

2. "I called upon the Lord," &c. I fled to him, not trusting in myself, and found mercy.

3. "The Lord answered me, and set me in a large place." This was the issue.

Upon which experience the Psalmist exults, and attributes it to God's mercy.

1. "The Lord is my helper," &c. The Lord is for me, therefore I shall not suffer.

2. "The Lord takes my part," &c. I shall be in safety, while my enemies will be cast down, and the church freed.

From which he deduces a third inference:—

1. "It is better to trust in the Lord," &c. He is both able and willing to help.

2. "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes." *David* found this in the case of *Achish*, king of *Gath*.

In a song of triumph he acquaints us in what dangers he was, and from which God delivered him. It is good then to trust in the Lord.

1. "All nations compassed me about," &c., but to no purpose.

2. "They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about," &c.

3. "They compassed me about like bees," &c. Angry, and armed with stings; but my trust is alone in the Lord. In his name, and by his help, "I will destroy them."

He told us of a multitude of enemies; and for the overthrow of these he sang his triumph.

1. "Thou hast thrust sore at me," &c. I was in great danger; there was little hope of escape.

2. "But the Lord helped me." No help was in myself, but the Lord.

In the next verse he fully acknowledges the Lord as his strength.

1. "My strength." By which I resist my enemies.

2. "My salvation." To deliver me from my enemies.

3. "My song." Him whom I joyfully sing after my deliverance.

III. And that this song might be fuller, he calls for the whole choir to sing with him. His delivery concerned the whole church, and therefore it must be sung by the whole church; and so it was kept as a jubilee, a day of thanksgiving.

1. "The voice of rejoicing," &c. They congratulate their own safety in mine.

2. "The right hand of the Lord," &c. This anthem the whole choir sang.

Now this anthem was no sooner ended by the choir, than the Psalmist took his harp again; and, exulting over his enemies, sings, "I shall not die," &c. Not be heartbroken, but "declare the works of the Lord."

And among his works this is one:—

1. "The Lord hath chastened me sore," &c. Within have I struggled hard with sin; without have I been assaulted with bitter enemies.

2. "But he hath not given me over," &c. I acknowledge in this his fatherly affection.

IV. It is supposed that this psalm was composed by *David*, in order that it might be sung when the people and the priests were assembled before the

Lord, for the purpose of thanksgiving; we may, with *Junius*, form it into a dialogue.

1. *David* speaks of the *priests* and *Levites* who had the care of the tabernacle: "Open to me the gates," &c., that is, the Lord's house; "for I will go in to them," &c.

2. To this the *priests* reply, "This is the gate," &c. The sole gate of justice that leads to him.

*David* replies, showing in brief his reason: "I will praise thee," &c.; and to the *twenty-eighth* verse, he shows how God had settled him in his kingdom, making him "the head of the corner;" which words, though they refer to *David*, there is no doubt of their having reference also to *Christ*, of whom *David* was a type; and of *Christ* then I shall rather interpret them, "The stone which the builders refused," &c.

1. The church is sometimes in Scripture called a building; the saints are the living stones, and *Christ* is "the chief Corner-stone."

2. But the *Jews*, the *priests*, to whom belonged the office of building the church, refused this stone: "We will not have this man," &c.

3. But "he is become the head of the corner." And whoever is not connected with him cannot be saved. 1. "This was the Lord's doing," &c. That *Christ* became our salvation. 2. "And it is marvellous in our eyes." And so it ever must be, that *Christ* should die, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God.

In commemoration of so great a work, a day should be set apart.

1. "This is the day," &c. Which without doubt was the day of the resurrection; the Lord making it a high and holy day.

2. "We will be glad and rejoice," &c. *Adam's* fall was a doleful day. On the day of *Christ's* resurrection we will be glad.

3. In the midst of our rejoicing we will pray, and sound forth *Hosanna* to the Son of *David*. This was done by the people on the entering of *Christ* into *Jerusalem*. It was the opinion of the *Jews* that this form of acclamation would be used before the *Messiah*.

The whole prophecy of *Christ's* coming, riding into *Jerusalem* in triumph, rejection, passion, &c., being thus explained, the prophet puts this into the mouths of the *priests*:—

1. "We have blessed you." All true happiness is under this King.

2. "Out of the house of the Lord," &c. From out of the church.

3. "God is the Lord," &c. Revealed unto us his Son as the Light of the world.

4. "Bind the sacrifice with cords," &c. Be thankful to him, and meet in the church to celebrate your thanksgivings.

V. The prophet concludes with a doxology.

1. "Thou art my God," I have taken thee for my portion.

2. "And I will praise thee;" which he doubles: "Thou art my God, and I will exalt thee." Which repetition shows his ardent desire of evincing his gratitude.

And thus the Psalmist concludes with the same exhortation with which he began the psalm.

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." And let him that readeth, and him that heareth, say, Amen!

This is an uncommonly fine psalm, and among the many noble ones it is one of the most noble. Its beauties are so many and so prominent that every reader, whose mind is at all influenced by spiritual things, must see, feel, and admire them.

The 22nd verse, "The stone which the builders

rejected is become the head stone of the corner," must have been a *proverbial* expression; but what gave birth to it I cannot find; but, like all other proverbs, it doubtless had its origin from some *fact*. One thing is evident from the Jewish doctors. The most enlightened of them understand this as a prophecy of the *Messiah*; and it was this general opinion, as well as the knowledge that the Spirit of prophecy thus intended it, that caused our Lord to apply it to himself, Matt. xxi. 42; nor did any of them attempt to dispute the propriety of the application.

PSALM CXIX.

The various excellencies and important uses of the law or revelation of God.

XXIV. DAY. EVENING PRAYER.

N ALEPH.

**BLESSED** are the <sup>a</sup>undefiled in the way, <sup>b</sup>who walk in the law of the LORD.

<sup>a</sup> Or, perfect or sincere—<sup>b</sup> Ps. cxxviii. 4.

2 Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart.

3 They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.

<sup>c</sup> 1 John iii. 9. v. 18.

NOTES ON PSALM CXIX.

This is another of the *alphabetical* or *acrostic* psalms. It is divided into *twenty-two* parts, answering to the number of letters in the *Hebrew alphabet*. Every part is divided into *eight verses*; and each verse begins with that letter of the alphabet which forms the *title* of the part, *e. g.*: The *eight* first verses have *a* *aleph* prefixed, the second *eight* *b* *beth*, each of the *eight* verses beginning with that letter; and so of the rest. All *connexion*, as might be naturally expected, is sacrificed to this artificial and methodical arrangement.

It is not easy to give any general *Analysis* of this psalm; it is enough to say that it treats in general on the privileges and happiness of those who observe the law of the Lord. That law is exhibited by various names and epithets, tending to show its various excellences. Earnest prayers are offered to God for wisdom to understand it, and for grace to observe it faithfully. These particulars may be collected from the *whole* composition, and appear less or more in *every part*.

The words which express that *revelation* which God had then given to men, or some *particular characteristic* of it, are generally reckoned to be the ten following: 1. *Testimonies*; 2. *Commandments*; 3. *Precepts*; 4. *Word*; 5. *Law*; 6. *Ways*; 7. *Truth*; 8. *Judgments*; 9. *Righteousness*; 10. *Statutes*. To these some add the following: 1. *Faithfulness*; 2. *Judgment*; 3. *Name*; but these are not used in the sense of the other *ten* words. I believe it is almost universally asserted that in *every verse* of this psalm one or other of those *ten* words is used, except in ver. 122; but on a closer inspection we shall find that none of them is used in the above sense in the 84th, 90th, 121st, 122nd, and 132nd. See the notes on these verses.

To save myself unnecessary repetition, and the reader time and trouble, I shall here, once for all, explain the above words, which the reader will do well to keep in remembrance.

I. THE LAW, *תורה* TORAH, from *יָרָה* *yarah*, to direct, guide, teach, make straight or even, point forward; because it guides, directs, and instructs in the way of righteousness; makes our path straight, shows what is even and right, and points us onward to peace, truth, and happiness. It is even our *school-master* to bring us to Christ, that we may be justified through faith; and by it is the knowledge of sin.

II. STATUTES, *חוקים* CHUKKIM, from *חָק* *chak*, to mark, trace out, describe, and ordain; because they mark out our way, describe the line of conduct we are to pursue, and order or ordain what we are to observe.

III. PRECEPTS, *פְּקֻדִים* PIKUDIM, from *פָּקַד* *pakad*, to take notice or care of a thing, to attend, have respect to, to appoint, to visit; because they take notice of our way, have respect to the whole of our life and conversation, superintend, overlook, and visit us in all the concerns and duties of life.

IV. COMMANDMENTS, *מצוות* MITSVOOTH, from *צָוָה* *tsavah*, to command, order, ordain; because they show us what we should do, and what we should leave undone, and exact our obedience.

V. TESTIMONIES, *עֵדוּת* EDOTH, from *עָד* *ad*, denoting beyond, further, all along, to bear witness or testimony. The rites and ceremonies of the law; because they point out matters beyond themselves, being types and representations of the good things that were to come.

VI. JUDGMENTS, *מִשְׁפָּטִים* MISHPATIM, from *שָׁפַט* *shaphat*, to judge, determine, regulate, order, and discern; because they judge concerning our words and works; show the rules by which they should be regulated; and cause us to discern what is right and wrong, and decide accordingly.

4 Thou hast commanded *us* to <sup>a</sup>keep thy precepts diligently.

5 O that my ways were directed to <sup>b</sup>keep thy statutes !

<sup>a</sup> Exod. xv. 26. Isai. xxxviii. 10, 13.—<sup>b</sup> Lev. xviii. 5, 26. xix.

19. xx. 8, 22. Deut. iv. 20. vi. 2. xxxi. 17. xxxviii. 45. xxx. 10.

VII. TRUTH, אמונה EMUNAH, from אמן aman, to make steady, constant, to settle, trust, believe. The law that is established, steady, confirmed, and ordered in all things, and sure ; which should be believed on the authority of God, and trusted to as an infallible testimony from Him who cannot lie nor deceive.

VIII. WORD, דבר dabar, from the same root, to discourse, utter one's sentiments, speak consecutively and intelligibly ; in which it appears to differ from לל malal, to utter articulate sounds. Any prophecy or immediate communication from heaven, as well as the whole body of divine revelation, is emphatically called דבר יהוה *debar Jehovah, the word of Jehovah*. On the same ground we call the whole *Old and New Testament* THE WORD OF THE LORD, as we term the volume in which they are contained THE BIBLE—THE BOOK. In his revelation God speaks to man ; shows him, in a clear, concise, intelligible, and rational way, his interest, his duty, his privileges ; and, in a word, the reasonable service that he requires of him.

IX. WAY, דרך DERECH, from the same root, to proceed, go on, walk, tread. The way in which God goes in order to instruct and save man ; the way in which man must tread in order to be safe, holy, and happy. God's manner of acting or proceeding in providence and grace ; and the way that man should take in order to answer the end of his creation and redemption.

X. RIGHTEOUSNESS, צדקה TSEDAKAH, from צדק tsadak, to do justice, to give full weight. That which teaches a man to give to all their due ; to give God his due, MAN his due, and HIMSELF his due ; for every man has duties to God, his neighbour, and himself, to perform. This word is applied to God's judgments, testimonies, and commandments : they are all righteous, give to all their due, and require what is due from every one.

The three words, which some add here, are, 1. FAITHFULNESS, אמונה EMUNAH : but see this under No. VII. ; nor does it appear in ver. 90, where it occurs, to be used as a characteristic of God's law, but rather his exact fulfilment of his promises to man.

The second is JUDGMENT, משפט mishpat. See this under No. VI. : it occurs in ver. 84 and 121 : "When wilt thou execute judgment," &c. ; but is not used in those places as one of the ten words.

The third is NAME, שם shem, see ver. 132 : but this is no characteristic of God's law ; it refers here simply to himself. Those that love thy NAME is the same as those that love THEE. Bishop Nicholson inserts promises among the ten words : but this occurs no where in the psalm.

We might, and with much more propriety, add a fourth, אמרה AMRAH, from אמר amar, to branch out, spread, or diffuse itself, as the branches of a tree ; and which is often used for a word spoken, a speech. This often occurs in the Psalm ; and we regularly translate it word, and put no difference or distinction between it and דבר dabar, No. VIII. : but

it is not exactly the same ; דבר dabar may apply more properly to history, relation, description, and such like ; while אמרה imrathecha, thy word, may mean an immediate oracle, delivered solemnly from God to his prophet for the instruction of men. But the two words appear often indifferently used ; and it would not be easy to ascertain the different shades of meaning between these two roots.

Having thus far introduced the psalm to the reader's attention, I should probably speak at large of the elegance of its composition, and the importance and utility of its matter. Like all other portions of divine revelation, it is elegant, important, and useful ; and while I admire the fecundity of the Psalmist's genius, the unabating flow of his poetic vein, his numerous synonyms, and his copia verborum, by which he is enabled to expand, diversify, and illustrate the same idea ; presenting it to his reader in all possible points of view, so as to render it pleasing, instructive, and impressive ; I cannot rob the rest of the book of its just praise by setting this, as many have done, above all the pieces it contains. It is by far the largest, the most artificial, and most diversified ; yet, in proportion to its length, it contains the fewest ideas of any psalm in the book.

Several of the ancients, particularly the Greek Fathers, have considered it as an abridgment of David's life ; in which he expresses all the states through which he had passed ; the trials, persecutions, succours, and encouragements he had received. The Latin Fathers perceive in it all the morality of the gospel, and rules for a man's conduct in every situation of life. Cassiodorus asserts that it contains the sentiments of the prophets, apostles, martyrs, and all the saints. In the introduction to the Book of Psalms I have conjectured that many of them were composed from notes taken at different times, and in widely different circumstances ; hence the different states described in the same psalm, which could not have been at one and the same time the experience of the same person. It is most likely that this psalm was composed in this way ; and this, as well as its acrostical arrangement, will account for its general want of connexion.

Though the most judicious interpreters assign it to the times of the Babylonish captivity ; yet there are so many things in it descriptive of David's state, experience, and affairs, that I am led to think it might have come from his pen ; or if composed at or under the captivity, was formed out of his notes and memoranda.

I shall now make short remarks on the principal subjects in each part ; and, at the end of each, endeavour by the Analysis to show the connexion which the eight verses of each have among themselves, and the use which the reader should make of them. In all the Versions except the Chaldee this psalm is numbered cxvii.

6 \*Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.

7 <sup>b</sup>I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned <sup>c</sup>thy righteous judgments.

\* Job xxii. 26. 1 John ii. 28.—<sup>b</sup> Ver. 171.

LETTER M ALEPH.—*First Division.*

Verse 1. *Blessed are the undefiled in the way*] *אֲשֵׁרֵי תִמְיֵם דָּרֵךְ ashrey temimey darech*, "O the blessedness of the perfect ones in the way." This psalm begins something like the *first*, where see the notes. By the *perfect*, which is the proper meaning of the original word, we are to understand those who sincerely believe what God has spoken, religiously observe all the rules and ceremonies of his religion, and have their lives and hearts regulated by the spirit of love, fear, and obedience. This is further stated in the *second* verse.

Verse 3. *They also do no iniquity.*] They avoid all idolatry, injustice, and wrong; and they walk in God's ways, not in those ways to which an evil heart might entice them, nor those in which the thoughtless and the profligate tread.

Verse 4. *Thy precepts diligently.*] *מֵעֵד meod*, "superlatively, to the uttermost." God has never given a commandment, the observance of which he knew to be impossible. And to whatsoever he has commanded he requires *obedience*; and his *grace is sufficient for us*. We must not trifle with God.

Verse 5. *O that my ways were directed*] "I wish that my way may be confirmed to keep thy statutes." Without thee I can do nothing; my soul is *unstable and fickle*; and it will continue *weak and uncertain* till thou *strengthen* and establish it.

Verse 6. *Then shall I not be ashamed*] Every act of transgression in the wicked man tends to *harden his heart*, and render it *callous*. If a man who fears God is so unhappy as to fall into sin, his conscience reproaches him, and he is *ashamed* before God and man. This is a full proof that God's Spirit has not utterly departed from him, and that he may repent, believe, and be *healed*.

*Unto all thy commandments.*] God requires *universal obedience*, and all things are possible to him whom Christ strengthens; and all things are possible to him that believes. *Allow* that any of God's commandments *may* be transgressed, and we shall soon have the whole decalogue set aside.

Verse 8. *O forsake me not utterly.*] *אַל תַּרְכֵּנִי ad meod*, "to utter dereliction;" never leave me to my own strength, nor to my own heart!

ANALYSIS OF LETTER ALEPH.—*First Division.*

I. In this first *octonary* the prophet commends to us the law of God, and persuades us to practise it by two arguments: 1. Happiness, ver. 1, 2. 2. The excellence of the Lawgiver, ver. 4.

II. He shows his affection to this law, desiring grace to keep it, ver. 5.

On which he knew there would follow two effects:

8 I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.

ב BETH.

9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse

\* Heb. judgments of thy righteousness.

1. Peace of conscience: "He should not be ashamed," &c.

2. Thankfulness to God for his teaching, ver. 7. "Blessed are they who are undefiled in the way," &c.

"Blessed are they who keep his testimonies," &c. "They also do no iniquity," &c.

I. The *first argument* used by the prophet to persuade men to obedience is *blessedness*. He that would be happy must be obedient; and his obedience, if true, may be thus discerned:—

1. "He must be undefiled in the way." Keep himself from sin.

2. "He must walk in the law of the Lord," &c. Which is the *rule* of our faith, life, and worship.

3. "He must keep his testimonies." Search them out in God's word.

4. "He must seek him with a whole heart." With sincerity search his law to the utmost, both what it *bids*, and what it *forbids*, in order to know the mind of the Lawgiver.

5. "They also do no iniquity." They work no iniquity with 1. Purpose of heart; 2. Delight; 3. With perseverance; 4. Nor at all, when the heart is fully sanctified unto God; Christ dwelling in it by faith.

6. *They walk in his way*, which the wicked do not: but the righteous have taken it for their path through life; and should they at any time swerve from it, they come back by repentance and confession to God.

The prophet's *second argument* to persuade to obedience is the authority of the Lawgiver. All disobedience proceeds either from contempt of God's laws, or rebellion against them: but David brings to our mind the authority of the Lawgiver, from a consideration of *who* he is who commands our obedience as his servants: "Thou hast commanded that we keep," &c.

1. *Thou*, who knowest when we err, and wilt punish us.

2. *Hast commanded*—absolutely enjoined.

3. *That we keep*, &c.—they cannot be dispensed with.

4. *Diligently*, &c. Not negligently or lazily, or Satan will take advantage of us.

II. The blessedness promised to the keepers of God's law moved the prophet to send forth this ardent prayer, "O that my ways," &c.

1. *David* was a great king, and yet desires to be obedient.

2. He answers God's *command* by a *prayer*, to be enabled to perform it by his grace.

3. "O that my ways," &c. My counsels, actions,

his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word.

10 With my whole heart have I <sup>a</sup> sought thee: O let me not <sup>b</sup> wander from thy commandments.

11 <sup>c</sup> Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

12 Blessed *art* thou, O LORD: <sup>d</sup> teach me thy statutes.

<sup>a</sup> 2 Chron. xv. 15.—<sup>b</sup> Ver. 21, 118.—<sup>c</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 31. Luke ii. 19, 51.—<sup>d</sup> Ver. 26, 33, 64, 68, 108, 124, 135. Ps.

&c., were conformable to the straitness and regularity of thy law.

4. He knew he could not be too closely united to God, and therefore he prays to be directed.

Which prayer he knew God would hear; and that the effect would be quietness of soul, and boldness at a throne of grace.

1. "Then shall I not be confounded," &c. If his heart were right with God, he should not fly from him, as did *Adam*: that was the effect of disobedience.

2. If God directed his ways to the keeping of his commandments, he should find no amazement in his conscience, but holy boldness.

And this effect will produce another fruit, a thankful heart.

1. "I will praise thee." Give thee thanks for thy grace and assistance.

2. "With uprightness of heart." Not with his tongue only, but with an honest and upright heart.

3. But this could not be done till God had taught him: "I will praise thee when I shall have learned," &c. Not to know them only with my *understanding*, but to make them the *rule of my life*, which cannot be but by the *influence* of the *Spirit of God*.

And what follows upon this will be a firm purpose of heart to be obedient to God's laws.

1. "I will keep thy statutes." So am I fully resolved and decreed with myself. And it is a great help to godliness to *resolve to live a godly life*; for how shall that be *performed* which is not purposed.

2. And yet this purpose or conclusion he makes in *God's strength*; and therefore constantly prays: "O forsake me not utterly." Without thy aid I can do nothing; but if at any time in thy just judgment thou desert me, that I may know and feel my own weakness, and learn the better to fly to thee, let it not be an utter desertion. Forsake me not, neither too much nor too long.

LETTER 2 BETH.—Second Division.

Verse 9. *A young man cleanse his way*] ארר *orach*, which we translate *way* here, signifies a *track*, a *rut*, such as is made by the wheel of a cart or chariot. A *young sinner* has no *broad beaten* path; he has his *private ways* of offence, his *secret pollutions*: and how shall he *be cleansed* from these? how can he be saved from what will destroy mind, body, and soul? Let him hear what follows; the description is from God.

1. He is to *consider* that his way is *impure*; and

13 With my lips have I <sup>a</sup> declared all the judgments of thy mouth.

14 I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as *much as* in all riches.

15 I will <sup>c</sup> meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.

16 I will <sup>e</sup> delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

xxv. 4.—<sup>c</sup> Ps. xxxiv. 11.—<sup>f</sup> Ps. i. 2. Ver. 23, 48, 78.—<sup>e</sup> Ps. i. 2. Ver. 35, 47, 70, 77.

how abominable this must make him appear in the sight of God.

2. He must examine it *according to God's word*, and carefully hear what God has said concerning him and it.

3. He must *take heed* to it. לשמר *lishmor*, to *keep, guard*, and *preserve his way*—his general course of life, from all defilement.

Verse 10. *With my whole heart have I sought thee*]

4. He must *seek God*; make *earnest prayer and supplication* to him for *divine light*, for a *tender conscience*, and for *strength* to walk uprightly. 5. His *whole heart*; all his affections must be engaged here, or he cannot succeed. If he keep any affection for the idol or abomination; if his *heart* do not give it before the Lord, he may make many prayers, but God will answer none of them. 6. He must *take care to keep in the path of duty*, of abstinence and self-denial; not permitting either his *eye*, his *hand*, or his *heart* to *wander from the commandments* of his Maker.

Verse 11. *Thy word have I hid in my heart*] 7. He must *treasure* up those portions of *God's word* in his mind and heart which speak against uncleanness of every kind; and that recommend purity, chastity, and holiness. The word of Christ should dwell *richly* in him. If God's word be only in his *Bible*, and not also in his *heart*, he may soon and easily be surprised into his *besetting sin*.

Verse 12. *Blessed art thou*] 8. He must *acknowledge the mercy of God*, in so far preserving him from all the *consequences* of his sin. 9. He should beg of him to become his *teacher*, that his heart and conscience might be *instructed in the spirituality* of his statutes.

Verse 13. *With my lips have I declared*] 10. He should *declare* to his own heart, and to all his *companions in iniquity*, God's *judgments* against himself and them; that if his *long-suffering mercy* have not made a proper impression on their hearts, they may tremble at his approaching *judgments*.

Verse 14. *I have rejoiced*] 11. He must consider it his *chief happiness* to be found in the *path of obedience*, giving his whole heart and strength to God; and when enabled to do it, he should rejoice more in it than if he had gained thousands of gold and silver. O how great is the treasure of a tender and approving conscience!

Verse 15. *I will meditate*] 12. He should encourage self-examination and reflection; and meditate frequently on God's words, works, and ways; and

3 GIMEL.

17 <sup>a</sup> Deal bountifully with thy servant, *that* I may live, and keep thy word.  
 18 <sup>b</sup> Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.  
 19 <sup>c</sup> I am a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. cxvi. 7. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. *reveal*. — <sup>c</sup> Gen. xlvii. 9. 1 Chron. xix. 15. Ps. xxxix. 12. 2 Cor. v. 6. Hebr. xi. 13.

especially on his gracious dealings towards him. 13. He should *keep his eye upon God's steps*; setting the example of his Saviour before his eyes, going *where* he would go, and *nowhere* else; *doing* what he would do, and *nothing* else; keeping the *company* that he would keep, and *none* else; and doing every thing in reference to the *final judgment*.

Verse 16. *I will delight myself*] The word is very emphatical: *yyrwsh eshtaasha, I will skip about and jump for joy*. 14. He must exult in God's word as his treasure, live in the spirit of obedience as his work, and ever glory in God, who has called him to such a state of salvation. 15. He must never forget what God has *done for him, done in him*, and promised *farther to do*; and he must not *forget* the *promises* he had made, and the *vows* of the Lord that are upon him. Any young man who attends to these *fifteen* particulars will get his impure way cleansed; victory over his sin; and, if he abide faithful to the Lord that bought him, an eternal heaven at last among them that are *sanctified*.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER BETH.—*Second Division.*

In the first part the Psalmist, having commended God's law, from its Author—God, and its end—happiness, shows us in the *second* part the efficacy and utility of it to a *holy life*, without which there can be no *happiness*. And in order to show this effect, he chooses the most unlikely *subject*.

I. A *young man*, in whom the law of the members is most strong. He wants experience; he is headstrong, and generally under the government, not of reason nor religion, but of his own passions.

II. The Psalmist shows that, to cleanse the way of such, he must "take heed to them," watch over them, and "remember his Creator in the days of his youth."

As a man must become *holy* in order to be *happy*, he shows how this holiness is to be attained, and adds words his own experience.

1. Seek God with thy "whole heart." Be truly sensible of your wants.
2. Keep and remember what God says: "Thy words have I hidden," &c.
3. Reduce all this to practice: "That I might not sin against thee."
4. Bless God for what he has given: "Blessed art thou," &c.
5. Ask more: "Teach me thy statutes."
6. Be ready to communicate his knowledge to others: "With my lips have I declared."

20 <sup>d</sup> My soul breaketh for the longing *that* it hath unto thy judgments at all times.  
 21 Thou hast rebuked the proud *that are* cursed, which do <sup>e</sup>err from thy commandments.  
 22 <sup>f</sup> Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. cxli. 1, 2. lxiii. 1. lxxxiv. 2. Ver. 40, 131. — <sup>e</sup> Ver. 10, 110, 118. — <sup>f</sup> Ps. xxxix. 8.

7. Let it have a due effect on thy own heart: "I have rejoiced," &c.

8. Meditate frequently upon them: "I will meditate," &c.

9. Deeply reflect on them: "I will have respect," &c. As food undigested will not nourish the body, so the word of God not considered with deep meditation and reflection will not feed the soul.

10. Having pursued the above course, he should continue in it, and then his happiness would be secured: "I will not forget thy word. I will (in consequence) delight myself in thy statutes."

LETTER 3 GIMEL.—*Third Division.*

Verse 17. *Deal bountifully*] גמול *gemol, reward* thy servant. Let him have the return of his faith and prayers, that the *divine life* may be preserved in his soul! Then he will keep thy word. From גמול *gamal, to reward, &c.*, comes the name of 3 *gimel, the third* letter in the Hebrew alphabet, which is prefixed to every verse in this *part*, and commences it with its own name. This is a stroke of the Psalmist's *art and ingenuity*.

Verse 18. *Open thou mine eyes*] גל עיני *gal eynai, reveal my eyes*, illuminate my understanding, take away the veil that is on my heart; and then shall I see wonders in thy law. The Holy Scriptures are plain enough; but the heart of man is *darkened* by sin. The *Bible* does not so much need a *comment*, as the *soul* does the *light of the Holy Spirit*. Were it not for the darkness of the human intellect, the things relative to salvation would be easily apprehended.

Verse 19. *I am a stranger in the earth*] In the *land*. Being obliged to wander about from place to place, I am like a *stranger* even in my *own country*. If it refer to the *captives in Babylon*, it may mean that they felt themselves there as in a state of *exile*; for, although they had been *seventy* years in it, they still felt it as a *strange* land, because they considered *Palestine, their home*.

Verse 20. *My soul breaketh*] We have a similar expression: *It broke my heart, That is heart-breaking, She died of a broken heart*. It expresses excessive longing, grievous disappointment, hopeless love, accumulated sorrow. By this we may see the *hungering and thirsting* which the Psalmist had after righteousness, often mingled with much *despondency*.

Verse 21. *Thou hast rebuked the proud*] This was done often in the case of David; and was true also in reference to the *Babylonians*, who held the Israelites in subjection, and whose kings were among the

23 Princes also did sit *and* speak against me: *but* thy servant did <sup>a</sup> meditate in thy statutes.

24 <sup>b</sup> Thy testimonies also *are* my delight *and* <sup>c</sup> my counsellors.

7 DALETH.

25 <sup>d</sup> My soul cleaveth unto the dust: <sup>e</sup> quicken thou me according to thy word.

26 I have declared my ways, and thou heardest me: <sup>f</sup> teach me thy statutes.

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 15.—<sup>b</sup> Ver. 77, 92.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *men of counsel*.  
<sup>d</sup> Ps. xlv. 25.—<sup>e</sup> Ver. 40. Ps. cxliii. 11.—<sup>f</sup> Ver. 12.

proudest of human beings. Instead of זָרִים *sedim*, the proud, some MSS. read זָרִים *zarim*, strangers, and one reads גּוֹיִם *goyim*, the heathen; and so the Syriac.

Verse 22. *Remove from me reproach and contempt*] Of these the captives in Babylon had a more than ordinary load.

Verse 23. *Princes also did sit*] It is very likely that the nobles of Babylon did often, by wicked misrepresentations, render the minds of the kings of the empire evil affected towards the Jews.

Verse 24. *Thy testimonies also are—my counsellors.*] אַנְשֵׁי אֲנֹכִי *anshey atsathi*, “the men of my counsel.” I sit with them; and I consider every testimony thou hast given as a particular counsellor; one whose advice I especially need.

The Analysis will farther explain the particular uses of this part.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER GIMEL.—Third Division.

In this division the Psalmist—

I. Reckons up the *impediments* he may meet with in endeavouring to keep God's law

II. Prays God to remove them.

*First Impediment.* A dead soul and a dull heart; and therefore he prays for grace that he may live and keep God's word.

*Second Impediment.* Blindness of understanding: “Open my eyes, that I may see wonders in thy law.” The wonderful equity, wisdom, and profit of it.

*Third Impediment.* His wayfaring and uncertain situation: I am a “stranger upon the earth;” therefore, “hide not thy commandments from me.” Should I be frequently destitute of thy ordinances, leave me not without thy Spirit's teaching.

*Fourth Impediment.* His infirmity and imperfection: “My soul breaks,” &c. I wish to be at all times, what I am sometimes, full of desire, fervour, zeal, prayer, and faith. Then shall I be what I should be, when my heart is steady in seeking thy salvation.

*Fifth Impediment.* Pride of heart. This he saw in others, and was afraid that it might take place in himself; and he knew if it did, he should wander from the commandment, and come under a curse.

*Sixth Impediment.* The reproach and contempt he met with in consequence of his endeavours to live a godly life. Against this he prays as a grievous temptation: “Remove from me reproach and contempt.”

27 Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so <sup>a</sup> shall I talk of thy wondrous works.

28 <sup>b</sup> My soul <sup>c</sup> melteth for heaviness; strengthen thou me according unto thy word.

29 Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciously.

30 I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid *before me*.

31 I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, put me not to shame.

Ps. xxv. 4. xxvii. 11. lxxxvi. 11.—<sup>a</sup> Ps. cxlv. 5, 6.—<sup>b</sup> Ps. cvii. 26.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *dropped*.

*Seventh Impediment.* The rulers of the people plotted against his life; they even met in council about it: “Princes did also sit and speak against me.” It is difficult to bear reproach even for Christ's sake; though it should be a matter of glorying: but he must be strong in the faith, who can stand against *keen railery*, and *state persecution*.

But what effect had all this upon the Psalmist?

1. He cleaved to God's testimonies, and conscientiously observed them.

2. He made them his counsellors—drew all his wisdom from them; and he was amply rewarded, for they became his delight. Every man profits who is faithful to his God.

LETTER 7 DALETH.—Fourth Division.

Verse 25. *My soul cleaveth unto the dust*] It would be best to translate נַפְשִׁי *naphshi*, my life; and then *cleaving to the dust* may imply an apprehension of approaching death; and this agrees best with the petition.

*Quicken thou me*] חַיֵּי *chaiyeni*, “make me alive.” Keep me from going down into the dust.

Verse 26. *I have declared my ways*] סִפְּרִיתִי *sipparti*, “I have numbered my ways;” I have searched them out; I have investigated them. And that he had earnestly prayed for pardon of what was wrong in them, is evident; for he adds, “Thou heardest me.”

Verse 28. *My soul melteth*] דָּלַף *dalaph* signifies to distil, to drop as tears from the eye. As my distresses cause the tears to distil from my eyes, so the overwhelming load of my afflictions causes my life to *ebb* and *leak* out.

Verse 29. *The way of lying*] The propensity to *falsity* and *prevarication*; whatsoever is contrary to truth. Remove me from its solicitations, and remove it from me. “Grant me thy law graciously;” give it to me as a rule of moral conduct; but give it to me graciously through the *gospel*; and then it will not be the letter that killeth, but will be sanctified to me, so as to become to me holy, just, and good.

Verse 30. *I have chosen the way of truth*] And that I may continue in it, “remove from me the way of lying.” See above.

Verse 31. *I have stuck*] דָּבַקְתִּי *dabakti*, I have cleaved to, been glued to, them: the same word as in

32 I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt <sup>a</sup> enlarge my heart.

XXV. DAY. MORNING PRAYER.

7 HE.

33 <sup>b</sup> Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it <sup>c</sup> unto the end.

34 <sup>d</sup> Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Kings iv. 29. Isai. lx. 5. 2 Cor. vi. 11. — <sup>b</sup> Ver. 12. <sup>c</sup> Ver. 112. Matt. x. 22. Rev. ii. 26. — <sup>d</sup> Ver. 73. Prov. ii. 6. James i. 5. — <sup>e</sup> Ver. 16. — <sup>f</sup> Ezek. xxxiii. 31. Mark

ver. 25. My soul cleaves as much to thy testimonies, as my life has cleaved to the dust.

O Lord, put me not to shame.] Let my sins and follies be blotted out by thy mercy; and so hide and cover them that they shall never appear, either in this or the coming world, to my shame and confusion! How many need to be importunate with God in this prayer!

Verse 32. I will run] The particle <sup>c</sup>, which we translate when, should be translated because: Because thou shalt enlarge, or dilate, my heart; make plain my path by cleansing me from my impurity, and taking the hindrances out of my way. I will then run without dread of stumbling, and every day make sensible progress.

#### ANALYSIS OF LETTER DALETH.—Fourth Division.

The Psalmist—

I. Sets down the state of an imperfect man.

II. Confesses it.

III. Asks grace and mercy.

IV. Professes what in consequence he would do.

I. 1. "My soul cleaveth unto the dust:" His affections cleaved to things below, instead of being set on things above.

2. "Quicken thou me:" Give me a life according to thy law. By cleaving to the earth, he was earthly; by cleaving to the flesh, he was carnal; but by living according to the spiritual law, he was to become one spirit with God.

II. He confesses his imperfections.

1. "I have declared my ways." I acknowledge all my wanderings, sins, follies, and unfaithfulness; I have hidden nothing from thee.

2. Thou didst hear me; forgavest me out of thy mere mercy.

3. Do the like now: "Teach me thy statutes." These two things should be sought together: mercy to pardon, and grace to assist and renew.

III. He proceeds in this prayer.

1. "Make me to understand:" Where the mind is darkened, the heart cannot be well ordered.

2. He that asks good things from God should ask them for a good end: "Make me to understand; so shall I talk," &c.

3. He would show God's wondrous works: I shall talk of thy wondrous law,—thy wondrous gospel,—

35 Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I <sup>e</sup> delight.

36 Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to <sup>f</sup> covetousness.

37 <sup>g</sup> Turn <sup>h</sup> away mine eyes from <sup>i</sup> beholding vanity; and <sup>k</sup> quicken thou me in thy way.

38 <sup>l</sup> Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear.

39 Turn away my reproach, which I fear: for thy judgments are good.

vii. 21, 22. Luke xii. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 10. Hebr. xiii. 5. <sup>e</sup> Isai. xxxiii. 15. — <sup>h</sup> Heb. make to pass. — <sup>i</sup> Prov. xxxiii. 5. — <sup>k</sup> Ver. 40. — <sup>l</sup> 2 Sam. vii. 25.

thy wondrous mercy in saving sinners,—the wondrous means thou usest, &c.

IV. He returns to his confession, and states what he purposes to do.

1. "My soul melts:" I am full of trouble and distress.

2. "Strengthen thou me:" Give me the grace thou hast promised.

3. "Remove from me the way of lying:" Give me power to avoid all sin.

4. "Grant me thy law graciously:" Print the matter of it in my heart, and abolish my corruption.

5. He chooses the truth.

6. He adheres to it.

7. He will continue in it.

8. Yea, and with greater diligence than ever. To make up for lost time, he will now run: and, while running, keep in God's way. Some run, but they run out of it.

#### LETTER 7 HE.—Fifth Division.

Verse 33. Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes] To understand the spiritual reference of all the statutes, &c., under the law, required a teaching which could only come from God.

I shall keep it unto the end.] Here is a good thing asked for a good end. He wishes for heavenly teaching; not to make a parade of it, but to enable him to discern his duty, that he might act accordingly.

Verse 34. With my whole heart.] I will not trifle with my God, I will not divide my affections with the world; God shall have all.

Verse 36. Not to covetousness.] Let me have no inordinate love for gain of any kind, nor for any thing that may grieve thy Spirit, or induce me to seek my happiness here below.

Verse 37. From beholding vanity] An idol, worldly pleasure, beauty, finery; any thing that is vain, empty, or transitory. Let me not behold it; let me not dwell upon it. Let me remember Achan: he saw,—he coveted,—he took,—he hid his theft, and was slain for his sin.

Verse 38. Stablish thy word] Fulfil the promises thou hast made to me.

Verse 39. Turn away my reproach, which I fear] This may be understood of the reproach which a man may meet with in consequence of living a godly life.



40 Behold, I have <sup>a</sup>longed after thy precepts: <sup>b</sup>quicken me in thy righteousness.

1 VAU.

41 <sup>c</sup>Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, *even* thy salvation, according to thy word.

42 <sup>d</sup>So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in thy word.

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 20.—<sup>b</sup> Ver. 25, 37, 88, 107, 149, 156, 159.—<sup>c</sup> Ps. cvi. 4. Ver. 77.—<sup>d</sup> Or, *So shall I answer him that re-*

43 And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments.

44 So shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever.

45 And I will walk <sup>e</sup>at liberty: for I seek thy precepts.

46 <sup>f</sup>I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed.

*proacheth me in a thing.*—<sup>e</sup> Heb. *at large.*—<sup>f</sup> Ps. cxxviii. 1. Matt. x. 18, 19. Acts xxvi. 1, 2.

for such a life was never *fashionable* in any *time* or *country*. But I have found the following note on the passage: "I have done a *secret evil*; my soul is sorry for it: if it become *public*, it will be a heavy reproach to me. O God, turn it away, and let it never meet the eye of man!"—*Anon.*

Verse 40. *Behold, I have longed*] Thou searchest the heart; thou knowest that I have long desired thy salvation; thou seest that this desire still remains. Behold it! it is thy work; and through thy mercy I breathe after thy mercy.

*Quicken me*] I am *dying*; O give me the spirit of life in Christ Jesus!

#### ANALYSIS OF LETTER HE.—*Fifth Division.*

In this part, which is wholly *precatory*, the Psalmist prays,—

I. That God would *illuminate* his mind.

II. That he would *remove all those hinderances* which might prevent him from doing his duty.

1. The first petition is for illumination: "Teach me;" point me out *what* I am to *learn*, and *how* I am to learn it.

2. The second is, "Give me understanding." Let me *comprehend*, that I may *profit* by this teaching.

3. The *end* for which he asks,—that he "may keep the law."

He specifies the manner: 1. He will be no *temporizer*; he will keep it "to the end." 2. He will be no *hypocrite*; he will keep it "with his whole heart."

1. He prays for *power*: "Make me to go." Without thy Spirit's help I can do nothing: I do not know the way without thy *teaching*; I cannot walk in it without thy *help*.

2. He wishes to go in *the path*; the way in which all God's followers have walked.

3. It is a *path*, not a public road; a path where no *beast* goes, and *men* seldom.

4. He gives a *reason* why his petition should be granted: "Therein do I *delight*."

II. He prays to have all impediments removed.

1. "Incline my heart." Bind it down to a willing obedience.

2. "Not to covetousness." Keep me from the *love of money*, the *world*, the *creature*.

3. He prays against the *desire of the eye*: "Turn away mine eyes." Let the eye of my body be turned away from *vanity*; the eye of my mind turned away to thee.

2332

4. Let me find the benefit of this turning: "Stablish thy word,"—make good thy word; give me grace to stand.

5. For which he gives this reason: "I am thy servant, and am devoted to thy fear."

6. He is afraid of the consequences if he be not faithful: "Turn away my reproach." Let it not be said, at the day of judgment, "I was hungry, and you gave me no meat," &c.

7. He knows if God condemn it must be justly: "For thy judgments are good." *Man may condemn where thou approvest; he may approve where thou condemnest. Thy judgments alone are good.*

8. He concludes, desiring the Lord to look on the state of his heart: "Behold!" 1. Is not my heart right before thee? 2. If so, *quicken me; make me alive, and keep me alive!* Without the *latter*, the *former* will answer no end.

#### LETTER VAU.—*Sixth Division.*

Verse 41. *Let thy mercies come*] Let me speedily see the accomplishment of all my prayers! Let me have *thy salvation*—such a deliverance as it becomes thy greatness and goodness to impart. Let it be *according to thy word*—thy exceeding great and precious promises.

Verse 42. *So shall I have wherewith to answer*] Many say, "My hope in thy mercy is vain;" but when thou fulfillest thy promises to me, then shall I answer to the confusion of their infidelity.

Verse 43. *Take not the word of truth*] Grant that the assurances which thy prophets have given to the people of approaching deliverance may not fall to the ground; let it appear that *they* have spoken *thy mind*, and that *thou* hast fulfilled *their word*.

Verse 45. *I will walk at liberty*] When freed from the present bondage, we shall rejoice in obedience to thy testimonies; we shall *delight* to keep all thy ordinances.

Verse 46. *I will speak—before kings*] Dr. Delaney supposes that this is spoken in reference to *Achish, king of Gath*, whom David had instructed in the Jewish religion; but we have already seen that it is most likely that the psalm was compiled under the Babylonish captivity. But the words may with more propriety be referred to the case of *Daniel*, and other bold and faithful Israelites, who spoke courageously before *Nebuchadnezzar, Belsazzar, and Darius*. See the books of *Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah*.

47 And I will <sup>a</sup> delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved.

48 My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will <sup>b</sup> meditate in thy statutes.

† ZAIN.

49 Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to <sup>c</sup> hope.

50 This is my <sup>d</sup> comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.

51 The proud have had me greatly <sup>e</sup> in derision: yet have I not <sup>f</sup> declined from thy law.

52 I remembered thy judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself.

53 <sup>g</sup> Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law.

54 Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.

55 <sup>h</sup> I have remembered thy name, O LORD, in the night, and have kept thy law.

56 This I had, because I kept thy precepts.

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 16.—<sup>b</sup> Ver. 15.—<sup>c</sup> Ver. 74, 81, 147.—<sup>d</sup> Rom. xv. 4.—<sup>e</sup> Jer. xx. 7.

Verse 47. *Thy commandments, which I have loved.*] O shame to Christians who feel so little affection to the gospel of Christ, when we see such cordial, conscientious, and inviolate attachment in a Jew to the laws and ordinances of Moses, that did not afford a thousandth part of the privileges!

Verse 48. *My hands also will I lift up*] I will present every victim and sacrifice which the law requires. I will make prayer and supplication before thee, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER VAU.—Sixth Division.

The Psalmist prays for *mercy*, and promises to show his *thankfulness* two ways:—

- I. By a bold confession of God's law.
- II. By holy obedience to it.

The whole section consists of two petitions and six promises.

I. i. *First petition.* "Let thy mercies come also unto me—even thy salvation." He joins these two, *mercy* and *salvation*, as *cause* and *effect*; for God's *mercy* can alone bring *salvation*.

This being granted, he vows to be thankful and courageous.

1. He vows to confess God's law, and answer any adversary who may say, "It is vain for him to hope in the Lord," by showing that God has fulfilled his word.

2. That he will put his trust in God; because he is omnipotent and merciful.

ii. The *second petition* is, "Take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth." For which he gives a reason: "I have hoped in thy judgments."

1. "Take not thy word," in which I boast and glory before my adversaries.

2. "Take not the word out of my mouth," so that I dare not speak nor openly profess it.

3. "Take it not away utterly." If for my unfaithfulness thou shouldst shut my mouth for a time, restore thy favour to me, that I may again make confession unto salvation.

4. For which he gives this reason: "I have hoped," &c. I trust in thy fidelity and justice, that thou wilt accomplish, in *promises* and *threatenings*, whatsoever thou hast engaged to perform.

ii. Now he shows his *thankfulness* by determining

to make confession of God's mercy in a holy life; serving God.

1. With a *free heart*: "I will walk at liberty;" sin shall have no dominion over me.

2. With a *loosened tongue*: "I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings." It is a difficult thing to speak to great men concerning their salvation; it requires great boldness, and equal *humility*. *Rudeness*, under the guise of *zeal*, spoils every good.

3. With *hearty affection*: "I will delight myself." He who can *delight* in his *duty* has made considerable progress in *piety*.

4. With *corresponding practice*: "My hands will I lift up." My life shall declare that I have not received the grace of God in vain.

5. With a *considerate mind*: "I will meditate in thy statutes." My understanding shall frequently examine them, approve of them, and turn them over to a heart full of fervent affection.

6. This was a work to which he *was accustomed*: "I have loved thy commandments and statutes." Love feels no loads, and habit is a second nature.

LETTER † ZAIN.—Seventh Division.

Verse 49. *Remember the word*] Thou hast *promised* to redeem us from our captivity; on that *word* we have built our *hope*. Remember that thou hast thus promised, and see that we thus *hope*.

Verse 50. *This is my comfort*] While enduring our harsh captivity, we anticipated our enlargement; and thy *word of promise* was the *means* of keeping our souls *alive*.

Verse 51. *The proud have had me*] We have been treated, not only with oppressive *cruelty*, but also with *contempt*, because we still professed to *trust in thee*, the living God, who because of our transgressions hadst been greatly displeased with us; yet we have not declined from thy law.

Verse 52. *I remembered thy judgments of old*] The *word judgments* is here taken for *providential dealing*; and indeed *kind treatment*; that which God showed to the Hebrews in bearing with and blessing them. And it was the recollection of these *judgments* that caused him to *comfort* himself.

Verse 53. *Horror hath taken hold upon me*] The word זילפח *zilaphah*, which we render *horror*, is thought to signify the pestilential burning wind called

□ CHETH.

57 \* *Thou art my portion, O LORD: I have said that I would keep thy words.*

58 I entreated thy <sup>b</sup> favour with *my whole*

\* Ps. xvi. 5. Jer. x. 16. Lam. iii. 24.

by the Arabs *simoom*. Here it strongly marks the idea that the Psalmist had of the destructive nature of *sin*; it is pestilential; it is corrupting, mortal.

Verse 54. *Thy statutes have been my songs*] During our captivity all our consolation was derived from singing thy praises, and chanting among our fellow-captives portions of thy law, and the precepts it contains.

Verse 55. *I have remembered thy name*] Thou art *Jehovah*; and as *our God* thou hast made thyself known unto us. In the deepest *night* of our affliction this has consoled me.

Verse 56. *This I had, because I kept thy precepts.*] Though thou didst leave us under the power of our enemies, yet thou hast not left us without the consolations of thy Spirit.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER ZAIN.—*Seventh Division.*

In this part the Psalmist—

I. Prays.

II. Shows his trust in God, notwithstanding his discouragements.

III. Commends the word of God, by showing what blessed effects it had produced in him.

1. He prays: "Remember;" accomplish and perfect thy promise. God's promises are made to prayer and faith; if men do not exert these, God will not fulfil the others.

2. "Made to thy servant:" The promises are made to the *obedient*. It is in vain to desire God to remember *his promises* made to us, if we make no conscience to perform *our promises* made to him.

3. "Wherein thou hast caused me to put my trust:" This is a forcible argument to induce God to fulfil his promises. They are thy promises; thou hast made them to us; and thou hast caused us to hope, because made by thee, that they shall be fulfilled.

II. He shows that the hope he had in God made him steady, even in afflictions.

1. "This is my comfort in affliction:" That is, God's word and promise.

2. "Thy word hath quickened me;" brought me *life, strength, and courage*.

3. He mentions his afflictions. 1. The proud have had me in derision. 2. Yet I have not declined from thy law. 3. For in my afflictions I remembered thy judgments; his casting down the proud and exalting the humble. And, 4. From these considerations he derived comfort.

III. His knowledge of God's purity and judgments caused him to commiserate the state of the wicked.

1. "Horror hath taken hold upon me:" For those who trampled under foot God's word, and persecuted the righteous, he grieved; not because of the evil they did him, but of the evil they did themselves. He describes those men.

heart: be merciful unto me <sup>c</sup> according to thy word.

59 I <sup>d</sup> thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

<sup>b</sup> Heb. *face*. Job xi. 19.—<sup>c</sup> Ver. 41.—<sup>d</sup> Luke xv. 17, 18.

2. They forsook God's laws. Probably *apostate* Israelites.

3. He was not without consolation, though much afflicted and harassed. He took delight in God's law, and made his *songs* of it.

4. And this was a source of joy to him both day and night.

5. He concludes with this acclamation: "This I had;" I had this spirit, this power, this comfort, "because I kept thy precepts." While I suffered for God, I was enabled to rejoice in God. As I made him my portion, so he has been my praise.

LETTER □ CHETH.—*Eighth Division.*

Verse 57. Thou art *my portion, O Lord*] From the *fifty-seventh* to the *sixtieth* verse may be seen the *progress* of the work of grace on the human heart, from the first dawn of heavenly light till the soul is filled with the fulness of God. But as I consider this psalm as *notes* selected from *diaries* of past experience, formed at different times; and that the author has been obliged, for the support of his *acrostic* plan, to interchange circumstances, putting that sometimes *behind* which in the order of grace comes *before*; because, to put it in its right place, the *letters* would not accord with the *alphabetical* arrangement; I shall therefore follow what I conceive to be its *order* in the *connexion of grace*, and not in the *order* in which the words are here laid down.

Verse 59. *FIRST*.—*I thought on my ways*] *חשבתי* *chashabti*, I deeply pondered them; I turned them upside down; I viewed my conduct on all sides. The word, as used here, is a metaphor taken from *embroidering*, where the *figure* must appear the *same* on the *one side* as it does on the *other*; therefore, the cloth must be turned on each side every time the needle is set in, to see that the stitch be fairly set. Thus narrowly and scrupulously did the Psalmist examine his conduct; and the result was, a deep conviction that he had departed from the way of God and truth.

*SECONDLY*.—*And turned my feet unto thy testimonies.*] Having made the above discovery, and finding himself under the displeasure of God, he abandoned every evil way, took God's word for his directory, and set out fairly in the way of life and salvation.

Verse 60. *THIRDLY*.—*I made haste, and delayed not*] He did this with the utmost *speed*; and did not trifle with his convictions, nor seek to drown the voice of conscience.

The original word, which we translate *delayed not*, is amazingly emphatical. *וְלֹא חִתְּמַמְתִּי* *velo hithmak-mahti*, I did not stand *what-what-what*; or, as we used to express the same sentiment, *shilly-shally* with myself: I was *determined*, and so set out. The *Hebrew* word, as well as the *English*, strongly

60 I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.

61 The <sup>a</sup> bands of the wicked have robbed me: *but* I have not forgotten thy law.

62 <sup>b</sup> At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments.

63 *I am* a companion of all *them* that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.

<sup>a</sup> Or, *companies*.—<sup>b</sup> Acts xvi. 25.

marks indecision of mind, positive action being suspended, because the mind is so unfixed as not to be able to make a choice.

Verse 58. FOURTHLY.—Being determined in his heart, he tells us, *I entreated thy favour with my whole heart*. He found he had sinned; that he needed *mercy*; that he had no time to lose; that he must be importunate; and therefore he sought that mercy *with all his soul*.

FIFTHLY.—Feeling that he *deserved* nothing but wrath, that he had no *right* to any good, he cries for *mercy* in the way that God had promised to convey it: “Be merciful unto me!” And to this he is encouraged only by the *promise* of God; and therefore prays, “Be merciful unto me according to thy word.”

Verse 57. SIXTHLY.—To keep himself firm in his present resolutions, he binds himself unto the Lord. “I have said that I would keep thy words.” Thy vows are upon me, and I must not add to my guilt by breaking them.

SEVENTHLY.—He did not seek in vain; God reveals himself in the fulness of blessedness to him, so that he is enabled to exclaim, *Thou art my portion, O Lord!* My whole soul trusts in thee; my spirit rests supremely satisfied with thee. I have no other inheritance, nor do I desire any. Here then is the way to *seek*, the way to *find*, and the way to be *happy*. Other effects of this conversion may be seen below.

Verse 61. *The bands of the wicked have robbed me*] *chibley*, the cables, cords, or snares of the wicked. They have *hunted* us like wild beasts; many they have taken for prey, and many they have destroyed.

Verse 62. *At midnight I will rise*] We are so overpowered with a sense of thy goodness, that in season and out of season we will return thee thanks.

Verse 63. *I am a companion*] This was the natural consequence of his own conversion; he abandoned the workers of iniquity, and associated with them that feared the Lord.

Verse 64. *The earth is full of thy mercy*] What an astonishing operation has the grace of God! In the midst of want, poverty, affliction, and bondage, it makes those who possess it happy! When Christ dwells in the heart by faith, we have nothing but *goodness* around us. Others may complain; but to us even the earth appears full of the mercy of the Lord.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER CETH.—*Eighth Division.*

In this part we have—

I. The assertion of the Psalmist, that *God* was his *portion*; and his resolution upon it to keep God's law.

64 ‘The earth, O LORD, is full of thy mercy: <sup>d</sup> teach me thy statutes.

¶ TETH.

65 Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.

66 Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. xxxiii. 5.—<sup>d</sup> Ver. 12, 26.

II. His *prayer* for grace to enable him to do it.

III. His *profession* of duty and a *holy life*.

IV. His *concluding* acclamation and *prayer*.

I. “Thou art my portion:” Let others choose as they please, *thou* art sufficient for *me*; I ask no more.

1. And on this I resolve to be thy *obedient servant*: “I have said, that I would keep thy words.”

2. But thou knowest I am unable without thy grace to do this; therefore I must entreat thy favour: “Be merciful unto me.” There are three helps to a godly life, all which we meet here, viz.:—

1. *Determination*. This makes a man *begin* well: “I have said.”

2. *Supplication*. This makes a man *continue* well: “I entreated.”

3. *Consideration*. This makes a man, when he *errs*, come back to the way again.

II. He was ready to co-operate with grace: “I have thought on my ways.” If we be not workers with God, vain are our prayers. *Two things* are required of us: 1. *Aversion* from evil. 2. *Conversion* to good. Both must meet together.

1. *Aversion* from evil: “I thought on my ways.” But he did not rest here.

2. *Conversion* to good: “I turned my feet unto thy testimonies.”

III. And his sincerity is shown many ways:—

1. By his *readiness* and *zeal*: “I made haste, and delayed not.”

2. By his *courage* and *constancy*. Though he was *plundered*, for his adherence to God, *by the bands of the wicked*, yet he did not forget *God's law*.

3. By his *zeal* about it. He was always employed in the work; and would rather take something from his natural rest, than not gratify his hunger and thirst after righteousness: “At midnight I will rise to give thanks.”

4. By *selecting his company*. “He who walks with the lame will learn to limp:” therefore, avoiding the society of the wicked, he seeks the company of them that *fear the Lord*, and *keep his precepts*.

IV. He concludes with an *acclamation* and *prayer*.

1. “The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy.” There is not a creature that is not a partaker of thy goodness; let *me* have my portion in it.

2. “Teach me thy statutes.” That is, continue to instruct me. I need constant teaching, line upon line, and precept upon precept. Teach thou, and I will learn; and as I learn from thy teaching, I will practise by thy grace.

67 \* Before I was afflicted I went astray : but now have I kept thy word.

68 Thou art <sup>b</sup> good, and doest good ; <sup>c</sup> teach me thy statutes.

69 The proud have <sup>d</sup> forged a lie against me : but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart.

70 \* Their heart is as fat as grease ; but I <sup>f</sup> delight in thy law.

71 \* It is good for me that I have been

afflicted ; that I might learn thy statutes.

72 <sup>b</sup> The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

XXV. DAY. EVENING PRAYER.

\* YOD.

73 <sup>i</sup> Thy hands have made me and fashioned me : <sup>h</sup> give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments.

74 <sup>i</sup> They that fear thee will be glad when

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 71. Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. Hebr. xii. 11. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. cvi. l. cvii. 1. Matt. xix. 17. — <sup>c</sup> Ver. 12, 26. — <sup>d</sup> Job xiii. 4. Ps. cix. 2. — <sup>e</sup> Ps. xvii. 10. Isai. vi. 10. Acts xxviii. 27. <sup>f</sup> Ver. 35. — <sup>g</sup> Ver. 67. Hebr. xii. 10, 11. — <sup>h</sup> Ver. 127. Ps. xix. 10. Prov. viii. 10, 11, 19. — <sup>i</sup> Job x. 8. Ps. c. 3. cxxxviii. 8. cxxxix. 14. — <sup>k</sup> Ver. 34, 144. — <sup>l</sup> Ps. xxxiv. 2.

LETTER  $\omega$  TETH.—Ninth Division.

Verse 65. *Thou hast dealt well with thy servant*] Whatsoever thy word has promised, thou hast fulfilled. Every servant of God can testify that God has done him nothing but good, and therefore he can speak good of his name.

Verse 66. *Teach me good judgment and knowledge*] *תב טעם ודעת לימורי* *toḇ taam vedaath lammedeni.* Teach me (to have) a good taste and discernment. Let me see and know the importance of divine things, and give me a *relish* for them.

Verse 67. *Before I was afflicted I went astray*] Many have been humbled under affliction, and taught to know themselves and humble themselves before God, that probably without this could never have been saved : after this, they have been serious and faithful. Affliction sanctified is a great blessing ; unsanctified, it is an additional curse.

Verse 68. *Thou art good*] And because thou art good, *thou doest good* ; and because thou delightest to do good, *teach me thy statutes*.

Verse 69. *The proud have forged a lie*] The poor captives in Babylon had their conduct and motives continually misrepresented, and themselves belied and calumniated.

Verse 70. *Their heart is as fat as grease*] They are egregiously stupid ; they have fed themselves without fear ; they are become *flesh—brutalized*, and given over to vile affections, and have no kind of *spiritual relish* : but *I delight in thy law*—I have, through thy goodness, a *spiritual feeling* and a *spiritual appetite*.

Verse 71. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted*] See on ver. 67.

Verse 72. *The law of thy mouth is better*] Who can say this ? Who *prefers* the law of his God, the Christ that bought him, and the heaven to which he hopes to go, when he can live no longer upon earth, to thousands of gold and silver ? Yea, how many are there who, like Judas, *sell their Saviour* even for thirty pieces of silver ? Hear this, ye lovers of the world and of money !

As the letter  $\omega$  teth begins but few words, not forty, in the Hebrew language, there is less variety under this division than under any of the preceding.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER TETH.—Ninth Division.

The Psalmist, having been afflicted, shows,—

I. How graciously God dealt with him, in bringing him profitably through it.

II. Prays for a right judgment and knowledge.

III. Expresses his love to God's law, and the value he set upon it.

I. The Psalmist gives thanks for mercy granted in affliction.

1. "Thou hast dealt graciously with thy servant." Graciously in afflicting him, and graciously in relieving him.

2. And this thou hast done "according to thy word." Thou hast fulfilled thy *promise*.

II. He prays to be taught of God :—

1. "Teach me good judgment." Many judge badly ; for they think that affliction is a sign of God's displeasure. Let me have that *good judgment* that receives it as a fatherly correction from thee.

2. He asks for *science* and *knowledge*. A spiritual perception, and taste for heavenly things.

3. For this he gives his reason : "I have believed thy commandments." If we believe not God, we cannot profit by his word.

4. There is something remarkable in the *manner* of asking : 1. A good or *sound judgment*. 2. *Knowledge* ; for without a *sound judgment*, *knowledge* is of no use.

III. He acknowledges that God's *chastisements* had done him good.

1. "Before I was afflicted." Prosperity is often the mother of error.

2. "Now have I kept thy word." Schola crucis, schola lucis, "The school of the cross is the school of light."

3. He acknowledges that the *good God* had done him good. To have a right notion of God is a great blessing.

IV. Much of the Psalmist's *affliction* proceeded from *wicked men*. These he describes :—

1. They were *proud*. Pride is the mother of *rebellion*, both against God and man.

2. They were *hars*. Evil speaking and calumny are the first weapons of persecutors.

3. They *forged* these lies ; they invented them. There was none *ready* to their hand, so they framed some to serve their purpose.

see me; because <sup>a</sup> I have hoped in thy word.

75 I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are <sup>b</sup> right, and <sup>c</sup> that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

76 Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be <sup>d</sup> for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.

77 <sup>e</sup> Let thy tender mercies come unto me,

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 49, 147.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. righteousness.—<sup>c</sup> Hebr. xii. 10.  
<sup>d</sup> Heb. to comfort me.

that I may live: for <sup>f</sup> thy law is my delight.

78 Let the proud <sup>g</sup> be ashamed; <sup>h</sup> for they dealt perversely with me without a cause: but I will <sup>i</sup> meditate in thy precepts.

79 Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies.

80 Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed.

<sup>e</sup> Ver. 41.—<sup>f</sup> Ver. 24, 47, 174.—<sup>g</sup> Ps. xxv. 3.—<sup>h</sup> Ver. 86.—<sup>i</sup> Ver. 23.

Let it be perfect—all given up to thee, and all possessed by thee.

#### ANALYSIS OF LETTER YOD.—Tenth Division.

I. In the first place the Psalmist prays for understanding, comfort, and mercy; and uses this argument, I am thy creature: "Thy hands have fashioned me."

II. He prays for understanding: Give me heavenly light and influence.

III. He prays for this that he may learn God's commandments. This was his end.

1. He endeavours to persuade God to this by the benefit that others would receive from seeing his conversion: "They that fear thee will be glad," &c.

2. He acknowledges that, if he was at any time deserted, it was because he was unfaithful, and that it was in very faithfulness that God had corrected him; therefore God's judgments were right.

3. He prays that God's merciful kindness may be extended to him. But this prayer he would not presume to have offered, had he not been authorized and encouraged by God's word: "According to thy word." When God gives a promise, he binds himself to fulfil it.

4. He desires to be treated as a child in the heavenly family; and therefore prays for God's fatherly mercies—his bowels of compassion.

5. And he prays for them for this end, "that he may live." And here also he adds a reason why he should be heard: "Thy law is my delight."

6. He puts up another petition for his enemies, if they will take timely warning: "Let the proud be ashamed;" let them see their unprincipled conduct, and blush that they have been persecuting and calumniating innocent people.

7. He next expresses his own resolution: "I will meditate on thy statutes." Howsoever they deal with me, I will cleave unto my God.

8. He prays that he may be acknowledged by the godly: "Let them that fear thee turn unto me." God's church is a communion of saints, and to them has God so distributed his graces that one stands in need of another. Where one doubts, the light of another may solve his difficulty. One grieves; another may comfort him. One is tempted; another may uphold and restore him. This company the Psalmist would have joined to him for these ends.

9. He prays that he may be sound in the faith, for without this he could not be steady in his obedience.

4. The Psalmist opposes them with humility and truth: "I will keep thy precepts."

5. He shows more particularly their moral character: "Their heart was as fat as grease;" they were stupid, brutish, hoggish. Their god was their belly. 1. Because they abounded in wealth, they were proud. 2. Because they pampered themselves, they were stupid, and incapable of moral feeling. The fat is the least sensible part of the animal system.

V. He shows the condition of the godly.

1. They see God's hand in their afflictions.

2. They learn his statutes.

3. They prefer his word to all earthly treasures; and,

4. They persevere in this heavenly disposition, because they continue to depend on God.

#### LETTER YOD.—Tenth Division.

Verse 73. Thy hands have made me] Thou hast formed the mass out of which I was made; and fashioned me—thou hast given me that particular form that distinguishes me from all thy other creatures.

Give me understanding] As thou hast raised me above the beasts that perish in my form and mode of life, teach me that I may live for a higher and nobler end, in loving, serving, and enjoying thee for ever. Show me that I was made for heaven, not for earth.

Verse 74. They that fear thee] They who are truly religious will be glad—will rejoice, at this farther proof of the saving power of God.

Verse 75. I know—that thy judgments are right] All the dispensations of thy providence are laid in wisdom, and executed in mercy: let me see that it is through this wisdom and mercy that I have been afflicted.

Verse 76. Thy merciful kindness] Let me derive my comfort and happiness from a diffusion of thy love and mercy, חסדך chasdecha, thy exuberant goodness, through my soul.

Verse 77. Let thy tender mercies] רחמיך rachameycha, thy fatherly and affectionate feelings.

Verse 78. Let the proud be ashamed] To reduce a proud man to shame, is to humble him indeed. Let him be confounded. Without cause—without any colourable pretext, have they persecuted me.

Verse 79. Let those that fear thee] The truly pious. Turn unto me] Seeing thy work upon me, they shall acknowledge me as a brand plucked from the burning.

Verse 80. Let my heart be sound in thy statutes]

▷ CAPH.

81 <sup>a</sup> My soul fainteth for thy salvation: *but* <sup>b</sup> I hope in thy word.

82 <sup>c</sup> Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?

83 For <sup>d</sup> I am become like a bottle in the smoke; *yet* do I not forget thy statutes.

84 <sup>e</sup> How many *are* the days of thy servant? <sup>f</sup> when wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?

85 <sup>g</sup> The proud have digged pits for me, which *are* not after thy law.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. lxxiii. 26. lxxxiv. 2.—<sup>b</sup> Ver. 74, 114.—<sup>c</sup> Ver. 123. Ps. lxxix. 3.—<sup>d</sup> Job xxx. 30.—<sup>e</sup> Ps. xxxix. 4.—<sup>f</sup> Rev. vi. 10.—<sup>g</sup> Ps. xxxv. 7. Prov. xvi. 27.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. *faithful-*

Though an *orthodox creed* does not constitute true religion, yet it is the basis of it, and it is a great blessing to have it; and *soundness of mind* is a strong help to the retention of a sound creed.

Finally, he shows the *end* for which he desires this blessing, that "he may not be ashamed." That he may continue sincere and upright, have dominion over all sin, give no place to secret iniquities, and that he may never be put to the blush before God or man. Reader, beg of God to enable *thee* to lay these things profitably to heart.

LETTER ▷ CAPH.—*Eleventh Division.*

Verse 81. *My soul fainteth for thy salvation*] I have longed so incessantly after *thy salvation*—the complete purification and restoration of my soul, that my very spirits are exhausted.

'My heartstrings groan with deep complaint;  
My soul lies panting, Lord, for thee;  
And every limb and every joint  
Stretches for perfect purity.'

Verse 82. *Mine eyes fail*] With *looking up* for the fulfilment of thy promise, as my heart fails in longing after thy presence.

Verse 83. *Like a bottle in the smoke*] In the eastern countries their *bottles* are made of *skins*; one of these hung in the smoke must soon be *parched* and *shrivelled up*. This represents the exhausted state of his body and mind by long bodily affliction and mental distress.

Verse 84. *How many are the days of thy servant?*] Dost thou not know that I have few to live, and they are full of trouble?

*When wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?*] Shall not the pride of the Chaldeans be brought down, the arm of their strength broken, and thy people delivered? In this verse there is none of the *ten* words used in reference to God's law.

Verse 85. *The proud have digged pits*] The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic* translate this verse thus: "They have recited to me unholy fables, which are not according to thy law." They wish us to receive their *system of idolatry*, and the *tales* concerning their *gods*; but these *are not according to thy*

86 All thy commandments *are* <sup>b</sup> faithful: <sup>i</sup> they persecute me <sup>k</sup> wrongfully; help thou me.

87 They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsook not thy precepts.

88 <sup>l</sup> Quicken me after thy loving-kindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.

▷ LAMED.

89 <sup>m</sup> For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

90 Thy faithfulness *is* <sup>n</sup> unto all genera-

*ness.*—<sup>l</sup> Ver. 78.—<sup>k</sup> Ps. xxxv. 19. xxxviii. 19.—<sup>i</sup> Ver. 40.—<sup>m</sup> Ps. lxxxix. 2. Matt. xxiv. 34, 35. 1 Pet. i. 25. <sup>n</sup> Heb. *to generation and generation.* Ps. lxxxix. 1.

*law.* The *Anglo-Saxon* is the same: Ði cyðon me þa unripcira gpellunga ac na gpa gpa æ þin; *They quothed me the unrightwise spells; but no so so law thine.*

Verse 87. *They had almost consumed me*] Had it not been for thy mercy, we had all been destroyed under this oppressive captivity.

Verse 88. *Quicken me*] Make and keep me *alive*.

*So shall I keep*] Without the *spiritual life* there is no *obedience*; we must therefore rise from the *dead*, and be *quicken*ed by the Spirit of Christ.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER CAPH.—*Eleventh Division.*

I. In this section the Psalmist laments his being grieved with some inward anguish.

II. Complains of his enemies.

III. Expresses his hope and constancy; and,

IV. Prays to God for comfort and grace.

1. He begins with a sad complaint: "My soul fainteth." As the body will fail if it want natural food, so will the soul if it get not the bread of life.

2. His eyes also failed with *looking up*. The blessing was long delayed.

3. Yet *he hoped in God's word*. He knew that it would not fail.

4. He made complaint: "When wilt thou comfort me?"

5. His state was most deplorable; his body *dried* and *shrivelled up* through long *fasting* and *affliction*, so that it resembled a leathern bottle hung up in the smoke.

6. Yet still he continued faithful: "I do not forget thy statutes."

II. He complains against his enemies.

1. How long he should be obliged to suffer them.

2. He inquires "when the Lord will execute judgments."

He describes these enemies from their *qualities* :—

1. They were *proud*. They would not bow down to nor acknowledge God.

2. They were *treacherous*. They *digged pits* for *him*—used every kind of means in order to destroy him; cruel, treacherous, and cowardly.

3. They were *impious*. In heart and conduct they were not "according to God's law."

tions: thou hast established the earth, and it  
abideth.

91 They continue this day according to  
thy ordinances: for all are thy servants.

92 Unless thy law had been my delights, I  
should then have perished in mine affliction.

93 I will never forget thy precepts: for  
with them thou hast quickened me.

94 I am thine, save me; for I have sought  
thy precepts.

95 The wicked have waited for me to de-

stroy me: but I will consider thy testimonies.

96 I have seen an end of all perfection:  
but thy commandment is exceeding broad.

MEM.

97 O how love I thy law! it is my medi-  
tation all the day.

98 Thou through thy commandments hast  
made me wiser than mine enemies: for they  
are ever with me.

99 I have more understanding than all my

<sup>a</sup> Heb. standeth.—<sup>b</sup> Jer. xxxiii. 25.—<sup>c</sup> Ver. 24.  
<sup>d</sup> Matt. v. 18. xxiv. 35.

<sup>e</sup> Ps. i. 2.—<sup>f</sup> Deut. iv. 6, 8.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. it is ever with me.

4. They acted without a shadow of justice; wrong-  
fully against law and justice.

III. He prays for succour: "Help thou me." Here  
are three things of especial note: 1. O THOU, who art  
infinite. 2. Help; for thou hast all power in heaven  
and in earth. 3. Me, who cannot stand against my  
enemies; but "I trust in thee."

IV. 1. He closes with a frequent petition:  
"Quicken thou me—make me alive." All true reli-  
gion consists in the LIFE of God in the SOUL of man.

2. The manner in which he wishes to be quickened:  
"After thy loving-kindness." He wishes not to be  
raised from the death of sin by God's thunder, but  
by the loving voice of a tender Father.

3. The effect it should have upon him: "So shall I  
keep the testimony of thy mouth." Whatever thou  
speakest I will hear, receive, love, and obey.

LETTER LAMED.—Twelfth Division.

Verse 89. For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in  
heaven.] Thy purposes are all settled above, and they  
shall all be fulfilled below.

Verse 90. Thy faithfulness] That which binds thee  
to accomplish the promise made. And this shall be,  
not for an age merely, but from generation to gene-  
ration; for thy promises refer to the whole duration  
of time.

Thou hast established the earth] Thou hast given it  
its appointed place in the system, and there it abideth.

Verse 91. They continue this day] This verse  
should be thus read: All are thy servants; therefore,  
they continue this day according to thy ordinances.  
"All the celestial bodies are governed by thy power.  
Thou hast given an ordinance or appointment to  
each, and each fulfils thy will in the place thou hast  
assigned it."

Verse 92. Unless thy law had been my delights]  
Had we not had the consolations of religion, we  
should long ago have died of a broken heart.

Verse 93. I will never forget thy precepts] How  
can I? It is by them I live.

Verse 94. I am thine, save me] He who can say  
this need fear no evil. In all trials, temptations, dan-  
gers, afflictions, persecutions, I am thine. Thy ene-  
mies wish to destroy me! Lord, look to thy servant;  
thy servant looks to thee. O how sovereign is such

a word against all the evils of life! I am THINE!  
therefore save thine OWN!

Verse 96. I have seen an end of all perfection]  
Literally, "Of all consummations I have seen the  
end:" as if one should say, Every thing of human  
origin has its limits and end, howsoever extensive,  
noble, and excellent. All arts and sciences, languages,  
inventions, have their respective principles, have their  
limits and end; as they came from man, and relate  
to man, they shall end with man: but thy law, thy  
revelation, which is a picture of thy own mind, an  
external manifestation of thy own perfections, con-  
ceived in thy infinite ideas, in reference to eternal  
objects, is exceeding broad; transcends the limits of  
creation; and extends illimitably into eternity! This  
has been explained as if it meant: All the real or  
pretended perfection that men can arrive at in this  
life is nothing when compared with what the law of  
God requires. This saying is false in itself, and is no  
meaning of the text. Whatever God requires of man  
he can, by his grace, work in man.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER LAMED.—Twelfth Division.

This section contains an encomium of the WORD of  
God; of its perfection and immutability; and of the  
comfort the Psalmist received from it.

I. In the three first verses the Psalmist shows that  
God's word is immutable, by an instance in the crea-  
tures.

1. In the HEAVENS. They continue to this day as  
he made them in the beginning.

2. In the EARTH. As it was established in the be-  
ginning, so it abideth.

3. So also of the other heavenly bodies. They also  
abide as they were created; and answer still, most  
exactly, the ends for which they were made.

4. The reason of which is, "All are God's ser-  
vants," made to obey his will: and from obedience  
they never swerve.

II. He shows the excellence of this word by a rare  
effect it had on himself: "Unless thy law had been  
my delight, I should have perished." No such com-  
fort in trouble as God's word and promise. This he  
remembers with gratitude.

1. "I will never forget thy precepts." Only those  
forget them who reap no good from them.



teachers : \* for thy testimonies *are* my meditation.

100 <sup>b</sup> I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.

101 I have <sup>c</sup>refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

\* 2 Tim. iii. 15. — <sup>b</sup> Job xxxii. 7, 8, 9. — <sup>c</sup> Prov. i. 15.

2. This word had *quicken*ed him, i. e., God speaking and working by that word.

3. He will therefore be the *Lord's servant* for ever: "I am thine."

4. He knows he cannot continue so but by *divine help*: "Save me!"

5. He shows his love to God's word: "He seeks his precepts," that he may obey them.

III. He needed the help of God, because he had *inveterate enemies*. These he describes:

1. By their *diligence*: "The wicked have waited for me."

2. By their *cruelty*: "They waited to destroy me." His *defence* against them. I will consider, עֲבָדָה אֶתְבוֹנֵן, *etkbonen*, I will set myself to consider. I will use all proper means to enable me to understand them.

IV. Having shown the perfection of God's word,—

1. In *establishing* and *upholding* the *frame of the world*.

2. In bringing comfort to the soul. In the close,

3. He compares it to all other things which we esteem as *excellent* and *perfect*,—*riches, honours, crowns, sceptres, kingdoms, &c.*, over which the word of God has still the pre-eminence; they perish, but it endures for ever: "I have seen an end of all perfection." Jonah's *gourd* was smitten by a *worm*; the *golden head* had *feet of clay*; the most *beautiful form* shall dissolve into *dust*; *Babylon*, the wonder of the world, has *perished* from the face of the earth; the fairest day is succeeded by *midnight*; and so of other things: "but the commandment is exceeding broad:" all the principles of justice are contained in it; no just notion of God without it; all the rules of a holy life, and all the promises of life eternal, are found in it. It is the word of God, and it endureth for ever. When the heavens and the earth are no more, this word shall stand up and flourish.

#### LETTER D MEM.—Thirteenth Division.

Verse 97. *O how love I thy law*] This is one of the strongest marks of a gracious and pious heart, cast in the mould of obedience. Such love the precepts of Christ: in his commandments they delight; and this delight is shown by their making them frequent subjects of their *meditation*.

Verse 98. *Wiser than mine enemies*] Some have thought that this psalm was composed by *Daniel*, and that he speaks of himself in these verses. Being instructed by God, he was found to have more *knowledge* than any of the Chaldeans, magicians, soothsayers, &c., &c.; and his wisdom soon appeared to the whole nation vastly superior to theirs.

Verse 99. *I have more understanding than all my*  
2340

102 I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me.

103 <sup>d</sup> How sweet are thy words unto my <sup>e</sup> taste! *yea, sweeter* than honey to my mouth!

104 Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore <sup>f</sup> I hate every false way.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. xix. 10. Prov. viii. 11. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. *palate*. — <sup>f</sup> Ver. 128.

*teachers*] As he had entered into the spiritual nature of the law of God, and saw into the exceeding breadth of the commandment, he soon became wiser than any of the *priests* or even *prophets* who instructed him.

Verse 100. *I understand more than the ancients*] God had revealed to him more of that *hidden wisdom* which was in his law than he had done to any of his predecessors. And this was most literally true of *David*, who spoke more fully about *Christ* than any who had gone before him; or, indeed, followed after him. His compositions are, I had almost said, a *sublime gospel*.

Verse 101. *I have refrained my feet*] By avoiding all sin, the spirit of wisdom still continues to rest upon me.

Verse 103. *Sweeter than honey to my mouth!*] What deep communion must this man have had with his Maker! These expressions show a soul filled with God. O Christians, how vastly *superior* are our privileges! and, alas! how vastly *inferior*, in general, are our consolations, our communion with God, and our heavenly-mindedness!

Verse 104. *Through thy precepts I get understanding*] Spiritual knowledge increases while we tread in the path of *obedience*. Obedience is the grand means of *growth* and *instruction*. Obedience trades with the talent of grace, and thus grace becomes multiplied.

#### ANALYSIS OF LETTER MEM.—Thirteenth Division.

In this division we see,—

I. The affection of the Psalmist to the law of God.

II. The great benefits he derived from it.

I. 1. "O how I love thy law." God alone knows how great that love is which I feel.

2. As true love always seeks opportunities of conversing with the beloved object, the Psalmist shows his in *meditation* on God's law by day and night.

He gives us several *encomiums* on God's word:—

1. The *wisdom* he derived from it. It made him *wiser than his enemies*. It taught him how to conduct himself towards them, so as to disappoint many of their plans, and always insure his own peace.

2. It made him *wiser than his teachers*. Many, even of the *Jewish teachers*, took upon them to *teach* that to others which they had *never learned* themselves. He must have been wiser than these. Many in the present day take upon themselves the character of *ministers of Jesus Christ*, who have never felt his gospel to be the power of God to their salvation. A simple woman, who is converted to God, and feels the *witness of his Spirit* that she is his child, has a *thousand times* more true wisdom than such per-

XXVI. DAY. MORNING PRAYER.

J NUN.

105 <sup>a</sup> Thy word *is* a <sup>b</sup> lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

106 <sup>c</sup> I have sworn, and I will perform *it*, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.

107 I am afflicted very much : <sup>d</sup> "quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word.

108 Accept, I beseech thee, <sup>e</sup> the freewill-offerings of my mouth, O LORD, <sup>f</sup> and teach me thy judgments.

109 <sup>g</sup> My soul *is* continually in my hand : yet do I not forget thy law.

110 <sup>h</sup> The wicked have laid a snare for me : yet <sup>i</sup> I erred not from thy precepts.

<sup>a</sup> Prov. vi. 23. — <sup>b</sup> Or, *candle*. — <sup>c</sup> Neh. x. 29. — <sup>d</sup> Ver. 88. — <sup>e</sup> Hos. xiv. 2. Hebr. xiii. 15. — <sup>f</sup> Ver. 12, 26. — <sup>g</sup> Job xiii. 14. — <sup>h</sup> Ps. cxl. 5. cxli. 9. — <sup>i</sup> Ver. 10, 21.

sons, though they may have learned many languages and many sciences.

3. It made him *wiser than the ancients*—than any of the *Jewish elders*, who had not made that word the subject of their deep study and meditation.

A *second encomium*. God's word *gives power* over sin : "I have refrained:" and the Psalmist was no *speculatist* ; he was in every respect a *practical man*.

A *third encomium* is, the more a man resists evil forbidden by that law, and practises righteousness commanded by it, the stronger he grows. The Psalmist *refrained from every evil way*, that he might keep God's word.

Lest any one should think that he pretends to have acquired all these excellencies by his own *study* and *industry*, he asserts that he had nothing but what he had received : "I have not departed," &c. ; "for THOU hast taught me."

A *fourth encomium* is, that God's law gives indescribable *happiness* to them who love and obey it : "How sweet are thy words," &c.

II. In the last verse he proves all that he said by the blessed effects of God's word upon himself.

1. He got *understanding* by it. He became learned, wise, and prudent.

2. He was enabled to *hate every false way*—false religion, lying vanities, empty pleasures ; and every thing that did not tend to and prepare for an eternity of blessedness.

LETTER J NUN.—Fourteenth Division.

Verse 105. *Thy word is a lamp*] This is illustrated thus by Solomon, Prov. vi. 23 : "The *commandment is a lamp* ; and the law is light ; and *reproofs of instruction are the way of life*." God's word is a *candle* which may be held in the hand to give us light in every *dark place* and *chamber* ; and it is a *general light* shining upon all *his works*, and upon all *our ways*.

Verse 106. *I have sworn*] Perhaps this means no more than that he had renewed his *covenant* with God ; he had *bound* himself to love and serve him only.

111 <sup>k</sup> Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever : for <sup>l</sup> they *are* the rejoicing of my heart.

112 I have inclined mine heart <sup>m</sup> to perform thy statutes alway, <sup>n</sup> *even unto* the end.

D SAMECH.

113 I hate *vain* thoughts : but thy law do I love.

114 <sup>o</sup> Thou *art* my hiding place and my shield : <sup>p</sup> I hope in thy word.

115 <sup>q</sup> Depart from me, ye evildoers : for I will keep the commandments of my God.

116 Uphold me according unto thy word,

<sup>k</sup> Dent. xxxiii. 4. — <sup>l</sup> Ver. 77, 92, 174. — <sup>m</sup> Heb. *to do*. — <sup>n</sup> Ver. 33. — <sup>o</sup> Ps. xxxii. 7. xci. 1. — <sup>p</sup> Ver. 81. — <sup>q</sup> Ps. vi. 8. cxxxix. 19. Matt. vii. 23.

Verse 107. *I am afflicted very much*] אדמועד *ad'meod*, "to extremity, excessively." We are in the most oppressive captivity.

*Quicken me*] Deliver us from our bondage.

Verse 108. *The freewill-offerings of my mouth*] נדבותי *nidboth pi*, the *voluntary offerings which I have promised*. Or, As we are in *captivity*, and cannot sacrifice to thee, but *would if we could* ; accept the *praises of our mouth*, and the *purposes of our hearts*, instead of the sacrifices and offerings which we *would bring* to thy altar, but *cannot*.

Verse 109. *My soul is continually in my hand*] נפשי *naphshi*, *my life* ; that is, it is in *constant danger* ; every hour I am on the confines of death. The expression signifies to be in *continual danger*. So *Xenarchus*, in *Athenæus*, lib. xiii., c. 4 : Εν τη χειρι την ψυχην εχοντα "having the life in the hand ;" which signifies continual danger and jeopardy. There is something like this in the speech of *Achilles* to *Ulysses*, *Hom. Il. ix.*, ver. 322 :

Αιει εμην ψυχην παραβαλλομενος πολεμιζειν

"Always presenting my life to the dangers of the fight."

*My soul is in thy hand*, is the reading of the *Syriac*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic* ; but this is a *conjectural* and *useless* emendation.

Verse 110. *The wicked have laid a snare*] Thus their lives were continually exposed to danger.

Verse 111. *As an heritage*] In ver. 57 he says, God is *my portion*, חלקי *chelki*. In this he says, *Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage*, נחל *nachal*. To these he was *heir* ; he had *inherited* them from his fathers, and he was determined to leave them to his *family* for ever. If a man can leave nothing to his child but a *Bible*, in that he bequeaths him the greatest treasure in the universe.

Verse 112. *I have inclined mine heart*] I used the power God gave me, and turned <sup>r</sup> to his testimonies with all mine heart. When we *work with God*, we can do *all things*.

that I may live : and let me not <sup>a</sup> be ashamed of my hope.

117 Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe : and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.

118 Thou hast trodden down all them that <sup>b</sup>err

<sup>a</sup> Ps. xxv. 2. Rom. v. 5. ix. 33. x. 11.—<sup>b</sup> Ver. 21.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER NUN.—*Fourteenth Division.*

In this division the Psalmist points out farther excellencies of God's word, in the use of it. 1. God's word was a *lamp to his feet* to guide him through every dark place. 2. It was a *light to his path*, ever showing him generally the way in which he should walk.

1. He therefore resolves to keep it, and binds himself to fulfil his resolution. As the lamp was going before, and the light was shining, it was necessary that he should walk while the light shone. He therefore, 1. Binds himself by an *oath* or *vow* : "I have sworn." 2. He will be *faithful* to his oath : "I will perform it." 3. Not merely to admire, but to *keep* God's word. 4. Not its *promises* merely, but its *righteous judgments*.

2. And this he will do in all circumstances, even in *extreme affliction*. Then he requests *two* things from the Lord. 1. That he would "accept the freewill-offerings of his mouth." All his praises, thanksgivings, and vows. 2. That he would "teach him his judgments," that he might perform what he had vowed.

3. He shows the difficulties he was in : 1. "My soul is continually in my hand." I am in continual danger. He had got the *sword of the Spirit*, and his life depended on the use he made of it : if the soldier, whose life depends on his *drawn sword*, does not use it well, his enemy kills him. 2. Hence he says, "I do not forget thy law." I am making a proper use of my sword. 3. And that I have need of it is evident, for "the wicked have laid a snare for me." 4. This did not intimidate him : he did not leave the *path of duty* for fear of a *snare* being in that path : "I erred not from thy precepts." I did not *go about* to seek a *safer* way.

4. He keeps his resolution, and vows still. 1. He preferred God's testimonies even to the land of Canaan, to riches and crowns : "I have taken them for my heritage." 2. He delighted in them : "They are the rejoicing of my heart."

5. In this work he was determined to *continue* : 1. "I have inclined my heart." The counsel of the soul is like a balance ; and the mind, which hath the commanding power over the affections, inclines the balance to that which it judges best. 2. It was to *perform* it, that he thus *inclined his heart*. 3. And this, not for a *time*, or on some *particular occasion*, but *always*, and unto the *end*. Then the *end of life* would be the *beginning of glory*.

LETTER D SAMECH.—*Fifteenth Division.*

Verse 113. *I hate vain thoughts*] I have hated רשעים *seaphim*, "tumultuous, violent men." I abominate all

from thy statutes : for their deceit is falsehood.

119 Thou <sup>c</sup>puttest away all the wicked of the earth <sup>d</sup>like dross : therefore I love thy testimonies.

120 <sup>e</sup>My flesh trembleth for fear of thee ; and I am afraid of thy judgments.

<sup>c</sup> Heb. *causet to cease*.—<sup>d</sup> Ezek. xxii. 18.—<sup>e</sup> Hab. iii. 16.

*mobs and insurrections*, and troublers of the public peace.

Verse 114. *My hiding place*] My asylum.

*And my shield*] There is a time in which I may be called to *suffer in secret* ; then thou *hidest me*. There may be a time in which thou callest me to *fight* ; then thou art my *Shield* and *Protector*.

Verse 115. *Depart from me*] *Odi profanum vulgus, etarceo*, I abominate the profane, and will have no communion with them. I drive them away from my presence.

Verse 116. *Uphold me*] סמך *sammecheni*, prop me up ; give me thyself to *lean upon*.

Verse 117. *Hold thou me up*] I shall grow weary and faint in the way, if not strengthened and *supported* by thee.

*And I shall be safe*] No soul can be *safe*, unless upheld by thee.

Verse 118. *Thou hast trodden down*] All thy enemies will be finally trodden down under thy feet.

*Their deceit is falsehood.*] Their elevation is a *lie*. The wicked often become *rich* and *great*, and affect to be *happy*, but it is all *false* ; they have neither a *clean* nor *approving conscience*. Nor can they have *thy* approbation ; and, consequently, no true *blessedness*.

Verse 119. *Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross*] There is no *true metal* in them : when they are tried by the *refining fire*, they are burnt up ; they fly off in fumes, and come to no amount. There is probably an allusion here to the *scum* or *scoria* at the *surface of melting metals*, which is swept off previously to casting the metal into the mould.

*Therefore I love thy testimonies.*] *Thy testimonies* will stand ; and thy *people* will stand ; because thou who didst give the one, and who upholdest the other, art *pure, immoveable* and *eternal*.

Verse 120. *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee*] I know thou art a just and holy God : I know thou requirest truth in the inner parts. I know that thou art a Spirit, and that they who worship thee must worship thee in spirit and in truth ; and I am often *alarmed* lest I *fall short*. It is only an assurance of my interest in thy mercy that can save me from *distressing fears* and *harassing doubts*. It is our privilege to know we are in God's favour ; and it is not less so to maintain a continual filial fear of offending him. A true conception of God's justice and mercy begets reverence.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER SAMECH.—*Fifteenth Division.*

In this section the Psalmist—

I. Declares his hatred to wickedness, and his detestation of wicked men.

## Y AIN.

121 I have done judgment and justice : leave me not to mine oppressors.

122 Be <sup>a</sup>surety for thy servant for good : let not the proud oppress me.

123 <sup>b</sup>Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.

124 Deal with thy servant according unto thy mercy, and <sup>c</sup>teach me thy statutes.

<sup>a</sup>Hebr. vii. 22. — <sup>b</sup>Ver. 81, 82. — <sup>c</sup>Ver. 12. — <sup>d</sup>Ps. cxvi. 16.

II. Expresses his love to God's law.

III. Prays for grace to sustain him in the observance of it.

IV. Foretels the destruction of the wicked.

I. "I hate vain thoughts ;" not only *evil* itself, but the *thought* that leads to it.

II. 1. "Thy law do I love : " I strive to keep every affection exercised on its *proper object*.

2. This is my privilege : for thou art, 1. "My hiding-place," that public evils may not reach me ; and, 2. "My shield," to ward off the fiery darts of the wicked one.

3. To God, therefore, and his word, he would adhere in all extremities ; and would have no communion with the wicked. 1. These he would *drive away* as the pests of piety : "Depart from me." 2. Because he would "*keep* the commandments of God," while the others were bent on *breaking* them.

III. He prays for the grace of God to sustain him.

1. "Uphold me : " if thou do not, I *fall*.

2. "Hold thou me up : " for I am *falling*. One part of this prayer is against the *occurrence* of evil ; the other, against evil as *actually taking place*.

IV. He foretels the destruction of wicked men.

1. "Thou hast trodden down : " They who *tr tread thy commandments* under their feet shall be *trodden down* under thy feet. The *first* treading shall bring on the *second*.

2. They *deceive* themselves in supposing thou wilt not resent this. This is a *deception*, and a dangerous one too, for it is against the most positive declarations of thy *truth*, therefore it is *falsehood*.

3. This is most certain, for "thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross ;" they are utterly vile, and of no account in thy sight.

4. "Therefore I love thy testimonies." And for this, among other reasons, that I may avoid their *judgments*.

5. Foreseeing the *judgments* to fall on the wicked, it was necessary that he should be filled with a salutary *fear*. 1. "My flesh trembleth." Happy is he who by other men's harms learns to be wise. 2. We should work out our salvation with fear and trembling. God is *holy* and *just*, as well as *merciful* ; therefore, we should fear before him. 3. Because he saw those judgments coming on the wicked, he desired to be *established in God's holy fear*. In all cases the old proverb is true : "Too much familiarity breeds contempt."

125 <sup>d</sup>I am thy servant ; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies.

126 *It is* time for thee, LORD, to work : for they have made void thy law.

127 <sup>e</sup>Therefore I love thy commandments above gold ; yea, above fine gold.

128 Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right ; and I <sup>f</sup>hate every false way.

<sup>e</sup>Ver. 72. Ps. xix. 10. Prov. viii. 11. — <sup>f</sup>Ver. 104.

## LETTER Y AIN.—Sixteenth Division.

Verse 121. *I have done judgment and justice*] I have given the best *decision* possible on every case that came before me ; and I have endeavoured to *render* to all their *due*.

Verse 122. *Be surety for thy servant*] שׁוֹב אֲרֹב, give a pledge or token that thou wilt help me in times of necessity. Or, *Be bail for thy servant*. What a word is this ! Pledge thyself for me, that thou wilt produce me *safely* at the judgment of the great day. Then sustain and keep me blameless till the coming of Christ. Neither of these two verses has any of the *ten words* in reference to God's *law* or *attributes*. The *judgment* and the *justice* refer to the Psalmist's own conduct in ver. 121. The *hundred and twenty-second* has no word of the kind.

Verse 123. *Mine eyes fail*] See on ver. 82.

Verse 125. *I am thy servant*] See on ver. 94.

Verse 126. *It is time for thee, Lord, to work*] The *time* is fulfilled in which thou hast promised deliverance to thy people. *They*—the Babylonians, *Have made void thy law.*] They have filled up the measure of their iniquities.

Verse 127. *Therefore I love thy commandments*] I see thou wilt do all things well. I will trust in thee.

*Above gold*] מִצְהָב מְרִירָה mizzahab, more than *resplendent gold* ; gold without any stain or rust.

*Yea, above fine gold.*] וּמִפָּאֵז umippaz, *above solid gold* ; gold separated from the dross, perfectly *refined*.

Verse 128. *All thy precepts concerning all things to be right*] There are too many *supplied* words here to leave the text unsuspected. All the ancient Versions, except the *Chaldee*, seem to have omitted the second כֹּל *col*, ALL, and read the text thus : "Therefore I have walked straight in all thy precepts." I go straight on in all thy precepts, hating every false way. I neither turn to the right hand nor to the left ; the *false ways* are *crooked* ; *thy way* is *straight*. I am going to heaven, and that way lies *straight before me*. To walk in the way of *falsety* I cannot, because I *hate* it ; and I hate such ways, because God hates them.

## ANALYSIS OF LETTER AIN.—Sixteenth Division.

In this part the Psalmist,

I. Makes a profession of his integrity.

II. Prays for protection against his enemies.

III. Resolves to walk in the right way.

I. He makes a profession of his integrity :

## D PE.

129 Thy testimonies *are* wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

130 The entrance of thy words giveth light; \*it giveth understanding unto the simple.

131 I opened my mouth, and panted: for I <sup>b</sup>longed for thy commandments.

132 <sup>c</sup>Look thou upon me; and be merciful unto me, <sup>d</sup>as <sup>e</sup>thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

133 <sup>f</sup>Order my steps in thy word: and <sup>g</sup>let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. xix. 7. Prov. i. 4.—<sup>b</sup> Ver. 20.—<sup>c</sup> I s. cvi. 4. <sup>d</sup> 2 Thess. i. 6, 7.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. according to the custom toward those, &c.—<sup>f</sup> Ps. xvii. 5.—<sup>g</sup> Ps. xix. 13. Rom. vi. 12. <sup>h</sup> Luke i. 74.—<sup>i</sup> Ps. iv. 6.—<sup>k</sup> Ver. 12, 26.—<sup>l</sup> Jer. ix. 1.

1. "I have done judgment and justice."

2. Though he had done so, yet he was not free from calumny and oppression. He commends, therefore, his righteous cause to God: "Leave me not to mine oppressors."

3. "Be surety for thy servant:" give me an assurance that thou wilt stand by me.

4. "Let not the proud oppress me." For miserable are the destitute when they fall into such hands.

II. He shows us how he had prayed against his enemies, and for God's salvation.

"Mine eyes fail." My faith is almost gone, and the eye of my mind become dim.

2. It was the *salvation* of God he had in view: "For thy salvation."

3. The ground on which he prayed was *the word of God's righteousness*.

He proceeds in his prayer; and begs God to deal with him as a needy *servant*, and also an *ignorant scholar*.

1. "Deal with thy servant." I am ready to do thy will; but treat me in thy *mercy*.

2. "Teach me thy statutes." I wish to learn what thy will is; and when I know it, faithfully to do it.

He urges the same request, with nearly the same reasons for it: "I am thy servant." I am no *stranger* to thee. I have frequently come to thee to get grace to enable me to serve thee. I am one of thy domestics, a member of thy church.

He comes now with his complaint.

1. "It is time for thee to work." Thy *enemies* are strong, and thy *people* weak.

2. "They have made void thy law." They have entirely trampled it under foot.

III. The zeal of the Psalmist increased as the love of many waxed cold.

1. "Therefore," because they despise thy word, ordinances, and people.

2. "I love thy commandments." As they hate, so I love. When we love God's commandments, it is a sign that we have not received the grace of God in vain.

3. To show the greatness of his love, he says, I love thy commandments "above gold; yea, above

134 <sup>h</sup> Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.

135 <sup>i</sup> Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and <sup>k</sup> teach me thy statutes.

136 <sup>l</sup> Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

## S TSADDI.

137 <sup>m</sup> Righteous *art* thou, O LORD, and upright *are* thy judgments.

138 <sup>n</sup> Thy testimonies *that* thou hast commanded *are* <sup>o</sup> righteous and very <sup>p</sup> faithful.

xiv. 17. See Ezek. ix. 4.—<sup>m</sup> Ezra ix. 15. Neh. ix. 33. Jer. xii. 1. Dan. ix. 7.—<sup>n</sup> Ps. xix. 7, 8, 9.—<sup>o</sup> Heb. righteousness.—<sup>p</sup> Heb. faithfulness.

fine gold." My love is greater to thy *law*, than that of the miser is to his bags.

4. He received all God's precepts to be right; and he takes not some, but the whole of them.

5. Whatever gain *idolatry* and *time-serving* might hold out to him, he abominated it, because he *hated every false way*. His love of God, his law, and holiness, was greater than his love of life.

## LETTER D PE.—Seventeenth Division.

Verse 129. *Thy testimonies are wonderful*] There is a height, length, depth, and breadth in thy word and testimonies that are truly astonishing; and on this account my soul loves them, and I deeply study them. The more I study, the more light and salvation I obtain.

Verse 130. *The entrance of thy words giveth light*] *פתח* *petlach*, the *opening* of it: when I open my Bible to read, light springs up in my mind. Every sermon, every prayer, every act of faith, is an *opening* by which light is let into the seeking soul.

Verse 131. *I opened my mouth, and panted*] A metaphor taken from an animal exhausted in the chase. He runs, open-mouthed, to take in the cooling air; the heart beating high, and the muscular force nearly expended through fatigue. The Psalmist sought for salvation, as he would run from a ferocious beast for his life. Nothing can show his earnestness in a stronger point of view.

Verse 132. *As thou usest to do*] Treat me as thy mercy has induced thee to treat others in my circumstances. Deal with me as thou dealest with thy *friends*.

Verse 133. *Order my steps*] *הכן* *hachen*, make them *firm*; let me not walk with a halting or unsteady step.

*Have dominion over me.*] *בי* *bi*, in me. Let me have no governor but God; let the throne of my heart be filled by him, and none other.

Verse 135. *Make thy face to shine*] Give me a sense of thy approbation. Let me know, by the testimony of thy Spirit in my conscience, that thou art reconciled to me. The godly in all ages derived their happiness from a consciousness of the divine

139 <sup>a</sup> My zeal hath <sup>b</sup> consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words.

140 Thy word *is* very <sup>d</sup> pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. lxix. 9. John ii. 17. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. *cut me off*. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. xii. 6. xviii. 30. xix. 8. Prov. xxx. 5.

favour. The witness of God's Spirit in the souls of believers was an essential principle in religion from the foundation of the world.

Verse 136. *Rivers of waters run down mine eyes*] How much had this blessed man the honour of God and the salvation of souls at heart! O for more of that spirit which mourns for the transgressions of the land! But we are not properly convinced of the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER PE.—*Seventeenth Division.*

In this division the Psalmist—

- I. Praises God's word.
- II. Shows his affection to it.
- III. Prays for grace to keep it.
- IV. Mourns for those who do not.

I. The eulogy he gives to God's word here is from a *new quality* not mentioned before. "Thy testimonies are wonderful;" wondrous mysteries are contained in the divine oracles.

1. The *ceremonial* law is wonderful, because the mystery of our redemption by the blood of Christ is pointed out in it.

2. The *prophecies* are wonderful, as predicting things, humanly speaking, so uncertain, and at such great distance of time, with so much accuracy.

3. The *decalogue* is wonderful, as containing in a very few words all the principles of justice and charity.

4. Were we to go to the *New Testament*, here wonders rise on wonders! All is astonishing; but the Psalmist could not have had this in view.

The second eulogy is, that God's law is *the dispenser of light*.

1. The entrance of it, the first chapter of Genesis; what light does that pour on the mind of man! What knowledge of the most important things, which we should never have known without it!

2. *It gives light to the simple*—to those who are not *double*; who have but *one end* in view, and one aim to that end.

3. Of those *simple ones* or *babes* our Lord speaks, Matt. xi. 25, and St. Paul, 1 Cor. i. 25, 26, &c.

II. The Psalmist shows that he was one of those *simple ones*.

1. "He opened his mouth" by prayer, and sought the spirit of light and piety.

2. He *panted* after it as men do that want breath, and are longing to get fresh air

3. And this he did because "he longed for God's commandments;" had a vehement desire to know and to keep them.

III. He now betakes himself to prayer, and acquaints us with the petitions he had offered.

1. He said, "Look upon me." Consider thy poor, dependant, helpless creature.

141 *I am* small and despised: yet do not I forget thy precepts.

142 Thy righteousness *is* an everlasting righteousness, and thy law *is* <sup>e</sup> the truth.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. *tried or refined*. — <sup>e</sup> Ver. 151. Ps. xix. 9. John xvii. 17.

2. "Have mercy upon me." Look, not with the indignation which I deserve, but with the mercy which thou knowest I need.

3. "As thou usest to do." Act by me as thou dost by them *that* love thee.

4. "Order my steps." Give me grace to be obedient. Many look for *mercy to pardon their sin*, but do not look for *grace to enable them to be obedient*.

5. "Let not any iniquity have dominion over me." Let me be saved from all my spiritual captivity.

6. "Deliver me from the oppression of men." Let neither wicked men nor wicked spirits rule over me.

7. "Make thy face to shine upon me!" Let me have thy light, thy peace, and thy *approbation*.

8. "And teach me thy statutes." Keep me at thy feet, under continual instruction.

IV. He concludes by telling how he grieved for the wickedness of others and the dishonour of God. If we grieve not for others, their sin may become ours. See Ezek. ix. 8, 1 Cor. v. 2.

LETTER Y TSADDI.—*Eighteenth Division.*

Verse 137. *Righteous art thou*] Thou art infinitely holy in thy nature; and therefore thou art *upright in thy judgments*—all thy dispensations to men.

Verse 138. *Thy testimonies*] Every thing that proceeds from thee partakes of the perfections of thy nature.

Verse 139. *My zeal hath consumed me*] My earnest desire to promote thy glory, and the pain I feel at seeing transgressions multiplied, have worn down both my flesh and spirits.

Verse 140. *Thy word is very pure*] צרופה *tseruphah*, it is *purification*. It is not a *purified thing*, but a *thing that purifies*. "Now ye are *clean*," said Christ, "by the word I have spoken unto you." God's word is a *fire to purify* as well as a *hammer to break*.

Verse 141. *I am small and despised*] And on these accounts have every thing to *fear*. Being *small*, I cannot *resist*; being *despised*, I am in *danger*; but even all this does not induce me to start aside, or through the fear of man to be unfaithful to thee.

Verse 142. *Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness*] The word צדק *tsedek* is a word of very extensive meaning in the Bible. It signifies, not only God's inherent righteousness and perfection of nature, but also his method of treating others; his plan of redemption; *his method of saving others*. And the word δικαιοσύνη, which answers to it, in the *Septuagint* and in the *New Testament*, is used with the same latitude of meaning, and in the same sense; particularly in that remarkable passage Rom. iii. 25, 26, where see the notes. Thy merciful method of dealing with sinners and justifying the ungodly will

143 Trouble and anguish have <sup>a</sup> taken hold on me: yet thy commandments are <sup>b</sup> my delights.

144 The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting: <sup>c</sup> give me understanding, and I shall live.

XXVI. DAY. EVENING PRAYER.

Ps KOPH.

145 I cried with my whole heart; hear me, O LORD: I will keep thy statutes.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. found me.—<sup>b</sup> Ver. 77.—<sup>c</sup> Ver. 34, 73, 169.—<sup>d</sup> Or, that I may keep

146 I cried unto thee; save me, <sup>d</sup> and I shall keep thy testimonies.

147 <sup>e</sup> I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: 'I hoped in thy word.

148 <sup>f</sup> Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word.

149 Hear my voice according unto thy loving-kindness: O LORD, <sup>g</sup> quicken me according to thy judgment.

150 They draw nigh that follow after mischief: they are far from thy law.

<sup>e</sup> Ps. v. 3. lxxxviii. 13. cxxx. 6.—<sup>f</sup> Ver. 74.—<sup>g</sup> Ps. lxxii. i. 6.—<sup>h</sup> Ver. 40, 154.

last as long as the earth lasts; and thy law that witnesses this, in all its pages, is the truth.

Verse 143. *Trouble and anguish*] I am exercised with various trials from men and devils.

*Have taken hold on me*] But still I cleave to my God, and am delighted with his law.

Verse 144. *The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting*] Thy moral law was not made for one people, or for one particular time; it is as imperishable as thy nature, and of endless obligation. It is that law by which all the children of Adam shall be judged.

*Give me understanding*] To know and practise it.

*And I shall live.*] Shall glorify thee, and live eternally; not for the merit of having done it, but because thou didst fulfil the work of the law in my heart, having saved me from condemnation by it.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER TSADDI.—Eighteenth Division.

In this division the Psalmist—

I. Commends the law of God, from its Author, its equity, its purity, and its perpetuity.

II. A consideration of which led him to love and delight in it, though opposed by many enemies.

1. "Righteous art thou." Thou alterest not with times, thou changest not with persons, thou art ever the same.

2. Thy judgments, in giving rewards and dispensing punishments, are upright.

3. Thy testimonies, that declare this, are righteous and faithful.

He consequently felt an ardent zeal for God's glory.

1. This "zeal consumed him," and he expresses the cause.

2. Men "forgot God's words." He pined away for grief on this account. He turns to another character of God's law.

"Thy word is very pure."

1. It is pure in itself, and the purifier of the heart.

2. On this account he loved it; and we know that "love is the fulfilling of the law."

A third effect was a careful remembrance of it, though tried by his enemies.

1. "I am small." Of no weight nor authority; have no secular power.

2. "Despised." Have no credit nor respect.

3. "Yet do I not forget thy precepts." Nothing

can move me while upheld by thee; and thou wilt uphold me while I cleave unto thee.

A fourth commendation of God's law is its immutability.

1. It is immutable, and can never be dispensed with. It is a righteousness that is everlasting.

2. It is the truth: 1. It has priority of all laws; 2. Contains no falsehood.

3. Its promises and threatenings shall all be punctually fulfilled.

II. He loved and delighted in it, notwithstanding he had trouble and anguish.

1. *Trouble and anguish.* The righteous are often under the cross.

2. Yet "thy commandments are my delights." While faithful to thee, all my afflictions are sanctified to me, so that I can rejoice while I suffer.

He speaks again about the immutability of God's word.

1. "The righteousness of thy testimonies." Thy word is like thyself, for it comes from thee.

2. "Give me understanding." I always stand in need of teaching.

3. "And I shall live." All is death without thee. Live in me, that I may live by thee.

LETTER Ps KOPH.—Nineteenth Division.

Verse 145. *I cried with my whole heart*] The whole soul of the Psalmist was engaged in this good work. He whose whole heart cries to God will never rise from the throne of grace without a blessing.

Verse 147. *I prevented the dawning*] קידמתי *kiddamti*, "I went before the dawn or twilight."

Verse 148. *Mine eyes prevent*] קידמי *kiddemu*, "go before the watches." Before the watchman proclaims the hour, I am awake, meditating on thy words. The Jews divided the night into three watches, which began at what we call six o'clock in the evening, and consisted each of four hours. The Romans taught them afterwards to divide it into four watches of three hours each; and to divide the day and night into twelve hours each, wherein different guards of soldiers were appointed to watch. At the proclaiming of each watch the Psalmist appears to have risen and performed some act of devotion. For a remarkable custom of our Saxon ancestors, see the note on ver. 164.

151 Thou art <sup>a</sup> near, O LORD; <sup>b</sup> and all thy commandments are truth.

152 Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them <sup>c</sup> for ever.

7 RESH.

153 <sup>d</sup> Consider mine affliction, and deliver me: for I do not forget thy law.

154 <sup>e</sup> Plead my cause, and deliver me: <sup>f</sup> quicken me according to thy word.

155 <sup>g</sup> Salvation is far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes.

156 <sup>b</sup> Great are thy tender mercies, O LORD: <sup>h</sup> quicken me according to thy judgments.

157 Many are my persecutors and mine enemies; yet do I not <sup>i</sup> decline from thy testimonies.

158 I beheld the transgressors, and <sup>j</sup> was grieved; because they kept not thy word.

159 Consider how I love thy precepts: <sup>k</sup> quicken me, O LORD, according to thy loving-kindness.

160 <sup>n</sup> Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. cxlv. 18.—<sup>b</sup> Ver. 86, 143, 172.—<sup>c</sup> Luke xxi. 33. <sup>d</sup> Ps. ix. 13. Lam. v. 1.—<sup>e</sup> 1 Sam. xxiv. 15. Ps. xxxv. 1. Mic. vii. 9.—<sup>f</sup> Ver. 40.—<sup>g</sup> Job v. 4.—<sup>h</sup> Or, Many

<sup>i</sup> Ver. 149.—<sup>k</sup> Ps. xlv. 18. Ver. 51.—<sup>l</sup> Ver. 136. Ezek. ix. 4.—<sup>m</sup> Ver. 25, 37, 40, 88, 107, 149, 154, 156. Pa. cxliii. 11.—<sup>n</sup> Heb. The beginning of thy word is true.

Verse 150. They draw nigh] They are just at hand who seek to destroy me.

They are far from thy law.] They are near to all evil, but far from thee.

Verse 151. Thou art near] As they are near to destroy, so art thou near to save. When the enemy comes in as a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against him.

Verse 152. Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old] קדם ידעתי kedem yadati, "Long ago I have known concerning thy testimonies." Thou hast designed that thy testimonies should bear reference to, and evidence of, those glorious things which thou hast provided for the salvation of men; and that this should be an everlasting testimony. They continue, and Christ is come.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER KOPH.—Nineteenth Division.

I. The Psalmist is earnest in his prayers for deliverance.

II. He shows the end for which he desires it.

III. The necessity of its being speedy, as his enemies were at hand.

1. His prayer was earnest; it was a cry, rather than a petition.

2. It was sincere: "I cried with my whole heart." There was no hypocrisy in it.

3. It was in season: "I prevented the dawning of the morning."

4. It was out of season: "Mine eyes prevent the night-watches."

What he prayed for,—

1. Audience: "Hear me, O Lord."

2. Deliverance: "Save me."

3. Increase of grace: "Quicken me."

II. The end for which he prayed.

1. That he might keep God's statutes.

2. That he might keep his testimonies. See the explanation of these words at the beginning of this psalm.

3. That he might meditate on God's word.

4. That he might increase in the life of God.

The arguments he uses:—

1. His faith and hope. I cried, because I waited and hoped in thy word.

2. God's mercy. According to thy loving-kindness.

3. The danger he was in from his pursuing enemies.—1. They draw nigh. 2. They are mischievously bent. 3. They are most impious men. Far from the law of God; they despised and hated it.

III. Near as they may be to destroy, thou art nearer to save.

1. "Thou art near:" They cannot come where thou art not.

2. "All thy commandments are truth:" And thou hast commanded us to trust in thee; and therefore we shall not fear evil. Thou wilt support thy servants, and destroy thine enemies.

He concludes with an acclamation:—

1. "Concerning thy testimonies:" Thy will, which thou hast testified in thy word.

2. "I have known of old:" Ever since I looked into them, began to study and practise them.

3. "That thou hast founded them for ever:" They are of eternal truth, immutable and indispensable. And this is the anchor of our souls, that we may not be carried away by trials and temptations. Not one title of God's truth has ever failed any of his sincere followers. No one promise of his that has been sought by faith in Christ has ever been unfulfilled. Blessed be God!

LETTER 7 RESH.—Twentieth Division.

Verse 153. Consider mine affliction] See mine affliction or humiliation: but the eye of the Lord affects his heart; and therefore he never sees the distresses of his followers without considering their situation, and affording them help.

Verse 154. Plead my cause] ריבה ריבה ribah ribi. "Be my Advocate in my suit." Contend for us against the Babylonians, and bring us out of our bondage.

According to thy word.] Spoken by thy prophets for our comfort and encouragement.

Verse 155. Salvation is far from the wicked] There is no hope of their conversion.



ו SCHIN.

161 \* Princes have persecuted me without a cause : but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

\* 1 Sam. xxiv. 11, 14.

[For they seek not thy statutes.] And they who do not seek, shall not find.

Verse 156. Great are thy tender mercies] They are רבים rabbim, multitudes. They extend to all the wretchednesses of all men.

Verse 158. I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved] Literally, I was affected with anguish.

Verse 160. Thy word is true from the beginning] ראש rosh, the head or beginning of thy word, is true. Does he refer to the first word in the Book of Genesis, בראשית bereshith, "in the beginning?" The learned reader knows that ראש rash, or raash, is the root in that word. Every word thou hast spoken from the first in Bereshith (Genesis) to the end of the law and prophets, and all thou wilt yet speak, as flowing from the fountain of truth, must be true; and all shall have, in due time, their fulfilment. And all these, thy words, endure for ever. They are true, and ever will be true.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER RESH.—*Twentieth Division.*

I. 1. The Psalmist begins with a petition: "Consider my affliction."

2. Begg that God would help him: "Deliver me."

3. The reason for both: "I do not forget thy law."

4. He begs God to be his Advocate: 1. "Plead my cause." At the bar of men a just cause often miscarries for want of an able advocate, and is borne down by an unjust judge. Be thou my Advocate, and I shall not fail. 2. "Quicken me:" Revive my hopes, give new life to my soul.

II. He believes he shall be heard, because—

1. "Salvation is far from the wicked:" But he does not forget God's law.

2. "They seek not God's statutes." But he meditates in God's law day and night.

III. If he ever miscarries, or comes short, he flees to God for mercy.

1. On God's mercies he bestows two epithets: 1. They are great or many, and they endure for ever, 2. They are tender; they are misericordiæ, q. d., miseria cordis, feelings which occasion pain and distress to the heart. רחמים rachamim, such as affect and flow from the tender yearnings of the bowels. The word signifies what a mother feels for the infant that lay in her womb, and hangs on her breast.

2. He prays to be quickened. Let me not die, but live.

IV. He complains of his adversaries:—

1. They are many: Many devils, many men; many visible, more invisible.

2. Yet he continued steadfast: "I do not decline," &c.

3. They were "transgressors:" Not simple sinners, but workers of iniquity.

162 I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.

163 I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love.

xxvi. 18. Ver. 23.

4. He was greatly distressed on their account: "I beheld them, and was grieved."

V. He brings this as a proof of his attachment to God.

1. "Consider how I love:" No man dare say to God, "Look upon me," but he who is persuaded that when God looks upon him he will like him. This was a sure proof of the Psalmist's sincerity.

2. He loves not merely the blessings he receives from God, but he loves God's law; and none will love this, who does not delight in obedience. And how few are there of this character, even in the church of God!

3. And because he loves he prays to be quickened. The soul only which is spiritually alive, can obey.

VI. He concludes with a commendation of God's word.

1. "Thy word is true," in its principle and in all its details, from Adam to Moses; from Moses to Christ; from Christ to the present time; and from the present time to the end of the world.

2. For it "endures for ever:" All other things wear out or decay; lose their testimony, and become obsolete. But God will ever bear testimony to his own word, and continue to support its veracity by fulfilling it to all successive generations.

LETTER ו SCHIN.—*Twenty-first Division.*

Verse 161. Princes have persecuted me] This may refer to what was done by prime ministers, and the rulers of provinces, to sour the king against the unfortunate Jews, in order still to detain them in bondage. In reference to David, the plotting against him in Saul's court, and the dangers he ran in consequence of the jealousies of the Philistine lords while he sojourned among them, are well known.

My heart standeth in awe] They had probably offers made them of enlargement or melioration of condition, providing they submitted to some idolatrous conditions; but they knew they had to do with a jealous God; their hearts stood in awe, and they were thereby kept from sin.

Verse 162. As one that findeth great spoil.] רב רב shalal rab. This appears to refer to such spoil as is acquired by stripping the dead in a field of battle, taking the rich garments of the slain chiefs; or it may refer to plunder in general. As God opened his eyes he beheld wonders in his law; and each discovery of this kind was like finding a prize.

Verse 163. I—abhor lying] Perhaps they might have made the confessions which the Chaldeans required, and by mental reservation have kept an inward firm adherence to their creed; but this, in the sight of the God of truth, must have been lying; and at such a sacrifice they would not purchase their enlargement, even from their captivity.

- 164 Seven times a day do I praise thee, because of thy righteous judgments.
- 165 <sup>a</sup>Great peace have they which love thy law: and <sup>b</sup>nothing shall offend them.
- 166 <sup>c</sup>LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments.
- 167 My soul hath kept thy testimonies; and I love them exceedingly.
- 168 I have kept thy precepts and thy

testimonies: <sup>d</sup>for all my ways are before thee.

¶ TAU.

- 169 Let my cry come near before thee, O LORD: <sup>e</sup>give me understanding according to thy word.
- 170 Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word.

<sup>a</sup> Prov. iii. 2. <sup>b</sup> Isai. xxxii. 17. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. they shall have no stumbling-block.

<sup>c</sup> Gen. xlix. 18. Ver. 174. — <sup>d</sup> Prov. v. 21. — <sup>e</sup> Ver. 144.

Verse 164. *Seven times a day do I praise thee*] We have often seen that *seven* was a number expressing *perfection, completion, &c.*, among the Hebrews; and that it is often used to signify *many*, or an *indefinite number*, see Prov. xxiv. 16; Lev. xxvi. 28. And here it may mean no more than that his soul was filled with the spirit of gratitude and praise, and that he very frequently expressed his joyous and grateful feelings in this way. But *Rabbi Solomon* says this is to be understood literally, for they praised God *twice* in the morning before reading the decalogue, and *once* after; *twice* in the evening before the same reading, and *twice* after; making in the whole *seven* times. The Roman church has prescribed a similar service.

In a manuscript Saxon Homily, Domin. 3, in Quadrag. A. D. 971, I find the following singular directions:—

Callum Cruxtenum mannum ef beboden þ hi ealne beora licheman geofon riðum geblettrion mid Cruxtef rode tacne.

- 1. æpæt on arne morzen.
- 2. oþne riðe on undern tid.
- 3. ðriððan riðe on midne bæg.
- 4. feorðan riðe on non tid.
- 5. fiftan riðe on æfen.
- 6. gýxtan riðe on niht ær he perze
- 7. seofðan riðe on uhtan huru he hine zode be.

Every Christian man is commanded that he always bless his body seven times with the sign of Christ's cross.

- 1. First, at day-break.
- 2. Second time at undern tide (nine o'clock in the morning).
- 3. The third time at midday.
- 4. The fourth time at noon-tide (3 o'clock P. M.)
- 5. The fifth time in the evening.
- 6. The sixth time at night ere he go to rest.
- 7. The seventh time at midnight. A good man would do so if he awoke.

It seems that the *sign of the cross* was thought sufficient, even without prayer.

Verse 165. *Great peace have they*] They have peace in their conscience, and joy in the Holy Spirit; and

*Nothing shall offend*] Stumble, or put them out of the way.

Verse 166. *Lord, I have hoped*] Thou hast pro-

*missed deliverance*, and I have *expected* it on the ground of that *promise*.

Verse 167. *My soul hath kept*] I have not attended to the *letter* merely, but my spirit has entered into the spirit and design of thy testimonies.

Verse 168. *For all my ways are before thee.*] Thou knowest that I do not lie; thy eye has been upon my heart and my conduct, and thou knowest that I have endeavoured to walk before thee with a perfect heart.

ANALYSIS OF LETTER SCHIN.—*Twenty-first Division.*

In this section the Psalmist shows,—

- I. His love to God; and
- II. The ardour and perfection of that love.

I. The *first* sign of his love was, that it stood in the midst of persecution.

- 1. "Princes have persecuted."
- 2. But "without a cause," though they pretended many.

3. "But my heart standeth in awe." My love and confidence have due respect to thy infinite justice and immaculate purity.

The *second* sign of his love is the *joy and delight* he took in *God's law*; it was greater than a conqueror could feel at the fortunate issue of a battle, and the spoils of the vanquished, howsoever rich or immense.

The *third* sign was his *hatred to all iniquity*: "I hate and abhor lying."

The *fourth* sign was his fervour and earnestness in devotion: "Seven times," &c.

The *fifth* sign was the satisfaction he took in the *welfare of others*.

- 1. "Great peace have they which love thy law."
- 2. "Nothing shall offend them." They go on their way rejoicing; and they that love God *rejoice with them that do rejoice*.

II. He shows the *perfection* of his love,—

- 1. By his *hope* and *confidence*: "Lord, I have hoped," &c.
- 2. By his *obedience*: "And done thy commandments."

3. By *keeping God's testimonies* with all his soul. And this he repeats.

- 1. "I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies."
- 2. I have *done* this through the *purest motives*, as thou knowest: "For all my ways are before thee." Whatever he did he did in God's sight; for he well knew that the eye of the Lord was constantly upon him. For other particulars see the preceding notes.

171 \* My lips shall utter praise, when thou hast taught me thy statutes.

172 My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.

173 Let thine hand help me; for <sup>b</sup> I have chosen thy precepts.

\* Ver. 7.—<sup>b</sup> Josh. xxiv. 22. Prov. i. 29. Luke x. 42.  
<sup>c</sup> Ver. 166.—<sup>d</sup> Ver. 16, 24, 47, 77, 111.

LETTER TAU—*Twenty-second Division.*

Verse 169. *Let my cry come near before thee*] This is really a fine image; it is of frequent occurrence, and is little heeded. Here the Psalmist's cry for deliverance is *personified*; made an intelligent being, and sent up to the throne of grace to negotiate in his behalf. He pursues this *prosopopœia* in the next verse, and sends his *supplication* in the same way. I have already had occasion to refer to a similar figure in *Homer*, where prayers are represented as the *daughters of Jupiter*. See on Ps. lxxxviii. 2.

Verse 171. *My lips shall utter praise*] תהלה *tehillah*, a song of praise.

Verse 172. *My tongue shall speak of thy word*] There is a curious *distinction* here. In the preceding verse he says, "My lips shall utter;" here no reference is made to *articulate sounds*, except as affixed to musical notes. In *this verse* he says "My tongue shall speak;" here *articulate and intelligible words* are intended. He first utters sounds connected with words expressive of his grateful feelings; in the second he speaks words, principally those which God himself had spoken, containing promises of support, purposes relative to the redemption of his people, and denunciations against their enemies.

Verse 173. *Let thine hand help me*] Exert thy power in my defence.

Verse 175. *Let my soul live*] Let my life be preserved, and my soul quickened!

Verse 176. *I have gone astray like a lost sheep*] A sheep, when it has once lost the flock, strays in such a manner as to render the prospect of its own return utterly hopeless. I have seen them bleating when they have lost the flock, and when answered by the others, instead of turning to the *sound*, have gone on in the same direction in which they were straying, their bleatings answered by the rest of the flock, till they were out of hearing! This fact shows the propriety of the next clause.

*Seek thy servant*] I shall never find thee; come to the wilderness, take me up, and carry me to the flock. See the notes on the parable of the *lost sheep*, Luke xv. 4, &c. The Psalmist began with "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord;" and he concludes with "I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant." And thus, conscious of the blessedness of those who are in the way of righteousness, he desires to be brought into it, that he may walk in newness of life. Ver. 1: "It is a good way, and they are blessed that walk in it." Verse the *last*, "Bring me into this

174 \* I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and <sup>d</sup> thy law is my delight.

175 Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me.

176 \* I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not 'forget thy commandments.

\* Isai. liii. 6. Luke xv. 4, &c. 1 Pet. ii. 25.—<sup>c</sup> Ver. 16, 83, 93, 109, 141, 153.

way, that I may be blessed." And thus the psalm, in sentiment, returns into itself; and the *latter verse* is so connected with the *former*, as to make the whole a perfect *circle*, like the serpent biting its own tail.

There is one extraordinary perfection in this psalm: *begin* where you will, you seem to be at the commencement of the piece; *end* where you will, you seem to close with a complete *sensè*. And yet it is not like the Book of *Proverbs*, a tissue of detached sentences; it is a *whole* composed of many *parts*, and all apparently as necessary to the perfection of the psalm, as the different *alphabetical letters* under which it is arranged are to the formation of a complete alphabet. Though there be a continual recurrence of the *same words*, which would of itself prevent it from having a pleasing effect upon the ear, yet these words are so connected with a vast *variety* of others, which show their force and meaning in still new and impressive points of light, that *attention* is still excited, and *devotion* kept alive, during the whole reading. It is constructed with admirable art, and every where breathes the justest and highest encomiums on the revelation of God; shows the glories of the God who gave it, the necessities and dependence of his intelligent creatures, the bounty of the Creator, and the praise and obedience which are his due. It is elegant throughout; it is full of beauties, and I have endeavoured in the preceding notes to mark some of them; but the number might have been greatly multiplied. To no psalm can its own words be better applied, ver. 18: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

ANALYSIS OF LETTER TAU.—*Twenty-second Division.*

In this last section the Psalmist seems to sum up all his preceding exercises.

- I. He prays.
- II. Gives thanks.
- III. Confesses his errors.
- IV. Craves mercy; and,
- V. Promises obedience.

I. In the first two verses he *prays for his prayers*, begging God to accept them.

1. "Let my cry come near before thee!"
2. "Let my supplication come before thee!" This repetition shows his earnestness, fervency, importance, and perseverance. See Luke xi. 1, &c.

That for which he prays is, 1. *Understanding*;

2. *Deliverance*.

1. "Give me understanding." I want more light.

2. Give me this "according to thy word." In the measure which thou hast promised.

3. And give it to me for this *end*, that I may know by law, be obedient to its precepts, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life.

4. "Deliver me according to thy word." I want *salvation*, and that *measure* of it which thy word promises.

II. He gives thanks.

1. "My lips shall utter praise." I will celebrate thy praises with songs.

2. "My tongue shall speak." I shall set forth thy glorious deeds.

3. Shall show that all thy commandments are righteous; just, holy, impartial.

4. But these things I cannot do till "thou hast taught me thy statutes."

III. He proceeds to other parts of prayer:—

1. "Let thy hand help me." My own *strength* will avail little.

2. "I have chosen thy statutes:" and without thy help I cannot obey them.

3. "I have longed for thy salvation." Thou knowest my heart is right with thee.

4. "And thy law is my delight." A man naturally longs for that which he delights to possess.

Here he notes *three* things:—

1. I have "chosen thy precepts."

2. I have "longed for thy salvation."

3. "Delighted in thy law;" therefore "let thy hand help me."

He prays for,—

1. *Life*: "Let my soul live."

2. "And it shall praise thee." When the soul is ad to God, there is neither *gratitude* nor *obedience*.

3. "Let thy judgments help me." Cause the *merciful dispensations of thy providence* ever to work in my behalf. In this sense the word *judgments* is frequently taken in this psalm.

IV. He confesses his errors.

1. "I have gone astray," Departed from thee, my Shepherd.

2. "And like a lost sheep too." See the note.

3. My errors, however, have not been *wilful* and *obstinate*. I did not sufficiently watch and pray, and my *sheep-like simplicity* was practised upon by my arch enemy.

4. The consequence, however, has been, I am *lost*—far from thy fold. But thou didst come to seek and save that which was lost.

5. Therefore, O Lord, *seek me*. I am in the *wilderness*; leave the *ninety and nine* that do not need thee as I do, and seek me; for, by thy grace, I seek thee.

V. I look for thee in the spirit of *obedience*.

1. Seek thy *servant*. I am ready to do thy will, though I erred from thy ways.

2. "I do not forget thy commandments," though I have often come short of my duty.

These words may be very suitable to a person who has *backslidden*, and who is returning to God with a penitent and believing heart.

1. Though he had *fallen*, the light of God continued to shine into his conscience.

2. He had not *forgotten God's way*, nor lost sight of his own state. The word of the Lord, applied by his Spirit, 1. When he was slumbering; *awakened* him. 2. When he was dead, *quicken*ed him. 3. When he was in danger, *preserved* him. 4. When he was wounded, *cured* him. 5. When he was assailed by his foes, *armed* and *defended* him. 6. And by this word he was *nourished* and *supported*. It was ever well with the Psalmist, and it is ever well with all the followers of God, when *they do not forget God's word*.

It may be just necessary to note here, that if this psalm be considered as belonging to the *times of the Babylonish captivity*, which it most probably does, the Psalmist, though speaking in *his own person*, is ever to be considered as speaking in *the persons of all the captives in Babylon*.

## PSALM CXX.

The Psalmist, in great distress, calls on the Lord for deliverance from calumny and defamation, 1, 2; shows the punishment that awaits his persecutor, 3, 4; deploras the necessity of his residence with the ungodly, 5—7.

XXVII. DAY. MORNING PRAYER.

A Song of Degrees.

N<sup>a</sup> my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. cxviii. 5. Jonah iv. 2.

## NOTES ON PSALM CXX.

This psalm, and all the rest that follow it, to the end of Psalm cxxxiv., *fifteen* in number, are called *Songs of Degrees*; for thus the Hebrew title *שירי מדרגות* *shiray madaaloth* is generally translated, as coming from the root *אלה* *alah*, to ascend or mount upwards. Hence *שירי מדרגות* *shiray madaaloth*, steps or stairs for ascending, 1 Kings

2 Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.

3<sup>b</sup> What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be<sup>c</sup> done unto thee, thou false tongue?

<sup>b</sup> Or, *What shall the deceitful tongue give unto thee? or, What shall it profit thee?*—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *addeda*.

x. 19, 20, 2 Kings ix. 13. But as the word may be applied to *elevation* in general, hence some have thought that it may here signify the *elevation of voice*; "these psalms being sung with the *highest elevations of voice and music*." Others have thought the word expresses rather the *matter* of these psalms, as being of peculiar *excellence*: and hence *Junius* and *Tre-*

4 \* Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.

5 Woe is me that I sojourn in <sup>b</sup> Mesech, <sup>c</sup> that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!

\* Or, It is as the sharp arrows of the mighty man with coals of juniper. — <sup>b</sup> Gen. x. 2. Ezek. xxxvii. 13.

*mellius* prefix to each *Canticum excellentissimum*, "A most excellent ode."

R. D. Kimchi says, "There were fifteen steps by which the priests ascended into the temple, on each of which they sang one of these fifteen psalms." This opinion I find referred to in the Apocryphal Gospel of the birth of Mary: "Her parents brought her to the temple, and set her upon one of the steps. Now there are fifteen steps about the temple, by which they go up to it, according to the fifteen Psalms of Degrees." But the existence of such steps and practices cannot be proved.

Aben Ezra supposes that the word means some kind of tune sung to these psalms. It is more likely, if the title be really ancient, that it was affixed to them on account of their being sung on the return from the Babylonish captivity, as the people were going up to Jerusalem; for though some of them are attributed to David, yet it is very probable that they were all made long after his time, and probably during the captivity, or about the end of it. The author of these fifteen psalms is not known; and most probably they were not the work of one person. They have been attributed to David, to Solomon, to Ezra, to Haggai, to Zechariah, and to Malachi, without any positive evidence. They are, however, excellent in their kind, and written with much elegance; containing strong and nervous sentiments of the most exalted piety, expressed with great felicity of language in a few words.

Verse 1. *In my distress*] Through the causes afterwards mentioned.

*I cried unto the Lord*] Made strong supplication for help.

*And he heard me.*] Answered my prayer by comforting my soul.

It appears to be a prayer of the captives in Babylon for complete liberty; or perhaps he recites the prayer the Israelites had made previously to their restoration.

Verse 2. *Lying lips*, and *from a deceitful tongue.*] From a people without faith, without truth, without religion; who sought by lies and calumnies to destroy them.

Verse 3. *What shall be given unto thee?*] Thou art worthy of the heaviest punishments.

Verse 4. *Sharp arrows*] The Chaldee has, "The strong sharp arrows are like lightning from above, with coals of juniper kindled in hell beneath." On the juniper, see the note on Job xxx. 4, where this passage is explained. *Fiery arrows*, or *arrows wrapped about with inflamed combustibles*, were formerly used in sieges to set the places on fire. See my notes on Eph. vi. 16.

Verse 5. *That I sojourn in Mesech*] The Chaldee has it, "Woe is me that I am a stranger with the

6 My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.

7 *I am* <sup>d</sup> for peace: but when I speak, they are for war.

<sup>c</sup> Gen. xxv. 13. 1 Sam. xxv. 1. Jer. xlix. 28, 29. — <sup>d</sup> Or, a man of peace.

Asiatics (כדן *useey*), and that I dwell in the tents of the Arabs." Calmet, who understands the psalm as speaking of the state of the captives in Babylon and its provinces, says, "Meshec was apparently the father of the Mosquians, who dwelt in the mountains that separate Iberia from Armenia, and both from Colchis. These provinces were subjugated by Nebuchadnezzar; and it is evident from 2 Kings xvii. 23, 24, xviii. 11, xix. 12, 13, that many of the Jews were held in captivity in those countries. As to Kedar, it extended into Arabia Petraea, and towards the Euphrates; and is the country afterwards known as the country of the Saracens."

Verse 6. *My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.*] A restless, barbarous, warlike, and marauding people.

Verse 7. *I am for peace*] We love to be quiet and peaceable; but they are continually engaged in excursions of rapine and plunder. It is evident that the Psalmist refers to a people like the *Scenite* or *wandering Arabs*, who live constantly in tents, and subsist by robbery; plundering and carrying away all that they can seize. The poor captives wished them to cultivate the arts of peace, and live quietly: but they would hear of nothing but their old manner of life.

#### ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTIETH PSALM.

The Psalmist in distress—

I. Flees to God by prayer.

II. Sets forth the miseries of a foul and deceitful tongue.

III. Complains of his banishment.

I. 1. He is in distress, and *cries* to the Lord; the surest and best way.

2. He tells us of the *success* of his prayer: "God heard him."

3. Of the matter of it: "Lord, I beseech thee deliver my soul!" 1. "From lying lips." Detractions, calumnies, and defamations. 2. From "a deceitful tongue," which, under the colour of friendship, covers deceit. A detractor does his mischief *openly*, a *flatterer* secretly; so that when a *deceitful tongue* is joined with *lying lips*, the mischief is intolerable.

II. He sets forth the evil that shall fall on such deceivers and slanderers.

1. *Arrows*—which wound afar off, suddenly and invisibly.

2. *Sharp arrows*, *well-headed* and *keen*, that can pierce deeply.

3. "Sharp arrows of the mighty," shot by a *strong hand*, and so much the more dangerous.

4. "With coals—inflamed arrows," such as set all things on fire.

5. "With coals of juniper," which of all coals are the hottest, and keep fire the longest.

III. The Psalmist complains of his banishment.

1. He laments his situation on account of the wickedness of the people among whom he sojourned.

2. They were barbarous and inhuman, enemies to piety and civility.

3. His state was the more intolerable, as it had been of long duration: "My soul hath long dwelt," &c.

His disposition was quite contrary to theirs.

1. "I am for peace." I wish to live in peace, and cultivate it.

2. But when I speak of peace, they are for war; They are fierce and inhuman. It was said of the Macedonians in Philip's time, Illis pacem esse bellum et bellum pacem. "To them peace was war, and war was peace." Such were the people of the provinces, among whom many of the Israelites were in captivity.

PSALM CXXI.

The resolution of a godly man, 1, 2. The safety and prosperity of such, as they and theirs shall be under the continual protection of God, 3—8.

A Song of degrees.

I WILL lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

2 My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

4 Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.

6 The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

7 The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

8 The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

<sup>a</sup> Or, Shall I lift up mine eyes to the hills? whence should my help come? See Jer. iii. 23.—<sup>b</sup> Ps. cxxiv. 8.—<sup>c</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 9. Prov. iii. 23, 26.—<sup>d</sup> Ps. cxxvii. 1. Isai. xxvii. 3.

<sup>e</sup> Isai. xxv. 4.—<sup>f</sup> Ps. xvi. 8. cix. 31.—<sup>g</sup> Ps. xci. 5. Isai. xlix. 10. Rev. vii. 16.—<sup>h</sup> Ps. xli. 2. xxvii. 10. cxlv. 20. <sup>i</sup> Dent. xxviii. 6. Prov. ii. 8. iii. 6.

NOTES ON PSALM CXXI.

This appears to be a prayer of the Jews in their captivity, who are solicitous for their restoration. It is in the form of a dialogue.

Ver. 1, 2. The person who worships God speaks the two first verses, "I will lift up mine eyes—my help cometh,"—ver. 1, 2.

Ver. 3. The ministering priest answers him, "He will not suffer thy foot to be moved." "He that keepeth thee will not slumber," ver. 3.

To which the worshipper answers, that he knows that "he who keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep," ver. 4; but he seems to express a doubt whether he shall be an object of the divine attention.

Ver. 5, &c. The priest resumes; and, to the conclusion of the psalm, gives him the most positive assurances of God's favour and protection.

Verse 1. *Unto the hills*] Jerusalem was built upon a mountain; and Judea was a mountainous country; and the Jews, in their several dispersions, turned towards Jerusalem when they offered up their prayers to God.

Verse 2. *My help cometh from the Lord*] There is no help for me but in my God; and I expect it from no other quarter.

Verse 3. *He will not suffer thy foot to be moved*] The foundation, God's infinite power and goodness, on which thou standest, cannot be moved; and whilst thou standest on this basis, thy foot cannot be moved.

Verse 4. *He that keepeth Israel*] The Divine Being

represents himself as a watchman, who takes care of the city and its inhabitants during the night-watches; and who is never overtaken with slumbering or sleepiness. There is a thought in the *Antigone of Sophocles*, that seems the counterpart of this of the Psalmist.

Ταν σαν, Ζευ, δυναμιν τις ανδρων  
Υπερβασια κατασχοι,  
Ταν ουθ' ὑπνος αι—  
ρει ποθ' ο παντογηνως.  
Ακαματοι τε θεων  
Μηνες;

Antig. ver. 613, Edit. Johnson.

Shall men below control great Jove above,  
Whose eyes by all-subduing sleep  
Are never closed, as feeble mortals' are;  
But still their watchful vigil keep  
Through the long circle of th' eternal year?

FRANKLIN.

Verse 6. *The sun shall not smite thee by day*] Thus expressed by the *Chaldee*: "The morning spectres shall not smite thee by day, during the government of the sun; nor the nocturnal spectres by night, during the government of the moon." I believe the Psalmist simply means, they shall not be injured by heat nor cold; by a sun-stroke by day, nor a frost-bite by night.

Verse 7. *The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil*] Spiritual and corporeal, natural and moral.

*He shall preserve thy soul.*] Take care of thy life, and take care of thy soul.

Verse 8. *Thy going out and thy coming in*] Night and day—in all thy business and undertakings; and this through the whole course of thy life: *for evermore.*

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIRST PSALM.

The scope of this psalm is to show that God alone is the refuge of the distressed.

I. While some are looking for earthly comfort and support, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills," &c.

II. Faith sees God, the only helper; and says, "My help is the Lord."

And the *first reason* for this is given: God's omnipotence and sufficiency. "The Lord that made heaven and earth," and is consequently the author and dispenser of all spiritual and temporal blessings.

And the *second reason* is, his *grace* and *goodness*; "He will not suffer thy foot to be moved."

A *third reason* is, his watchful care: "He that keepeth thee will not slumber."

III. The *end* which God proposes in his watching, —to *keep them.*

1. He is the "Keeper of Israel." He guards his church; he is as a wall of fire about it.

2. He is a *shade*. This certainly refers to that kind of *umbraculum*, or *parasol*, which was in very ancient use in the eastern countries. The sense of the passage is, Neither the day of prosperity nor the night of adversity shall hurt thee; nor the heat of persecution, nor the coldness of friends or relatives: all these shall work for thy good.

3. "He shall preserve thee from all evil;"—and,

4. Especially from every thing that might hurt thy soul: "He shall preserve thy soul."

The Psalmist concludes with this encouraging assurance.

1. "The Lord shall preserve thy going out." We are always beginning or ending some action, going abroad or returning home; and we need the protecting care of God in all.

2. "From this time forth." Now that thou hast put thy whole trust and confidence in God, he will be thy continual portion and defence in all places, in all times, in all actions; in life, in prosperity, in adversity, in death, in time, and in eternity.

PSALM CXXII.

The satisfaction of a gracious soul in the use of God's ordinances, 1, 2. Description of the internal government of Jerusalem, 3—5. Prayers for its peace and prosperity, 6—9.

A Song of degrees of David.

A. M. cir. 3468.  
B. C. cir. 536.  
Cyr,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
primum.

I WAS glad when they said unto me, "Let us go into the house of the LORD."

2 Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

3 Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together.

4 Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD.

\* Isai. ii. 3. Zech. viii. 21.—<sup>b</sup> See 2 Sam. v. 9.—<sup>c</sup> Exod. xxiii. 17. Deut. xvi. 16.—<sup>d</sup> Exod. xvi. 34.

5 For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David.

A. M. cir. 3468.  
B. C. cir. 536.  
Cyr,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
primum.

6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.

7 Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.

8 For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee.

9 Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good.

\* Deut. xvii. 8. 2 Chron. xix. 8.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. *do sit.*—<sup>g</sup> Ps. li. 18.—<sup>h</sup> Neh. ii. 10.

NOTES ON PSALM CXXII.

In the preceding psalms we find the poor captives crying to God for deliverance; here they are returning thanks that they find they are permitted to return to their own land and to the ordinances of their God.

Verse 1. *I was glad when they said*] When Cyrus published an edict for their return, the very first object of their thanksgiving was the kindness of God in permitting them to return to his ordinances.

Verse 2. *Our feet shall stand*] For seventy years we have been exiled from our own land; our heart was in Jerusalem, but our feet were in Chaldea. Now God has turned our captivity, and our feet shall shortly stand within the gates of Jerusalem. What a transition from misery to happiness! and what a subject for rejoicing!

Verse 3. *Jerusalem—compact together.*] It is now well rebuilt, every part contributing to the strength of the whole. It is also a state of great political and spiritual union. It is the centre of union to all the tribes, for each tribe has an equal interest in that God who is worshipped there.

Verse 4. *The testimony of Israel*] There is the ark, where the presence of God is manifested; there is the holy of holies; and there all the tribes assembled to worship Jehovah. He no doubt alludes to the assembling of the tribes annually at each of the three grand national festivals.

Verse 5. *There are set thrones of judgment*] There were the public courts, and thither the people went to obtain justice; and while the thrones of the house of David were there, they had justice.

Verse 6. *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem*] שלום *shalom* signifies both *peace* and *prosperity*. Let her *unanimity* never be *disturbed*; let her *prosperity* ever be on the *increase*!

*They shall prosper that love thee.*] In the peace and prosperity of the city, they shall find their peace and their prosperity; and even on this ground they should *love* the city, and labour to promote its best interests. There is a remarkable *alliteration* in this verse, the letter *w shin* frequently recurring.

שאלו שלום ירושלים ישלי אהבך

*Shaalu shalom yerushalam yishlayu ohabeycha.*

"Ask ye the prosperity of Jerusalem; they shall be quiet that love thee."

There are remarkable specimens of similar *alliteration* to be found in *all poets*, ancient and modern. This formed the chief feature of our *ancient poetry*. Thus in *Peter the ploughman* :—

"In a somers seysoun whan sete was the sonne  
I schoop me in a shrowde as I a sheep were."

And the same manner often appears, even in Milton himself. See the *Il Penseroso* :—

"Oft, on a plat of rising ground,  
I hear the far off curfew sound  
Over some wide watered shore,  
Swinging slow with sullen roar."

Verse 7. *Peace be within thy walls*] This is the *form of prayer* that they are to use: "May *prosperity* ever reside within thy walls, on all the people that dwell there; and tranquillity within thy palaces or high places, among the *rulers* and *governors* of the people."

Verse 8. *For my brethren and companions' sakes*] Because this city is the abode of my kinsfolk and countrymen, I will wish it prosperity. I will promote its peace and tranquillity by all means in my power. I will affectionately say, *May peace be within thee!*

Verse 9. *Because of the house of the Lord our God*] Particularly will I wish thee well, because thou art the *seat of religion*, the place where our merciful God has condescended to dwell.

To the captives in Babylon the prophet *Jeremiah* had given this charge, chap. xxix. 7: "And seek שלום *shalom*, the *prosperity* of the city, whither I have caused you to be carried captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the *prosperity* thereof ye shall have *prosperity*."

Was this a *duty for the captives*? Yes. And is it the duty of every man for his *own country*? God, nature, common sense, and self-interest say, YES! And what must we think of the wretches who not only do not thus pray, but labour to destroy the public peace, to subvert the government of their country, to raise seditions, and to destroy all its civil and religious institutions? *Think of them!* Why, that *hemp* would be *disgraced* by hanging them.

There is a fine picture given us here of the state of Jerusalem after the restoration of the Jews. The *walls* were finished, the *city* rebuilt, beautiful, strong, and regular; and the temple and its worship were restored, the *courts of justice* were re-established, the

*constituted authorities* in church and state were doing their duty; and God was pouring out his blessing upon all. Who could see this without praying, May God increase thy peace, and establish thy prosperity for ever!

#### ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SECOND PSALM.

The Psalmist, in the person of the people,—

I. Expresses his joy that he might join with the church in God's service, ver. 1, 2.

II. Commends the church, under the name of Jerusalem, for her unity, ver. 3; religious worship, ver. 4; civil and ecclesiastical policy, ver. 5.

III. Exhorts all to pray for its peace and prosperity, ver. 6; and puts the form of prayer into their mouths, ver. 7.

IV. Shows his own readiness to do this, and offers up his supplications, ver. 8, 9.

I. The Psalmist congratulates himself and the people on the restoration of God's worship :—

1. He expresses his own joy: "I was glad."

2. To hear of the unanimity of the people mutually exhorting each other to it: "When they said unto me."

3. "Let us go into the house of the Lord." Let us all go, hear his word, give him thanks, and make prayers and supplications to him.

II. He commends Jerusalem *three ways* :—

1. For its *unity*: it was compact together; it was united in itself; and united, both in *politics* and *religion*, in its *inhabitants*.

2. For its being the *place of God's worship*: 1. For "thither the tribes go up" thrice in the year, as was ordained, Exod. xxiii. 14, to celebrate their deliverance from Egypt, in keeping the *passover*. 2. The giving of the law, in the feast of *pentecost*. 3. Their preservation in the wilderness, in the feast of *tubercles*.

These tribes are "the tribes of the Lord." A very honourable title.

"Unto the testimony of Israel." To the ark of the covenant, the pledge of the covenant between God and the people.

The *end* for which they went up: "To give thanks unto the name of the Lord."

3. He commends Jerusalem for its civil and ecclesiastical policy: 1. "For there are set thrones of judgment." The tribunals and courts of justice are there. 2. "The thrones of the house of David." The court and throne of a legitimate sovereign.

III. He exhorts the tribes to *pray for* a continuance of its present happy state.

1. "Pray for the peace," &c. It is our duty to pray for the *prosperity* of the *nation* and of the *church of God*.

2. "They shall prosper that love thee." Those who love both are *blessed*, those who do not are *cursed*.

3. And that we may know the prayer that God will hear, he puts one in our mouth, "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces." It is well to join *peace* and *prosperity* together. *Peace* without *prosperity* is but a secure possession of *misery*; and *prosperity* without *peace* is but a dubious and uncertain *felicity*.



1. "Peace be within thy walls." Not only thy fortifications, civil and religious institutions, but also among all thy officers, soldiers, and inhabitants, for they constitute the strength and safety of the kingdom.

2. "And prosperity within thy palaces." In the king's house, his family, his ministers; if there be dissensions there, ruin will soon follow.

IV. The Psalmist shows his own readiness to do this.

1. "I will now say, Peace be within thee." So should all the ministers of religion pray.

2. "I will seek thy good." So should the king and every officer of state resolve. All should be united in so good a work. They should not seek their own good, but the good, not the goods, of the people.

For this the Psalmist gives these reasons:—

1. "For my brethren and companions' sakes." We are not only subjects of one king, citizens of the same city, but we have all one God and Father.

2. "Because of the house of the Lord." For the maintenance of true religion. If religion fail, the kingdom will fail; prosperity will be at an end, the nation will be divided, distracted, destroyed. Religion, the true religion in a country, is the consolation of the good, and the bridle that holds in the jaws of the wicked. Let us all pray for the prosperity of pure and undefiled religion, and the prosperity of the state!

### PSALM CXXIII.

The prayer and faith of the godly, 1, 2. They desire to be delivered from contempt, 3, 4.

A Song of degrees.

UNTO thee <sup>a</sup>lift I up mine eyes, O thou <sup>b</sup>that dwellest in the heavens.

2 Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD

<sup>a</sup> Ps. cxxi. 1. cxli. 8.

#### NOTES ON PSALM CXXIII.

This psalm is probably a complaint of the captives in Babylon relative to the contempt and cruel usage they received. The author is uncertain.

Verse 1. *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes*] We have no hope but in thee; our eyes look upward; we have expectation from thy mercy alone.

Verse 2. *As the eyes of servants*] We now wait for thy commands, feeling the utmost readiness to obey them when made known to us. The words may be understood as the language of dependance also. As slaves expect their support from their masters and mistresses; so do we ours from thee, O Lord! Or, As servants look to their masters and mistresses, to see how they do their work, that they may do it in the same way; so do we, O Lord, that we may learn of thee, and do thy work in thy own Spirit, and after thy own method. Some think that there is a reference here to the chastisement of slaves by their masters, who, during the time they are receiving it, keep their eyes fixed on the hand that is inflicting punishment upon them, professing deep sorrow, and entreating for mercy. And this sense seems to be countenanced by the following words:—

Verse 3. *Have mercy upon us, O Lord*] Chastise us no more; we will no more revolt against thee.

*We are exceedingly filled with contempt.*] We not only suffer grievously from our captivity, but are treated in the most contemptuous manner by our masters.

Verse 4. *Those that are at ease*] The Babylonians, who, having subdued all the people of the neighbouring

our God, until that he have mercy upon us.

3 Have mercy upon us, O LORD, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt.

4 Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud.

<sup>b</sup> Ps. ii. 4. xi. 4. cxv. 3.

nations, lived at ease, had none to contend with them, and now became luxurious, indolent, and insolent: they were contemptuous and proud.

#### ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THIRD PSALM.

The oppressed followers of God make application to him for mercy. In this application they express three things:—

I. Their confidence in God.

II. Prayer for mercy.

III. An account of their oppressors.

I. Their trust in God.

1. "Unto thee lift I up mine eyes." We trust in thee alone.

2. "O thou that dwellest in the heavens." Infinitely raised above us; but affected with our miserable condition, and always ready to help us.

This he shows by a double similitude:—

"As the eyes of servants," i. e., men-servants, "look unto the hand of their masters."

2. "As the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress:" both might be beaten; and here both beg to be saved from farther stripes.

3. "So our eyes," &c. God's children are always looking up to him.

4. "Until that he have mercy;" abate his stripes, and take off his hand.

II. Their prayer for mercy.

1. Before they lifted their eyes to God, but now they cry for mercy.

For this crying, they give the following reasons:

1. "We are exceedingly filled with contempt." To

suffer contempt is much, to be filled with it is more ; and to be exceedingly filled with it is worst of all.

2. We are scorned : they join words and actions to show how much they despise us.

III. They give the character of those by whom they suffer.

1. They are at ease—loaded with wealth, and sunk in indolence.

2. They are proud—puffed up with a sense of their own importance; and this leads them to despise others. Proud men are for the most part empty, shallow-pated men : and contempt and scorn from such wounds deeply ; especially if they rise, as they often do, from the dung-hill. The sick lion in the fable found it extremely galling to be kicked by the foot of an ass.

PSALM CXXIV.

A thanksgiving of the godly for extraordinary deliverances, 1—6. The great danger they were in, 7. Their confidence in God, 8.

A Song of degrees of David.

A. M. cir. 3494.  
B. C. cir. 510.  
Assueri,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
duodecimum.

IF it had not been the LORD who was on our side, \* now may Israel say ;

2 If it had not been the LORD

who was on our side, when men rose up against us :

3 Then they had <sup>b</sup> swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us :

4 Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul :

5 Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.

6 Blessed be the LORD, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth.

7 Our soul is escaped <sup>c</sup> as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers : the snare is broken, and we are escaped.

8 <sup>d</sup> Our help is in the name of the LORD, <sup>e</sup> who made heaven and earth.

A. M. cir. 3494.  
B. C. cir. 510.  
Assueri,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
duodecimum.

\* Ps. cxxix. 1. —<sup>b</sup> Ps. lvi. 1, 2. lvii. 3. Prov. i. 12.  
<sup>c</sup> Ps. xci. 3. Prov. vi. 5.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. cxxi. 2. —<sup>e</sup> Gen. i. 1. Ps. cxxxiv. 3.

NOTES ON PSALM CXXIV.

In our present Hebrew copies this psalm is attributed to David, דָּוִד *ledavid* ; but this inscription is wanting in three of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS., as also in the Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, Æthiopic, and Arabic ; and in most of the ancient Fathers, Greek and Latin, who found no other inscription in their copies of the text than *A Psalm of degrees*. It was composed long after David's days ; and appears to be either a thanksgiving for their deliverance from the Babylonish captivity, or for a remarkable deliverance from some potent and insidious enemy after their return to Judea. Or, what appears to me more likely, it is a thanksgiving of the Jews for their escape from the general massacre intended by Haman, prime minister of Ahasuerus, king of Persia. See the whole Book of Esther.

Verse 1. *If it had not been the Lord*] If God had not, in a very especial manner, supported and defended us, we had all been swallowed up alive, and destroyed by a sudden destruction, so that not one would have been left. This might refer to the plot against the whole nation of the Jews by Haman, in the days of Mordecai and Esther ; when by his treacherous schemes the Jews, wheresoever dispersed in the provinces of Babylon, were all to have been put to death in one day. This may here be represented under the figure of an earthquake, when a chasm is formed, and a whole city and its inhabitants are in a moment swallowed up alive.

Verse 5. *Then the proud waters*] The proud

Haman had nearly brought the flood of desolation over our lives.

Verso 7. *Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare*] This is a fine image ; and at once shows the weakness of the Jews, and the cunning of their adversaries. Haman had laid the snare completely for them ; humanly speaking, there was no prospect of their escape : but the Lord was on their side ; and the providence that induced Ahasuerus to call for the book of the records of the kingdom to be read to him, as well indeed as the once very improbable advancement of Esther to the throne of Persia, was the means used by the Lord for the preservation of the whole Jewish people from extermination. God thus broke the snare, and the bird escaped ; while the poacher was caught in his own trap, and executed. See the Book of Esther, which is probably the best comment on this psalm.

Verse 8. *Our help is in the name of the Lord*] יְיָ בְּשֵׁם יְיָ בִּשְׁמֵי בִּשְׁמֵי *beslum meymra dayai*, Chaldee, "In the name of the WORD of the LORD." So in the second verse, "Unless the WORD of the LORD had been our Helper : " *the substantial WORD* ; not a word spoken, or a prophecy delivered, but the person who was afterwards termed ὁ Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the WORD or God*. This deliverance of the Jews appears to me the most natural interpretation of this psalm : and probably Mordecai was the author

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FOURTH PSALM.

The people of God, newly escaped from some great

danger, acknowledge it, and celebrate God as their Deliverer.

I. The Psalmist begins abruptly, as is usual in pathetic expressions.

1. "If it had not been the Lord:" and so deeply was he affected with a sense of God's goodness, and the narrowness of the escape, that he repeats it: "Unless the Lord," &c. Nothing else could have saved us.

2. "Now may Israel say;" the whole body of the Jewish people may well acknowledge this.

3. "When men rose up:" when they were all leagued against us as one man to destroy us; and, humanly speaking, our escape was impossible.

II. This danger and escape the Psalmist illustrates by two metaphors:

1. The first is taken from *beasts of prey*: "They had swallowed us up quick." They would have rushed upon us, torn us in pieces, and swallowed us down, while life was quivering in our limbs.

This they would have done in their *fury*. The plot was laid with great *circumspection and caution*; but it would have been executed with a *resistless fury*.

2. The second similitude is taken from *waters* which had broken through dikes, and at once submerged the whole country: "The stream had gone over our soul;" the *proud waters*, resistless now the dikes were broken, would have *gone over our soul*—destroyed our life.

III. He next acknowledges the *deliverance*.

1. "We are not given a prey to their teeth."  
2. It is the blessed God who has preserved us: "Blessed be God," &c.

As this deliverance was *beyond expectation*, he illustrates it by *another metaphor*, a *bird* taken in, but escaping from, a *snare*.

1. We were in "the snare of the fowler."

2. But "our soul is escaped."

3. And the fowler disappointed of his prey. The disappointment of Haman was, in all its circumstances, one of the most mortifying that ever occurred to man.

IV. He concludes with a grateful acclamation.

1. "Our help is in the name of the Lord." In open assaults, and in *insidious attacks*, we have no helper but God; and from him our deliverance must come.

2. This help is sufficient; for he made the *heaven and earth*; has both under his government; and can employ both in the support, or for the *deliverance*, of his followers.

Or, take the following as a plainer analysis:—

I. 1. The *subtlety* of the adversaries of the church in laying snares to entrap it, as fowlers do birds, ver. 7.

2. Their *cruelty* in seeking to tear it to pieces, as some ravenous beasts of prey do; or, as mighty inundations that overthrow all in their way, ver. 3—6.

II. The cause of this subtlety and cruelty: wrath and displeasure, ver. 3.

III. The delivery of the church from both, by the power and goodness of God, ver. 1, 2, 6, 7.

IV. The duty performed for this deliverance; praises to God, ver. 6.

PSALM CXXV

The safety of those who trust in God, 1—2. God's protecting providence in behalf of his followers, 3. A prayer for the godly, 4. The evil lot of the wicked, 5.

A Song of degrees.

A. M. cir. 3559.  
B. C. cir. 445.  
Artaxerxis I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
vigesimum.

THEY that trust in the LORD shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.

2 As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever.

3 For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the

\* Prov. xxii. 8. Isai. xiv. 5.—b Heb. wickedness.

NOTES ON PSALM CXXV.

This psalm is without a *title*: it belongs most probably to the times after the captivity; and has been applied, with apparent propriety, to the opposition which *Sunballat* the Horonite, *Geshem* the Arabian, and *Tobiah* the Ammonite, gave to the Jews while employed in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, and restoring the temple.

Verse 1. *They that trust in the Lord*] Every faithful Jew who confides in Jehovah shall stand, in those open and secret attacks of the enemies of God and

righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.

4 Do good, O LORD, unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts.

5 As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity: but peace shall be upon Israel.

A. M. cir. 3559.  
B. C. cir. 445.  
Artaxerxis I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
vigesimum.

c Prov. ii. 15.—d Ps. cxxviii. 6. Gal. vi. 16.

truth, as *unshaken* as *Mount Zion*; and shall not be moved by the power of any adversary.

Verse 2. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem] Jerusalem, according to *Sandys*, was situated on a rocky mountain every way to be ascended, except a little on the north, with steep ascents and deep valleys, naturally fortified. It is surrounded with other mountains, at no great distance, as if placed in the midst of an amphitheatre; for on the east is *Mount Olivet*, separated from the city by the valley of *Jehoshaphat*, which also encompasses a part

of the north; on the south, the mountain of *Offiner* interposed with the valley of *Gehinnom*; and on the west it was formerly fenced with the valley of *Gihon*, and the mountains adjoining. The situation was such as to be easily rendered impregnable.

The Lord is round about his people] He is above, beneath, around them; and while they keep within it, their fortress is impregnable, and they can suffer no evil.

Verse 3. For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous] Rod, here, may be taken for persecution, or for rule; and then it may be thus interpreted: "The wicked shall not be permitted to persecute always, nor to have a permanent rule." In our liturgic version this clause is thus rendered: "The rod of the ungodly cometh not into the lot of the righteous." "This," said one of our forefathers, "is neither truth nor scripture. First, it is not truth; for the rod of the wicked doth come into the inheritance of the righteous, and that often. Secondly, it is not scripture; for the text saith, 'The rod of the wicked shall not rest there.' It may come, and stay for a time; but it shall not be permitted to abide."

This is only one, and not the worst, of the many sad blemishes which deform the Version in our national Prayer-book. In short, the Version of the Psalms in that book is wholly unworthy of regard; and should be thrown aside, and that in the authorized Version in the Bible substituted for it. The people of God are misled by it; and they are confounded with the great and glaring differences they find between it and what they find in their Bibles, where they have a version of a much better character, delivered to them by the authority of church and state. Why do not our present excellent and learned prelates lay this to heart, and take away this sore stumbling-block out of the way of the people? I have referred to this subject in the introduction to the *Book of Psalms*.

Let the righteous put forth] Were the wicked to bear rule in the Lord's vineyard, religion would soon become extinct; for the great mass of the people would conform to their rulers. Fear not your enemies, while ye fear God. Neither *Sanballat*, nor *Tobiah*, nor *Geshem*, nor any of God's foes, shall be able to set up their rod, their power and authority, here. While you are faithful, the Lord will laugh them to scorn.

Verse 4. Do good, O Lord, unto those that be good] Let the upright ever find thee his sure defence! Increase the goodness which thou hast already bestowed upon them; and let all who are upright in heart find thee to be their stay and their support!

Verse 5. As for such as turn aside] Who are not faithful; who give way to sin; who backslide, and walk in a crooked way, widely different from the straight way of the upright, ישר *yesharim*, the straight in heart; they shall be led forth to punishment with the common workers of iniquity. Thus thy church will be purified, and thy peace rest upon thy true Israel. Let him that readeth understand.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH PSALM.

It is the purpose of the Psalmist to comfort the people of God,—

I. By an assurance of their perpetuity, both from God's presence and protection, ver. 1, 2.

II. That though he may permit them to be harassed by the wicked, yet he will not leave them under their rod, ver. 3.

III. He prays for the good; and,

IV. Sets down the portion of the wicked, ver. 4, 5.

I. A general promise of the perpetuity of the church; that is, of them "that trust in God."

1. "They that trust in the Lord:" "The congregation of God's faithful people, who have the pure word of God preached, and the sacraments duly administered," Acts xix.

2. "Shall be as Mount Zion," secure and immovable; immovable, because a mountain,—a holy mountain,—and particularly dear to God.

3. "Which abideth for ever:" So surely as *Mount Zion* shall never be removed, so surely shall the church of God be preserved. Is it not strange that wicked and idolatrous powers have not joined together, dug down this mount, and carried it into the sea, that they might nullify a promise in which the people of God exult! Till ye can carry *Mount Zion* into the Mediterranean Sea, the church of Christ shall grow and prevail. Hear this, ye murderous Mohammedans!

4. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem"—to fortify it.

5. "So the Lord is round about his people"—to preserve them.

6. "From henceforth, even for ever:" Through both time and eternity.

II. 1. But the church is often persecuted and harassed. Granted; for the "rod," the power and scourge, "of the wicked, may come into the heritage of the righteous."

2. But then may it not finally prevail? No: for though it come, it shall not rest.

3. And why? Because it might finally destroy the church, pervert the good, and cause them to join issue with the ungodly. Therefore, "they shall not be tempted above that they are able."

III. Therefore the Psalmist prays,—

1. "Do good to the good:" Give them patience, and keep them faithful.

2. And "to the upright in heart:" Let not the weak and the sincere be overcome by their enemies!

IV. He sets down the lot of the ungodly:—

1. "They turn aside."

2. They get into crooked paths; they get into the spirit of the world, and are warped into its crooked and winding ways.

3. They shall be condemned, and then led forth to punishment. The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways; he shall have writhing in pain, for crooked walking in sin.

4. But while this is their portion, "peace," prosperity, and blessedness, "shall be upon Israel."

PSALM CXXVI.

The joy of the Israelites on their return from captivity, and the effect their deliverance had upon the heathen, 1—3. The prayer which they had offered up, 4. The inference they draw from the whole, 5, 6.

XXVII. DAY. EVENING PRAYER.

A. Song of degrees

A. M. cir. 3468.  
B. C. cir. 536.  
Cyri,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
primum.

WHEN the LORD <sup>a</sup> turned again the captivity of Zion, <sup>b</sup> we were like them that dream.

2 Then <sup>c</sup> was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD <sup>d</sup> hath done great things for them.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. returned the returning of Zion. Ps. liii. 6. lxxxv. 1. Hos. vi. 11. Joel iii. 1. — <sup>b</sup> Acts xii. 9. — <sup>c</sup> Job viii. 21.

NOTES ON PSALM CXXVI.

This psalm is not of David, has no title in the Hebrew or any of the Versions, and certainly belongs to the close of the captivity. It might have been composed by *Haggai* and *Zechariah*, as the *Syriac* supposes; or by *Ezra*, according to others. It is beautiful, and highly descriptive of the circumstances which it represents.

Verse 1. *When the Lord turned again the captivity*] When Cyrus published his decree in favour of the Jews, giving them liberty to return to their own land, and rebuild their city and temple.

*We were like them that dream.*] The news was so unexpected that we doubted for a time the truth of it. We believed it was too good news to be true, and thought ourselves in a dream or illusion. When the Romans had vanquished Philip, king of Macedon, they restored liberty to the Grecian cities by proclamation. It was done at the time of the Isthmian games, and by the crier, who went into the circus to proclaim them; none but the Roman general, T. Quintius, knowing what was to be done. Multitudes from all Greece were there assembled; and the tidings produced nearly the same effect upon them, according to Livy, that the publication of the decree of Cyrus did on the Jews, according to what is here related by the Psalmist. I shall give the substance of this account from the Roman historian. When the Romans had sat down to behold the games, the herald with his trumpet went into the arena, according to custom, to proclaim the several games. Silence being obtained, he solemnly pronounced the following words:—

SENATUS ROMANUS ET T. QUINCIUS IMPERATOR, PHILIPPO REGE MACEDONIBUSQUE DEVICTIS; LIBEROS, IMMUNES, SUI LEGIBUS ESSE JUBET CORINTHIOS, PHOCENSES, LOCRENSESQUE OMNES, ET INSULAM EUBŒAM, ET MAGNETAS, THESSALOS, PERRHŒBOS, ACHÆOS, PHTHIOTAS.

“The Roman Senate, and T. Quintius the general, having vanquished king Philip and the Macedonians, do ordain that the Corinthians, Phocensians, all the Locrensians, the island of Eubœa, the Magnesians,

3 The LORD hath done great things for us; *whereof* we are glad.

4 Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south.

5 <sup>e</sup>They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing <sup>f</sup>precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves *with him*.

A. M. cir. 3468.  
B. C. cir. 536.  
Cyri,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
primum.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. hath magnified to do with them.—<sup>e</sup> See Jer. xxxi. 9, &c.—<sup>f</sup> Or, *singing*.—<sup>g</sup> Or, *seed basket*.

Thessalians, Perrhæbians, Achæans, and Pthiotians, shall be free, be delivered from all taxes, and live according to their own laws.”

The effect that this produced on the astonished Grecians who were present, is related by this able historian in a very natural and affecting manner; and some parts of it *nearly in the words of the Psalmist*.

Audita voce præconis, majus gaudium fuit, quam quod universum homines caperent. Vix satis se credere se quisque audisse: alii alios intueri mirabundi velut somnii vanam speciem: quod ad quemque pertineret, suarum aurium fidei minimum credentes, proximos interrogabant. Revocatur præco, cum unusquisque non audire, sed videre libertatis sue nuncium averit, iterum pronunciarer eadem. Tum ab certo jam gaudio tantus cum clamore plausus est ortus, totiesque repetitus, ut facile appareret, nihil omnium bonorum multitudini gratius quam LIBERTATEM ESSE.

T. Liv. Hist. lib. xxxiii, c. 32.

This proclamation of the herald being heard, there was such joy, that the people in general could not comprehend it. Scarcely could any person believe what he had heard. They gazed on each other, wondering as if it had been *some illusion, similar to a dream*; and although all were interested in what was spoken, none could trust his own ears, but inquired each from him who stood next to him what it was that was proclaimed? The herald was again called, as each expressed the strongest desire not only to hear, but see the messenger of his own liberty: the herald, therefore, repeated the proclamation. When by this repetition the glad tidings were confirmed, there arose such a shout, accompanied with repeated clapping of hands, as plainly showed that *of all good things none is so dear to the multitude as LIBERTY.*”

O that God may raise up some other deliverer to save *these same cities*, with their inhabitants, from a worse yoke than ever was imposed upon them by the king of Macedon; and from a servitude which has now lasted three hundred years longer than the captivity of the Israelites in the empire of Babylon!

Constantinople was taken by the *Turks* in 1453 ; and since that time till the present (October 1822), three hundred and sixty-nine years have elapsed. Why do the *Christian* powers of Europe stand by, and see the ark of their God in captivity ; the holy name by which they are called despised and execrated ; the vilest indignities offered to those who are called Christians, by barbarians the most cruel, ferocious, and abominable that ever disgraced the name of man ? Great God, vindicate the cause of the distressed Greeks as *summarily*, as *effectually*, as *permanently*, as thou once didst that of thy oppressed people the *Jews* ! Let the *crescent* never more fill its horns with a *victory*, nor with the spoils of any who are called by the sacred name of *JESUS* : but let it wane back into total darkness ; and know no change for the better, till illuminated by the *orient splendour* of the *Sun of righteousness* ! Amen ! Amen !

How signally has this prayer been thus far answered ! Three great Christian powers, the *British*, the *French*, and the *Russian*, have taken up the cause of the oppressed Greeks. The Turkish fleet has been attacked in the Bay of Navarino by the combined fleets of the above powers in October, 1827, under the command of the British Admiral, Sir Edward Codrington, and totally annihilated. After which, the Mohammedan troops were driven out of Greece and the Morea ; so that the whole of Greece is cleared of its oppressors, and is now under its own government, protected by the above powers.—March, 1829.

Verse 2. *Then was our mouth filled with laughter*] The same effect as was produced on the poor liberated Grecians mentioned above.

*Then said they among the heathen*] The liberty now granted was brought about in so extraordinary a way, that the very *heathens* saw that the hand of the great *Jehovah* must have been in it.

Verse 3. *The Lord hath done great things for us*] We acknowledge the hand of our God. *Deus nobis hæc otia fecit*, "God alone has given us this enlargement."

*We are glad.*] This is a mere burst of ecstatic joy. O how happy are we !

Verse 4. *Turn again our captivity*] This is either a recital of the prayer they had used *before* their deliverance ; or it is a prayer for those who *still remained* in the provinces beyond the Euphrates. The Jewish captives did not all return at *once* ; they came back at different times, and under different leaders, Ezra, Nehemiah, Zerubbabel, &c.

*As the streams in the south.*] Probably the Nile is meant. It is now pretty well known that the Nile has its origin in the kingdom of *Damot* ; and runs from *south* to *north* through different countries, till, passing through Egypt, it empties itself into the Mediterranean Sea. It is possible, however, that they might have had in view some *rapid rivers* that either rose in the south, or had a *southern* direction ; and they desired that their return might be as rapid and as *abundant* as the waters of those rivers. But we know that the Nile proceeds from the south, divides itself into several *streams* as it passes through Egypt, and falls by *seven mouths* into the Mediterranean.

Verse 5. *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.*] This is either a *maxim* which they gather from their own history, or it is a *fact* which they are now witnessing. We see the benefit of humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God ; we have now a sweet return for our bitter tears. Or, *We have sown in tears* ; now we reap in joy. We are restored after a long and afflicting captivity to our own country, to peace, and to happiness.

Verse 6. *He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed*] The metaphor seems to be this : A poor farmer has had a very bad harvest : a very scanty portion of grain and food has been gathered from the earth. The *seed time* is now come, and is very unpromising. Out of the famine a little seed has been saved to be sown, in hopes of another crop ; but the badness of the present season almost precludes the entertainment of hope. But he must sow, or else despair and perish. He carries his all, his *precious seed*, with him in his *seed basket* ; and with a sorrowful heart commits it to the furrow, watering it in effect with his tears, and earnestly imploring the blessing of God upon it. God hears ; the season becomes mild ; he beholds successively the *blade*, the *ear*, and the *full corn* in the ear. The appointed weeks of harvest come, and the grain is very productive. He fills his arms, his carriages, with the sheaves and shocks ; and returns to his large expecting family in triumph, praising God for the wonders he has wrought. So shall it be with this *handful of returning Israelites*. They also are to be *sown*—scattered all over the land ; the blessing of God shall be upon them, and their faith and numbers shall be abundantly increased. The return here referred to, *Isaiah* describes in very natural language : "And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering to the Lord out of all nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord," chap. lvi., ver. 20.

## ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SIXTH PSALM.

The parts of this psalm are three :—

I. An expression of joy for their strange deliverance from captivity.

II. A prayer for the return of the remaining part.

III. A moral collected by the Psalmist from it.

I. The Psalmist celebrates their return, and amplifies it *three* ways :—

1. From the cause, *Jehovah*. Cyrus gave a commission for it ; but it was the Lord who disposed his heart so to do : "When the Lord turned," &c.

2. From the *manner* of it. It was strange and wonderful ; they could scarcely believe it.

3. From the *joy* at it, inward and external. 1. Their "mouths were filled with laughter." 2. Their "tongue with singing." A thankful tongue expressed the feelings of a thankful heart.

That God did this for them he proves by two evidences :—

1. The *heathen* : "Then said they among the hea-

then." They saw that they were permitted to return by virtue of a royal edict; that the very king who gave the commission was named by a prophet; that they had rich gifts given them, the vessels of gold and silver restored, &c. Who could do all these things but God?

2. The *Jews*. It is true, said the Jews, what you acknowledge. 1. "The Lord hath done great things for us." Beyond our merit, beyond our hope. 2. "Whereof we are glad," for we are freed from a galling yoke.

II. But there were some Jews left behind, for whom they pray.

1. "Turn their captivity also." Put it in their hearts to join their brethren. Several, no doubt, staid behind, because they had married strange wives, &c.

2. "Turn it as the streams in the south." Or, as some read it, *streams of water on a parched land*. Judea has been lying waste; we need many hands to cultivate it. When all join together in this work

the land will become *fruitful*, like the parched ground when powerful rivulets are sent through it in all directions.

III. The benefit of this will be great; for although it may cost us much *hard labour* and *distress* in the beginning, yet the maxim will hold good—"They who sow in tears shall reap in joy." Which the Psalmist amplifies in the next verse.

1. "He that goeth forth and weepeth." The poor husbandman, for the reasons given above and in the notes, *bearing precious seed*—seed bought with a high price, which augments his grief, being so poor.

2. "He shall doubtless come again"—in harvest, *with joy*, having a plentiful crop; for every grain sown at least one full-fed ear of corn, with at the lowest *thirty-fold*. Some maxims are to be gathered from the whole: Penitential sorrow shall be followed by the joy of pardoning mercy; he that bears the cross shall wear the crown; and, trials and difficulties shall be followed by peace and prosperity.

PSALM CXXVII.

*The necessity of God's blessing on every undertaking, without which no prosperity can be expected, 1, 2. Children are an heritage from the Lord, 3, 4. A fruitful wife is a blessing to her husband, 5.*

A Song of degrees \* for Solomon.

A. M. cir. 3559.  
B. C. cir. 445.  
Artaxerxis I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
vigesimum.

EXCEPT the LORD build the house, they labour in vain <sup>b</sup> that build it: except <sup>c</sup> the LORD keep the city, the

watchman waketh *but* in vain.

2. *It is vain* for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to <sup>d</sup> eat the bread of sorrows: *for* so he giveth his beloved sleep.

\* Or, of Solomon. Ps. lxxii. title. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. that are builders of it in it. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. cxxi. 3, 4, 5. — <sup>d</sup> Gen. iii. 17, 19. — <sup>e</sup> Gen. xxxiii. 5. xlvi. 4. Josh. xxiv. 3, 4. — <sup>f</sup> Deut.

NOTES ON PSALM CXXVII.

The *Hebrew*, *Chaldee*, and *Vulgate* attribute this psalm to Solomon. The *Syriac* says it is "A Psalm of David concerning Solomon; and that it was spoken also concerning Haggai and Zechariah, who forwarded the building of the temple." The *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, *Arabic*, and *Anglo-Saxon* have no title, but simply "A Psalm of Degrees." It was most likely composed for the building of the second temple, under Nehemiah, and by some prophet of that time.

Verse 1. *Except the Lord build the house*] To build a house is taken in *three* different senses in the sacred writings: 1. To build the temple of the Lord, which was called *הבית* *habbeith*, *the house*, by way of eminence. 2. To build any ordinary house, or place of dwelling. 3. To have a numerous offspring. In this sense it is supposed to be spoken concerning the Egyptian midwives; that because they feared the Lord, therefore he built them houses. See the note

3 Lo, <sup>e</sup> children are an heritage of the LORD: *and* <sup>f</sup> the fruit of the womb *is* his reward.

A. M. cir. 3559.  
B. C. cir. 445.  
Artaxerxis I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
vigesimum.

4 As arrows *are* in the hand of a mighty man; so *are* children of the youth.

5 Happy *is* the man that <sup>g</sup> hath his quiver full of them: <sup>h</sup> they shall not be ashamed, but they <sup>i</sup> shall speak with the enemies in the gate.

xxviii. 4. — <sup>g</sup> Heb. hath filled his quiver with them. <sup>h</sup> See Job v. 4. Prov. xxvii. 11. — <sup>i</sup> Or, shall subdue. — Ps. xviii. 47; or, destroy.

on Exod. i. 21. But, however the above passage may be interpreted, it is a fact that *בן* *ben*, a son, and *בת* *bath*, a daughter, and *בית* *beith*, a house, come from the same root *בנה* *banah*, to build; because sons and daughters build up a household, or constitute a family, as much and as really as stones and timber constitute a building. Now it is true that unless the good hand of God be upon us we cannot prosperously build a place of worship for his name. Unless we have his blessing, a dwelling-house cannot be comfortably erected. And if his blessing be not on our children, the house (the family) may be built up, but instead of its being the house of God, it will be the synagogue of Satan. All marriages that are not under God's blessing will be a private and public curse. This we see every day.

*Except the Lord keep the city*] When the returned Jews began to restore the walls of Jerusalem, and rebuild the city, Sanballat, Tobiah, and others formed plots to prevent it. Nehemiah, being informed

of this, set up proper watches and guards. The enemy, finding this, gathered themselves together, and determined to fall upon them at once, and cut them all off. Nehemiah, having gained intelligence of this also, armed his people, and placed them behind the wall. Sanballat and his company, finding that the Jews were prepared for resistance, abandoned their project; and Nehemiah, to prevent surprises of this kind, kept one-half of the people always under arms, while the other half was employed in the work. To this the Psalmist alludes; and in effect says, Though you should watch constantly, guard every place, and keep on your armour ready to repel every attack, yet remember the success of all depends upon the presence and blessing of God. While, therefore, ye are not slothful in business, be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; for there is no success either in spiritual or secular undertakings but in consequence of the benediction of the Almighty.

Verse 2. It is *vain for you to rise up early*] There seems to be here an allusion to the daily and nightly watches which Nehemiah instituted. The people were worn out with constant labour and watching; he therefore divided them in such a manner, that they who had worked in the day should rest by night, and that they who worked by night should rest in the day; and thus *his beloved*, a title of the Jews, *the beloved of God*, got sleep, due refreshment, and rest. As for Nehemiah and his servants, they never put off their clothes day or night but for washing.

Verse 3. *Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord*] That is, To many God gives children in place of temporal good. To many others he gives houses, lands, and thousands of gold and silver, and with them the womb that beareth not; and these are their inheritance. The poor man has from God a number of children, without lands or money; these are his inheritance; and God shows himself their father, feeding and supporting them by a chain of miraculous providences. Where is the *poor man* who would give up his *six children*, with the prospect of having *more*, for the *thousands or millions* of him who is the *centre of his own existence*, and has neither *root nor branch* but his forlorn solitary self upon the face of the earth? Let the fruitful family, however poor, say this to heart: "Children are an heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is his reward." And he who gave them will feed them; for it is a fact, and the *maxim* formed on it has never failed, "Wherever God sends mouths, he sends meat." "Murmur not," said an Arab to his friend, "because my family is large; know that it is for *their sakes* that God feeds thee."

Verse 4. *As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man*] Each child will, in the process of time, be a *refuge and support* to the family, as arrows in the quiver of a skilful and strong archer: the more he has the more enemies he may slay, and consequently he more redoubted shall he be.

*Children of the youth.*] The children of *young people* are always more strong and vigorous, more healthy, and generally longer lived than those of *elderly*, or comparatively *elderly persons*. Youth is

the time for marriage; I do not mean *infancy* or a comparative *childhood*, in which several fools join in marriage who are scarcely fit to leave the *nursery* or *school*. Such couples generally disagree; they cannot bear the *boyish* and *girlish* petulancies and caprices of each other; their own growth is hindered, and their offspring (if any) have never much better than an *embryo* existence. On the other hand *age* produces only a *dwarfish* or *rickety* offspring, that seldom live to procreate; and when they do, it is only to perpetuate deformity and disease. It would be easy to assign reasons for all this; but the interpretation of Scripture will seldom admit of *physiological details*. It is enough that God has said, *Children of the youth* are strong and active, *like arrows in the hands of the mighty*.

Verse 5. *Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them*] This is generally supposed to mean *his house full of children*, as his *quiver* is full of *arrows*; but I submit whether it be not more congenial to the metaphors in the text to consider it as applying to the *wife*: "Happy is the man who has a breeding or fruitful wife;" this is the *gravida sagittis pharetra*, "the quiver pregnant with arrows." But it may be thought the metaphor is not natural. I think otherwise; and I know it to be in the *Jewish style*, and the style of the times of the captivity, when this psalm was written, and we find the *puerum muliebrem*, or human *matrix*, thus denominated, Ecclus. xxvi. 12: Κατιναντι παντος πασσαλου καθησεται, και εναντι βελουσι ανοιξει φαρετραν. The reader may consult the place in the *Apocrypha*, where he will find the verse well enough translated.

*With the enemies in the gate.*] "When he shall contend with his adversaries in the gate of the house of judgment."—*Targum*. The reference is either to *courts of justice*, which were held at the *gates of cities*, or to *robbers* who endeavour to force their way into a *house* to spoil the inhabitants of their goods. In the *first case* a man falsely accused, who has a numerous family, has as many witnesses in his behalf as he has children. And in the *second case* he is not afraid of *marauders*, because his house is well defended by his active and vigorous sons. It is, I believe, to this last that the Psalmist refers.

This psalm may be entitled, "The Soliloquy of the happy Householder:—The poor man with a large loving family, and in annual expectation of an increase, because his wife, under the divine blessing, is fruitful." All are blessed of the Lord, and his hand is invariably upon them for good.

## ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVENTH PSALM.

The Jews were at this time very busy in rebuilding their temple, and the houses and walls of their city; and the prophet teaches them that, without the assistance of God, nothing will be blessed or preserved, and that their children are his especial blessing also. This the prophet shows by these words repeated, *nisi, nisi, frustra, frustra*; and proves it by an induction.

I. In civil affairs, whether in house or city.

1. "Except the Lord build the house," &c. God



must be the chief builder in the family ; his blessing and help must be prayed for, for the nourishment of wife, children, servants, cattle, &c.

2. "Except the Lord keep the city," &c. And so it is in kingdoms and commonwealths. The *Jews* had now a trowel in one hand, and a sword in the other, for fear of their enemies : but the prophet tells them that the Lord must be their protector and keeper, else their watch, magistrates, judges, &c., would be of little value.

And this he illustrates by an elegant *hypothesis* of an industrious man who strives to be rich, but looks not to God.

1. "He riseth early." He is up with the rising of the sun.

2. "He sits up late." Takes little rest.

3. "He eats the bread of sorrow." Defrauds himself of necessary food. His mind is full of anxiety and fear : but all this without God's blessing is vain : "It is vain for you to rise up early," &c. On the contrary, he who loves and fears God has God's bless-

ing : "For so he gives his beloved sleep," in the place of fear and distraction.

11. The prophet then sets down the blessing a man possesses in his children. In reference to their birth,

1. "Lo, children are an heritage," &c. They are alone the Lord's gift.

2. As regarding their education : being brought up in the fear of the Lord, they become generous spirits : "As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man," &c., enabled to do great actions, and to defend themselves and others.

And the benefit will redound to the father in his old age.

1. "Happy is the man that hath," &c. Of such good children.

2. "He shall not be ashamed," &c. He shall be able to defend himself, and keep out all injuries, being fortified by his children. And if it so happens that he has a cause pending in the gate, to be tried before the judges, he shall have the patronage of his children, and not suffer in his plea for want of advocates : his sons shall stand up in a just cause for him.

PSALM CXXVIII.

The blessedness of the man that fears the Lord, 1. He is blessed in his labour, 2; in his wife and children, 3, 4; in the ordinances of God, 5; and in a long life and numerous posterity, 6.

A Song of degrees.

A. M. cir. 3559.  
B. C. cir. 445.  
Artaxerxis I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
vigesimum.

**BLESSED** \* is every one that feareth the LORD ; that walketh in his ways.

2 <sup>b</sup> For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands : happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.

3 Thy wife shall be <sup>c</sup> as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house : thy children <sup>d</sup> like olive

\* Ps. cxii. l. cxv. 13. cxix. 1. — <sup>b</sup> Isai. iii. 10. — <sup>c</sup> Ezek. xix. 10.

plants round about thy table.

4 Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD.

5 <sup>e</sup> The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion : and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

6 Yea, thou shalt <sup>f</sup> see thy children's children, and <sup>g</sup> peace upon Israel.

A. M. cir. 3559.  
B. C. cir. 445.  
Artaxerxis I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
vigesimum.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. lii. 8. cxliv. 12. — <sup>e</sup> Ps. cxxxiv. 3. — <sup>f</sup> Gen. l. 23. Job xlii. 16. — <sup>g</sup> Ps. cxxxv. 5.

NOTES ON PSALM CXXVIII.

This psalm has no *title*, either in the *Hebrew* or any of the *Versions* ; though the *Syriac* supposes it to have been spoken of *Zerubbabel*, prince of Judah, who was earnestly engaged in building the temple of the Lord. It seems to be a continuation of the preceding psalm, or rather the *second* part of it. The man who is stated to have a numerous offspring, in the *preceding psalm*, is here represented as *sitting at table* with his large family. A person in the mean while coming in, sees his happy state, speaks of his comforts, and predicts to him and his all possible future good. And why? Because the man and his family "fear God, and walk in his ways."

Verse 2. *Thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands*] Thou shalt not be exempted from labour. Thou shalt work : but God will *bless* and *prosper* that work, and thou and thy family shall eat of it. Ye shall all live

on the produce of your own labour, and the hand of violence shall not be permitted to deprive you of it. Thus,

*Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.* Thou shalt have prosperity.

Verse 3. *Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine*] *Thy children*, in every corner and apartment of thy house, shall be the evidences of the fruitfulness of thy wife: as *bunches of grapes* on every bough of the vine are the proofs of its being in a healthy thriving state. Being *about the house sides*, or *apartments*, is spoken of the *wife*, not the *vine* ; being *around the table* is spoken of the *children*, not of the *olive-plants*. It does not appear that there were any *vines* planted *against the walls* of the houses in Jerusalem ; nor any *olive-trees* in *pots* or *tubs* in the inside of their houses : as may be found in different parts of Europe.

Verse 4. *Thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.*] A great price for a small consideration.

Fear God, and thou shalt have as much domestic good as may be useful to thee.

Verse 5. *The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion*] In all thy approaches to him in his house by prayer, by sacrifice, and by offering, thou shalt have his especial blessing. Thou shalt thrive every *where*, and in all things.

*And thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem*] Thou shalt see the cause of God flourish in thy lifetime, and his church in great prosperity.

Verse 6. *Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children*] Thou shalt not die till thou have seen thy family all settled in the world, and those of them who may be married blessed with children.

*And peace upon Israel.*] This is the same conclusion as in Ps. cxv.; and should be translated, *Peace be upon Israel!* May God favour his own cause, and bless all his people!

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHTH PSALM.

In this psalm the prophet persuades men to fear God upon the several rewards that attend upon piety. It is divided into *three* parts.

I. He describes the pious man, and pronounces him blessed, ver. 1.

II. He proposes the particulars of his blessing, ver. 2—6.

III. He gives his acclamation to it, ver. 4.

I. He describes the man who is to expect the blessing. Two qualities he must have:—

1. He must "fear the Lord." Fear, and not decline from him.

2. He must "walk in his ways." This is the true character of his fear.

3. This man shall be "blessed." Whether rich or

poor, high or low; all such shall experience the blessing of the Lord.

II. And the blessedness consists in three particulars.

1. He shall enjoy those goods he has honestly obtained with his hands: "For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands:" his happiness consists not in having much, but in enjoying what he has.

2. "Happy shalt thou be," &c. Able to help others, and leave to thy children.

3. Happy he shall be in his marriage, if his choice be prudent, and in the Lord: 1. "His wife shall be," &c. *Fetifera, non sterilis*. 2. Upon the walls of thy house. Staying at home, and caring for the things of the house, while her husband is taking care abroad.

4. Happy in his children: 1. "Thy children like olive-plants." Fresh, green, spreading, fruitful, and pledges of peace: not like sharp and prickly thorns. 2. "Round about thy table." Sit, eat, and converse with thee.

III. The acclamation follows these temporal blessings: "Thus shall the man be blessed," &c. In his goods, wife, and children.

But there is a blessing far beyond these, the sum of which is,—

1. God's blessing: "The Lord shall bless thee," &c. By a federal, a church blessing.

2. "Thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem," &c. The prosperity of the church.

3. "Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children."

*Et natos natorum, et qui nascuntur ab illis.*

"Thy children's children, and those born of them."

4. "And peace upon Israel." A flourishing commonwealth and kingdom: for by peace is understood all prosperity.

PSALM CXXIX.

The Jews give an account of the afflictions which they have passed through, 1—3. And thank God for their deliverance, 4. The judgments that shall fall on the workers of iniquity, 5—8.

A Song of degrees.

**M**ANY <sup>a</sup> a time have they afflicted me from <sup>b</sup> my youth, <sup>c</sup> may Israel now say:

2 Many a time have they afflicted me from my outh: yet they have not prevailed against me.

3 The plowers plowed upon my back: they made long their furrows.

4 The LORD is righteous: he hath cut sunder the cords of the wicked.

5 Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion.

6 Let them be as <sup>d</sup> the grass upon the house-tops, which withereth afore it groweth up:

7 Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand; nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.

8 Neither do they which go by say, "The blessing of the LORD be upon you: we bless you in the name of the LORD."

<sup>a</sup> Or, *Much*.—<sup>b</sup> See Ezek. xxiii. 3. Hos. ii. 15. xi. 1.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. cxxiv. 1.—<sup>d</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 2.—<sup>e</sup> Ruth ii. 4. Ps. cxviii. 26.

NOTES ON PSALM CXXIX.

This psalm was written after the captivity; and contains a reference to the many tribulations which the Jews passed through from their youth, i. e., the earliest part of their history, their bondage in Egypt. It has no title in any of the Versions, nor in the He-

brew text, except the general one of *A Psalm of Degrees*. The author is uncertain.

Verse 1. *Many a time have they afflicted me*] The Israelites had been generally in affliction or captivity from the earliest part of their history, here called *their youth*. So Hos. ii. 15: "She shall sing as in the

days of her youth, when she came up out of the land of Egypt." See Jer. ii. 2, and Ezek. xvi. 4, &c.

Verse 2. *Yet they have not prevailed*] They endeavoured to annihilate us as a people; but God still preserves us as his own nation.

Verse 3. *The plowers plowed upon my back*] It is possible that this mode of expression may signify that the people, during their captivity, were cruelly used by scourging, &c.; or it may be a sort of proverbial mode of expression for *the most cruel usage*. There really appears here to be a reference to a *yoke*, as if they had actually been *yoked to the plough*, or to *some kind of carriages*, and been obliged to draw like *beasts of burden*. In this way St. Jerome understood the passage; and this has the more likelihood, as in the next verse God is represented as *cutting them off* from these draughts.

Verse 4. *The Lord—hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked.*] The words have been applied to the sufferings of Christ; but I know not on what authority. No such scourging could take place in his case, as would justify the expression,

"The ploughers made long furrows there,  
Till all his body was one wound."

It is not likely that he received more than *thirty-nine* stripes. The last line is an unwarranted assertion.

Verse 5. *Let them all be confounded*] They shall be confounded. They who *hate Zion*, the church of God, hate God himself; and all such must be dealt with as *enemies*, and be utterly *confounded*.

Verse 6. *As the grass upon the housetops*] As in the East the roofs of the houses were *flat*, seeds of various kinds falling upon them would naturally vegetate, though in an imperfect way; and, because of the want of proper nourishment, would necessarily *dry* and *wither* away. If *grass*, the *mower* cannot make *hay* of it; if *corn*, the *reaper* cannot make a *sheaf* of it. Let the Babylonians be like such herbage—good for nothing, and come to nothing.

*Withereth afore it groweth up*] Before *שָׁלַק* *shalak*, it is *unsheathed*; i. e., before it *ears*, or comes to *seed*.

Verse 8. *Neither do they which go by say*] There is a reference here to the *salutations* which were given and returned by the reapers in the time of the *harvest*. We find that it was customary, when the master came to them into the field, to say unto the reapers, *The Lord be with you!* and for them to answer, *The Lord bless thee!* Ruth ii. 4. Let their land become desolate, so that no harvest shall ever more appear in it. No interchange of benedictions between owners and reapers. This has literally taken

place: Babylon is utterly destroyed; no harvests grow near the place where it stood.

## ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-NINTH PSALM.

The intent of the prophet in composing this psalm is to comfort the church in affliction, and to stir her up to glorify God for his providence over her, always for her good, and bringing her enemies to confusion, and a sudden ruin.

It is divided into *three* parts:—

I. The indefatigable malice of the enemies of the church, ver. 1, 3.

II. That their malice is vain. God saves them, ver. 2, 4.

III. God puts into the mouth of his people what they may say to their enemies, even when their malice is at the highest.

I. "Many a time have they afflicted me," &c. In which observe,—

1. That afflictions do attend those who will live righteously in Christ Jesus.

2. These afflictions are many: "Many a time," &c.

3. That they begin with the church: "From my youth." Prophets, martyrs, &c.

4. This affliction was a heavy affliction: "The plowers plowed upon my back," &c. They dealt unmercifully with me, as a husbandman does with his ground.

II. But all their malice is to no purpose.

1. "Yet they have not prevailed against me." To extinguish the church.

2. The reason is, "The Lord is righteous." And therefore he protects all those who are under his tuition, and punishes their adversaries.

3. "The Lord is righteous," &c. Cut asunder the ropes and chains with which they made their furrows: "He hath delivered Israel," &c.

III. In the following verses, to the end, the prophet, by way of prediction, declares the vengeance God would bring upon his enemies, which has *three* degrees:—

1. "Let them all be confounded," &c. Fail in their hopes against us.

2. "Let them be as the grass," &c. That they quickly perish. Grass on the housetops is good for nothing: "Which withereth afore it groweth up," &c. Never is mowed, nor raked together.

3. "Neither do they which go by say, The blessing of the Lord," &c. No man says so much as, God speed him! as is usual to say to workmen in harvest: but even this the enemies of the church, and of God's work, say not, for they wish it not.

## PSALM CXXX.

*The prayer of a penitent to God, with confession of sin, 1—3. Confidence in God's mercy, and waiting upon him, 4—6. Israel is encouraged to hope in the Lord, because of his willingness to save, 7, 8.*

## A Song of degrees.

OUT<sup>a</sup> of the depths have I cried unto thee,  
O LORD.

2 LORD, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

3<sup>b</sup> If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities,  
O LORD, who shall stand?

4 But *there is*<sup>c</sup> forgiveness with thee, that  
thou mayest be feared.

5<sup>d</sup> I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait,  
and<sup>e</sup> in his word do I hope.

6<sup>f</sup> My soul *waiteth* for the LORD more than  
they that watch for the morning: <sup>g</sup>*I say, more  
than* they that watch for the morning.

7<sup>h</sup> Let Israel hope in the LORD: for<sup>i</sup> with  
the LORD *there is* mercy, and with him *is*  
plenteous redemption.

8 And<sup>j</sup> he shall redeem Israel from all his  
iniquities.

<sup>a</sup> Lam. iii. 55. Jonah ii. 2.—<sup>b</sup> Ps. cxliii. 2. Rom. iii. 20, 23, 24.—<sup>c</sup> Exod. xxxiv. 7.—<sup>d</sup> 1 Kings viii. 40. Ps. ii. 11. Jer xxxiii. 8, 9.—<sup>e</sup> Ps. xxvii. 14. xxxiii. 20. xl. 1. Isai. viii. 17. xxvi. 8. xxx. 18.—<sup>f</sup> Ps. cxix. 81.—<sup>g</sup> Ps. lxxiii. 6.

cxix. 147.—<sup>h</sup> Or, *which watch unto the morning.*—<sup>i</sup> Ps. cxxxii. 1.—<sup>j</sup> Ps. lxxxvi. 5, 15. Isai. lv. 7.—<sup>k</sup> Ps. ciii. 3, 4. Matt. i. 21.

## NOTES ON PSALM CXXX.

This psalm has no title nor author's name, either in the Hebrew, or in any of the Versions; though the Syriac says it was spoken of Nehemiah the priest. It was most probably composed during the captivity; and contains the complaint of the afflicted Jews, with their hopes of the remission of those sins which were the cause of their sufferings, and their restoration from captivity to their own land. This is one of those called *penitential psalms*.

Verse 1. *Out of the depths*] The captives in Babylon represent their condition like those who are in a prison—an abyss or deep ditch, ready to be swallowed up.

Verse 2. *Lord, hear my voice*] They could have no helper but God, and to him they earnestly seek for relief.

Verse 3. *If thou—shouldest mark iniquities*] If thou shouldst set down every deviation in thought, word, and deed from thy holy law; and if thou shouldst call us into judgment for all our infidelities, both of heart and life; O Lord, who could stand? Who could stand such a trial, and who could stand acquitted in the judgment? This is a most solemn saying; and if we had not the doctrine that is in the next verse, who could be saved?

Verse 4. *But there is forgiveness with thee*] Thou canst forgive; mercy belongs to thee, as well as judgment. The doctrine here is the doctrine of St. John: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken!" Jesus has died for our sins; therefore God can be just, and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.

Verse 5. *I wait for the Lord*] The word *קָוָה* *kavah*, which we translate to *wait*, properly signifies the *extension of a cord from one point to another*. This is a fine metaphor: God is one point, the *human heart* is the other; and the *extended cord* between both is the *earnest believing desire of the soul*. This *desire*, strongly extended from the heart to God, in every mean of grace, and when there is none, is the *active energetic waiting* which God requires, and which will be successful.

Verse 6. More than *they that watch for the morning*.] I believe the original should be read differently from what it is here. The *Chaldee* has, "More than they who observe the morning watches, that they may offer the morning oblation." This gives a good sense, and is, perhaps, the true meaning. Most of the Versions have, "From the morning to the night watches." Or the passage may be rendered, "My soul waiteth for the Lord from the morning watches to the morning watches." That is, "I wait both day and night."

Verse 7. *Let Israel hope in the Lord*] This, to hope for salvation, is their *duty* and their *interest*. But what *reason* is there for this *hope*? A twofold reason:—

1. *With the Lord there is mercy*] חַסֵּד *hachesed*, THAT *mercy, the fund, the essence of mercy*.

2. *And with him is plenteous redemption*.] וְרַבְרַבָּה עֲוֹנוֹתֵינוּ *veharabbah immo peduth*; and that *abundant redemption*, that to which there is none like, the *Fountain of redemption, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world*. The article הַ, both in הרַבְרַבָּה *harabbah* and חַסֵּד *hachesed*, is very emphatic.

Verse 8. *He shall redeem Israel*] Καὶ αὐτὸς λυτρώσεται, "He will make a ransom for Israel. He will provide a great price for Israel, and by it will take away all his iniquities. I would not restrict this to Israel in Babylon. Every *believer* may take it to himself. God perfectly justifies and perfectly sanctifies all that come unto him through the Son of his love.

## ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTIETH PSALM.

In this psalm the Spirit of God proposes to us the case of a person oppressed with the wrath of God against sin, yet flying to him for comfort, remission, and purification.

I. Acknowledging his miserable condition, he prays to be heard, ver. 12.

II. He desires remission of sin, ver. 3, 4.

III. He expresses his hope and confidence, ver. 5, 6.

IV. He exhorts God's people to trust in him, ver. 7, 8.

I. The Psalmist likens himself to a man in the bottom of a pit:—

1. "Out of the depths have I cried," &c. A true penitent cries out of the depth of his misery, and from the depth of a heart sensible of it.

2. "Lord, hear my voice." Although I be so low, thou canst hear me.

3. "Let thine ears be attentive," &c. Or I cry in vain. II. But there was a reason why God should not hear. He was a grievous sinner; but all men are the same; therefore,

1. "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity." And I have nothing of my own but it to bring before thee, yet execute not thy just anger on account of my transgressions; for,

2. "There is mercy with thee," &c. True repentance requires two things, the recognition of our own misery and the persuasion of God's mercy. Both are needful; for if we know not the former, we shall not seek mercy; and if we despair of mercy, we shall never find it.

3. "That thou mayest be feared." Not with a servile but a filial fear, which involves prayer, faith, hope, love, adoration, giving of thanks, &c. This fear leads to God's throne as a merciful and pardoning God.

III. The method of God's servants in their addresses to heaven is, that they believe, hope, pray, and expect. Thus did the Psalmist.

1. "I expect the Lord." In faith.

2. "My soul doth wait." His expectation was active and real, and proceeded from fervency of heart.

3. His expectation was not presumptive, but

grounded upon God's word and promise: "In his word is my hope."

4. "My soul waiteth for the Lord." Which he illustrates by the similitude of a watchman who longs for the morning.

5. "I wait for the Lord more than they," &c. It was now night with him, darkness and misery were upon his soul; the morning he expected was the remission of his sins, which must come from God's mercy. For this he eagerly waited.

IV. He proposes his own example to God's people:—

1. "Let Israel hope in the Lord," like me, and cry from the depths.

2. "For with the Lord there is mercy." This is the reason and encouragement for the hope. Mercy flows from him.

3. "And with him is redemption." Which we need, being all sold under sin; and this redemption was purchased for us by the death of his Son.

4. And this redemption is plentiful; for by it he has redeemed the whole world, 1 John i. 2.

5. And this is to take effect upon Israel: "For he shall redeem Israel," &c. It is not, as the Jews expected, a temporal redemption, but a spiritual, as the angel told Joseph: "His name shall be called Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins."

PSALM CXXXI.

The Psalmist professes his humility, and the peaceableness of his disposition and conduct,

1, 2. Exhorts Israel to hope in God, 3.

A Song of degrees of David.

**L**ORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: <sup>a</sup> neither do I <sup>b</sup> exercise myself in great matters, or in things too <sup>c</sup> high for me.

<sup>a</sup> Rom. xii. 16.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. *walk*. —<sup>c</sup> Heb. *wonderful*. Job xlii. 3. Ps. cxxxix. 6.

2 Surely I have behaved and quieted <sup>d</sup> myself, <sup>e</sup> as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul *is* even as a weaned child.

3 Let Israel hope in the LORD <sup>f</sup> from henceforth and for ever.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. *my soul*. —<sup>e</sup> Matt. xviii. 3. 1 Cor. xiv. 20.—<sup>f</sup> Ps. cxxx. 7.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. *from now*.

NOTES ON PSALM CXXXI.

Some think that David composed this psalm as a vindication of himself, when accused by Saul's courtiers that he affected the crown, and was laying schemes and plots to possess himself of it. Others think the psalm was made during the captivity, and that it contains a fair account of the manner in which the captives behaved themselves, under the domination of their oppressors.

Verse 1. *Lord, my heart is not haughty*] The principle of *pride* has no place in my heart; and consequently the *high, lofty, and supercilious look* does not appear in my eyes. I neither *look up*, with desire to obtain, to the *state* of others, nor *look down* with contempt to the meanness or poverty of those below me. And the whole of my conduct proves this; for *I have not exercised myself*—walked, in *high matters*, nor associated myself with the higher ranks of the community, nor in *great matters*, נִפְתָּר niph-

*laoth, wonderful* or sublime things; *too high for me*, מִמֵּנִי *mimmeni, alien from me*, and that do not belong to a person in my sphere and situation in life.

Verse 2. *I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child*] On the contrary, I have been under the rod of others, and when chastised have not complained; and my *silence* under my affliction was the fullest proof that I neither *murmured* nor *repined*. but received all as coming from the hands of a just God.

*My soul is even as a weaned child.*] I felt I must forego many conveniences and comforts which I once enjoyed; and these I gave up without repining or demurring.

Verse 3. *Let Israel hope in the Lord*] Act all as I have done; trust in him who is the God of justice and compassion; and, after you have suffered awhile, he will make bare his arm and deliver you. שְׂרָרָה as it is, this is a most instructive psalm. He who

as the Psalmist did, is never likely to come to mischief, or do any to others.

## ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIRST PSALM.

I. The Psalmist, having been accused of proud and haughty conduct, protests his innocence, states his humble thoughts of himself, and the general meekness of his department.

II. That his confidence was in God; in him he trusted, and therefore was far from ambition.

III. And by his own example calls on Israel to trust in God as he did.

I. He protests his humility.

1. There was no *pride* in his heart; and he calls God to witness it: "Lord, my heart is not haughty."

2. There was no *arrogance* in his carriage: "Nor mine eyes lofty."

3. Nor in his undertakings: "Neither do I exercise myself in great matters." He kept himself within his own bounds and vocation, and meddled not with state affairs.

II. What preserved him from *pride* was *humility*. He brought down his desires, and wants, and views to his circumstances.

1. "Surely I have behaved and quieted myself." Have I not given every evidence of my mild and

peaceable behaviour? and I certainly never permitted a high thought to rise within me.

2. I acted as the *child weaned* from his mother. When once deprived of my comforts, and brought into captivity, I submitted to the will of God, and brought down my mind to my circumstances.

III. He proposes his own example of humility and peaceableness for all Israel to follow.

1. "Let Israel hope." Never despair of God's mercy, nor of his gracious providence. The *storm* will be succeeded by *fair and fine weather*.

2. "Let Israel hope in the Lord." Never content yourselves with merely supposing that in the course of things these afflictions will wear out. No; look to God, and depend on him, that *he* may bring them to a happy conclusion.

Remember that he is *Jehovah*.

1. Wise to plan.

2. Good to purpose.

3. Strong to execute, and will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly.

4. Trust *from henceforth*. If you have not begun before, begin now.

5. And do not be weary; trust *for ever*. Your case can never be out of the reach of God's power and mercy.

## PSALM CXXXII.

The Psalmist prays that God would remember his promises to David, 1. His purpose to bring the ark of the Lord into a place of rest, 2—5. Where it was found, and the prayer in removing it, 6—9. The promises made to David and his posterity, 10—12. God's choice of Zion for a habitation, and his promises to the people, 13—17. All their enemies shall be confounded, 18.

## XXVIII. DAY. MORNING PRAYER

## A Song of degrees.

A. M. cir. 3489.  
B. C. cir. 515.  
Darii I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
sextum.

**L**ORD, remember David,  
and all his afflictions:

2 How he sware unto the LORD,  
and vowed unto <sup>b</sup> the mighty

God of Jacob;

3 Surely I will not come into the tabernacle

<sup>a</sup> Ps. lxxv. 1. — <sup>b</sup> Gen. xlix. 24. — <sup>c</sup> Prov. vi. 4. — <sup>d</sup> Acts vii. 46.

## NOTES ON PSALM CXXXII.

Some attribute this psalm to *David*, but without sufficient ground; others, to *Solomon*, with more likelihood; and others, to some inspired author at the conclusion of the captivity, which is, perhaps, the most probable. It refers to the building of the second temple, and placing the ark of the covenant in it.

Verse 1. *Lord, remember David*] Consider the promises thou hast made to this thy eminent servant, that had respect, not only to *him* and to his *family*, but to all the *Israelitish people*.

Verse 2. *How he sware unto the Lord*] It is only in this place that we are informed of David's vow to

of my house, nor go up into my bed;

4 I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids,

5 Until I <sup>d</sup> find out a place for the LORD,  
<sup>e</sup> an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.

6 Lo, we heard of it <sup>f</sup> at Ephrath: <sup>g</sup> we

<sup>e</sup> Heb. *habitations*. — <sup>f</sup> 1 Sam. xvii. 12. — <sup>g</sup> 1 Sam. vii. 1.

the Lord, relative to the building of the temple; but we find he had fully purposed the thing.

Verse 3. *Surely I will not come*] This must refer to the *situation* of the temple; or, as we would express it, he would not pass another day till he had found out the *ground* on which to build the temple, and projected the *plan*, and devised *ways* and *means* to execute it. And we find that he would have acted in all things according to his oath and vow, had God permitted him. But even after the Lord told him that Solomon, not he, should build the house, he still continued to show his good will by collecting treasure and materials for the building, all the rest of his life.

A. M. cir. 3489.  
B. C. cir. 515.  
Dari I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
sextum.

found it <sup>a</sup> in the fields of the wood.

7 We will go into his tabernacles : <sup>b</sup> we will worship at his

footstool.

8 <sup>c</sup> Arise, O LORD, into thy rest; thou, and <sup>d</sup> the ark of thy strength.

9 Let thy priests <sup>e</sup> be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy.

10 For thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed.

11 <sup>f</sup> The LORD hath sworn *in* truth unto David; he will not turn from it; <sup>g</sup> Of the fruit of <sup>h</sup> thy body will I set upon thy throne.

12 If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimonies that I shall teach them,

<sup>a</sup> 1 Chron. xiii. 5. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. v. 7. xcix. 5. — <sup>c</sup> Numb. x. 35. 2 Chron. vi. 41, 42. — <sup>d</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 61. — <sup>e</sup> Job xxix. 14. Ver. 16. Isai. lxi. 10. — <sup>f</sup> Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4, 33, &c. cx. 4. <sup>g</sup> 2 Sam. vii. 12. 1 Kings viii. 25. 2 Chron. vi. 16. Luke i. 69. Acts ii. 30. — <sup>h</sup> Heb. *thy belly*. — <sup>i</sup> Ps. xlviii. 1, 2.

Verse 5. *The mighty God of Jacob.*] אביר אביר *abir yaacob*, the *Mighty One of Jacob*. We have this epithet of God for the first time, Gen. xlix. 24. Hence, perhaps, the *abirim* of the heathen, the stout ones, the *strong beings*.

Verse 6. *Lo, we have heard of it at Ephratah*] This may be considered as a continuation of David's vow; as if he had said: As I had determined to build a temple for the ark, and heard that it was at *Ephratah*, I went and found it in the *fields of Jaar*, ער;—not the wood, but Kirjath Jaar or Jearim, where the ark was then lodged;—and having found it, he entered the tabernacle, ver. 7; and then, adoring that God whose presence was in it, he invited him to arise and come to the place which he had prepared for him.

Verse 8. *Arise, O Lord, into thy rest; thou and the ark of thy strength.*] Using the same expressions which Solomon used when he dedicated the temple, 2 Chron. vi. 41, 42. There are several difficulties in these passages. *Ephratah* may mean the *tribe of Ephraim*; and then we may understand the place thus: "I have learned that the ark had been in the tribe of Ephraim, and I have seen it at Kirjath-jearim, or *Field of the woods*"; but this is not a proper place for it, for the Lord hath chosen Jerusalem." It is true that the ark did remain in that tribe from the days of Joshua to Samuel, during *three hundred and twenty-eight* years; and thence it was brought to Kirjath-jearim, where it continued *seventy* years, till the commencement of the reign of David over all Israel.

But if we take verses 6, 7, and 8, *not* as the continuation of David's vow, but as the *words of the captives in Babylon*, the explanation will be more plain and easy: "We have heard, O Lord, from our fathers, that thy tabernacle was formerly a long time at Shiloh, in the tribe of Ephraim. And our history informs us that it has been also at Kirjath-jearim, the fields of the wood; and afterwards it was brought to Jerusalem, and there established: but Jerusalem is

their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore.

13 <sup>i</sup> For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired *it* for his habitation.

14 <sup>k</sup> This *is* my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.

15 <sup>l</sup> I <sup>m</sup> will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread.

16 <sup>n</sup> I will also clothe her priests with salvation: <sup>o</sup> and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.

17 <sup>p</sup> There will I make the horn of David to bud: <sup>q</sup> I have ordained a <sup>r</sup> lamp for mine anointed.

18 His enemies will I <sup>s</sup> clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish.

<sup>k</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 16. — <sup>l</sup> Ps. cxlvii. 14. — <sup>m</sup> Or, *surely*. — <sup>n</sup> 2 Chron. vi. 41. Ver. 9. Ps. cxlix. 4. — <sup>o</sup> Hos. xi. 12. <sup>p</sup> Ezek. xxix. 21. Luke i. 69. — <sup>q</sup> See 1 Kings xi. 36. <sup>r</sup> 4. 2 Chron. xxi. 7. — <sup>s</sup> Or, *candle*. — <sup>t</sup> Ps. xxxv. 26. <sup>u</sup> cx. 29.

now ruined, the temple destroyed, and thy people in captivity. Arise, O Lord, and re-establish thy dwelling-place in thy holy city!" See *Calmet* and others on this place.

Verse 9. *Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness*] Let them be as remarkable for *inward holiness* as they are for the splendour of their *holy vestments*.

Verse 10. *The face of thine anointed.*] David. Remember thy promises to him, that he may be restored to thee and to thy worship.

Verse 11. *The Lord hath sworn*] As David swore to the Lord, so the Lord swears to David, that he will establish his throne, and place his posterity on it; and that he had respect to David's Antitype, we learn from St. Peter, Acts ii. 30, where see the note. This verse with the following refers to the spiritual David, and the Christian church.

Verse 12. *If thy children will keep my covenant*] This was conditional with respect to the posterity of David. They have been driven from the throne, because they did not keep the Lord's covenant; but the true David is on the throne, and his posterity forms the genuine Israelites.

Verse 13. *The Lord hath chosen Zion*] Therefore neither *Shiloh* nor *Kirjath-jearim* is the place of his rest.

Verse 14. *This is my rest for ever*] Here the Christian church is most indubitably meant. This is *God's place* for ever. After this there never will be another *dispensation*; Christianity closes and completes all communications from heaven to earth. God has nothing greater to give to mankind on this side heaven; nor does man need any thing better; nor is his nature capable of any thing more excellent.

Verse 15. *I will abundantly bless her provision*] There shall be an abundant provision of salvation made for mankind in the Christian church. Our Lord's *multiplication of the loaves* was a *type* and *proof* of it.

Verse 16. *I will also clothe her priests*] All Christian ministers, *with salvation*; this shall appear in all their

conduct. *Salvation—redemption from all sin* through the blood of the Lamb, shall be their great and universal message.

Verse 17. *There will I make the horn of David to bud*] There, in the Christian church, the power and authority of the spiritual David shall appear.

*I have ordained a lamp*] I have taken care to secure a posterity, to which the promises shall be expressly fulfilled.

Verse 18. *His enemies will I clothe with shame*] Every opponent of the Christian cause shall be confounded.

*But upon himself shall his crown flourish.*] There shall be no end of the government of Christ's kingdom. From verse 11 to the end, the spiritual David and his posterity are the subjects of which the psalm treats.

#### ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND PSALM.

This psalm is divided into *three* parts:—

I. A petition, before which is David's care and vow to settle the ark, and with what reverence they would settle it in the temple; and he sets down the solemn prayer then used, ver. 1—10.

II. An explication of the promises made unto David for the continuance of his kingdom in his posterity, ver. 11, 12, and God's love to his church, ver. 13.

III. A prophecy, spoken in the person of God, for the stability of Christ's church; and the blessings upon the people, the priests, and the house of David, from ver. 14 to the end.

I. In all prayer a man must reflect upon God's promise; otherwise he cannot pray in faith.

1. "Lord, remember David:" Thy promises made to him. First he prays for the king; then for the ecclesiastics, ver. 8, 9; then for the people, ver. 8.

2. "And all his afflictions:" Many he had before he was king; and one of the greatest was the settling of the ark.

Now this his ardent and sincere desire appears by his oath. And now,—

1. "How he swore unto the Lord," &c.

2. The substance of which was, "Surely I will not come," &c.

Now this is hyperbolic; for we must not conceive that he went not into his house or bed till he found out a place to build God's house. But see the note.

1. "I will not come into—my house:" So as to forget to build God's house.

2. "Nor go up into my bed:" Or let any thing make me forget the work.

3. "I will not give sleep," &c.: But make provision for building the temple.

And here the prophet inserts two verses by way of gratitude.

First, he exults for the news of the ark: "Lo, we heard of it at Ephrathah," &c.

By *Ephrathah* some understand the land of *Ephraim*, in which the ark remained at Shiloh. Being afterwards sent home, it was found in the field of Joshua; thence conveyed to the house of *Amminadab*, who dwelt in *Kirjath-yearim*, that signifies a *woody city*. Hence, David might well say, "And found it in the fields of the wood," &c.

And the place for the ark being found, he calls on Israel, saying,

1. "We will go into his tabernacles." Now the ark is rested in Mount Zion.

2. "And we will worship," &c. Not make rash approaches to the ark, but come with reverence, and bow in his presence.

The ark being brought into the temple, he uses this solemn form:

1. "Arise, O Lord," &c. He prays and invites him to dwell in his temple.

2. "Into thy rest." To pass no more from place to place.

3. "Thou, and the ark of thy strength." Show thy power and strength, as thou didst at *Jordan*, &c.

Before the ark in the temple he prays,—

1. "Let thy priests be clothed," &c. Inwardly, in heart and soul.

2. "Let thy saints shout," &c. With a cheerful voice, for the ark rests.

3. "For thy servant David's sake," &c. 1. David is not here to be taken absolutely for his person only, as having the covenants and promise made to him, but for the promise's sake. 2. "Turn not away," &c. Suffer me not to depart from thy presence unheard.

II. The prophet now proceeds to count up the promises made to *David*, which God confirmed by oath, in which we are to observe, 1. The manner of the promise: "The Lord hath sworn in truth," &c. It was merciful to promise; but more so to bind himself by oath. 2. The matter of his oath expressed ver. 11—14.

1. For the seed of David, as respects Christ, is categorical and absolute: "Of the fruit of thy body," &c. Which word St. *Peter* refers to Christ, Acts ii. 30. According to the flesh he was David's seed; for by the *mother's* side Christ was to be David's seed, not by the father's.

2. For the seed of David, as it relates to his posterity, the oath is hypothetical and conditional: "If thy children will keep," &c.

As the external kingdom was by this oath annexed to one family, so the external worship was assigned by it to one place.

1. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion," &c.

2. "This is my rest for ever." Zion was the seat of the sanctuary till the coming of the Messiah. But Zion was but a type of Christ's church, which he hath chosen to be his rest for ever.

III. The prophet represents God as promising good things to his church.

1. Such abundance of temporal things that the poor shall not want: "I will abundantly bless her provision," &c.

2. That her "priests shall be clothed with salvation," &c.

3. "There will I make the horn of David to flourish," &c. That is, the kingdom of the Messiah.

4. The fourth benefit God promises is the confusion of their enemies, and the eternal authority in this kingdom: "His enemies will I clothe with shame, but upon himself shall his crown flourish."



PSALM CXXXIII.

The comfort and benefit of the communion of saints, 1—3.

A Song of degrees of David.

A. M. cir. 3489.  
B. C. cir. 515.  
Dari I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
sextum.

**B**EHOLD, how good and how pleasant *it is* for <sup>a</sup> brethren to dwell <sup>b</sup> together in unity!

2 *It is* like <sup>c</sup> the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, *even*

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xiii. 8. Heb. xiii. 1. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. *even together*. — <sup>c</sup> Exod. xxx. 25, 30.

NOTES ON PSALM CXXXIII.

There are different opinions concerning this psalm; the most probable is that it represents the priests and Levites returned from captivity, and united in the service of God in the sanctuary. This, the preceding, and the following, appear to make one subject. In the *one hundred and thirty-second*, the Lord is entreated to enter his temple, and pour out his benediction; in the *one hundred and thirty-third*, the beautiful order and harmony of the temple service is pointed out; and in the *one hundred and thirty-fourth*, all are exhorted to diligence and watchfulness in the performance of their duty. It is attributed to David by the Hebrew, the Syriac, and the Vulgate; but no name is prefixed in the Septuagint, Æthiopic, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon.

Verse 1. *Behold, how good and how pleasant*] Unity is, according to this scripture, a *good* thing and a *pleasant*; and especially among *brethren*—members of the same family, of the same Christian community, and of the same nation. And why not among the great family of mankind? On the other hand, *disunion* is bad and hateful. The former is from heaven; the latter, from hell.

Verse 2. *Like the precious ointment*] The composition of this holy anointing oil may be seen, Exod. xxx. 23; *sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus, cassia lignea, and olive oil*. The odour of this must have been very agreeable, and serves here as a metaphor to point out the exquisite excellence of brotherly love.

*Ran down upon the beard*] The oil was poured upon the head of Aaron so profusely as to run down upon his garments. It is customary in the East to pour out the oil on the head so profusely as to reach every limb.

Verse 3. *As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion*] This was not Mount Zion, *רֶם צִיּוֹן*, in Jerusalem, but *Sion* *צִיּוֹן*, which is a part of Hermon, see Deut. iv. 48: "Mount Sion, which is Hermon." On this mountain the dew is very copious. Mr. Maundrell says that "with this dew, even in dry weather, their tents were as wet as if it had rained the whole night." This seems to show the strength of the comparison.

*For there*] Where this unity is.

*The Lord commanded the blessing*] That is, an *everlasting life*. There he pours out his blessings, and gives a long and happy life.

Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; 3 As the dew of <sup>d</sup> Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for <sup>e</sup> there the LORD commanded the blessing, *even* life for evermore.

A. M. cir. 3489.  
B. C. cir. 515.  
Dari I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
sextum.

<sup>d</sup> Deut. iv. 48. — <sup>e</sup> Lev. xxv. 21. Deut. xxviii. 8. Ps. xlii. 8

For other particulars, see the commentators *passim*, and the following *analysis*.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-THIRD PSALM.

In this psalm the blessings of peace and unity are recommended and described, whether in the church, family, or kingdom.

I. *It is*, says the prophet, *a good and pleasant thing*, &c., ver. 1.

II. He declares both by similitudes.

1. The pleasantness, by the *ointment* with which the high-priest was anointed.

2. The goodness, by the *dew* which fell upon the mountains.

3. But in plainer terms, by the *blessing of God* upon the head of the peaceful.

I. The prophet begins with an encomium of peace, unity, and concord.

1. "Behold." Take notice of it in its effects.

2. "How good and pleasant," &c. He admires, but cannot express it.

3. The *encomium* itself is expressed by two epithets: 1. *It is good*, and brings much profit. 2. *It is pleasant*, and brings much content with it.

4. The concord itself is thus expressed: *Brethren*, either in a church, family, or kingdom, should be of one soul, and intent on the common good.

II. The pleasantness is compared to "the precious ointment upon the head."

1. All benefit from this concord; princes, nobles, and people. *The head, beard, and skirts*.

2. It sends forth a sweet and reviving savour.

3. It is as balsam poured into wounds.

The profit he compares to the dews: "As the dew of Hermon," &c., gently descending, and fructifying and enriching the ground.

And this he sets down without any metaphor: "For there the Lord commanded the blessing," &c.; which approbation he manifests by the abundance he pours where concord and unity are found.

1. He commands his blessing. Makes all creatures useful to them.

2. His blessing is prosperity, good success. To bless is to benefit.

3. This he calls life; for with troubles, griefs, &c. a man's life is no life. A quiet life those shall have who live in peace, without dissensions respecting religion, or in matters connected with the state.

## PSALM CXXXIV.

An exhortation to praise God in his sanctuary, 1—3.

A Song of degrees.

A. M. cir. 3489.  
B. C. cir. 515.  
Darii I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
sextum.

**B**EHOLD, bless ye the LORD, \*all ye servants of the LORD, <sup>b</sup> which by night stand in the house of the LORD.

2 <sup>c</sup> Lift up your hands <sup>d</sup> in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.

3 \*The LORD that made heaven and earth <sup>f</sup> bless thee out of Zion.

A. M. cir. 3489.  
B. C. cir. 515.  
Darii I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
sextum.

\* Ps. cxxxv. 1, 2.—<sup>b</sup> 1 Chron. ix. 33.—<sup>c</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 8.

<sup>d</sup> Or, in holiness.—<sup>e</sup> Ps. cxxiv. 8.—<sup>f</sup> Ps. cxxviii. 5. cxxxv. 21.

## NOTES ON PSALM CXXXIV.

This is the last of the fifteen psalms called *Psalms of degrees*. Who was the author is uncertain; it is attributed to *David* only by the *Syriac*; it is intimately connected with the two preceding psalms, and is an exhortation to the priests and Levites who kept nightly watch in the temple, to be assiduous in praising the Lord. It seems to consist of two parts: 1. An exhortation, probably from the high-priest, to those priests and Levites who kept watch in the temple by night, to spend their time profitably, and duly celebrate the praises of God, ver. 1, 2. The *second* part, which is contained in the third verse, is the prayer of the priests and Levites for the *high-priest*, who seems now to be going to his rest.

Verse 1. *Behold, bless ye the Lord*] I believe *הנה חנה* should be taken here in the sense of *take heed!* Be upon your guard; you serve a jealous God; provoke him not.

*Which by night stand*] Who minister during the night.

Verse 2. *Lift up your hands in the sanctuary*] *קדש* *kodesh*, "in holiness:" or, as the *SYRIAC*, *ܩܘܕܫܐ* *lekoudishe*, "to holiness;" in *sancta*, *VULGATE*; and *εὐρα ἁγία*, *SEPTUAGINT*; "in holy things;" or, as the *ETHIOPIA*, "in the house of the sanctuary." The expression seems very similar to that of St. Paul, 1 Tim. ii. 8: "Lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."

*Bless the Lord.*] That is, speak good of his name: tell the wonders he has wrought, and show that his name is exalted.

Verse 3. *The Lord that made heaven and earth*] Who governs and possesses all things; and who can give you every spiritual and earthly blessing.

*Bless thee out of Zion.*] As if they had said, "We will attend to your orders; go in peace, and may God shower down his blessings upon you!" The blessing pronounced by the priests was the following: "The Lord bless thee and keep thee! The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee! The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace!" Numb. vi. 24—26.

## ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FOURTH PSALM.

In this psalm the prophet—

1. Exhorts the Levites and ministers of religion to attend the appointed hours of prayer.

II. Then the ministers bless the people.

I. 1. "Behold, bless ye the Lord."

2. Yet principally, "all ye servants of the Lord:" Choose out of the people to this service.

3. "Which by night stand in the house of the Lord," &c.: In the temple ye ought not to be sleepy, or forget your duty.

4. Therefore, "lift up your hands," &c., before the ark of the covenant, which was the symbol of his presence.

5. "Bless the Lord," &c.

II. The other part of your office is to bless the people; let not that be forgotten, but say,—

1. "The Lord bless thee:" Let them know from whom the blessing comes.

2. "Out of Zion:" So long as they remain in the unity of the church; there was none to be expected out of Zion.

3. "The Lord that made:" &c. He that hath power to bless hath given, and must give, his blessing to all creatures, without which they will not be blessed to thee; therefore, bless him.

## PSALM CXXXV.

An exhortation to praise God for his goodness and greatness, 1—5; for his wonders in nature, 6, 7; his wonders done in Egypt, 8, 9; in the wilderness, 10—12; for his goodness to his people, 13, 14. The vanity of idols, 15—18. Israel, with its priests and Levites, exhorted to praise the Lord, 19—21.

A. M. cir. 3489.  
B. C. cir. 515.  
Dari I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
sexturn.

**PRAISE** ye the LORD.  
Praise ye the name of the  
LORD; \* praise *him*, O ye ser-  
vants of the LORD.

2<sup>b</sup> Ye that stand in the house of the LORD,  
in <sup>c</sup> the courts of the house of our God,

3 Praise the LORD; for <sup>d</sup> the LORD *is* good:  
sing praises unto his name; \* for *it is* pleasant.

4 For <sup>e</sup> the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto  
himself, *and* Israel for his peculiar treasure.

5 For I know that <sup>f</sup> the LORD *is* great, and  
*that* our LORD *is* above all gods.

6 <sup>h</sup> Whatsoever the LORD pleased, *that* did  
he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and  
all deep places.

7 <sup>i</sup> He causeth the vapours to ascend from  
the ends of the earth; <sup>k</sup> he maketh lightnings  
for the rain; he bringeth the wind out of his  
<sup>l</sup> treasuries.

8 <sup>m</sup> Who smote the first-born  
of Egypt, <sup>n</sup> both of man and  
beast.

9 <sup>o</sup> *Who* sent tokens and won-  
ders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, <sup>p</sup> upon  
Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.

10 <sup>q</sup> Who smote great nations, and slew  
mighty kings;

11 Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king  
of Bashan, and <sup>r</sup> all the kingdoms of Canaan:

12 <sup>s</sup> And gave their land *for* an heritage, an  
heritage unto Israel his people.

13 <sup>t</sup> Thy name, O LORD, *endureth* for ever;  
*and* thy memorial, O LORD, <sup>u</sup> throughout all  
generations.

14 <sup>v</sup> For the LORD will judge his people,  
and he will repent himself concerning his  
servants.

15 <sup>w</sup> The idols of the heathen *are* silver and

A. M. cir. 3489.  
B. C. cir. 515.  
Dari I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
sexturn.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. cxlii. 1. cxxxiv. 1. — <sup>b</sup> Luke ii. 37. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. xcii. 13. xcvi. 8. cxvii. 19. — <sup>d</sup> Ps. cxix. 68. — <sup>e</sup> Ps. cxlvii. 1. <sup>f</sup> Exod. xix. 5. Deut. vii. 6, 7. x. 15. — <sup>g</sup> Ps. xc. 3. xcvii. 9. — <sup>h</sup> Ps. cxv. 3. — <sup>i</sup> Jer. x. 13. li. 16. — <sup>k</sup> Job xxxviii. 25, 26. xxxviii. 24, &c. Zech. x. 1. — <sup>l</sup> Job xxxviii. 22. <sup>m</sup> Exod. xii. 12, 29. Ps. lxxviii. 51. cxxxvi. 10. — <sup>n</sup> Heb.

from man unto beast. — <sup>o</sup> Exod. vii. viii. ix. x. xiv. <sup>p</sup> Ps. cxxxvi. 15. — <sup>q</sup> Numb. xxi. 24, 25, 26, 34, 35. Ps. cxxxvi. 17, &c. — <sup>r</sup> Josh. xii. 7. — <sup>s</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 55. cxvii. 21, 22. — <sup>t</sup> Exod. iii. 15. Ps. cii. 12. — <sup>u</sup> Heb. *to generation and generation.* — <sup>v</sup> Deut. xxxii. 36. — <sup>w</sup> Ps. cxv. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

NOTES ON PSALM CXXXV.

This psalm is intimately connected with the preceding. It is an exhortation addressed to the *priests* and *Levites*, and to all *Israel*, to publish the praises of the Lord. The conclusion of this psalm is nearly the same with Psalm cxv.; and what is said about *idols*, and the effects of the power of God, seems to be taken from it and the tenth chapter of Jeremiah; and from these and other circumstances it appears the psalm was written *after the captivity*; and might, as *Calmet* conjectures, have been used at the dedication of the second temple.

Verse 1. *Praise ye the Lord*] This may be considered as the *title*, for it has none other.

*Praise ye the name of the Lord*] Perhaps the original יהוה יהוה halelu eth shem Yehovah, should be translated, *Praise ye the name Jehovah*; that is, Praise God in his infinite essence of being, holiness, goodness, and truth.

Verse 2. *Ye that stand*] Priests and Levites. For which he gives several reasons.

Verse 3. *The Lord is good*] Here is the *first reason* why he should be praised; and a *second* is subjoined: —

*For it is pleasant.*] It is becoming to acknowledge this infinite Being, and our dependance on him; and it is truly comfortable to an upright mind to be thus employed.

Verse 4. *For the Lord hath chosen Jacob*] This is a *third reason*. He has taken the Israelites for his peculiar people, יהוה *segullatho*, his peculiar treasure; and now has brought them home to himself from their captivity and wanderings.

Verse 5. *The Lord is great*] Unlimited in his power: *another reason*.

*Is above all gods.*] Every class of *being*, whether idolized or not; because he is the Fountain of existence. This is a *fifth reason*.

Verse 6. *Whatsoever the Lord pleased*] All that he has done is *right*, and therefore it is *pleasing* in his sight. He is the Author of all existence. Angels, men, spirits, the heavens, the earth, and all their contents, were made by him, and are under his control.

Verse 7. *He causeth the vapours to ascend*] Dr. Shaw thinks that the account here refers to the *autumnal rains* in the *East*. Of them he speaks as follows: "Seldom a night passes without much *lightning* in the north-west quarter, but not attended with *thunder*; and when this *lightning* appears in the west or south-west points, it is a sure sign of the approaching *rain*, which is often followed by *thunder*. A squall of wind and clouds of dust are the sure fore-runners of the first rain." This account induces Mr. *Harmer* to believe that the word נֶשֶׁתִּים *nesiim*, should be translated *clouds*, not *vapours*. It shows that God—

*Maketh lightnings for the rain*] The squalls of wind bring on these *refreshing showers*, and are therefore *precious things* of the *treasuries of God*; and when he *thunders*, it is the *noise of waters in the heavens*. See Jer. x. 13, which contains almost the same words as those in this verse: "When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens; and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasuries."

Verse 8. *Who smote the first-born of Egypt*] See the parallel passages.

A. M. cir. 3489.  
B. C. cir. 515.  
Darii I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
sextum.

gold, the work of men's hands.

16 They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not;

17 They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths.

18 They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. cxv. 9, &c. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. cxxxiv. 3.

Verse 14. *The Lord will judge his people*] He will do them justice against their enemies.

Verse 15. *The idols of the heathen*] This verse and the following, to the end of the 18th, are almost word for word the same as verses 4—8 of Psalm cxv, where see the notes.

Verse 17. To this verse one of Kennicott's MSS. adds the 6th and 7th verses of Psalm cxv.

Verse 19. *Bless the Lord, O house, &c.*] See similar verses, Ps. cxv. 9—13, and the notes there.

Verse 21. *Blessed be the Lord out of Zion*] Who has once more restored our temple and city, and now condescends to dwell with us in Jerusalem.

## ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIFTH PSALM.

In this psalm the prophet invites the servants of God, and especially his ministers, to praise God, ver. 1, 2, from arguments drawn,

I. From his goodness, particularly in choosing Israel, ver. 3, 4.

II. From the greatness and power showed in his works, ver. 5—8.

III. From his justice showed to the enemies of Israel, ver. 1—13.

IV. From his loving-kindness extended and promised still to his servants, ver. 13, 14.

V. Having derided the vanity of idols, ver. 15—19, he returns to his exhortation, calling upon them to bless God, ver. 19—21.

I. He calls upon the ministers of religion especially to attend the recitation of divine praises:—

1. "Praise ye the Lord," &c.

2. "Ye that stand."

And now, repeating his words again, he produces his reason of inducement:—

1. Because the Lord is worthy of praise: "For he is good," &c. Not comparatively, but absolutely good.

2. "Sing praises unto his name," &c. Because it is no painful duty, but pleasant.

3. Praise him for his love to Israel; for this you owe him gratitude: "For the Lord hath chosen Jacob," &c. 2. "And Israel for his peculiar treasure."

II. The next argument he uses is drawn from his greatness.

1. From his empire and universal dominion in heaven and earth: "Whatsoever the Lord pleased," &c. Nothing is impossible to him: but he does all from his free will, not from any necessity.

2. "He doth all things," &c. In all places; heaven, earth, seas, and hell.

And these last words the prophet amplifies,—

19 <sup>a</sup> Bless the LORD, O house of Israel: bless the LORD, O house of Aaron:

20 Bless the LORD, O house of Levi: ye that fear the LORD, bless the LORD.

21 Blessed be the LORD <sup>b</sup> out of Zion, which dwelleth at Jerusalem. <sup>c</sup> Praise ye the LORD.

A. M. cir. 3489.  
B. C. cir. 515.  
Darii I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
sextum.

<sup>c</sup> Judg. v. 2. 1 Chron. xvi. 4. xxiii. 30, xxv. 3.

1. In the earth. Causing the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth, from all parts, which are endued with several qualities.

2. In the air. "He maketh lightning for rain."

3. In the water. "For he bringeth the winds out of his treasures." Nothing is more obscure than the generation of the winds.

III. The fourth argument the prophet uses to persuade men to praise God, is from the vengeance he executes on the enemies of his people.

1. Upon the Egyptians. "Who smote the first-born of Egypt," &c.

2. "Who sent tokens and wonders," &c. "And he smote great nations," &c.

IV. To the commemoration of the justice God exercised upon their enemies, the prophet exhorts them to extol God.

1. "Thy name, O Lord," &c.

2. "And thy memorial," &c.

And the reason is drawn from his mercy.

1. "For the Lord will judge his people." Judge their cause, and deliver them.

2. "And he will repent himself," &c. If they repent, and turn to him.

The prophet, having proved that God is great in himself, now proves that he is above all gods, which are but vanity.

1. From their composition: "Silver and gold."

2. From their makers: "The work of men's hands."

3. From their impotency: "They have mouths," &c.

4. From the nature of their worshippers: "They that make them," &c.

Lastly, he invites all true worshippers of God to praise him, because they are lively images of the living God, from whom all their faculties have proceeded. To this he invites—

1. All Israel: "Bless the Lord, O house of Israel."

2. The priests: "Bless the Lord, O house of Aaron."

3. The Levites: "Bless the Lord, O house of Levi."

4. Lastly, all the laity: "Ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord."

To which he adds his own note, concluding—

1. "Blessed be the Lord out of Zion." Where he shows his presence by the ark.

2. "Which dwelleth at Jerusalem." Who, though in essence he is every where, yet more especially manifests his presence in his church by his indwelling Spirit.

Therefore, let all people bless the Lord for his great mercy: but let the citizens of Zion and Jerusalem never cease to praise him.

PSALM CXXXVI.

An exhortation to give thanks to God for various mercies granted to all men, 1—9; particularly to the Israelites in Egypt, 10—12; at the Red Sea, 13—15; in the wilderness, 16—20; and in the promised land, 21, 22; for the redemption of the captives from Babylon, 23, 24; and for his providential mercies to all, 25, 26.

XXVIII. DAY. EVENING PRAYER.

A. M. cir. 3489.  
B. C. cir. 515.  
Darii I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
sextum.

**O** <sup>a</sup>GIVE thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: <sup>b</sup>for his mercy endureth for ever.

2 **O** give thanks unto <sup>c</sup>the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.

3 **O** give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever.

4 To him <sup>d</sup>who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth for ever.

5 <sup>e</sup>To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever.

6 <sup>f</sup>To him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth for ever.

7 <sup>g</sup>To him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever:

<sup>a</sup> Ps. cvi. 1. cviii. 1. — <sup>b</sup> 1 Chron. xvi. 34, 41. 2 Chron. xx. 21. — <sup>c</sup> Deut. x. 17. — <sup>d</sup> Ps. lxxii. 18. — <sup>e</sup> Gen. i. 1. Jer. iii. 19. Jer. li. 15. — <sup>f</sup> Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxiv. 2. Jer. x. 12. — <sup>g</sup> Gen. i. 14. — <sup>h</sup> Gen. i. 16. — <sup>i</sup> Heb. for the

NOTES ON PSALM CXXXV.

This psalm is little else than a repetition of the preceding, with the burden, *כִּי לַעֲלֹם חַסְדּוֹ* *ki leolam chasdo*, "because his mercy endureth for ever," at the end of every verse. See below. It seems to have been a *responsive song*: the first part of the verse sung by the Levites, the burden by the people. It has no title in the Hebrew, nor in any of the Versions. It was doubtless written after the captivity. The author is unknown.

Verse 1. *O give thanks unto the Lord: for he is good*] This sentiment often occurs: the goodness of the divine nature, both as a ground of confidence and of thanksgiving.

*For his mercy endureth for ever.*] These words, which are the burden of every verse, *כִּי לַעֲלֹם חַסְדּוֹ* *ki leolam chasdo*, might be translated: "For his tender mercy is to the coming age:" meaning, probably, if the psalm be prophetic, that peculiar display of his compassion, the redemption of the world by the Lord Jesus. These very words were prescribed by David as an acknowledgment, to be used continually in the divine worship, see 1 Chron. xvi. 41: also by Solomon, 2 Chron. vii. 3, 6, and observed by Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xx. 21; all acknowledging that, however rich in mercy God was to them, the most extensive displays of his goodness were reserved for the age to come; see 1 Pet. i. 10—12: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired, and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, — unto whom it was revealed, that not unto them-

8 <sup>h</sup>The sun <sup>i</sup>to rule by day: for his mercy endureth for ever:

9 The moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy endureth for ever.

10 <sup>k</sup>To him that smote Egypt in their first-born: for his mercy endureth for ever:

11 <sup>l</sup>And brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy endureth for ever.

12 <sup>m</sup>With a strong hand, and with a stretched-out arm: for his mercy endureth for ever:

13 <sup>n</sup>To him which divided the Red Sea into parts: for his mercy endureth for ever:

14 And made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for his mercy endureth for ever.

15 <sup>o</sup>But <sup>p</sup>overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea: for his mercy endureth for ever.

*rulings by day.* — <sup>k</sup> Exod. xii. 29. Ps. cxxxv. 8. — <sup>l</sup> Exod. xii. 51. xiii. 3, 17. — <sup>m</sup> Exod. vi. 6. — <sup>n</sup> Exod. xiv. 21, 22. Ps. lxxviii. 13. — <sup>o</sup> Exod. xiv. 27. Ps. cxxxv. 9. — <sup>p</sup> Heb. *shaked off*.

selves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that preached the gospel unto you by the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven," &c.

Verse 2. *The God of gods*] *לַאֲדֹנָי הָאֲדֹנִים* *ladonai haadonim*. As *adonai* signifies *director*, &c., it may apply here, not to idols, for God is not their god; but to the priests and spiritual rulers; as *Lord of lords* may apply to kings and magistrates, &c. He is God and ruler over all the rulers of the earth, whether in things sacred or civil.

Verse 4. *Who alone doeth great wonders*] MIRACLES. No power but that which is almighty can work miracles, *נִפְלְאוֹת* *niphlaoth*, the inversion, or suspension, or destruction of the laws of nature.

Verse 5. *By wisdom made the heavens*] In the contrivance of the celestial bodies, in their relations, connexions, influences on each other, revolutions, &c., the wisdom of God particularly appears.

Verse 6. *Stretched out the earth above the waters*] Or, upon the waters. This seems to refer to a central abyss of waters, the existence of which has not been yet disproved.

Verse 7. *Great lights*] See the notes on the parallel passages in Genesis, &c.

Verse 10. *Smote Egypt in their first-born*] This was one of the heaviest of strokes: a great part of the rising generation was cut off; few but old persons and children left remaining.

Verse 13. *Divided the Red Sea into parts*] Some of the Jews have imagined that God made twelve

A. M. cir. 3489.  
B. C. cir. 515.  
Dari I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
sextum.

16 <sup>a</sup> To him which led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

17 <sup>b</sup> To him which smote great

kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

18 <sup>c</sup> And slew famous kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

19 <sup>d</sup> Sihon, king of the Amorites: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

20 <sup>e</sup> And Og the king of Bashan: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

21 <sup>f</sup> And gave their land for an heritage: for

his mercy *endureth* for ever: 22 *Even* an heritage unto Israel his servant: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

A. M. cir. 3489.  
B. C. cir. 515.  
Dari I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
sextum.

23 Who <sup>g</sup> remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

24 And hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

25 <sup>h</sup> Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

26 O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

<sup>a</sup> Exod. xiii. 18. xv. 22. Deut. viii. 15. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. cxxxv. 10, 11. — <sup>c</sup> Deut. xxix. 7. — <sup>d</sup> Numb. xxi. 21. — <sup>e</sup> Numb. xxi. 33. — <sup>f</sup> Josh. xii. 1, &c. Ps. cxxxv. 12. — <sup>g</sup> Gen. viii.

1. Deut. xxxii. 36. Ps. cxiii. 7. — <sup>h</sup> Ps. civ. 27. cxlv. cxlvii. 9.

paths through the Red Sea, that each tribe might have a distinct passage. Many of the *Fathers* were of the same opinion; but is this very likely?

Verse 16. *Which led his people through the wilderness*] It was an astonishing miracle of God to support so many hundreds of thousands of people in a wilderness totally deprived of all necessaries for the life of man, and that for the space of *forty* years.

Verse 23. *Who remembered us in our low estate*] He has done much for our *forefathers*; and he has done much for us, in delivering us, when we had no helper, from our long captivity in Babylon.

Verse 25. *Giveth food to all flesh*] By whose *universal providence* every intellectual and animal being is supported and preserved. The appointing every *living thing* food, and that sort of food which is suited to its nature (and the nature and habits of animals are endlessly diversified), is an overwhelming proof of the wondrous providence, wisdom, and goodness of God.

The Vulgate, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon add a twenty-seventh verse, by repeating here ver. 3 very unnecessarily.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SIXTH PSALM.

This psalm has the same argument with the preceding. It is divided into *three* parts:—

I. A general exhortation to praise God for his goodness and majesty, ver. 1, 2, 3.

II. A declaration of that goodness and majesty in their effects, ver. 4—10.

III. A conclusion fit for the exordium, ver. 26.

1. Of his creation, ver. 4—10.

2. Of his providence in preserving the church, and punishing her enemies, ver. 10—25.

3. That his providence extends to all his creatures, ver. 25.

I. In the *three* first verses the prophet invites us to adore God for his mercy and goodness. And in these *three* verses expositors find the Trinity:—

1. *Jekovah*. God the Father, who is the Fountain being.

2. *God the Son*. Who is God of gods, and over all.

3. *The Holy Ghost*. Who is Lord of lords.

The Psalmist's reasons for calling upon us thus to

praise him are, "for he is good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever."

The prophet now begins to praise God for his wonderful works, and which he alone was able to do.

1. "Who hath done wonderful things." Such as the work of creation.

2. "For his mercy *endureth* for ever." In sustaining and preserving all things.

"To him give thanks" for the wisdom manifested in the heavens; for, contemplate them as we may, they appear full of beauty, order, and splendour.

Praise him for his formation of the earth, as the mansion of man.

Give thanks "to him that stretched out," &c. Naturally this could not be, because the earth is heavier than water: but God hath made furrows for the waters to flow into, that man and beast might live on the earth.

"For his mercy *endureth* for ever." In this there was a threefold mercy:—

1. In reference to the *earth*. To make it something of nothing.

2. As respects the *water*. To prepare for it a settled place.

3. In regard of *man*. To whom he gave the earth uncovered from water, and yet plentifully supplied with rivers and fruits.

The third instance is the two great luminaries and the stars, in the three following verses. These do astonishingly adorn the heaven, and profit the earth. The sun and moon illuminate the earth, and comfort us. Perhaps the prophet instances these because they are alike blessings bestowed upon and shared by all the world.

II. From the wonderful works of the creation the prophet descends to those of his providence, in the preservation of the church; and instances it in the redemption of his people *Israel* from the land of *Egypt*, &c., dwelling at large upon it, ver. 10—22.

In these verses the prophet records how God performed to *Israel* all the offices of a good Captain, Guide, Leader, and even Father; for he fed them with bread from heaven, gave them water out of the rock, caused that their clothes wore not out, cured their sick, defended them from their enemies, &c.

All this God did for them before they entered *Canaan*. And then the prophet reminds them how they rebelled against God, and he humbled them by bringing the *Philistines* and the *Babylonian* kings against them, who conquered and subjected them: but when they cried to him, he turned their captivity; for "he remembered us when we were in our low estate," &c.; "and hath redeemed us from our enemies," &c.

Lastly, that his goodness is not only extended over his people, but his *creatures*; to all *flesh*, which word signifies every thing that hath life.

III. He concludes as he began, "O give thanks unto the God of heaven," &c. The prophet calls him the *God of heaven*, because he alone made the heavens, and has his throne there, having the whole world under him; and by his wisdom and providence he preserves, moderates, and governs all things.

## PSALM CXXXVII.

*The desolate and afflicted state of the captives in Babylon, 1, 2. How they were insulted by their enemies, 3, 4. Their attachment to their country, 5, 6. Judgments denounced against their enemies, 7—9.*

BY the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

2 We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.

3 For there they that carried us away captive required of us <sup>a</sup> a song; and they that

<sup>b</sup> wasted <sup>c</sup> us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.

4 How shall we sing the LORD's song in a <sup>d</sup> strange land?

5 If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget *her cunning*.

6 If I do not remember thee, let my <sup>e</sup> tongue

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *the words of a song*.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. *laid us on heaps*.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. lxxix. 1.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. *land of a stranger*.—<sup>e</sup> Ezek. iii. 26.

## NOTES ON PSALM CXXXVII.

The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic* say, ridiculously enough, a *Psalm of David for Jeremiah*. Anachronisms with those who wrote the *titles* to the psalms were matters of no importance. *Jeremiah* never was at Babylon; and therefore could have no part in a psalm that was sung on the banks of its rivers by the Israelitish captives. Neither the *Hebrew* nor *Chaldee* has any *title*; the *Syriac* attributes it to *David*. Some think it was sung when they returned from Babylon; others, while they were there. It is a matter of little importance. It was evidently composed *during* or at the *close* of the captivity.

Verse 1. *By the rivers of Babylon*] These might have been the *Tigris* and *Euphrates*, or their *branches*, or *streams* that flowed into them. In their captivity and dispersion, it was customary for the Jews to hold their religious meetings on the banks of rivers. Mention is made of this Acts xvi. 13, where we find the Jews of Philippi resorting to a *river side*, where *prayer was wont to be made*. And sometimes they built their synagogues here, when they were expelled from the cities.

Verse 2. *We hanged our harps upon the willows*] The ערבית *arabim* or *willows* were very plentiful in Babylon. The great quantity of them that were on the banks of the *Euphrates* caused *Isaiah*, chap. xv. 7, to call it *the brook or river of willows*. This is a most affecting picture. Perhaps resting themselves after toil, and wishing to spend their time religiously, they took their harps, and were about to sing one of the songs of Zion; but, reflecting on their own country, they became so filled with distress, that they unstrung their harps with one consent, and hung them on the willow bushes, and gave a general loose

to their grief. Some of the Babylonians, who probably attended such meetings for the sake of the music, being present at the time here specified, desired them to *sing one of Zion's songs*: this is affectingly told.

Verse 3. *They that carried us away captive required of us a song*] This was as *unreasonable* as it was *insulting*. How could they who had reduced us to slavery, and dragged us in chains from our own beautiful land and privileges, expect us to sing a sacred ode to please them, who were enemies both to us and to our God? And how could those who *wasted us* expect *mirth* from people in captivity, deprived of all their possessions, and in the most abject state of poverty and oppression?

Verse 4. *How shall we sing the Lord's song*] אע"פ! *nashir*; *oh, we sing!* Who does not hear the *deep sigh* in the strongly guttural sound of the original אע"פ! *eich!* wrung, as it were, from the bottom of the heart? Can we, in this state of *slavery*,—we, *eriks* from our country,—we, *stripped* of all our property,—we, reduced to *contempt* by our *strong enemy*,—we, *deprived* of our *religious privileges*,—we, *insulted* by our *oppressors*,—we, in the land of *heathens*,—we *sing*, or be *mirthful* in these *circumstances*? No: God does not expect it; man should not wish it; and it is base in our enemies to require it.

Verse 5. *If I forget thee, O Jerusalem*] Such conduct would be, in effect, a renunciation of our land; a tacit acknowledgment that we were reconciled to our bondage; a concession that we were pleased with our captivity and could profane holy ordinances by using them as means of *sport* or *pastime* to the heathen. No: *Jerusalem!* we remember thee and thy divine ordinances; and especially thy *King*

cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above <sup>a</sup> my chief joy.

7 Remember, O LORD, <sup>b</sup> the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, 'Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *the head of my joy.* — <sup>b</sup> Jer. xlix. 7, &c. Lam. iv. 22. Ezek. xxv. 12. Obad. 10, &c. 1 Esdr. iv. 45. — <sup>c</sup> Heb. *Maki bare.* — <sup>d</sup> Isai. xlii. 1, 6, &c. xlvii. 1. Jer. xxv. 12.

and our God, whose indignation we must bear, because we have sinned against him.

*Let my right hand forget*] Let me forget the use of my right hand. Let me forget that which is dearest and most profitable to me; and let me lose my skill in the management of my harp, if I ever prostitute it to please the ungodly multitude or the enemies of my Creator!

Verse 6. *Let my tongue cleave*] Let me lose my voice, and all its powers of melody; my tongue, and all its faculty of speech; my ear, and its discernment of sounds; if I do not prefer my country, my people, and the ordinances of my God, beyond all these, and whatever may constitute the chiefest joy I can possess in aught else beside. This is truly patriotic, truly noble and dignified. Such sentiments can only be found in the hearts and mouths of those slaves whom the grace of God has made free.

Verse 7. *Remember—the children of Edom*] It appears from Jer. xii. 6; xxv. 14; Lam. iv. 21, 22; Ezek. xxv. 12; Obad. 11—14; that the Idumeans joined the army of Nebuchadnezzar against their brethren the Jews; and that they were main instruments in rasing the walls of Jerusalem even to the ground.

Verse 8. *O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed*] Or, *O thou daughter of Babylon the destroyer, who art to be ruined.* In being reduced under the empire of the Persians, Babylon was already greatly humbled and brought low from what it was in the days of Nebuchadnezzar; but it was afterwards totally ruined that not a vestige of it remains. After its capture by Cyrus, A. M. 3468, it could never be considered a capital city; but it appeared to follow the fortunes of its various conquerors till it was, as a city, finally destroyed.

*Rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.*] This was Cyrus, who was chosen of God to do this work, and therefore called *happy*, as being God's agent in its destruction. Greater desolations were afterwards wrought upon it by *Darius Hystaspes*, who took this city after it had revolted, and slaughtered the inhabitants, men and women, in a barbarous manner. Prod. lib. iii.

Verse 9. *Happy—that taketh and dasheth thy little ones*] That is, So oppressive hast thou been to all under thy domination, as to become universally hated and detested; so that those who may have the last word in thy destruction, and the total extermination of thy inhabitants, shall be reputed *happy*—shall be celebrated and extolled as those who have rid the world of a curse so grievous. These prophetic de-

8 O daughter of Babylon, <sup>d</sup> who art to be destroyed; happy *shall he be*, <sup>e</sup> that <sup>f</sup> rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.

9 Happy *shall he be*, that taketh and <sup>b</sup> dasheth thy little ones against <sup>i</sup> the stones.

1. 2. — <sup>a</sup> Heb. *wasted.* — <sup>b</sup> Heb. *that recompenseth unto thee thy deed which thou didst to us.* — <sup>c</sup> Jer. l. 15, 29. Rev. xviii. 6. — <sup>d</sup> Isai. xlii. 6. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. *the rock.*

clarations contain no excitement to any person or persons to commit acts of cruelty and barbarity; but are simply declarative of what would take place in the order of the retributive providence and justice of God, and the general opinion that should in consequence be expressed on the subject; therefore *praying for the destruction of our enemies* is totally out of the question. It should not be omitted that the Chaldee considers this psalm a *dialogue*, which it thus divides:—The three first verses are supposed to have been spoken by the *Psalmist*, *By the rivers*, &c. The Levites answer from the porch of the temple, in ver. 4, *How shall we sing*, &c. The voice of the *Holy Spirit* responds in ver. 5, 6, *If I forget thee*, &c. *Michael, the prince of Jerusalem*, answers in ver. 7, *Remember, O Lord*, &c. *Gabriel, the prince of Zion*, then addresses *the destroyer of the Babylonish nation*, in ver. 8, 9, *Happy shall he be that rewardeth thee*, &c. To slay all when a city was sacked, both male and female, old and young, was a common practice in ancient times. Homer describes this in words almost similar to those of the Psalmist:—

Ἰάσ τ' ὀλλυμένους, ἑλκυσθίνας τε θυγάτρας,  
καὶ θαλαμοὺς κεραϊζόμενους, καὶ νηπία τέκνα  
βαλλόμενα προτὶ γαίῃ ἐν αἰγῇ δῆϊότητι,  
ἔλκομενας τε νουὸς ὀλοῦς ἦπο χερσὶν Ἀχαιῶν.

Il. lib. xxii., ver. 62.

My heroes slain, my bridal bed o' returned;  
My daughters ravished, and my city burned:  
My bleeding infants dashed against the floor;  
These I have yet to see; perhaps yet more.

POPE.

These excesses were common in all barbarous nations, and are only prophetically declared here. He shall be reputed *happy*, *prosperous*, and *highly commendable*, who shall destroy Babylon.

#### ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVENTH PSALM.

When this psalm was composed, the *Jews* were in captivity in *Babylon*, far from their own country, the temple, and the public exercises of religion; and the scoff and scorn of their enemies; and they contrast what they were with what they are. This psalm has two parts:—

I. The complaint of *Israel*. Because of the insults of the *Babylonians*, they deplore their sad condition, long for the temple, and their return to *Jerusalem*, ver. 1—7.

II. An imprecation or prayer for vengeance, on their persecutors, ver. 7—9.

I. Their complaint arises from their captivity, and it is aggravated:—

1. From the place, *Babylon*: "By the rivers of



Babylon." A place far from their country; who were aliens from the covenant made by God with Abraham, scornors of their religion, had laid waste their city, and forced them to base and servile labour.

2. From the continuance of their captivity and misery: "There we sat down," &c. Took up the seats allotted to us, and that for *seventy* years.

3. From the effects it produced: "Yea, we wept," &c.

4. From the cause which drew these tears. The remembrance of what they had enjoyed (now lost), the services of religion: "We wept when we remembered Zion," &c.

5. From the intensesness of their grief, which was so great that they could not even tune their harps: "We hung our harps," &c.

That which increased their grief was the joy their enemies manifested at it.

1. THERE, in a strange land, the place of our captivity.

2. "THEY that carried us away captive."

3. "They required of us a song." They required of us mirth, saying,

4. O thou Jew or captive, come now, "sing us one of the songs of Zion."

To this sarcasm the captive Jews return a double answer.

"How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" You are aliens, and this is a strange land; we cannot sing God's service there, which is destined to his honour, to you, or in this place without offending our God.

They reply by a protestation of their hope and constancy in religion, and accurse themselves if they do not continue in it.

1. "If I forget thee," &c. Forget the worship and feasts I kept there.

2. "If I do not remember thee," &c. If I do not prefer and make mention of Jerusalem, then "let my tongue cleave," &c. Let me no more have the use of that excellent organ of God's glory. It would be unworthy of my religion, and a dishonour to my God, to sing the songs of Zion thus circumstanced, and to scoffers and aliens.

11. This seems to be the sense of the first part of the psalm. The second part has reference to the imprecations poured out against Edom and Babylon, both persecutors of God's people. The Babylonians carried them away captive, and the Edomites persecuted their brethren with the sword, Amos i. 12.

1. Against Edom.

(1) "Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom," &c. How they carried themselves towards thy people on that day when thy anger smote against them, and the Babylonians carried us away.

(2) Remember how they added to our affliction, saying, "Rase it," &c.

2. Against Babylon. To her he turns his speech by an apostrophe; but at the same time foretels her ruin: "O Daughter of Babylon," &c. Thou seemest to thyself to be most happy; but thy ruin approaches. Shortly after, the Medes, led by Cyrus, destroyed them.

(1) "Happy shall he be that rewardeth," &c. [See the notes.]

(2) "Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones," &c. [See the notes.]

PSALM CXXXVIII.

The Psalmist praises the Lord for his mercies to himself, 1—3. He foretels that the kings of the earth shall worship him, 4, 5. God's condescension to the humble, 6. The Psalmist's confidence, 7, 8.

A Psalm of David.

A. M. cir. 2956.  
B. C. cir. 1048.  
Davidis, Regis  
Israelitarum,  
cir. annum.  
decimum.

I WILL praise thee with my whole heart: \* before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

2<sup>b</sup> I will worship<sup>c</sup> toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy loving-kindness and for thy truth: for thou hast<sup>d</sup> magnified thy word above all thy name.

A. M. cir. 2956.  
B. C. cir. 1048.  
Davidis, Regis  
Israelitarum,  
cir. annum.  
decimum.

\* Ps. cxiv. 46.—<sup>b</sup> Ps. xxviii. 2.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Kings viii. 29, 30. Ps. v. 7.—<sup>d</sup> Isai. liii. 21.

NOTES ON PSALM CXXXVIII.

The Hebrew and all the Versions attribute this Psalm to David, and it is supposed to have been made by him when, delivered from all his enemies, he was firmly seated on the throne of Israel. As the Septuagint and Arabic prefix also the names of Haggai and Zechariah, it is probable that it was used by the Jews as a form of thanksgiving for their deliverance from all their enemies; and their ultimate settlement in their own land, after Ahasuerus, supposed by Calmet to be Darius Hystaspes, had married Esther, before which time they were not peaceably settled in their own country.

Verse 1. I will praise thee with my whole heart] I have received the highest favours from thee, and my whole soul should acknowledge my obligation to thy mercy. The Versions and several MSS. add יהוה יהovah, "I will praise thee, O Lord," &c.

Before the gods will I sing] נֶגַד אֱלֹהִים neged Elohim, "in the presence of Elohim;" most probably meaning before the ark, where were the sacred symbols of the Supreme Being. The Chaldee has, before the judges. The Vulgate, before the angels. So the Septuagint, Æthiopic, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon. The Syriac, Before kings will I sing unto thee. This phrase has been alleged by the Roman Catholics as a proof

A. M. cir. 2956.  
B. C. cir. 1048.  
Davidis, Regis  
Israelitarum,  
cir. annum  
decimum.

3 In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, *and* strengthenedst me *with* strength in my soul.

4 \*All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O LORD, when they hear the words of thy mouth.

5 Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the LORD: for great *is* the glory of the LORD.

6 <sup>b</sup>Though the LORD *be* high, yet <sup>c</sup>hath he

<sup>a</sup> Ps. cii. 15, 22. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. cxiii. 5, 6. Isai. lvii. 15. — <sup>c</sup> Prov. iii. 34. James iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5.

that the holy angels, who are present in the assemblies of God's people, take their prayers and praises, and present them before God. There is nothing like this in the *text*; for supposing, which is not granted, that the word *elohim* here signifies *angels*, the praises are not *presented to them*, nor are they *requested to present them before God*; it is simply said, *Before elohim will I sing praise unto thee*. Nor could there be need of any intermediate agents, when it was well known that God himself was present in the sanctuary, sitting between the cherubim. Therefore this opinion is wholly without support from this place.

Verse 2. *For thy loving-kindness*] Thy tender mercy shown to me; and for the fulfilment of thy *truth*—the promises thou hast made.

*Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.*] All the *Versions* read this sentence thus: "For thou hast magnified above all the name of thy holiness," or, "thy holy name." Thou hast proved that thou hast all *power* in heaven and in earth, and that thou art *true* in all thy words. And by giving the word of *prophecy*, and fulfilling those words, thou hast *magnified thy holy name above all things*—thou hast proved thyself to be *ineffably great*. The original is the following: *כי הגדלת על כל שכן אמרת* *ki higdalla al kol shimcha, imrathecha*, which I think might be thus translated: "For thou hast magnified thy name and thy word over all," or, "on every occasion." *Kennicott* reads, "He preferred *faithfulness to his promise* to the attribute of his *power*." I believe my own translation to be nearest the truth. There may be some corruption in this clause.

Verse 3. With *strength in my soul*.] Thou hast ended my soul with many graces, blessings, and heavenly qualities.

Verse 4. *All the kings of the earth*] Of the land: all the neighbouring nations, seeing what is done for us, and looking in vain to find that any human agency was employed in the work, will immediately see that it was *thy hand*; and consequently, by *confessing* that it was *thou*, will give praise to thy name.

Verse 5. *They shall sing in the ways of the Lord*] They shall admire thy *conduct*, and the *wondrous workings* of thy providence; if they should not even unite with thy people.

Verse 6. *Though the Lord be high*] Infinitely *great* as God is, he regards even the lowest and most

respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.

7 <sup>d</sup>Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

8 \*The LORD will perfect *that which* concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, *endureth* for ever: <sup>f</sup>forsake not the works of thine own hands.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. xxiii. 3 4. — <sup>e</sup> Ps. lvii. 2. Phil. i. 6. — <sup>f</sup> See Job x. 3, 8. xiv. 15.

inconsiderable part of his creation; but the *humble* and *afflicted* man attracts his notice particularly.

*But the proud he knoweth afar off.*] He beholds them at a distance, and has them in utter derision.

Verse 7. *Though I walk in the midst of trouble*] I have had such experience of thy mercy, that let me fall into whatsoever trouble I may, yet I will trust in thee. Thou wilt *quicken* me, though I were *ready to die*; and thou wilt deliver me from the *wrath of my enemies*.

Verse 8. *The Lord will perfect*] Whatever is farther necessary to be done, he will do it.

*Forsake not the works of thine own hands.*] My body—my soul; thy work *begun in my soul*; thy work in *behalf of Israel*; thy work in the evangelization of the world; thy work in the salvation of mankind. Thou wilt not forsake these.

#### ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-EIGHTH PSALM.

I. In the three first verses of this psalm David promises a grateful heart, and to sing the praises of God, because he had heard his cries, and sent him comfort and deliverance.

II. In the three next he shows what future kings would do, when the works and truth of God should be made known to them.

III. In the two last verses he professes his confidence in God; shows what he hopes for from him; and, in assurance that God will perfect his work, prays him not to desert or forsake him.

I. The prophet shows his thankfulness, which he illustrates and amplifies.

1. "I will praise thee with my whole heart." Sincerely, cordially.

2. "Before the gods," &c. Publicly, before potentates, whether angels or kings.

3. "I will worship toward," &c. It is true God ruleth as King in his palace: there will I bow; it is the symbol of his presence.

4. "And praise thy name," &c. From a feeling sense of thy goodness. 1. "For thy loving-kindness," &c. In calling me to the kingdom from the sheepfold. 2. "And for thy truth." In performing thy promise. By which,

5. "Thou hast magnified," &c. This clause is differently read. "Thou hast magnified thy name in thy word; *by* performing thy word above all things."

Or, "Thou hast magnified thy name and thy word above all things." See the notes.

6. "In the day when I cried," &c. Finite creatures as we are, we must sometimes faint in our temptations and afflictions, if not strengthened by God.

II. The prophet, having set down what God had in mercy done for him in calling him *from following the ewes*, &c., and *making him king*, and performing *his promises to him*; seeing all this, the prophet judges it impossible but that the neighbouring and future kings should acknowledge the miracle, and praise God. This appears the literal sense: but it may have reference to the conversion of kings in future ages to the faith.

1. "All the kings of the earth," &c. Or the future kings of Israel.

2. "Yea, they shall sing in the ways," &c. His mercy, truth, clemency, &c.: "For great is the glory of the Lord." Righteous and glorious in all his works, of which this is one. "Though the Lord be high," &c. Of which David was an instance. "But the proud," &c., he removes far from him. Saul and others are examples of this.

III. Because *God who is high*, &c. And David,

being conscious of his own humility of mind, confidently expects help from God.

1. "Though I walk," &c. Exposed on all sides to trouble.

2. "Thou wilt revive me." Preserve me safe and untouched.

3. "Thou shalt stretch forth thy hand," &c. Restrain the power of my enemies.

4. "And thy right hand," &c. Thy power; thy *Christ*, who, in Isai. liii. is called the *arm of the Lord*.

The last verse depends on the former. Because the prophet knew that many troubles and afflictions remained yet to be undergone; therefore he was confident that the same God would still deliver and make his work perfect.

1. "The Lord will perfect," &c. Not for my merits, but his mercy.

2. Of which he gives the reason: "Thy mercy, O Lord," &c. It does not exist only for a moment, but it is eternal.

3. And he concludes with a prayer for God to perfect his work: "Forsake not the work," &c. Thou who hast begun this work, increase and perfect it; because it is thy work alone, not mine. If we desire that God should perfect any work in us, we must be sure that it is his work, and look to him continually.

## PSALM CXXXIX.

*A fine account of the omniscience of God, 1—6; of his omnipresence, 7—12; of his power and providence, 13—16. The excellence of his purposes, 17, 18. His opposition to the wicked, 19, 20; with whom the godly can have no fellowship, 21, 22.*

XXIX. DAY. MORNING PRAYER.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

**O** LORD, <sup>a</sup> thou hast searched me, and known me.

<sup>a</sup> Pa. xvii. 3. Jer. xii. 3. — <sup>b</sup> 2 Kings xix. 27. — <sup>c</sup> Matt.

### NOTES ON PSALM CXXXIX.

The title of this psalm in the *Hebrew* is, *To the chief Musician*, or, *To the Conqueror*, *A Psalm of David*. The *Versions* in general follow the *Hebrew*. And yet, notwithstanding these testimonies, there appears internal evidence that the psalm was not written by *David*, but *during or after the time of the captivity*, as there are several *Chaldaisms* in it. See verses 2, 3, 7, 9, 19, 20, collated with Dan. ii. 29, 30, iv. 16, vii. 28; some of these shall be noticed in their proper places.

As to the *author*, he is unknown; for it does not appear to have been the work of *David*. The composition is worthy of him, but the language appears to be *lower* than his time.

Concerning the *occasion*, there are many conjectures which I need not repeat, because I believe them unfounded. It is most probable that it was written on *no particular occasion*, but is a moral lesson on the wisdom, presence, providence, and justice of God, without any reference to any circumstance in the *life of David*, or in the *history of the Jews*.

2 <sup>b</sup> Thou knowest my downsitteing and mine uprising, thou <sup>c</sup> understandest my thought afar off.

3 <sup>d</sup> Thou <sup>e</sup> compassesest my path and my lying

ix. 4. John ii. 24, 25. — <sup>d</sup> Job xxxi. 4. — <sup>e</sup> Or, *winnowest*.

The psalm is very sublime; the sentiments are grand, the style in general highly elevated, and the images various and impressive. The first part especially, that contains so fine a description of the wisdom and knowledge of God, is inimitable.

Bishop *Horsley's* account of this psalm is as follows:—

"In the first twelve verses of this psalm the author celebrates God's perfect knowledge of man's thoughts and actions; and the reason of this wonderful knowledge, *viz.*, that God is the Maker of man. Hence the Psalmist proceeds, in the four following verses, 13, 14, 15, 16, to magnify God as ordaining and superintending the formation of his body in the womb. In the 17th and 18th he acknowledges God's providential care of him in every moment of his life: and in the remainder of the psalm implores God's aid against impious and cruel enemies, professing his own attachment to God's service, that is, to the true religion, and appealing to the searcher of hearts himself for the truth of his professions.

The composition, for the purity and justness of

down, and art acquainted with all my ways.

4 For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.

5 Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.

6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.

7 Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

8 If I ascend up into heaven, thou art

there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there.

9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

10 Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

11 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.

12 Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the dark-

Hebr. iv. 13.— Job xlii. 3. Ps. xl. 5. cxlxi. 1. Jer. xxiii. 24. Jonah i. 3.— Amos ix. 2, 3, 4.— Job xvi. 6. Prov. xv. 11.— Job xxxvi. 6. xxxiv. 22. Dan. ii.

22. Hebr. iv. 13.— Heb. darkeneth not.— Heb. as is the darkness so is the light.

religious sentiment, and for the force and beauty of the images, is certainly in the very first and best style. And yet the frequent Chaldaisms of the diction argue no very high antiquity.

Verse 1. O Lord, thou hast searched me] חקרני ehakartani; thou hast investigated me; thou hast thoroughly acquainted thyself with my whole soul and conduct.

Verse 2. My downsitting and mine uprising] Even these inconsiderable and casual things are under thy continual notice. I cannot so much as take a seat, or leave it, without being marked by thee.

Thou understandest my thought] לרעי lerei, "my cogitation." This word is Chaldee, see Dan. ii. 29, 30.

Afar off.] While the figment is forming that shall produce them.

Verse 3. Thou compassest my path] זריתא zeritha thou dost winnow, ventilate, or sift my path; and my lying down, רבעי ribi, my lair, my bed.

And art acquainted] Thou treasurest up. This is the import of סאן sachan. Thou hast the whole number of my ways, and the steps I took in them.

Verse 4. There is not a word in my tongue] Although (כי ki) there be not a word in my tongue, behold, O Jehovah, thou knowest the whole of it, that is, thou knowest all my words before they are uttered, as thou knowest all my thoughts while as yet they are unformed.

Verse 5. Thou hast beset me behind and before] אחור וקדם tsartani, "The hereafter and the past, thou hast formed me." I think Bishop Horsley's emendation here is just, uniting the two verses together. "Behold thou, O Jehovah, knowest the whole, the hereafter and the past. Thou hast formed me, and laid thy hand upon me."

Verse 6. Such knowledge is too wonderful] I think, with Kennicott, that פלאיה דעת pelaiyah daath should be read פליא דעת peli haddaath, "this knowledge," נמני nimnenu, "is beyond or above me." This change is made by taking the ה he from the end of פלאיה elaiyah, which is really no word, and joining it with דת daath; which, by giving it an article, makes it demonstrative, דעת haddaath, "this knowledge." This kind of knowledge, God's knowledge, that takes in all things, and their reasons, essences, tendencies, and issues, is far beyond me.

Verse 7. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?] Surely

רוח ruach in this sense must be taken personally, it certainly cannot mean either breath or wind; to render it so would make the passage ridiculous.

From thy presence?] מפניך mipaneycha, "from thy faces." Why do we meet with this word so frequently in the plural number, when applied to God? And why have we his Spirit, and his appearances or faces, both here? A Trinitarian would at once say, "The plurality of persons in the Godhead is intended;" and who can prove that he is mistaken?

Verse 8. If I ascend] Thou art in heaven, in thy glory; in hell, in thy vindictive justice; and in all parts of earth, water, space, place, or vacuity, by thy omnipresence. Wherever I am, there art thou; and where I cannot be, thou art there. Thou fillest the heavens and the earth.

Verse 11. Surely the darkness shall cover me] Should I suppose that this would serve to screen me, immediately this darkness is turned into light.

Verse 12. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee] Darkness and light, ignorance and knowledge, are things that stand in relation to us; God sees equally in darkness as in light; and knows as perfectly, however man is enveloped in ignorance, as if all were intellectual brightness. What is to us hidden by darkness, or unknown through ignorance, is perfectly seen and known by God; because he is all sight, all hearing, all feeling, all soul, all spirit—all in ALL, and infinite in himself. He lends to every thing; receives nothing from any thing. Though his essence be unimpartible, yet his influence is diffusible through time and through eternity. Thus God makes himself known, seen, heard, felt; yet, in the infinity of his essence, neither angel, nor spirit, nor man can see him; nor can any creature comprehend him, or form any idea of the mode of his existence. And yet vain man would be wise, and ascertain his foreknowledge, eternal purposes, infinite decrees, with all operations of infinite love and infinite hatred, and their objects specifically and nominally, from all eternity, as if himself had possessed a being and powers co-extensive with the Deity! O ye wise fools! Jehovah, the fountain of eternal perfection and love, is as unlike your creeds, as he is unlike yourselves, forgers of doctrines to prove that the source of infinite benevolence is a streamlet of capricious love to thousands, while he is an overflowing, eternal, and irresistible tide

ness and the light are both alike to thee.

13 For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth <sup>a</sup>right well.

15 <sup>b</sup>My <sup>c</sup>substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *greatly*.—<sup>b</sup> Job x. 8, 9. Eccles. xi. 5.—<sup>c</sup> Or, *strength or body*.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. *all of them*.

of hatred to millions of millions both of angels and men! The antiproof of such doctrines is this: he bears with such blasphemies, and does not consume their abettors. "But nobody holds these doctrines." Then I have written against *nobody*; and have only to add the prayer, May no such doctrines ever disgrace the page of history; or further dishonour, as they have done, the annals of the church!

Verse 13. *Thou hast possessed my reins*] As the Hebrews believed that the *reins* were the first part of the human fetus that is formed, it may here mean, thou hast laid the foundation of my being.

Verse 14. *I am fearfully and wonderfully made*] The texture of the human body is the most complicated and curious that can be conceived. It is, indeed, *wonderfully made*; and it is withal so exquisitely *nice* and *delicate*, that the slightest accident may impair or destroy in a moment some of those parts essentially necessary to the continuance of life; therefore, we are *fearfully made*. And God has done so to show us our *frailty*, that we should walk with *death*, keeping *life* in view; and feel the necessity of *depending* on the all-wise and continual superintending care and providence of God.

Verse 15. *My substance was not hid from thee*]

*רִמְסִי atsmi*, my bones or skeleton. *Curiously wrought*] *רִקְמָתִי rukkamti*, embroidered, made of needle-work. These two words, says Bishop Horsley, describe the two principal parts of which the human body is composed; the *bony skeleton*, the *foundation* of the whole; and the *external covering* of muscular flesh, tendons, veins, arteries, nerves, and skin; a curious *web of fibres*. On this passage Bishop Lowth has some excellent observations: "In that most perfect hymn, where the immensity of the omnipresent Deity, and the admirable wisdom of the Divine Artificer in framing the human body, are celebrated, the poet uses a remarkable metaphor, drawn from the nicest tapestry work:

When I was formed in secret;  
When I was wrought, as with a needle, in the  
lowest parts of the earth.

"He who remarks this (but the man who consults *Versions* only will hardly remark it), and at the same time reflects upon the wonderful composition of the human body, the various implication of veins, arteries, fibres, membranes, and the 'inexplicable texture' of

being imperfect; and in thy book 'all my members were written,' which in continuance were fashioned, when *as yet there was none* of them.

17 'How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them.

18 If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.

<sup>e</sup> Or, *what days they should be fashioned*.—<sup>f</sup> Ps. xl. 5.

the whole frame; will immediately understand the beauty and elegance of this most apt translation. But he will not attain the whole force and dignity, unless he also considers that the most artful embroidery with the needle was dedicated by the Hebrews to the *service of the sanctuary*; and that the proper and singular use of their work was, by the immediate prescript of the divine law, applied in a certain part of the *high priest's dress*, and in the *curtains of the tabernacle*, Exod. xxviii. 39; xxvi. 36; xxvii. 16; and compare Ezek. xvi. 10, xiii. 18. So that the Psalmist may well be supposed to have compared the wisdom of the Divine Artificer particularly with that specimen of human art, whose dignity was through religion the highest, and whose elegance (Exod. xxxv. 30—35) was so exquisite, that the sacred writer seems to attribute it to a divine inspiration."

*In the lowest parts of the earth.*] The womb of the mother, thus expressed by way of delicacy.

Verse 16. *Thine eyes did see my substance*]

*גִּלְמִי golmi*, my embryo state—my yet indistinct mass, when all was *wrapped up* together, before it was gradually unfolded into the lineaments of man. "Some think," says Dr. Dodd, "that the allusion to *embroidery* is still carried on. As the embroiderer has still his work, pattern, or *carton*, before him, to which he always recurs; so, by a method as exact, were all my members *in continuance fashioned*, i.e., from the rude embryo or mass they daily received some degree of figuration; as from the rude skeins of variously coloured silk or worsted, under the artificer's hands, there at length arises an unexpected beauty, and an accurate harmony of colours and proportions.

*And in thy book all my members were written*] "All those members lay open before God's eyes; they were discerned by him as clearly as if the *plan* of them had been *drawn in a book*, even to the least figuration of the body of the child in the womb."

Verse 17. *How precious also are thy thoughts*]

*רֵעֵיכָה reeycha*, thy cogitations; a *Chaldaism*, as before.

*How great is the sum of them!*] *כִּי רַב עֲצֵמֵי רֵאשֵׁיחַ atsemu rasheyhem*; *How strongly rational are the heads or principal subjects of them!* But the word *ראש* apply to the *bones*, *עצמות atsamoth*, the structure and uses of which are most curious and important.

Verse 18. *If I should count them*] I should be glad

19 Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me, therefore, ye bloody men.

20 For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain.

21 Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?

22 I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

24 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Isai. xi. 4. — Ps. cxix. 115. — Jude 15. — 2 Chron. xix. 2. Ps. cxix. 151.

Job xxxi. 6. Ps. xxvi. 2. — Heb. way of pain or grief. Ps. v. 8. cxliii. 10.

to enumerate so many interesting particulars: but they are beyond calculation.

When I awake] Thou art my Governor and Protector night and day.

I am still with thee.] All my steps in life are ordered by thee: I cannot go out of thy presence; I am ever under the influence of thy Spirit.

The subject, from the 14th verse to the 16th inclusive, might have been much more particularly illustrated, but we are taught, by the peculiar delicacy of expression in the Sacred Writings, to avoid, as in this case, the entering too minutely into anatomical details. I would, however, make an additional observation on the subject in the 15th and 16th verses. I have already remarked the elegant allusion to embroidery, in the word רוקמתי rukkamti, in the astonishing texture of the human body; all of which is said to be done in secret, בסתר bassether, in the secret place, viz., the womb of the mother, which, in the conclusion of the verse, is by a delicate choice of expression termed the lower parts of the earth.

The embryo state, גולם golem, has a more forcible meaning than our word substance amounts to. גולם galam signifies to roll or wrap up together; and expresses the state of the fetus before the constituent members were developed. The best system of modern philosophy allows that in semine masculino all the members of the future animal are contained; and that these become slowly developed or unfolded, in the case of fowls, by incubation; and in the case of the more perfect animals, by gestation in the maternal matrix. It is no wonder that, in considering these, the Psalmist should cry out, How precious, or extraordinary, are thy thoughts! how great is the sum—heads or outlines, of them! The particulars are, indeed, beyond comprehension; even the heads—the general contents, of thy works; while I endeavour to form any tolerable notion of them, prevail over me—they confound my understanding, and are vastly too multitudinous for my comprehension.

Verse 19. Surely thou wilt slay the wicked] The remaining part of this psalm has no visible connexion with the preceding. I rather think it a fragment, or a part of some other psalm.

Ye bloody men.] אשני דמים anshey damim, men of blood, men guilty of death.

Verse 20. Thine enemies take thy name in vain.] Bishop Horsley translates the whole verse thus:—

“They have deserted me who are disobedient to thee;

“They who are sworn to a rash purpose—thy refractory adversaries.”

The original is obscure: but I cannot see these things in it. Some translate the Hebrew thus: “Those who oppose thee iniquitously seize unjustly upon thy cities;” and so almost all the Versions. The words, thus translated, may apply to Sanballat, Tobiah, and the other enemies of the returned Jews, who endeavoured to drive them from the land, that they might possess the cities of Judea.

Verse 21. Do not I hate them] I hold their conduct in abomination.

Verse 22. With perfect hatred] Their conduct, their motives, their opposition to thee, their perfidy and idolatrous purposes, I perfectly abhor. With them I have neither part, interest, nor affection.

Verse 23. Search me, O God] Investigate my conduct, examine my heart, put me to the test, and examine my thoughts.

Verse 24. If there be any wicked way] דרך עב derech oseb: a way of idolatry, or of error. Anything false in religious principle; any thing contrary to piety to thyself, and love and benevolence to man. And he needed to offer such a prayer as this, while filled with indignation against the ways of the workers of iniquities; for he who hates, utterly hates, the practices of any man, is not far from hating the man himself. It is very difficult

“To hate the sin with all the heart, And yet the sinner love.”

Lead me in the way everlasting.] בדרך עולם be-derech olam, in the old way—the way in which our fathers walked, who worshipped thee, the infinitely pure Spirit, in spirit and in truth. Lead me, guide me, as thou didst them. We have אורח עולם orach olam, the old path, Job xxii. 15. “The two words דרך derech and אורח orach, differ,” says Bishop Horsley, “in their figurative senses: derech is the right way, in which a man ought to go; orach is the way, right or wrong, in which a man actually goes by habit.” The way that is right in a man’s own eyes is seldom the way to God.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINTH PSALM.

David, having had aspersions laid upon him, calls upon God in this psalm to witness his innocence. Now, that this his appeal be not thought unreasonable, he presents God in his two especial attributes, omniscience and omnipresence; then he shows he loved goodness, and hated wickedness.

- This psalm is divided into four parts:—
- I. A description of God’s omniscience, ver. 1—7.
- II. A description of his omnipresence, ver. 7—18.
- III. David’s hatred to evil and evil men, ver. 19—23.

IV. A protestation of his own innocency, which he offers to the trial of God, ver. 23, 24.

I. He begins with God's omniscience: "O Lord, thou hast searched me," &c. Examined me with scrutiny.

He searches and knows our actions.

1. "Thou knowest," &c. When and for what reasons I ever act.

2. "Thou understandest my thoughts," &c. Thou knowest my counsels and thoughts.

3. Thou compassest my path, &c. The end I aim at.

4. "There is not a word," &c. Every word and thought thou knowest.

And for this he gives this reason: God is our Maker: "Thou hast beset me," &c. These *two* arguments prove that God knows all things.

1. God knows all the past and future: "Beset behind and before."

2. He governs man: "Thou God madest man," &c. The prophet concludes this divine attribute, omniscience, with an acclamation: "Such knowledge," &c. It is beyond my reach and capacity.

II. From God's omnipresence the prophet argues that man cannot hide any thing from God, for he is every where present.

1. "Where shall I go," &c. That I may be hid from thy knowledge.

2. "Or whither shall I flee," &c. From thy face and eye.

There is no place that is not before thee.

1. "If I ascend up to heaven," &c.

2. "If I make make my bed in hell," &c.

3. "If I take the wings of the morning," &c.

And among many instances that might be brought forward to prove God's omniscience and omnipresence, we may simply instance the formation of a child in the womb.

1. "Thou hast possessed my reins," &c. Thou hast undertaken wholly to frame, and cherish me when formed.

2. "Thou hast covered me," &c. Clothed me with flesh, skin, bones, &c.

Then the prophet breaks out in admiration of God's works.

1. "I will praise thee," &c.

2. "I am fearfully," &c. His works are enough to strike all men with reverential fear.

3. "Marvellous are thy works."

Then he proceeds with the formation of the infant embryo.

1. "My substance," &c. My strength, my essence. "Is not hid," &c.

2. "When I was made in secret," &c. In the secret cell of my mother's womb.

3. "And curiously wrought," &c. The word in the Hebrew signifies to interweave coloured threads. Man is a curious piece, and the variety of his faculties shows him such. [See the notes.]

4. "In the lowest parts of the earth," &c. In the womb, where it is as secret as if God wrought it in *the lowest part of the earth*.

5. "Thine eyes did see my substance," &c. When in embryo, and without any distinct parts.

6. "And in thy book," &c. The idea of them was with thee, as the picture in the eye of the painter.

7. Which *in continuance*, &c.

The prophet closes this part with an exclamation.

1. "How precious also are thy thoughts," &c. In this and other respects.

2. "O how great is the sum of them." They are infinite.

3. And for this cause: "When I awake," &c., thy wisdom and providence are ever before my mind, and my admiration is full of them.

The prophet, having ended his discourse on the omniscience and omnipresence of God, justifies himself at God's tribunal.

1. "Surely thou wilt slay the wicked," &c. I dare not then associate with them.

2. "Depart, therefore, from me," &c. Keep at a distance.

3. "For they speak against thee wickedly," &c. Blaspheme my God.

So far from giving them the right hand of fellowship, he asks,—

1. "Do not I hate them, O Lord," &c. I hate them as sinners, but feel for and pity them as men.

2. Then he returns this answer to himself, "Yea, I hate them," &c. I count them my enemies, for they are thine.

IV. Lastly, it would appear that his heart was sincere and pure, or he would not abide such a trial.

1. "Search me, O God:" In the beginning of the psalm he showed what God did; now he entreats him to do it.

2. "Try me," &c. Examine my heart and my ways.

3. "And see if there be any wicked way," &c. Presumptuous sins.

4. "And lead me in the way everlasting." This was the end proposed by his trial; that, if God saw any wickedness in him that might seduce him, he would withdraw him from it; and lead him to think, and devise, and do those things which would bring him to life eternal.

## PSALM CXL.

*The Psalmist prays against his enemies, 1—6; returns thanks for help, 7; describes his enemies, and prays farther against them, 8—11. His confidence in God, 12, 13.*

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

A. M. cir. 2943.  
B. C. cir. 1061.  
Sauli, Regis  
Israelitarum,  
cir. annum 35.

**D**ELIVER me, O LORD,  
from the evil man: <sup>a</sup> preserve  
me from the <sup>b</sup> violent  
man;

<sup>2</sup> Which imagine mischiefs in *their* heart;  
<sup>c</sup> continually are they gathered together for  
war.

<sup>3</sup> They have sharpened their tongues like a  
serpent; <sup>d</sup> adders' poison *is* under their lips.  
Selah.

<sup>4</sup> Keep me, O LORD, from the hands of the  
wicked; <sup>e</sup> preserve me from the violent man;  
who have purposed to overthrow my goings.

<sup>5</sup> The proud have hid a snare for me, and  
cords; they have spread a net by the way-  
side; they have set gins for me. Selah.

<sup>6</sup> I said unto the LORD, Thou *art* my  
God: hear the voice of my supplications, O  
LORD.

<sup>7</sup> O God the LORD, the strength of my

salvation, thou hast covered my  
head in the day of battle.

<sup>8</sup> Grant not, O LORD, the  
desires of the wicked: further  
not his wicked device; <sup>h</sup> lest' they exalt them-  
selves. Selah.

<sup>9</sup> As for the head of those that compass me  
about, <sup>k</sup> let the mischief of their own lips cover  
them.

<sup>10</sup> Let burning coals fall upon them; let  
them be cast into the fire; into deep pits,  
that they rise not up again.

<sup>11</sup> Let not <sup>m</sup> an <sup>n</sup> evil speaker be established  
in the earth: evil shall hunt the violent man  
to overthrow *him*.

<sup>12</sup> I know that the LORD will <sup>o</sup> maintain the  
cause of the afflicted, *and* the right of the  
poor.

<sup>13</sup> Surely the righteous shall give thanks  
unto thy name: the <sup>p</sup> upright shall dwell in  
thy presence.

A. M. cir. 2943.  
B. C. cir. 1061.  
Sauli, Regis  
Israelitarum,  
cir. annum 35.

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 4. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. *man of violences*. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. lvi. 6.  
<sup>d</sup> Ps. lviii. 4. Rom. iii. 13. — <sup>e</sup> Ps. lxxi. 4. — <sup>f</sup> Ver. 1.  
<sup>g</sup> Ps. xxxv. 7. lvii. 6. cxix. 110. cxli. 9. Jer. xviii. 22.  
<sup>h</sup> Or, *let them not be exalted*. — <sup>i</sup> Deut. xxxii. 27. — <sup>k</sup> Ps.  
vi. 16. xciv. 23. Prov. xii. 13. xviii. 7. — <sup>l</sup> Ps. xi. 6.

<sup>m</sup> Heb. *a man of tongue*. — <sup>n</sup> Or, *an evil speaker a wicked  
man of violence, be established in the earth: let him be  
hunted to his overthrow*. — <sup>o</sup> I Kings viii. 45. Ps. ix. 4.  
<sup>p</sup> Job i. 1. Ps. lxxviii. 10. Prov. ii. 21. xi. 20. xiv. 11.

NOTES ON PSALM CXL.

The *Hebrew*, and all the *Versions*, attribute this  
psalm to *David*; and it is supposed to contain his  
complaint when persecuted by Saul. The *Syriac* de-  
termines it to the time when Saul endeavoured to  
transfix David with his spear.

Verse 1. *From the evil man*] Saul, who was full  
of envy, jealousy, and cruelty against David, to whom  
both himself and his kingdom were under the highest  
obligations, endeavoured by every means to destroy  
him.

Verse 2. *They gathered together*] He and his  
courtiers form plots and cabals against my life.

Verse 3. *They have sharpened their tongues*] They  
employ their time in forging lies and calumnies against  
me; and those of the most virulent nature.

Verse 4. *Preserve me from the violent man*] Saul  
again; who was as headstrong and violent in all his  
measures, as he was cruel, and inflexibly bent on the  
destruction of David.

Verse 5. *Have hid a snare for me*] They hunted  
David as they would a dangerous wild beast: one  
while striving to pierce him with the spear; another  
to entangle him in their snares, so as to take and  
sacrifice him before the people, on pretence of his  
being an enemy to the state.

*Selah*] This is the truth.

Verse 7. *Thou hast covered my head*] Not only  
when I fought with the proud blaspheming Philistine;  
but in the various attempts made against my life by  
my sworn enemies.

Verse 8. *Further not his wicked device*] He knew

his enemies still desired his death, and were plotting  
to accomplish it; and here he prays that God may  
disappoint and confound them. The *Chaldee* under-  
stands this of *Doeg*.

Verse 10. *Let burning coals*] The *Chaldee* con-  
siders this as spoken against *Ahithophel*, who was  
head of a conspiracy against David; and translates  
this verse thus: "Let coals from heaven fall upon  
them, precipitate them into the fire of hell, and into  
miry pits, from which they shall not have a resurrec-  
tion to eternal life." This is a proof that the Jews did  
believe in a resurrection of the body, and an eternal  
life for that body, in the case of the righteous.

Verse 11. *Let not an evil speaker be established*] *ישון אש ish lashon*, "a man of tongue." There is  
much force in the rendering of this clause in the  
*Chaldee* גבאר דמישטוי לישון חליתי *gebar demishtui lishan  
telithai*, "The man of detraction, or inflammation, with  
the three-forked tongue." He whose tongue is set on  
fire from hell; the talebearer, slanderer, and dealer  
in scandal: with the three-forked tongue; wounding  
three at once: his neighbour whom he slanders; the  
person who receives the slander; and himself who  
deals in it. What a just description of a character  
which God, angels, and good men must detest! Let  
not such a one be established in the land; let him  
be unmasked; let no person trust him; and let all  
join together to hoot him out of society. "He shall  
be hunted by the angel of death, and thrust into  
hell."—CHALDEE.

Verse 12. *The cause of the afflicted*] Every person  
who is persecuted for righteousness' sake has God for



his peculiar help and refuge; and the persecutor has the same God for his especial enemy.

Verse 13. *The righteous shall give thanks*] For thou wilt support and deliver him.

*The upright shall dwell in thy presence.*] Shall be admitted to the most intimate intercourse with God.

The persecuted have ever been dear to God Almighty; and the martyrs were, in an especial manner, his delight; and in proportion as he loved those, so must he hate and detest these.

#### ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTIETH PSALM.

David, being persecuted by Saul, *Doeg*, and the men of *Ziph*, prays to God against their evil tongues. But the Fathers apply it more largely to the church, in its persecution by wicked men and devils.

The psalm is divided into *four* parts:

I. A petition to be delivered from his enemies, whom he describes, ver. 1—6.

II. A protestation of his confidence in God, ver. 6, 7.

III. A prayer against them, ver. 8—11.

IV. A manifestation of his hope, that God will maintain his just cause, ver. 12, 13.

I. He first summarily proposes his petition.

1. "Deliver me, O Lord," &c. From Saul, *Doeg*, or the devil.

2. "Preserve me," &c. From his violence and malice, and their effects. 1. Evil counsels, and wicked stratagems: "Which imagine mischief," &c. 2. From their evil words, which were consonant with their thoughts.

"They have sharpened their tongues," &c. With calumnies and frauds.

"Like a serpent," &c. Their bitter words are as the poison of the *viper* and *adder*, or the *asp*, which, without pain, extinguishes life.

He repeats his petition: "Keep me, O Lord," &c.

To move God, he shows their intentions.

1. "They have purposed," &c.: To make me walk slowly, or not at all, in the ways of God; to turn me back.

2. The method they took to attain their purpose: "The proud have laid a snare," &c.: as hunters do for birds and beasts. So the devil shows the bait, but hides the hook: under pleasure he hides the bitterness of its reward and consequences.

II. He implores aid from God against the evil and danger.

1. "I said unto the Lord," &c. I do not cast away my confidence.

2. "Hear the voice," &c.

Better to show the ground of his constancy, he declares,—

1. What esteem he had for his God: "Thou art the strength," &c. My fortification against all my enemies.

2. What he had formerly done for him: "Thou hast covered my head," &c.

III. The other part of his petition consists in praying against their plots.

1. "Grant not, O Lord," &c. Let them not have their wishes.

2. "Further not his wicked device," &c. Give them no prosperity in them.

3. "Lest they exalt themselves," &c. Triumph in my being conquered by them.

After praying against them, he predicts their punishment: "As for the head of those that compass me about," &c.

1. "Let the mischief of their own lips," &c.

2. Deal severely with them: "Let burning coals," &c. Let them suffer extreme punishment: "Let them be cast into the fire," &c.

3. "Let not an evil speaker," &c.—a liar, flatterer, &c., "be established in the earth."

4. "Evil shall hunt," &c. Give no rest, but pursue the wicked man to his utter ruin; all those who persecute the church, who write their laws in her blood.

IV. To the infliction of punishment on the wicked, he subjoins, by an antithesis, the promise of God for the defence of the righteous, and so concludes.

1. "I know," &c. Am certainly persuaded by my own experience, and the example of my forefathers, whom thou hast delivered in their trials and temptations.

2. "That the Lord will maintain," &c. He may defer his help and deliverance; but he will not take it from them.

And this he confirms and amplifies from the final cause, which is double.

1. That they praise him: "Surely the righteous shall give thanks," &c. Being delivered, they attribute the honour, not to themselves, or their innocency or merit, but give the glory of his grace and love to God alone.

2. That they remain before him in his church militant and triumphant. That they may "dwell in thy presence," &c. Walk before his face here, dwell in his favour, and enjoy the beatific vision hereafter.

#### PSALM CXLI.

*The Psalmist prays that his devotions may be accepted, 1, 2. That he may be enabled to watch that he do not offend with his tongue; and that he may be preserved from wickedness, 3, 4. His willingness to receive reproof, 5. He complains of disasters, 6, 7. His trust in God, and prayer against his enemies, 8—10.*

A Psalm of David.

A. M. cir. 2943.  
B. C. cir. 1061.  
Sauli, Regis  
Israelitarum,  
cir. annum 35.

**L**ORD, I cry unto thee :  
make haste unto me ; give  
ear unto my voice, when I cry  
unto thee.

2 Let my prayer be set forth before thee  
as incense ; and the lifting up of my hands  
as the evening sacrifice.

3 Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth ;  
keep the door of my lips.

4 Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to  
practise wicked works with men that work  
iniquity : and let me not eat of their dainties.

5 Let the righteous smite me ; it shall be  
a kindness : and let him reprove me ; it shall  
be an excellent oil, which shall not break my

1 Ps. lxx. 5. — 2 Rev. v. 8. viii. 3, 4. — 3 Heb. directed.  
4 Rev. viii. 3. — 5 Ps. cxxxiv. 2. 1 Tim. ii. 8. — 6 Exod.  
ix. 39. — 7 Prov. xxiii. 6. — 8 Prov. ix. 8. xix. 25. xxviii.  
12. Gal. vi. 1. — 9 Or, Let the righteous smite me kindly,

NOTES ON PSALM CXLI.

This psalm is generally attributed to David, and considered to have been composed during his persecution by Saul. Some suppose that he made it at the time that he formed the resolution to go to Achish, king of Gath ; see 1 Sam. xxvi. It is generally thought to be an evening prayer, and has long been used as such in the service of the Greek church. It is in several places very obscure.

Verse 1. Lord, I cry unto thee] Many of David's psalms begin with complaints ; but they are not those of habitual plaint and peevishness. He was in frequent troubles and difficulties, and he always sought help in God. He ever appears in earnest ; at no time is there any evidence that the devotion of David was formal. He prayed, meditated, supplicated, groaned, cried, and even roared, as he tells us, for the disquietude of his soul. He had speedy answers ; for he had much faith, and was always in earnest.

Verse 2. As incense] Incense was offered every morning and evening before the Lord, on the golden altar, before the veil of the sanctuary ; Exod. xxix. 39, and Numb. xxviii. 4.

As the evening sacrifice.] This was a burnt-offering, accompanied with flour and salt. But it does not appear that David refers to any sacrifice, for he uses not זבח zebach, which is almost universally used for a slaughtered animal ; but מנחה minchah, which is generally taken for a gratitude-offering or unbloody sacrifice. The literal translation of the passage is, " Let my prayer be established for incense before thy faces ; and the lifting up of my hands for the evening oblation." The Psalmist appears to have been at this time at a distance from the sanctuary, and therefore could not perform the divine worship in the way prescribed by the law. What could he do ? Why, as he could not worship according to the letter of the law, he will worship God according to the spirit ; then prayer is accepted in the place of incense ; and

head ; for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities.

A. M. cir. 2943.  
B. C. cir. 1061.  
Sauli, Regis  
Israelitarum,  
cir. annum 35.

6 When their judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words ; for they are sweet.

7 Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth.

8 But mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord : in thee is my trust ; leave not my soul destitute.

9 Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity.

10 Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I withal escape.

and reprove me ; let not their precious oil break my head, &c. 2 Cor. i. 9. — 1 2 Chron. xx. 12. Ps. xxv. 15. cxxxiii. 1, 2. 3. — 2 Heb. make not my soul bare. — 3 Ps. cxix. 110. cl. 5. cxlii. 3. — 4 Ps. xxxv. 8. — 5 Heb. pass over.

the lifting up of his hands, in gratitude and self-dedication to God, is accepted in the place of the evening minchah or oblation. Who can deplore the necessity that obliged the Psalmist to worship God in this way ?

Verse 3. Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth] While there are so many spies on my actions and words, I have need to be doubly guarded, that my enemies may have no advantage against me. Some think the prayer is against impatience ; but if he were now going to Gath, it is more natural to suppose that he was praying to be preserved from dishonouring the truth, and from making sinful concessions in a heathen land ; and at a court where, from his circumstances, it was natural to suppose he might be tempted to apostasy by the heathen party. The following verse seems to support this opinion.

Verse 4. Let me eat not of their dainties.] This may refer either to eating things forbidden by the law ; or to the partaking in banquets or feasts in honour of idols.

Verse 5. Let the righteous smite me] This verse is extremely difficult in the original. The following translation, in which the Syriac, Vulgate, Septuagint, Æthiopic, and Arabic nearly agree, appears to me to be the best : " Let the righteous chastise me in mercy, and instruct me : but let not the oil of the wicked anoint my head. It shall not adorn (יני יני, from נח navah) my head ; for still my prayer shall be against their wicked works."

The oil of the wicked may here mean his smooth flattering speeches ; and the Psalmist intimates that he would rather suffer the cutting reproof of the righteous than the oily talk of the flatterer. If this were the case, how few are there now a-days of his mind ! On referring to Bishop Horsley, I find his translation is something similar to my own : —

Let the just one smite me, let the pious remove me.  
Let not the ointment of the impious anoint my head.  
But still I will intrude in their calamities.

Verse 6. *When their judges are overthrown in stony places*] בִּידֵי סֶלֶע *biyedey sela*, "In the hands of the rock." Does this *rock* signify a *strong* or *fortified place*; and its *hands* the *garrison* which have occupied it, by whom these judges were overthrown? If we knew the occasion on which this psalm was made, we might be the better able to understand the *allusions* in the text.

*They shall hear my words; for they are sweet.*] Some think there is here an allusion to David's generous treatment of Saul in the cave of En-gedi, and afterwards at the hill of Hachilah, in this verse, which might be translated: "Their judges have been dismissed in the rocky places; and have heard my words, that they were sweet." Or perhaps there may be a reference to the *death of Saul* and his *sons*, and the very disastrous defeat of the Israelites at *Gilboa*. If so, the *seventh* verse will lose its chief difficulty, *Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth*; but if we take them as referring to the *slaughter of the priests at Nob*, then, instead of translating לִבֵּי שְׂאֵל *lephi sheol*, at the *grave's mouth*, we may translate *at the command of Saul*; and then the verse will point out the *manner* in which those servants of the Lord were massacred; *Doeg cut them in pieces; heved them down* as one cleaveth wood. Some understand all this of the *cruel usage* of the captives in Babylon. I could add other conjectures, and contend for my own; but they are all too vague to form a just ground for decided opinion.

Verse 8. *But mine eyes are unto thee*] In all times, in all places, on all occasions, I will cleave unto the Lord, and put my whole confidence in him.

Verse 10. *Let the wicked fall into their own nets*] This is generally the case; and those who lay snares for others fall into them themselves. *Harm watch, harm catch*, says the old adage. How many cases have occurred where the spring guns that have been set for thieves have shot some of the family! I have known some dismal cases of this kind, where some of the most amiable lives have been sacrificed to this accursed machine.

*Whilst—I withal escape.*] They alone are guilty; they alone spread the nets and gins; I am innocent, and God will cause me to escape.

## ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIRST PSALM.

The contents and sum of the psalm are the following:—

I. His prayer, ver. 1, 2.

II. That God would restrain his tongue, and compose his mind, that through anger or impatience he offend not, ver. 3, 4.

III. He prays that if he must be reprov'd, it be by the just, not the unjust man, ver. 5; whose judgment he declares, ver. 5, 6, and will not have any society with him.

IV. He shows the malice of the wicked to good men, ver. 6, 7.

V. He puts his trust in God, and prays to be delivered from snares, ver. 8—10.

I. 1. "Lord, I cry unto thee," &c. Speedily hear my prayer, which is fervently and affectionately addressed to thee.

2. "Let my prayer be set forth before thee," &c. Which was offered with the sacrifice. Why does David pray that his prayer might be accepted as the evening rather than the morning sacrifice? Perhaps the evening sacrifice might be more noble, as a figure of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, which was in the evening.

II. His second petition is, that God would restrain his tongue, that he might know when to speak and when to be silent. The metaphor is taken from the watch and gate of a city, which to be safely kept, no one must be suffered to go in or out that ought not. The gate will not be sufficient without the watch; for it will be always shut, or ever open.

His third petition is for his heart, because it is deceitful above all things. Man is weak without the grace of God.

1. "Incline not my heart," &c. Suffer it not to be bent, or set on any evil thing.

2. "Incline not my heart to practices," &c. To do iniquity, being invited by their example.

3. "Let me not eat," &c. Partake with them in their feasts, doctrines, feigned sanctity, power, riches, or dignities.

III. His fourth petition is, that if reprov'd, it may be in the kindness of friendship, not revenge or bitterness.

1. "Let the righteous smite me," &c. Smite with a reproof.

2. "It shall be a kindness," &c. I shall account it an act of charity, and I will love him for it.

3. "And let him reprove me," &c. An excellent oil, to heal my wounds of sin.

IV. His next petition he prefaces thus: "Let my prayer," &c. "When their judges are overthrown," &c., refers to the judicature, the chief seats, authorities, &c., are swallowed up, as men are by the sea; as the ship is dashed against the rock, and broken to pieces.

And this sense the following verse will justify: "Our bones are scattered," &c. They beset me and my company so closely, that we despair of life; and our bones must be scattered here and there in the wilderness, except thou, O Lord, succour us.

V. Therefore he presents his last petition, which has two parts. 1. "But mine eyes are unto thee," &c. 2. "Leave not my soul destitute."

1. For his own safety: "Leave not my soul," &c. Let me not fall into their hands.

2. Which prayer is grounded on his confidence in God: "Mine eyes are unto thee," &c. I depend on and look to thee alone for deliverance.

3. "Keep me from the snares," &c. From their frauds and ambushes.

Lastly, he imprecates confusion on the heads of his enemies.

1. "Let the wicked fall," &c.

2. "Whilst that I withal escape." Pass by or through them unhurt.

PSALM CXLII.

The Psalmist, in great distress and difficulty, calls upon God, 1—7.

XXVI. DAY. EVENING PRAYER.

<sup>a</sup> Maschil <sup>b</sup> of David; A Prayer <sup>c</sup> when he was in the cave.

I <sup>d</sup> CRIED unto the LORD with my voice; with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication.

2 <sup>e</sup> I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble.

3 <sup>f</sup> When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. <sup>g</sup> In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me.

4 <sup>h</sup> I <sup>i</sup> looked on my right hand, and beheld, but <sup>j</sup> there was no man that would know me:

<sup>a</sup> Ps. lvii. title. — <sup>b</sup> Or, A Psalm of David, giving instruction. — <sup>c</sup> 1 Sam. xxii. 1. xxiv. 3. — <sup>d</sup> 1 Sam. vii. 8. Ps. cvii. 19. — <sup>e</sup> Ps. cii. title. Isai. xxvi. 16. — <sup>f</sup> Ps. cxliii. 4. <sup>g</sup> Ps. cxl. 5. — <sup>h</sup> Ps. lxxix. 20. — <sup>i</sup> Or, Look on the right hand, and see. — <sup>j</sup> Ps. xxxi. 11. lxxxviii. 8, 18. — <sup>k</sup> Heb. perished

NOTES ON PSALM CXLII.

The title says, "An Instruction of David," or a Psalm of David, giving instruction; "A Prayer when he was in the cave."

David was twice in great peril in caves. 1. At the cave of Adullam, when he fled from Achish, king of Gath, 1 Sam. xxii. 2. When he was in the cave of En-gedi, where he had taken refuge from the pursuit of Saul; and the latter, without knowing that David was in it, had gone into it on some necessary occasion, 1 Sam. xxiv. If the inscription can be depended on, the cave of En-gedi is the most likely of the two, for the scene laid here. But were there doubts concerning the legitimacy of the title, I should refer the psalm to the state of the captives in Babylon, to which a great part of the psalms refer. Bishop Horsley calls it "A Prayer of the Messiah taken and deserted." It may be so: but where is the evidence, except in the conjectural system of Origen.

Verse 1. *I cried unto the Lord*] See on the first verse of the preceding psalm.

Verse 3. *Then thou knewest my path.*] When Saul and his army were about the cave in which I was hidden, *thou knewest my path*—that I had then no way of escape but by miracle: but thou didst not permit them to know that I was wholly in their power.

Verse 4. *There was no man that would know me*] This has been applied to the time in which our Lord was deserted by his disciples. As to the case of David in the cave of En-gedi, he had no refuge: for what were the handful of men that were with him to Saul and his army?

Verse 5. *Thou art my refuge*] Even in these most disastrous circumstances, I will put my trust in thee.

Verse 6. *I am brought very low*] Never was I so near total ruin before.

*Deliver me from my persecutors*] They are now in full possession of the only means of my escape.

refuge <sup>1</sup> failed me; <sup>2</sup> no man cared for my soul.

5 I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, <sup>3</sup> Thou art my refuge and <sup>4</sup> my portion <sup>5</sup> in the land of the living.

6 Attend unto my cry; for I am <sup>6</sup> brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.

7 Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: <sup>7</sup> the righteous shall compass me about; <sup>8</sup> for thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

from me. — <sup>m</sup> Heb. no man sought after my soul. — <sup>n</sup> Ps. xli. 1. xci. 2. — <sup>o</sup> Ps. xvi. 5. lxxiii. 26. cxix. 57. Lam. iii. 24. — <sup>p</sup> Ps. xxvii. 13. — <sup>q</sup> Ps. cxvi. 6. — <sup>r</sup> Ps. xxxiv. 2. <sup>s</sup> Ps. xiii. 6. cxix. 17.

*They are stronger than I.*] What am I and my men against this well-appointed armed multitude, with their king at their head.

Verse 7. *Bring my soul out of prison*] Bring נפשתי naphshi, my life, out of this cave in which it is now imprisoned; Saul and his men being in possession of the entrance.

*The righteous shall compass me about*] יחזקו יצדקתי yach-tiru, they shall crown me; perhaps meaning that the pious Jews, on the death of Saul, would cheerfully join together to make him king, being convinced that God, by his bountiful dealings with him, intended that it should be so. The old Psalter, which is imperfect from the twenty-first verse of Psalm cxix. to the end of Psalm cxli., concludes this psalm thus: "Lede my saule oute of corrupcion of my body; that corrupcion is bodely pyne, in whilk my saule is anguyst; after that in Godes house, sal al be louyng (praising) of the."

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SECOND PSALM.

The substance of this psalm is the earnest prayer of the Psalmist that he might be delivered from the danger he was in.

The parts are,

- I. An exordium; in which he
  1. Shows what he did in his trouble; took himself to prayer, ver. 1, 2.
  2. Then his consternation and anxiety of mind, which arose from the malice and craft of his enemies, and want of help from his friends, ver. 3, 4.

II. His address and petition to God, ver. 5—7. 1. The two first verses show the Psalmist's intention. "I cried unto the Lord," &c. 2. "I poured out my supplication," &c.

This he amplifies,—

- 1. From his vehemence: "I cried, I supplicated."

2. From the object: "Unto the Lord." I invoked him, and no other.

3. From the instrument: "With my voice."

4. From his humility in prayer. It was a *supplication*.

5. From his free and full confession: "I poured out," &c.

6. From his sincerity and confidence in God.

The reason was:—

1. This I did "when my spirit was overwhelmed," &c. There being no sufficiency in me, I betook myself to the all-sufficient God.

2. "For thou knowest my path," &c. My actions and intentions.

The craft and subtlety of his enemies, especially Saul.

1. "In the way wherein I walked," &c. My vocation.

2. "Have they privily laid," &c. Saul gave him his daughter *Michal* to be a snare to him; and a dowry he must have of a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, that David might fall by their hands.

His destitution in the time of trouble.

1. "I looked on my right hand," &c. But no friend was near: "There was no man," &c. The miserable have few friends.

2. "Refuge failed me," &c. I had no place of safety.  
3. "No man cared," &c. Regarded my life, or cared if I perished.

II. The Psalmist, having no human help, calls upon God.

1. "Thou art my refuge," &c. My hiding-place.

2. "Thou art my portion," &c. While I live in this world.

Then he sends up his prayer, fortified by a double argument.

1. From the lamentable condition he was brought into: "I was brought low," &c.

2. From the malice and power of his enemies: "Deliver me," &c.

Again he renews his prayer, and presses it from the final cause: "Bring my soul," &c.

Upon which follow two effects:—

1. His gratitude: "That I may praise thy name."

2. That of others: "The righteous shall compass me," &c. Come unto me."

3. The reason for this: "For thou shalt deal bountifully with me." Bestow favours upon me, having delivered me from my former miseries; which men seeing, who are commonly the friends of prosperity, will magnify and resort to me.

PSALM CXLIII.

The Psalmist prays for mercy, and deprecates judgment, 1, 2. His persecutions, 3. His earnest prayer for deliverance, 4—9. Prays for God's quickening Spirit, 10, 11. And for the total discomfiture of his adversaries, 12.

A Psalm of David.

A. M. cir. 2981.  
B. C. cir. 1023.  
Davidis, Regis  
Israelitarum,  
cir. annum 33.

**H**EAR my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: \* in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness.

ousness.

2 And <sup>b</sup> enter not into judgment with thy

\* Ps. xxxi. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Job xiv. 3.

NOTES ON PSALM CXLIII.

The Hebrew and all the Versions attribute this psalm to David; and the Vulgate, Septuagint, Æthiopic, and Arabic state that it was composed on the rebellion of his son Absalom: nor is there any thing in the psalm that positively disagrees with this inscription. This is the last of the seven psalms styled penitential.

Verse 1. *In thy faithfulness answer me*] Thou hast promised to support me in my difficulties, and, though my children should forsake me, never to withdraw thy loving-kindness from me. See the present unnatural rebellion of my son. Lord, undertake for me!

Verse 2. *Enter not into judgment*] אל תביא אל תבוא. Do not come into court, either as a Witness against me, or as a Judge, else I am ruined; for thou hast

servant: for <sup>c</sup> in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

3 For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath smitten my life down to the ground; he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.

A. M. cir. 2981.  
B. C. cir. 1023.  
Davidis, Regis  
Israelitarum,  
cir. annum 33.

<sup>c</sup> Exod. xxxiv. 7. Job iv. 17. ix. 2. xv. 14. xxv. 4. Ps. cxxx. 3. Eccles. vii. 20. Rom. iii. 20. Gal. ii. 16.

seen all my ways that they are evil, and thy justice requires thee to punish me. Nor can any soul that has ever lived be justified in the sight of thy justice and righteousness. Had I my desert from thee, I should have worse than even my unnatural son intends me. O what a relief is *Jesus crucified* to a soul in such circumstances!

Verse 3. *He hath made me to dwell in darkness*] Literally, *in dark places*. This may be understood of David's taking refuge in caves and dens of the earth, to escape from his persecuting son; yea, even to take refuge in the tombs, or repositories of the dead.

Verse 4. *Therefore is my spirit*] I am deeply depressed in spirit, and greatly afflicted in body.

*My heart within me is desolate.*] It has no companion of its sorrows, no sympathetic friend. I am utterly destitute of comfort.

A. M. cir. 2981.  
B. C. cir. 1023.  
Davidis, Regis  
Israelitarum,  
cir. annum 33.

4 \*Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate.

5 <sup>b</sup> I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

6 <sup>c</sup> I stretch forth my hands unto thee: <sup>d</sup> my soul *thirsteth* after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.

7 Hear me speedily, O LORD: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, <sup>e</sup> lest <sup>f</sup> I be like unto them that go down into the pit.

8 Cause me to hear thy loving-kindness <sup>g</sup> in the morning; for in thee do I trust: <sup>h</sup> cause

me to know the way wherein I should walk; for <sup>i</sup> I lift up my soul unto thee.

9 Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies: I <sup>k</sup> flee unto thee to hide me.

10 <sup>l</sup> Teach me to do thy will; for thou *art* my God: <sup>m</sup> thy Spirit *is* good; lead me into <sup>n</sup> the land of uprightness.

11 <sup>o</sup> Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.

12 And of thy mercy <sup>p</sup> cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for <sup>q</sup> I *am* thy servant.

A. M. cir. 2981.  
B. C. cir. 1023.  
Davidis, Regis  
Israelitarum,  
cir. annum 33.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. lxxvii. 3. cxlii. 3. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. lxxvii. 5, 10, 11. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 9. — <sup>d</sup> Ps. lxxiii. 1. — <sup>e</sup> Ps. xxviii. 1. — <sup>f</sup> Or, *for I am become like*, &c. — <sup>g</sup> Ps. lxxxviii. 4. — <sup>h</sup> See Ps. xli. 5. — <sup>i</sup> Ps. v. 8. — <sup>j</sup> Ps. xxv. 1. — <sup>k</sup> Heb. *hide me with thee*.

<sup>l</sup> Ps. xxv. 4, 5. cxxxix. 24. — <sup>m</sup> Neh. ix. 20. — <sup>n</sup> Isai. xxvi. 10. — <sup>o</sup> Ps. cxix. 25, 37, 40, &c. — <sup>p</sup> Ps. liv. 5. — <sup>q</sup> Ps. cxvi. 16.

Verse 5. *I remember the days of old*] Thou hast often helped me, often delivered me. I will therefore trust in thee, for thy mercy is not clean gone from me.

Verse 6. *I stretch forth my hands*] This is a natural action. All in distress, or under the influence of *eager desire*, naturally extend their hands and arms, as if to catch at help and obtain succour.

*As a thirsty land.*] Parched and burned by the sun, longs for rain, so does my thirsty soul for the living God.

Verse 7. *Hear me speedily*] מהר *maher*, *make haste* to answer me. A few hours, and my state may be irretrievable. In a short time my unnatural son may put an end to my life.

Verse 8. *Cause me to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning*] This petition was probably offered in the *night-season*. David had dispatched his messengers in all directions; and prays to God that he might by the morning get some good news.

*Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk*] Absalom and his partisans are in possession of all the country. I know not in what direction to go, that I may not fall in with them: point out by thy especial providence the path I should take.

Verse 9. *I flee unto thee to hide me.*] That I may not be *found* by my enemies, who seek my life to destroy it.

Verse 10. *Teach me to do thy will*] רצונו *retsonecha*, thy *pleasure*. To be found doing the will of God is the only safe state for man.

*Thy Spirit is good*] The Author of every good desire and holy purpose.

*Lead me*] Let it lead me by its continued inspirations and counsels.

*Into the land of uprightness.*] "Into a right land," CHALDÆE. Into the place where I shall be safe. The old Psalter has, *Thi gaste gude sal lede me into rpgt lande*.

Verse 11. *Quicken me*] I am as a dead man, and my hopes are almost dead within me.

Verse 12. *And of thy mercy*] To me and the kingdom.

*Cut off mine enemies*] Who, if they succeed, will destroy the very form of godliness. The steps he has already taken show that even *morality* shall have no countenance, if Absalom reign.

*I am thy servant.*] Whoever is disloyal to me, I will love and serve thee.

For a full explanation of this psalm, as applied to penitents, see the analysis.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-THIRD PSALM.

David, being driven from Jerusalem by his son Absalom, wisely calls to mind his sin, as being the cause of it.

This psalm has four parts:—

I. A prayer for remission of sin, grounded on God's promise, ver. 1; not on his own worthiness, ver. 2.

II. A narration of the sad state of his affairs, ver. 3, 4.

III. The comfort he received in his sad condition, and whence, ver. 5, 6.

IV. His petition, containing many particulars and reasons, ver. 7 to the end.

I. He prays for audience: "Hear my prayer, O Lord," &c. He does not plainly express the matter he prayed for; but it may be gathered from the context that it was for remission of sin.

1. "In thy faithfulness," &c. Thou art a faithful God, and hast promised to pardon the penitent. I am a penitent; have mercy on me.

2. "And in thy righteousness," &c. Which here signifies mercy, loving-kindness.

This sense appears more plainly from the next verse.

1. "And enter not into judgment," &c. Call me not to a strict account at the bar of thy justice. This he deprecates; so that *justitia* in the former verse could not be taken for that justice.

2. "For in thy sight," &c. Not I, nor any other man: pardon me, then, for the sake of thy mercy and promise, not my merits.

II. And now he enters upon the narration of his sad condition.

1. "For the enemy hath persecuted," &c. My son Absalom seeks my life: but it was Satan who enticed me to adultery and homicide.

2. "He hath smitten," &c. Humbled me; made me a lover of earth, vile in thy sight.

3. "He hath made me to dwell," &c. After Satan had entangled me with earthly pleasures, I was in spiritual darkness, and saw not the way of life, any more than those who have been long dead.

The effect this darkness produced was fear and consternation.

1. "Therefore is my spirit," &c. I suffered a kind of swoon in my soul; I was ready to faint when I considered thy holiness and my impurity.

2. "My heart within me," &c. Far from comfort, in heavy trouble.

III. In this sadness of heart and mind,—

1. "I remember the days of old," &c. Thy past kindness to me and to others.

2. "I meditate," &c. I did not slightly run them over, but pondered on them.

And I derived great profit from my meditation; for,

1. "I stretch forth my hands," &c. I began earnestly to pray to thee.

2. "My soul thirsteth," &c. After thy righteousness, as the dry land wanting water. For as the earth without rain has no consistence, but is pulverized; so the soul not moistened with the grace of God falls on the right and left hand into temptation, and brings forth no fruit to God's glory.

IV. The sad case in which David was, upon a sense of God's indignation, makes him seek out a remedy.

1. "Hear me speedily," &c. And his reason for this is the sad condition in which he was till God was pacified for his sin.

2. "Hide not thy face," &c. Thy presence, thy favour.

His next petition resembles the former in substance.

1. "Cause me to hear," &c. Thy pardoning mercy out of thy word; it is thy Spirit which must work with it to save me.

2. "In the morning," &c. Betimes, speedily, quickly, &c.

3. His reason: "For in thee do I trust," &c. I did not let go my hold even in my extremity; but still hoped against hope.

His third petition is—

1. "Cause me to know," &c. The Psalmist, being truly penitent, fears to relapse into his pardoned sin, and prays to God for grace and direction.

2. His reason: "For I lift up my soul," &c. My purpose, to serve thee.

His fourth petition is—

1. "Deliver me, O Lord," &c. From the devil and all his temptations.

2. His reason: "I flee unto thee," &c. From them. His fifth petition resembles his third.

1. "Teach me to do thy will," &c. Both by an active and passive obedience may I know thy will perfectly; in adversity, to submit to it; in prosperity, to do it without pride or presumption.

2. His reason: "For thou art my God." Who hast promised me thy help; and from whom all my good proceeds, being and well-being.

His sixth petition: "Thy Spirit is good." Not mine. Let then thy good Spirit instruct and lead me in the right way.

His seventh petition is—

1. "Quicken me, O Lord," &c. Restore life; justify me fully.

2. "For thy name's sake." Not my merits, but thy mercy, and the glory that will accrue to thy name in pardoning a penitent soul.

3. He goes on: "For thy righteousness' sake," &c. Freedom he desires; but still at the hands of God's infinite mercy.

His last petition is for the destruction of Satan's kingdom.

1. "Of thy mercy cut off mine enemies," &c.

2. His reason: "For I am thy servant," &c. A follower; one under thy patronage and protection; one of thy family honoured with the dignity of being thy servant, and well contented and pleased to perform my duty and service.

PSALM CXLIV.

The Psalmist praises God for his goodness, 1, 2. Exclamations relative to the vanity of human life, 3, 4. He prays against his enemies, 5—8; and extols God's mercy for the temporal blessings enjoyed by his people, 9—15.

XXX. DAY. MORNING PRAYER.

A Psalm of David.

A. M. cir. 2981.  
B. C. cir. 1023.  
Davidis, Regis  
Israelitarum,  
cir. annum 33.

**B**LESSED be the LORD  
a my strength, b which  
teacheth my hands c to war,  
and my fingers to fight:

2 d My e goodness, and my fortress; my

high tower, and my deliverer;  
my shield, and he in whom I  
trust; who subdueth my people  
under me.

A. M. cir. 2981.  
B. C. cir. 1023.  
Davidis, Regis  
Israelitarum,  
cir. annum 33.

3 f LORD, what is man, that thou takest  
knowledge of him! or the son of man, that  
thou makest account of him!

\* Heb. my rock. Ps. xviii. 2, 31. — b 2 Sam. xxii. 35. Ps. xviii. 34. — c Heb. to the war, &c.

d 2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3, 40, 48. — e Or, My mercy. — f Job vii. 17. Ps. vii. 4. Hebr. ii. 6.

A. M. cir. 2981.  
B. C. cir. 1023.  
Davidis, Regis  
Israelitarum,  
cir. annum 33.

A. M. cir. 2981.  
B. C. cir. 1023.  
Davidis, Regis  
Israelitarum,  
cir. annum 33.

4 \* Man is like to vanity : <sup>b</sup> his days are as a shadow that passeth away.

11 ° Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood :

5 ° Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and come down : <sup>d</sup> touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.

12 That our sons may be <sup>p</sup> as plants grown up in their youth ; that our daughters may be as corner stones, <sup>q</sup> polished after the similitude of a palace :

6 ° Cast forth lightning, and scatter them : shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.

13 That our garners may be full, affording <sup>r</sup> all manner of store : that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets :

7 ° Send thine <sup>s</sup> hand from above ; <sup>b</sup> rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hand of <sup>i</sup> strange children ;

14 That our oxen may be <sup>s</sup> strong to labour ; that there be no breaking in, nor going out ; that there be no complaining in our streets.

8 Whose mouth <sup>b</sup> speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.

15 ° Happy is that people, that is in such a case : yea, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD.

9 I will <sup>l</sup> sing a new song unto thee, O God : upon a psaltery and an instrument of ten strings will I sing praises unto thee.

10 <sup>m</sup> It is he that giveth <sup>n</sup> salvation unto kings : who delivereth David his servant from the hurtful sword.

<sup>a</sup> Job iv. 19. xiv. 2. Ps. xxxix. 5. lxi. 9. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. cii. 11. Ps. xviii. 9. Isai. lxiv. 1. — <sup>d</sup> Ps. civ. 32. — <sup>e</sup> Ps. xviii. 13, 14. — <sup>f</sup> Ps. xviii. 16. — <sup>g</sup> Heb. hands. — <sup>h</sup> Ver. 11. Ps. lxi. 1, 2, 14. — <sup>i</sup> Ps. liv. 3. Mal. ii. 11. — <sup>k</sup> Ps. xii. 2. — <sup>l</sup> Ps. xxxiii. 2, 3. xl. 3. — <sup>m</sup> Ps. xviii. 50.

<sup>n</sup> Or, victory. — <sup>o</sup> Ver. 7, 8. — <sup>p</sup> Ps. cxxviii. 3. — <sup>q</sup> Heb. cut. — <sup>r</sup> Heb. from kind to kind. — <sup>s</sup> Heb. able to bear burdens, or laden with flesh. — <sup>t</sup> Deut. xxxiii. 29. Ps. xxxiii. 12. lxx. 4. cxlvi. 5.

NOTES ON PSALM CXLIV.

The Hebrew, and all the Versions, attribute this psalm to David. The Vulgate, Septuagint, Æthiopic, and Arabic term it, A psalm of David against Goliath. The Syriac says, "A Psalm of David when he slew Asaph, the brother of Goliath." Calmet thinks, and with much probability, that it was composed by David after the death of Absalom, and the restoration of the kingdom to peace and tranquillity. From a collation of this with Ps. xviii., of which it appears to be an abridgment, preserving the same ideas, and the same forms of expression, there can be no doubt of both having proceeded from the same pen, and that David was the author. There is scarcely an expression here of peculiar importance that is not found in the prototype ; and for explanation I must refer generally to the above psalm.

Verse 1. Teacheth my hands to war] To use sword, battle-axe, or spear.

And my fingers to fight] To use the bow and arrows, and the sling.

Verse 2. Who subdueth my people] Who has once more reduced the nation to a state of loyal obedience. This may refer to the peace after the rebellion of Absalom.

Verse 3. Lord, what is man] See the notes on Ps. viii. 4, 5. What is Adam, that thou approvest of him? Can he do any thing worthy of thy notice? Or he son of feeble perishing man, that thou shouldest hold him in repute? What care, love, and attention dost thou lavish upon him!

Verse 4. Man is like to vanity] אדם להבל דמה Adam lahebel damah, literally, Adam is like to Abel, exposed to the same miseries, accidents, and murderers ; for in millions of cases the hands of brothers

are lifted up to shed the blood of brothers. What are wars but fratricide in the great human family?

His days are as a shadow] The life of Abel was promissory of much blessedness ; but it afforded merely the shadow of happiness. He was pure and holy, beloved of his parents, and beloved of God ; but, becoming the object of his brother's envy, his life became a sacrifice to his piety.

Verse 5. Bow thy heavens] See the note on Ps. xviii. 9.

Verse 6. Cast forth lightning] See the note, ib. ver. 13, 14.

Verse 7. Deliver me out of great waters] See the note, ib. ver. 16.

Verse 9. I will sing a new song] A song of peculiar excellence. I will pour forth all my gratitude, and all my skill, on its composition. See on Ps. xxxiii. 2, 3.

Verse 10. He that giveth salvation unto kings] Monarchy, in the principle, is from God : it is that form of government which, in the course of the divine providence, has principally prevailed ; and that which, on the whole, has been most beneficial to mankind. God, therefore, has it under his peculiar protection. It is by him that kings reign ; and by his special providence they are protected.

Verse 12. That our sons may be as plants] God had promised to his people, being faithful, THREE descriptions of BLESSINGS, Deut. xxviii. 4. 1. The fruit of the body—sons and daughters. 2. The fruits of the ground—grass and corn in sufficient plenty, 3. Fruit of the cattle—"the increase of kine, and flocks of sheep." These are the blessings to which the Psalmist refers here, as those in which he might at present exult and triumph : blessings actually enjoyed



by his people at large ; proofs of his mild and paternal government, and of the especial blessing of the Almighty. The people who *were in such a state*, and revolted, had no excuse: they were doubly guilty, as ungrateful both to *God* and *man*.

Verse 13. That our *garners, &c.*] *Our garners are full*. These are not *prayers* put up by David for such blessings: but *assertions*, that such blessings were actually in possession. All these expressions should be understood in the *present tense*.

*Ten thousands in our streets.*] בְּרַחֲוֵי bechutsoth-yynu should be translated in our *pens* or *sheep-walks*; for *sheep bringing forth* in the *streets* of cities or towns is absurd.

Verse 14. *Our oxen may be strong to labour*] We have not only an abundance of cattle; but they are of the most strong and vigorous breed.

*No breaking in*] So well ordered is the *police* of the kingdom, that there are no depredations, no robbers, house-breakers, or marauding parties in the land; no sudden incursions of neighbouring tribes or banditti breaking into fields or houses, carrying away property, and taking with them the people to sell them into captivity: there is no such *breaking in*, and no such *going out*, in the nation. *My enemies* are either become *friends*, and are united with me in political interests; or are, *through fear*, obliged to *stand aloof*.

Verse 15. *Happy is that people*] "O how happy are the people!" Such were his people; and they had not only all this secular happiness, but they had *Jehovah for their God*; and in him had a ceaseless fountain of strength, protection, earthly blessings, and eternal mercies! A people in such a case to rebel, must have the curse of God and man.

#### ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOURTH PSALM.

This psalm is divided into *three* parts:—

- I. A thanksgiving, ver. 1—5.
- II. A petition, ver. 5—11.
- III. A discussion on happiness, and in what it consists, ver. 12, to the end.

1. The prophet gives thanks, and praises God.

1. "Blessed be the Lord:" &c. Who has taught me in a general way the art of war, in a particular way the use of the sling; giving me skill, &c.

2. "He is my strength," &c. The strength I have is from him.

3. "My goodness," &c. Benignity or mercy.

4. "My fortress," &c. To him I fly as to a stronghold.

5. "And my Deliverer." Therefore will I trust in him.

From the consideration of so many benefits, the Psalmist exclaims, "Lord, what is man," &c.

To which question he replies,—

1. "Man is like to vanity." If God be not his fulness and strength.

2. "His days," &c. God is always the same; but man changes every moment.

II. He prays for God's assistance: "Bow thy heavens," &c. "Cast forth lightning," &c. If men will not acknowledge thy mercy, let them see thy judgments. This first part of his petition against his enemies being ended, he prays,—

1. "Rid me, and deliver me:" &c. From dangers of men.

2. "From the hand of strange children:" &c. Moabites, Philistines, &c.

Upon whom he sets these two characters.

1. "Whose mouth speaketh vanity:" &c. Lies, insincere words.

2. "And their right hand:" &c. They use their power to oppress and deceive.

Then the Psalmist exclaims, as in a short hymn—

1. "I will sing a new song," &c. And this I will do because "thou hast given victory," &c. "Thou hast delivered David," &c., from Saul, Absalom, &c.

2. And then he repeats, and concludes his petition as before: "Rid me," &c.

III. His petition being ended, he discourses on the nature of happiness, which is of two kinds, temporal and spiritual. The addition of temporal blessings is pleasant, and promised to the obedient: but godliness is the only safety in this, and especially in the life to come: "For godliness," &c. God created temporal *goods* not merely for the wicked; they are often the rewards of piety. The Psalmist therefore prays,—

1. "That our sons," &c. They are the pillars of a house; let them be flourishing.

2. "That our daughters," &c. Stones that join the building, beautiful as well as useful.

3. "That our garners may be full," &c. That we may have abundance.

4. "That our sheep," &c. Our flocks' increase.

5. "That our oxen," &c. May be healthy and strong.

6. "That there be no breaking," &c. No plundering among us.

7. "That there be no complaining," &c. No want of bread, or any cause of tumult. David prays that, during his reign, the people may be happy, and enjoy the fruits of peace.

Then he concludes the psalm with this acclamation:—

1. "Happy is that people," &c. Those he has described.

2. "Yea, happy," &c. That have the true God for their God; who know God to be their Father, and that he takes care of them, providing for their temporal necessities, and supplying all their spiritual wants. Others understand these words, not as prayers, but as a description of the state *David* and his people were then in. See the notes.

## PSALM CXLV.

God is praised for his unsearchable greatness, 1, 2; for his majesty and terrible acts, 3—6; for his goodness and tender mercies to all, 7—9; for his power and kingdom, 10—13; for his kindness to the distressed, 14; for his providence, 15—17. He hears and answers prayer, 18—20. All should praise him, 21.

David's *Psalm* of praise.

I WILL extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.

2 Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.

3 <sup>b</sup> Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised; <sup>c</sup> and <sup>d</sup> his greatness *is* unsearchable.

4 <sup>e</sup> One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

5 I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous <sup>f</sup> works.

6 And *men* shall speak of the might of thy

<sup>a</sup> Ps. c. title. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. xevi. 4. cxlvii. 5. — <sup>c</sup> Heb. *and of his greatness there is no search.* — <sup>d</sup> Job v. 9. ix. 10. Rom. xi. 33. — <sup>e</sup> Isai. xxxviii. 19. — <sup>f</sup> Heb. *things or words.*

## NOTES ON PSALM CXLV.

This psalm is attributed to *David* by the *Hebrew* and all the *Versions*. It is the last of the *acrostic* psalms; and should contain twenty-two verses, as answering to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet; but the verse between the thirteenth and fourteenth, beginning with the letter *nun*, is lost out of the present Hebrew copies; and a translation of it is found in the *Syriac*, *Septuagint*, *Vulgate*, *Ethiopic*, *Arabic*, and *Anglo-Saxon*. See below. It is an incomparable psalm of praise; and the rabbins have it in such high estimation, that they assert, if a man with sincerity of heart repeat it three times a-day, he shall infallibly enjoy the blessings of the world to come. It does not appear on what particular occasion it was composed; or, indeed, whether there was any occasion but gratitude to God for his ineffable favours to mankind.

Verse 1. *I will extol thee*] I will raise thee on high, I will lift thee up.

*I will bless thy name*] *לעלם לעלם leolam vaed, for ever and onward*, in this and the coming world. This sort of expressions, which are very difficult to be translated, are on the whole well expressed by those words, in a hymn of Mr. Addison:

Through all eternity to thee  
A joyful song I'll raise;  
But oh, eternity's too short  
To utter all thy praise!

This contains a strong *hyperbole*; but allowable in such cases.

Verse 3. *His greatness is unsearchable.*] Literally, *To his mightinesses there is no investigation.* All in God is *unlimited* and *eternal*.

Verse 4. *One generation*] *Thy creating and redeeming acts* are recorded in thy *word*; but thy *wondrous providential dealings* with mankind must be

terrible acts: and I will <sup>e</sup> declare thy greatness.

7 They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.

8 <sup>b</sup> The LORD *is* gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and <sup>i</sup> of great mercy.

9 <sup>k</sup> The LORD *is* good to all: and his tender mercies *are* over all his works.

10 <sup>l</sup> All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee.

11 They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;

<sup>e</sup> Heb. *declare it.* — <sup>b</sup> Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. Numb. xiv. 18. Ps. lxxxvi. 5, 15. ciii. 8. — <sup>i</sup> Heb. *great in mercy.* — <sup>k</sup> Ps. c. 5. Nah. i. 7. — <sup>l</sup> Ps. xix. 1.

handed down by tradition, from generation to generation; for they are in continual occurrence, and consequently innumerable.

Verse 8. *The Lord is gracious*] His holy nature is ever *disposed* to show favour.

*Full of compassion*] Wherever he sees misery, his eye affects his heart.

*Slow to anger*] When there is even the *greatest* provocation.

*Of great mercy.*] Great in his *abundant* mercy. These *four* things give us a wonderful display of the goodness of the divine nature.

Verse 9. *The Lord is good to all*] There is not a soul out of hell that is not continually under his *most merciful regards*; so far is he from *willing* or *decreeing* before their creation the damnation of any man.

*His tender mercies*] His *bowels of compassion*, are over all his works; he feels for his intelligent offspring, as the most *affectionate mother* does for the child of her own bosom. And through this matchless mercy, these bowels of compassion, his son Jesus tasted death for every man. How far is all that is here spoken of the nature of God opposed to the Molochian doctrine of the eternal decree of reprobation!

“ His grace for every soul is free:  
For his, who forged the dire decree;  
For every reprobate and me.”

Verse 10. *All thy works shall praise thee*] Whom? The God *who is good to all*.

*Thy saints*] *חסידים charideycha*, thy *compassionate ones*; those who are partakers of thy *great mercy*, ver. 8. These shall *bless thee*, because they know, they *feel*, that thou wiltest the salvation of all. The dark, the gloomy, the hard-hearted, the narrow-minded bigots, who never have had thy love shed abroad in their hearts, can unfeelingly deal in the damnation of their fellows.

12 To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

13 <sup>a</sup> Thy kingdom *is* <sup>b</sup> an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion *endureth* throughout all generations.

14 The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and <sup>c</sup> raiseth up all *those that be* bowed down.

15 <sup>d</sup> The eyes of all <sup>e</sup> wait upon thee; and <sup>f</sup> thou givest them their meat in due season.

16 Thou openest thine hand, <sup>g</sup> and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

17 The LORD *is* righteous in all his ways, and <sup>h</sup> holy in all his works.

18 <sup>i</sup> The LORD *is* nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him <sup>k</sup> in truth.

19 He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

20 <sup>l</sup> The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

21 My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. cxlvi. 10. 1 Tim. i. 17. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. *a kingdom of all ages*. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. cxlvii. 8. — <sup>d</sup> Ps. civ. 27. — <sup>e</sup> Or, *look unto thee*. — <sup>f</sup> Ps. cxxxvi. 25. — <sup>g</sup> Ps. civ. 21. cxlvii. 9. — <sup>h</sup> Or,

*merciful or bountiful*. — <sup>i</sup> Deut. iv. 7. — <sup>k</sup> John iv. 24. <sup>l</sup> Ps. xxxi. 23. xcvi. 10.

Verse 12. *To make known*] They delight to recommend their God and Father to others.

Verse 13. *Thy dominion endureth*] There is neither age nor people in and over which God does not manifest his *benignly ruling* power. As the above verse begins with the letter *mem*, the next in the order of the alphabet should begin with *nun*: but that verse is totally wanting. To say it never was in, is false, because the alphabet is not complete without it; and it is an unanswerable argument to prove the careless manner in which the Jews have preserved the divine records. Though the *Syriac, Septuagint, Vulgate, Æthiopic, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon* have a verse, not in the Hebrew text, that answers to the *nun*, which is found in no printed copy of the Hebrew Bible; yet one MS., now in Trinity College, Dublin, has it thus, I suppose by correction, in the bottom of the page:—

נאמן יהוה בכל דבריו וחסידי ככל מעשיו

*Neeman Jehovah bechol debaraiv; vechasid bechol maasaiv.*

“The Lord is faithful in all his words; and merciful in all his works.”

Πιστος Κυριος εν τοις λογοις αυτου και οσιος εν πασι τοις εργασις αυτου.—SEPTUAGINT.

Fidelis Dominus in omnibus verbis suis: et sanctus in omnibus operibus suis.—VULGATE.

These two Versions, the *Septuagint* and *Vulgate*, are the same with the Hebrew given above. The *Anglo-Saxon* is the same:—

geztrype riht on eallum worpum heora; 7 halize on eallum worpum hr. “True Lord in all words his; and holy in all works his.”

The *Latin* text in my old Psalter is the same with the present printed *Vulgate*: “Fidelis Dominus in omnibus verbis suis; et sanctus in omnibus operibus suis.” Thus translated in the same MSS.: *Foide true in all his words; and holp in al his workes.*

It is remarkable that the whole verse is wanting in the *Vulgate*, as published in the *Complutensian Polyglot*, as also the *Antwerp* and *Paris Polyglots*, which were taken from it. It is wanting also in the

Polyglot Psalter of *Porus*, because he did not find it in the Hebrew text.

Verse 14. *The Lord upholdeth all that fall*] נופלים, *nophelim*, the *falling*, or those who are not able to keep their feet; the weak. He *shores* them up; he is their *prop*. No man falls through his own weakness *merely*; if he rely on God, the strongest foe cannot shake him.

Verse 15. *The eyes of all wait upon thee*] What a fine figure! The *young* of all animals look up to their *parents for food*. God is here represented as the *universal Father*, providing food for every living creature.

*In due season.*] The kind of food that is suited to every animal, and to all the *stages of life in each animal*. This is a wonderful mystery. It is a fact that all are thus provided for; but *how* is it done? All expect it from God, and not one is disappointed! For,

Verse 16. *Thou openest thine hand*] What a hand is this that holds in it all the food that meets the desires and necessities of the universe of creatures! A very large volume might be written upon this: The proper kinds of food for the various classes of animals.

Verse 17. *The Lord is righteous*] It was the similarity of *this* to the omitted verse, which should have been the *fourteenth*, that caused it to be omitted.

Verse 18. *The Lord is nigh*] Whoever calls upon God in truth, with a sincere and upright heart, one that *truly desires* his salvation, to that person *God is nigh*. The following verse shows he is not only *near* to praying people, but 1. He will *hear their cry*. 2. *Fulfil their desires*. 3. *Save them*. Reader, lift up thy soul in prayer to this merciful God.

Verse 20. *The Lord preserveth*] He is the keeper of all them that love him.

*But all the wicked will he destroy.*] They call not upon him; they fight against him, and he will *confound* and *destroy* them. There is something curious in the שומר *shomer*, the keeper or guardian of the pious; he is שמיד *shamid*, the destroyer of the wicked. The first word implies he is continually keeping them; the second, that he *causes* the others to be *destroyed*.

Verse 21. *Let all flesh bless his holy name*] He is good to all, wants to save all, actually feeds and preserves all. And as near as שמר *shamar* is to שמר *shamad*, so near is he as Saviour to those who stand on the brink of destruction, if they will look to him.

For the application of all this psalm to the church of Christ, see the analysis.

## ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIFTH PSALM.

This hymn is most excellent, both as it regards matter and style. The matter is praise to God; the style, the Hebrew alphabet, the better to assist our memories in recording God's praise.

This psalm contains,—

I. A proem, or protestation to praise God, ver. 1, 2.  
II. A celebration of divine praises through the whole psalm, from these arguments:

1. From the greatness of God, ver. 3.

ii. From his wonderful works, ver. 4, which he distinguishes under the following heads:—

1. They are glorious and beautiful, majestic and wonderful, ver. 5.

2. Marvellous, and full of terror, ver. 6.

3. Amiable, and full of goodness, ver. 7—9.

But all wonderful.

III. From his kingdom, and government of it, and in it, ver. 10—21.

IV. A conclusion, ver. 21, in which he performs his protestation of praising God.

1. In the two first verses the Psalmist acquaints us what he will do with the whole.

1. "I will extol, I will bless, I will praise."

2. "Thee, my God, my King." I am thy servant, though an earthly king.

3. "Every day," &c. No day shall pass without my praising thee.

4. "For ever and ever." I shall now begin, and succession of men will continue to hymn and praise thee till the consummation of all things.

II. The first thing he praises God for is his essence.

1. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised."

of course this follows:

"And his greatness is unsearchable." Past our weak capacity to comprehend; higher than the heavens, deeper than hell, having no end. Or if *great* here refer to him as King, then in respect to the extension of his empire over every living creature, he *great*; he rules over the hearts of the children of men, over their thoughts and affections, and nothing hidden from his sight.

ii. From the essence of God the Psalmist passes to his works and effects, which yet set forth his praise: "One generation shall praise," &c. Each age is an eye-witness of thy mighty acts and mercy. From a general consideration of these works he then particularizes:—

1. "For the heavens declare," &c. The sun, moon, and stars, in their splendour, magnitude, and perpetual motion, show forth God's honour and majesty.

2. A second kind of works are the terrible acts of justice, such as the deluge, the fire of Sodom,

Pharaoh's overthrow in the Red Sea, the earth opening to swallow up *Korah, Dathan, and Abiram*.

Then there follow his acts of love and mercy, spoken of at large.

1. "Thy great works shall abundantly utter," &c. Thy bounty shall make all generations eloquent in thy praise, and shall sing of thy righteousness, in exhibiting thy promised blessings, in bestowing temporal benefits; but above all, in the gifts of thy grace:—in the incarnation, passion, resurrection, ascension, the coming of the Holy Ghost, calling of the Gentiles, justification, sanctification, and eternal life; for all these, and each of them, men shall abundantly utter thy righteousness.

2. "The Lord is gracious," &c.

3. "The Lord is good to all," &c.

4. "His tender mercies are over," &c. Even to the most wicked, God gives time and opportunity for repentance, before he cuts them off.

III. The prophet having sung of God's great works in glory, terror, and mercy, now adds, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord." And now he begins a new matter, the erection of his peculiar kingdom in his church: "A peculiar people," &c. His saints. These will continue to mark thy wonders, and sing to thy glory; these, *thy saints, shall bless thee* for all and in all thy acts. "They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom," &c. "To make known to the sons of men," &c. "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom," &c. Now the power and glory of Christ's kingdom differ in a fourfold manner from that of the sons of men.

1. The kings on earth require obedience from their subjects; they exact subsidies, tributes, taxes, &c.

2. Earthly kings glory in their power, and rejoice in their dignity; but their crown is full of thorns, anxiety, care, &c.

3. Earthly kings reign but for a time, Christ for ever. 1. "They shall speak of the glory," &c. Excelling all others. 2. "To make known," &c. Thy acts far beyond theirs. 3. "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom," &c. Not so theirs.

The prophet having described Christ's kingdom, begins to extol the qualities and virtue of a good king, which agrees with Christ.

i. His *veracity*.

ii. His *probity*: "The Lord is faithful," &c.

iii. This is another quality of a good king, so to govern his subjects that they fall not, or to raise them if fallen. Christ sustains and upholds his people, or restores them if they fall from him and return by repentance to him; this was exemplified in *David, Peter, the prodigal*, &c. "The eyes of all," &c. "Thou openest thine hand," &c.

iv. Liberality and bounty are excellent qualities in a king who cares for his subjects, and may properly be applied to Christ, who provides for his church in all things. And—

1. "The eyes of all wait upon thee." In expectation.

2. "And thou givest," &c. It is a gift, not a debt.

3. "Their meat." Every thing fit for them.

4. "In due season." When fit and necessary.

5. "Thou openest thine hand." Givest bountifully.
6. "And satisfiest," &c. The covetous always want; content is from God.
7. "The desire of every living thing," &c. "The Lord is righteous," &c.
- v. This is another virtue of a good king, and refers to Christ. "The Lord is nigh unto all them," &c.
- vi. This is the sixth quality of a good king, to show himself ready of access to all who implore his aid.
1. *Faith.* For he that prays without it will not be answered.
2. *Hope and confidence.* He prays not seriously who hopes not to be heard.
3. *Love.* No man prays who hates God.
4. *Desire.* Nor that desires not to obtain.
5. *Attention and intention,* without which prayer is idle. "The Lord will fulfil," &c.
- vii. The seventh quality of a good king is to grant petitions.

1. "He will fulfil," &c. But with limitation: "So they fear him."
2. "He also will hear their cry." When it is earnest and sincere.
3. "And will save them:" "The Lord preserveth all them," &c.
- viii. The eighth quality of a good king is to spare the humble and destroy the proud. *Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.*—VIRGIL. Which Christ will do; he preserves his martyrs in patience, and then receives them into glory.
- IV. The conclusion is an acclamation, and answer to the beginning of the psalm.
1. "My mouth shall speak," &c. This will I do while I live.
2. "And let all flesh," &c. And let all follow his example in giving due praise to this bountiful God.

PSALM CXLVI.

The Psalmist, full of gratitude, purposes to praise God for ever, 1, 2; and exhorts not to trust in man, not even the most powerful; for which he gives his reasons, 3, 4. The great advantage of trusting in God, 5. The mercies which they who trust in God may expect, 6—9. The divine government is everlasting, 10.

**P**RAISE <sup>a</sup>ye the LORD. <sup>b</sup>Praise the LORD,  
O my soul.  
2 <sup>c</sup>While I live will I praise the LORD: I  
will sing praises unto my God while I have  
any being.  
3 <sup>d</sup>Put not your trust in princes, nor in  
the son of man, in whom *there is* no <sup>e</sup> help.

4 <sup>f</sup>His breath goeth forth, he returneth to  
his earth; in that very day <sup>g</sup>his thoughts  
perish.  
5 <sup>h</sup>Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob  
for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his  
God:  
6 <sup>i</sup>Which made heaven, and earth, the sea,

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *Hallelujah*.—<sup>b</sup> Ps. ciii. 1.—<sup>c</sup> Ps. civ. 33.—<sup>d</sup> Ps. cxviii. 8, 9. Isai. ii. 22.—<sup>e</sup> Or, *salvation*.—<sup>f</sup> Ps. civ. 29.

Eccles. xii. 7. Isai. ii. 22.—<sup>g</sup> See 1 Cor. ii. 6.—<sup>h</sup> Ps. cxliv. 15. Jer. xvii. 7.—<sup>i</sup> Gen. i. 1. Rev. xiv. 7.

NOTES ON PSALM CXLVI.

This is the first of the psalms called *Hallelujah* psalms, of which there are five, and which conclude the book. No author's name is prefixed to this, either in the *Hebrew* or *Chaldee*. But the *Syriac*, *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic* attribute it to *Haggai* and *Zechariah*. It was probably written after the captivity, and may refer to the time when Cyrus, prejudiced by the enemies of the Jews, withdrew his order for the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, to which revocation of the royal edict the third verse may refer: *Put not your trust in princes, &c.*

Verse 2. *While I live will I praise*] The true feeling of a heart overpowered with a sense of God's goodness.

*While I have any being.*] *בְּעוֹדִי בְּעוֹדִי* *beodi*, in my continuance, in my progression, my eternal existence—This is very expressive.

Verse 3. *Put not your trust in princes*] This may refer, as has been stated above, to Cyrus, who had revoked his edict for the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Perhaps they had begun to suppose that they were about to owe their deliverance to the Persian king.

God permitted this change in the disposition of the king, to teach them the *vanity of confidence in man*, and the necessity of *trusting in himself*.

Verse 4. *His breath goeth forth*] His existence depends merely, under God, on the air he breathes. When he ceases to *respire* he ceases to *live*; his body from that moment begins to claim its affinity to the earth; and all his thoughts, purposes, and projects, whether good or evil, come to nought and *perish*. He, then, who has no other dependance, must necessarily be *miserable*.

Verse 5. *Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help*] While he that trusts in man is *miserable*. he that trusts in God is *happy*. *In the son of man* *בֶּן אָדָם* *ben Adam*, there is no help, *אֵין עֲשׂוּרָה לְעֹשֶׂהוּ* *eshuah*, no saving principle. Every son of Adam naturally comes into the world without this, and must continue so till the Lord open the eyes of the blind, ver. 8; but a measure of light is given from that true Light which *lighteth every man that cometh into the world*. The son of Adam returns to his earth, *לְאֶרֶץ לְאֶרֶץ* *leadmate* to the ground, from which he was taken; this refers directly to Gen. ii. 7, iii. 19. But he that has the

and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever:

7 <sup>a</sup>Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: <sup>b</sup>which giveth food to the hungry. <sup>c</sup>The LORD looseth the prisoners:

8 <sup>d</sup>The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind: <sup>e</sup>the LORD raiseth them that are bowed

down: the LORD loveth the righteous:

9 <sup>f</sup>The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: <sup>g</sup>but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

10 <sup>h</sup>The LORD shall reign for ever, *even* thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD.

<sup>a</sup>Ps. ciii. 6. — <sup>b</sup>Ps. cvii. 9. — <sup>c</sup>Ps. lxxviii. 6. cvii. 10, 14. <sup>d</sup>Matt. ix. 30. John ix. 7.—32. — <sup>e</sup>Ps. cxlv. 14. cxlvii. 6.

Luke xiii. 13. — <sup>f</sup>Deut. x. 8. Ps. lxxviii. 5. — <sup>g</sup>Ps. cxlvii. 6. <sup>h</sup>Erod. xv. 18. Ps. x. 16. cxlv. 13. Rev. xi. 15.

God for his help who helped Jacob in his distress, and was with him and sustained him in and through all adversities, can never be destitute; for this God changes not; he lives for ever, and his projects cannot perish. He has purposed that Israel shall be delivered from this captivity. *Cyrus may change, but God will not; trust therefore in HIM.* He has all power; he made heaven and earth; he has them under his government and at his disposal; and should earth itself fail, heaven endures. And he keeps his truth for ever; and therefore his promises must be fulfilled to them that trust in him. *Fear not.*

Verse 7. *Which executeth judgment for the oppressed*] For those who suffer by violence or calumny. This may refer to the Israelites, who suffered much by oppression from the Babylonians, and by calumny from the Samaritans, &c., who had prejudiced the king of Persia against them.

*Giveth food to the hungry.*] No doubt he fed the poor captives by many displays of his peculiar providence.

*The Lord looseth the prisoners*] And as he has sustained you so long under your captivity, so will he bring you out of it.

Verse 8. *Openeth the eyes of the blind*] He brings us out of our prison-house, from the shadow of death, and opens our eyes that we may behold the free light of the day. And it is the Lord only that can open the eyes of any son of Adam, and give him to see his wretchedness, and where help and salvation may be found.

*Raiseth them that are bowed down*] Through a sense of their guilt and sinfulness.

*The Lord loveth the righteous*] These he makes partakers of a divine nature; and he loves those who bear his own image.

Verse 9. *Preserveth the strangers*] He has preserved you strangers in a strange land, where you have been in captivity for seventy years; and though in an enemy's country, he has provided for the widows and orphans as amply as if he had been in the promised land.

*The way of the wicked he turneth upside down.*] He overturns, turns aside. They shall not do all the wickedness they wish; they shall not do all that is in their power. In their career he will either stop them, turn them aside, or overturn them.

Verse 10. *The Lord shall reign for ever*] Therefore he can never fail; and he is thy God, O Zion. Hitherto he has helped you and your fathers; and as extended that help from generation to generation. Therefore trust in him and bless the Lord.

ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SIXTH PSALM.

The subject of this psalm is the same with the former.

It is divided into four parts:—

I. An exhortation to praise God, ver. 1. Which the Psalmist resolves to do, ver. 2.

II. A dehortation from confidence in man, ver. 3, 4.

III. He pronounces them happy who trust in God, ver. 5.

IV. And to persuade to this he uses every reason, ver. 6, to the end.

I. He begins with a dialogism.

1. He speaks to all: "Praise ye the Lord."

2. Then by an apostrophe he turns to himself: "Praise the Lord, O my soul."

3. And his soul answers: "While I live," &c. While I am, while I shall be.

II. But the prophet, for fear men should trust too much in the great, and not rely wholly upon God, exhorts them: "Put not your trust in princes," &c.

He gives his reasons for the warning:—

1. Because of their impotency: "There is no help in them," &c.

2. Because of their mortality: "Their breath goeth forth," &c.

III. If a man will be happy, the prophet shows him that he must rely upon God alone; for,

1. "Happy is he that hath," &c. Him in whom Jacob trusted.

2. "And whose hope," &c. Not in short-lived man. And this he confirms by many reasons:—

i. From his omnipotence: "He is God the Creator," &c.

ii. From his veracity: "Who keeps truth for ever," &c. His word is passed for our protection, and he can and will keep it.

iii. From his justice: "He executeth judgment," &c.

iv. From his mercy.

1. "He giveth food," &c. Relieves men in their necessities.

2. "The Lord looseth the prisoner." Another act of grace, again.

3. "The Lord openeth the eyes," &c. Whether spiritually or corporeally.

4. "The Lord raiseth them that are bowed down," &c. By sin or misery.

v. From his love: "The Lord loveth," &c. Of which the effects are:—

1. "The Lord preserveth," &c.

2. "He delivereth the fatherless," &c.

3. But the ungodly find a far different effect: "But the way of the wicked," &c. He makes their glory to perish utterly.

PSALM CXLVII.

The Psalmist praises God for his goodness to Jerusalem, 1—3; shows his great mercy to them that trust in him, 4—6; he extols him for his mercies, and providential kindness, 7—11; for his defence of Jerusalem, 12—15; for his wonders in the seasons, 16—18; and his word unto Jacob, 19, 20.

XXX. DAY. EVENING PRAYER.

A. M. cir. 3485.  
B. C. cir. 519.  
Dari I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
secundum.

**P**RAISE ye the LORD: for  
it is good to sing praises  
unto our God; <sup>b</sup> for it is pleas-  
ant; and <sup>c</sup> praise is comely.

2 The LORD doth <sup>d</sup> build up Jerusalem: <sup>e</sup> he  
gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.

3 <sup>f</sup> He healeth the broken in heart, and  
bindeth up their <sup>g</sup> wounds.

4 <sup>h</sup> He telleth the number of the stars; he  
calleth them all by their names.

5 <sup>i</sup> Great is our LORD, and of <sup>k</sup> great power:  
<sup>l</sup> his <sup>m</sup> understanding is infinite.

6 <sup>n</sup> The LORD lifteth up the meek: he cast-  
eth the wicked down to the ground.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. xcii. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Ps. cxxxv. 3.—<sup>c</sup> Ps. xxxiii. 1.—<sup>d</sup> Ps.  
cii. 16.—<sup>e</sup> Deut. xxx. 3.—<sup>f</sup> Ps. li. 17.—<sup>g</sup> Isai. lvii. 15. lvi.  
1. Luke iv. 18.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. griefs.—<sup>i</sup> See Gen. xv. 6.  
Isai. xl. 26.—<sup>j</sup> 1 Chron. xvi. 25. Ps. xlvi. 1. xvi. 4.  
cxlv. 3.—<sup>k</sup> Nah. i. 3.—<sup>l</sup> Heb. of his understanding there

NOTES ON PSALM CXLVII.

This psalm, which is without title in the Hebrew, Chaldee, and Vulgate, is attributed by the other Versions to Haggai and Zechariah. It was probably penned after the captivity, when the Jews were busily employed in rebuilding Jerusalem, as may be gathered from the second and thirteenth verses. It may be necessary to remark that all the Versions, except the Chaldee, divide this psalm at the end of the eleventh verse, and begin a new psalm at the twelfth. By this division the numbers of the psalms agree in the Versions with the Hebrew; the former having been, till now, one behind.

Verse 1. *Praise is comely.*] It is decent, befitting, and proper that every intelligent creature should acknowledge the Supreme Being: and as he does nothing but good to the children of men, so they should speak good of his name.

Verse 2. *The Lord doth build up*] The Psalmist appears to see the walls rising under his eye, because the outcasts of Israel, those who had been in captivity, are now gathered together to do the work.

Verse 3. *He healeth the broken in heart*] שבורי, the shivered in heart. From the root שבר shabar, to break in pieces, we have our word shiver, to break into splinters, into shivers. The heart broken in pieces by a sense of God's displeasure.

Verse 4. *He telleth the number of the stars*] He whose knowledge is so exact as to tell every star in heaven, can be under no difficulty to find out and collect all the scattered exiles of Israel.

7 Sing unto the LORD with  
thanksgiving: sing praise upon  
the harp unto our God:

8 <sup>o</sup> Who covereth the heaven  
with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth,  
who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.

9 <sup>p</sup> He giveth to the beast his food, and <sup>q</sup> to  
the young ravens which cry.

10 <sup>r</sup> He delighteth not in the strength of the  
horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of  
a man.

11 The LORD taketh pleasure in them that  
fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

12 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise  
thy God, O Zion.

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is no number.—<sup>m</sup> Isai. xl. 28.—<sup>n</sup> Ps. cxlvi. 8, 9.—<sup>o</sup> Job  
xxxviii. 26, 27. Ps. civ. 13, 14.—<sup>p</sup> Job xxxviii. 41. Ps.  
civ. 27, 28. cxxxvi. 25. cxlv. 15.—<sup>q</sup> Job xxxviii. 41. Mat.  
vi. 26.—<sup>r</sup> Ps. xxxiii. 16, 17, 18. Hus. i. 7.

Verse 5. *His understanding is infinite.*] To his intelligence there is no number: though he numbers the stars, his understanding is without number. It is infinite; therefore, he can know, as he can do, all things.

Verse 6. *The Lord lifteth up the meek*] The humbled, the afflicted.

Verse 7. *Sing unto the Lord*] שׁוּבָנוּ, sing a responsive song, sing in parts, answer one another.

Verse 8. *Who covereth the heaven with clouds*] Collects the vapours together, in order to cause it to rain upon the earth. Even the direction of the winds, the collection of the clouds, and the descent of the rain, are under the especial management of God. These things form a part of his providential management of the world.

*Maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.*] After this clause the Vulgate, the Septuagint, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon, add, and herb for the service of man. It appears that a hemistich, or half-line, has been lost from the Hebrew text; which, according to the above Versions, must have stood thus: וְעֵשֶׂב לַעֲבוֹדָתָא וְעֵשֶׂב לַעֲבוֹדָתָא וְעֵשֶׂב לַעֲבוֹדָתָא וְעֵשֶׂב לַעֲבוֹדָתָא. Ps. civ. 14: "And herbage for the service of mankind."

Verse 10. *He delighteth not*] The horse, among all animals, is most delighted in by man for beauty, strength, and fleetness. And a man's legs, if well proportioned, are more admired than even the finest features of his face. Though God has made these yet they are not his peculiar delight.

A. M. cir. 3485.  
B. C. cir. 519.

Darii I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
secundum.

13 For he hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; he hath blessed thy children within thee.

14 <sup>a</sup> He <sup>b</sup> maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the <sup>d</sup> finest of the wheat.

15 <sup>c</sup> He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth: his word runneth very swiftly.

16 <sup>e</sup> He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoar frost like ashes.

17 He casteth forth his ice like morsels:

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *Who maketh thy border peace.*—<sup>b</sup> Isai. lx. 17, 18. <sup>c</sup> Ps. cxxxii. 15.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. *fat of wheat.* Deut. xxxii. 14. <sup>e</sup> Ps. lxxxi. 16.—<sup>f</sup> Ps. cvii. 20. Job xxxvii. 12.—<sup>g</sup> Job xxxvii. 6.—<sup>h</sup> Ver. 15. See Job xxxvii. 10.—<sup>i</sup> Deut.

who can stand before his cold?

18 <sup>s</sup> He sendeth out his word, and melteth them: he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow.

19 <sup>h</sup> He sheweth <sup>i</sup> his word unto Jacob, <sup>k</sup> his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.

20 <sup>l</sup> He hath not dealt so with any nation: and *as for his judgments*, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD.

xxxiii. 2, 3, 4. Ps. lxxvi. 1. lxxviii. 5. ciii. 7.—<sup>l</sup> Heb. *his words.*—<sup>m</sup> Mal. iv. 4.—<sup>n</sup> See Deut. iv. 32, 33, 34. Rom. iii. 1, 2.

Verse 11. *The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him*] That are truly religious.

*In those that hope in his mercy.*] Who are just beginning to seek the salvation of their souls. Even the cry of the penitent is pleasing in the ear of the Lord. With this verse the hundred and forty-sixth psalm ends in all the Versions, except the Chaldee. And the hundred and forty-seventh commences with the 12th verse. I believe these to be two distinct psalms. The subjects of them are not exactly the same, though something similar; and they plainly refer to different periods.

Verse 13. *He hath strengthened the bars of thy gates*] He has enabled thee to complete the walls of Jerusalem. From the former part of the psalm it appears the walls were then in progress; from this part, they appear to be completed, and provisions to be brought into the city, to support its inhabitants. The gates were set up and well secured by bars, so that the grain, &c., was in safety.

Verse 14. *He maketh peace*] They were now no longer troubled with the Samaritans, Moabites, &c.

Verse 15. *He sendeth forth his commandment*] His substantial word. It is here personified, מְצִוָּתָא *meymra*, Chaldee, and appears to be a very active agent running every where, and performing the purposes of his will.

Verse 16. *He giveth snow like wool*] Falling down in large flakes; and in this state nothing in nature has a nearer resemblance to fine white wool.

*Scattereth the hoar frost like ashes.*] Spreading it over the whole face of nature.

Verse 17. *He casteth forth his ice*] קִרְחוֹ *korcho* [probably hailstones], like crumbs.

*Who can stand before his cold?*] At particular times the cold in the east is so very intense as to kill man and beast. *Jacobus de Vitriaco*, one of the writers in the *Gesta Dei per Francos*, says, that in an expedition in which he was engaged against Mount Tabor, on the 24th of December, the cold was so intense that many of the poor people, and the beasts of burden, died by it. And *Albertus Aquensis*, another of these writers, speaking of the cold in Judea, says, that thirty of the people who attended Baldwin I. in the mountainous districts near the Dead Sea, were

killed by it; and that in that expedition they had to contend with horrible hail and ice, with unheard-of snow and rain. From this we find that the winters are often very severe in Judea; and in such cases as the above, we may well call out, "Who can stand against his cold!"

Verse 18. *He sendeth out his word*] He gives a command: the south wind blows; the thaw takes place; and the ice and snow being liquefied, the waters flow, where before they were bound up by the ice.

Verse 19. *He sheweth his word unto Jacob*] To no nation of the world beside had God given a revelation of his will.

Verse 20. *And as for his judgments*] The wondrous ordinances of his law, no nation had known them; and consequently, did not know the glorious things in futurity to which they referred.

## ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SEVENTH PSALM.

The parts of this psalm are two:—

I. An exhortation to praise God, ver. 1, which is repeated, ver. 7 and 12.

II. The arguments to persuade to it: God's bounty, wisdom, power, providence, justice, and mercy; dwelt on through the whole psalm.

I. The exhortation is briefly proposed, "Praise the Lord." Which the prophet, as the chanter of the choir, begins; and then more fully repeats, "Sing unto the Lord," &c. And again, "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem," &c., ver. 12; where the Arabic, Greek, and Latin translators begin a new psalm: but in the Hebrew they are conjoined, and form but one hymn.

The prophet, having ended his exhortation, adds his reasons for it.

1. It is pleasant and becoming.

2. His bounty in building Jerusalem; and bringing back the dispersed, ver. 2. In comforting the distressed, ver. 3. For his wisdom, ver. 4. For his power, ver. 5. For his mercy and justice, ver. 6.

His first arguments are drawn from the thing itself.

1. Good: "For it is good," &c.

For many reasons this may be called good.

1. For it is God's command, and must not be neglected.



2. It elevates the heart from earth to heaven.

3. Good again, because we are bound to it by obligations.

II. "To praise God is pleasant."

1. Because it proceeds from love.

2. Because it is pleasant to perform our duty, and the end of our creation.

3. Because God is pleased with it: "He that offereth me praise, glorifieth me," &c.

4. Because God is pleased with the virtues of faith, hope, charity, humility, devotion, &c., of which praise is the effect.

III. "It is comely." There is no sin greater than that of ingratitude.

These are the first arguments the prophet uses, and they are drawn from the nature of the thing itself: they may apply to all ages of the church.

He dwells upon the deliverance of *Israel* from captivity.

1. "The Lord doth build up" his church, the seat of his sanctuary. He hath restored our policy and religion.

2. "He gathereth together," &c. The banished and scattered ones; the Gentiles.

3. "He healeth the broken in heart," &c. Oppressed by captivity or sin.

4. "And bindeth up," &c. Like a good surgeon.

The second argument is drawn from his *wisdom*.

1. "He telleth the number of the stars," &c. A thing to man impossible.

2. "He calleth them," &c. They are his army, and he knows them.

By the stars in this place some understand God's saints.

1. The stars are infinite in number. So are the saints.

2. Among them are planets. Saints have their circuits; and always revolve round him, the Sun of righteousness.

3. The stars shine clearest in the night. The saints in persecution.

4. One star differeth from another in glory. Some saints excel others in piety.

5. The stars are above. The saints' conversation is in heaven.

6. The stars are obscured by clouds. The church is sometimes obscured by affliction and persecution.

His third argument is drawn from God's *power*: "Great is the Lord," &c.

His fourth argument is drawn from God's *justice* and *mercy*.

1. His mercy: "The Lord lifteth up the meek," &c. Sustains and exalts them.

2. His justice: "He casteth the wicked down," &c. They shall not always triumph.

But, before the prophet proceeds further, he repeats:—

1. "Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving." Do it in words.

2. "Sing praises upon the harp," &c. Do it in works.

Then he proceeds to argue from God's *providence*.

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1. "Who covereth the heaven," &c. Not to obscure, but fructify the earth.

2. "Who maketh grass to grow," &c. By his blessing on the most barren places.

3. "He giveth to the beast," &c. They gather it from his supplies.

4. "And to the young ravens," &c. No bird suffers its young so soon to provide for themselves; but God hears and sends them food. *Christ* himself uses this argument to encourage us to rely on God's providence, *Matt. vi.*

Should the distrustful *Jew* argue, Alas, we have no strength, ammunition, horse, or armour, the prophet replies:—

1. "He delighteth not," &c. When used as a warlike creature.

2. "He taketh not pleasure," &c. In the nimbleness of man, when used for warlike preparations.

But he delights in his servants.

1. "The Lord taketh pleasure," &c. In those who obey and love him.

2. "In those that hope," &c. Have faith and confidence in him.

3. He again repeats his proposition, and calls upon the church to perform it: "Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem," &c. "Thy God, O Zion." Should others be negligent, be not ye.

He then adds four reasons why *Zion* should praise him: 1. Security and defence. 2. Benediction. 3. Peace: 4. Substance.

1. Security: "For he hath strengthened," &c.

2. Benediction: "He hath blessed," &c. His officers with wisdom, &c.

3. Peace: "He maketh peace." *The vision of peace* is the literal interpretation of the word *Jerusalem*.

4. Provision: "Filleth thee with the finest of the wheat," &c.

That *God* has done this for Jerusalem, is evident from his general providence over the world. And this argument the prophet uses: "He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth," &c. For,

1. "He giveth snow like wool." Beautiful in appearance, and in order to preserve vegetables from the nipping but necessary frost, when long continued.

2. "He scattereth the hoar-frost," &c. Thickening the air with it like ashes; freezing all the vapours that float in it.

3. "He casteth forth his ice," &c. Fragments of ice.

4. Who can stand before his cold?" Endure it unprovided.

But having described all these powerful agents, the prophet next shows how easily they are governed by his *word*.

1. "He sendeth out his word, and melteth them."

2. "He causeth his wind to blow," &c. And the ice and snow return to water. All these are his, and on him we must depend for safety and comfort.

By these *God* teaches alike nations to acknowledge him.

But there are particular acts which refer to his people; for,

- 1. "He sheweth his word," &c. By *Moses* and the prophets.
- 2. "He hath not dealt so," &c. None at that time, but since to his church.

3. "As for his judgments," &c. His evangelical precepts. He is sending forth his word; the nations could not find out his precepts otherwise: therefore for this *praise ye the Lord*.

PSALM CXLVIII.

The Psalmist calls on all the creation to praise the Lord. The angels and visible heavens, 1-6; the earth and the sea, 7; the meteors, 8; mountains, hills, and trees, 9; beasts, reptiles, and fowls, 10; kings, princes, and mighty men, 11; men, women, and children, 12, 13; and especially all the people of Israel, 14.

A. M. cir. 3485.  
B. C. cir. 519.  
Darii I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
secundum.

**P**RAISE ye the LORD.  
Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

- 2<sup>b</sup> Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts.
- 3 Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, all ye stars of light.
- 4 Praise him, <sup>c</sup> ye heavens of heavens, and <sup>e</sup> ye waters that be above the heavens.
- 5 Let them praise the name of the LORD: for <sup>e</sup> he commanded, and they were created.

A. M. cir. 3485.  
B. C. cir. 519.  
Darii I.,  
R. Persarum,  
cir. annum  
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6<sup>f</sup> He hath also stablished them for ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.

- 7 Praise the LORD from the earth, <sup>g</sup> ye dragons, and all deeps:
- 8 Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind <sup>h</sup> fulfilling his word:
- 9 <sup>i</sup> Mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars:
- 10 Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and <sup>k</sup> flying <sup>l</sup> fowl:

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *Hallelujah*. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. ciii. 20, 21. — <sup>c</sup> 1 Kings viii. 27. 2 Cor. xii. 2. — <sup>d</sup> Gen. i. 7. — <sup>e</sup> Gen. i. 1, 6, 7. Ps. xxxiii. 6, 9. — <sup>f</sup> Pa. lxxxix. 37. cxix. 90, 91. Jer. xxxi. 3, 36. xxxiii. 25. — <sup>g</sup> Isai. xliii. 20. — <sup>h</sup> 1<sup>a</sup>. cxlvii. 15-18.

<sup>i</sup> Isai. xlv. 23. xlix. 13. lv. 12. — <sup>k</sup> Heb. *birds of wing*. — <sup>l</sup> Gen. i. 26. ii. 19. vii. 23. viii. 17. ix. 2, 20. Deut. iv. 17. Ezek. xxxix. 17. Dan. vii. 6.

NOTES ON PSALM CXLVIII.

This psalm has no title: but by the *Syriac* it is attributed to *Haggai* and *Zechariah*; and the *Sep-tuagint* and the *Aethiopic* follow it. As a hymn of praise, this is the most sublime in the whole book.

Verse 1. *Praise ye the Lord from the heavens*] The *Chaldee* translates, "Praise the Lord, ye holy creatures from the heavens. Praise him, ye armies of upreme angels. Praise him, all ye angels who minister before him." *מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם* *min hashshamayim* signifies whatever belongs to the heavens, all their inhabitants; as *מִן הָאָרֶץ* *min haarets*, ver. 7, signifies all that belongs to the earth, all its inhabitants and reductions.

Verse 3. *Praise ye him, sun and moon*] The meaning of this address and all others to *inanimate nature*, is this: Every work of God's hand partakes much of his perfections, that it requires only to be studied and known, in order to show forth the manifold *wisdom, power, and goodness* of the Creator.

*Stars of light.*] The brightest and most luminous stars: probably the planets may be especially intended.

Verse 4. *Heavens of heavens*] Heavens exceeding heavens. Systems of systems extending as far beyond the solar system, as it does beyond the lowest depths. An endless systematic concatenation of worlds.

*Ye waters that be above the heavens.*] This refers to Gen. i. 7, where see the notes. Clouds, vapours, air, halations, rain, snow, and meteors of every kind.

Verse 5. *He commanded, and they were created.*] He spake the word expressive of the idea in his infinite mind; and they sprang into being according to that idea.

Verse 6. *He hath also stablished them*] He has determined their respective *revolutions*, and the *times* in which they are performed, so exactly to show his all-comprehensive wisdom and skill, that they have never passed the line marked out by his *decree*, nor intercepted each other in the vortex of space, through revolutions continued for nearly 6000 years.

Verse 7. *Praise the Lord from the earth*] As, in the first address, he calls upon the heavens, and all that *belong to them*; so here, in this second part, he calls upon the earth, and all that *belong to it*.

*Ye dragons*] *תַּנִּינִים* *tanninim*, whales, porpoises, sharks, and sea-monsters of all kinds.

*And all deeps*] Whatsoever is contained in the sea, whirlpools, eddies, ground tides, with the astonishing flux and reflux of the ocean.

Every thing, in its *place* and *nature*, shows forth the perfections of its Creator.

Verse 8. *Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours*] All kinds of meteors, water, and fire, in all their forms and combinations. And *air*, whether in the gentle breeze, the gale, the whirlwind, the tempest, or the tornado; each accomplishing an especial purpose, and fulfilling a particular *will* of the Most High.

Verse 9. *Mountains, and all hills*] Whether *primitive, secondary, or alluvial*; of *ancient* or *recent*

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11 Kings of the earth, and  
all people; princes, and all  
judges of the earth:

12 Both young men, and maid-  
ens; old men, and children:

13 Let them praise the name of the LORD:  
for <sup>a</sup> his name alone is <sup>b</sup> excellent; <sup>c</sup> his glory

<sup>a</sup> Ps. viii. 1. Isai. xii. 4. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. *exalted*. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. cxliii. 4.

formation, with all their contents, quarries, mines, and minerals. But what a profusion of wisdom and skill is lavished on these! To instance only in the different metals, earthen, and minerals; especially the precious stones.

*Fruitful trees*] פרי עץ *ets peri, fruit trees* of all kinds.

*And all cedars*] Every kind of forest tree. The formation of the fruits, their infinitely varied hues and flavours, proclaim the unsearchable wisdom and goodness of God: not less so, the growth, structure, and various qualities and uses of the forest trees.

Verse 10. *Beasts*] חַיִּיּוֹת הַבַּיַּת *hachaiyah, wild beasts* of every kind.

*All cattle*] בְּהֵמָה *behemah, all domestic animals*; those used for the service of the house, and those for agricultural purposes.

*Creeping things*] All the class of reptiles, from the boa constrictor, that can combat, kill, and swallow whole the royal tiger, to the cobra de manille, a poisonous reptile as small as a fine needle; with those still smaller animals that are found in water, and require the power of the microscope to bring them to view. In the production, preservation, habits, and properties of all these, there is a profusion of wisdom and economy that would require ages to exhibit.

*Flying fowl*] The structure of fowls is astonishing; and the exact mathematical manner in which flying fowls swim the air, and steer their course wheresoever they will; the feathers, and their construction, with the muscles which give them motion; strike the observer of nature with astonishment and delight.

Verse 11. *Kings of the earth*] As being representatives of the Most High; and all people—the nations governed by them. Princes, as governors of provinces, and all judges executing those laws that bind man to man, and regulate and preserve civil society; praise God, from whom ye have derived your power and influence: for by him kings reign. And let the people magnify God for civil and social institutions, and for the laws by which, under him, their lives and properties are preserved.

Verse 12. *Both young men, and maidens*] Who are in the bloom of youth, and in the height of health and vigour; know that God is your Father; and let the morning and energy of your days be devoted to him.

*Old men, and children*] Very appropriately united here, as the beginning and conclusion of life present nearly the same passions, appetites, caprices, and infirmities: yet in both the beneficence, all-sustaining power, and goodness of God are seen.

is above the earth and heaven.

14 <sup>a</sup> He also exalteth the horn of his people, <sup>c</sup> the praise of all his saints; *even* of the children of Israel, <sup>b</sup> a people near unto him. Praise ye the LORD.

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<sup>a</sup> Ps. lxxv. 10. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. cxlix. 9. — Eph. ii. 17.

Verse 13. *Let them*] All already specified, praise the name of Jehovah, because he excels all beings: and his glory, as seen in creating, preserving, and governing all things, is by al, upon or over, the earth and heaven. All space and place, as well as the beings found in them, show forth the manifold wisdom and goodness of God.

Verse 14. *He also exalteth the horn*] Raises to power and authority his people.

*The praise*] Jehovah is the subject of the praise of all his saints.

*A people near unto him.*] The only people who know him, and make their approaches unto him with the sacrifices and offerings which he has himself prescribed. Praise ye the Lord!

O what a hymn of praise is here! It is a universal chorus! All created nature have a share, and all perform their respective parts.

All intelligent beings are especially called to praise him who made them in his love, and sustains them by his beneficence. Man particularly, in all the stages of his being—infancy, youth, manhood, and old age: all human beings have their peculiar interest in the great Father of the spirits of all flesh.

He loves man, wheresoever found, of whatsoever colour, in whatever circumstances, and in all the stages of his pilgrimage from his cradle to his grave.

Let the lisp of the infant, the shout of the adult, and the sigh of the aged, ascend to the universal parent, as a gratitude-offering. He guards those who hang upon the breast; and controls and directs the headstrong and giddy, and sustains old age in its infirmities; and sanctifies to it the sufferings that bring on the termination of life.

Reader, this is thy God! How great, how good, how merciful, how compassionate! Breathe thy soul up to him; breathe it into him; and let it be preserved in his bosom till mortality be swallowed up of life, and all that is imperfect be done away.

Jesus is thy sacrificial offering; Jesus is thy Mediator. He has taken thy humanity, and placed it on the throne! He creates all things new; and faith in his blood will bring thee to his glory! Amen! Leluljah!

The beautiful morning hymn of Adam and Eve (Paradise Lost, book v., line 153, &c.),—

“These are thy glorious works, Parent of good;  
Almighty, thine this universal frame,” &c.—

has been universally admired. How many have spoken loud in its praises, who have never attempted to express their feelings in a stanza of the hundred

and forty-eighth psalm! But to the rapturous adorers of Milton's poetry what is the song of David, or this grand music of the spheres! Know this, O forgetful man, that Milton's morning hymn is a *paraphrase* of this psalm, and is indebted to it for every excellency it possesses. It is little else than the Psalmist speaking in English instead of Hebrew verse.

## ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-EIGHTH PSALM.

The Psalmist calls upon the whole creation to be instrumental in praising God. By which he shows,—

I. His ardent desire that God be praised. As if creatures, endowed with reason, were too few, therefore he calls on inanimate things to join and be heralds of his wondrous works.

II. His intention; what he would and could have done.

III. That what could be done should be done.

IV. That all really do praise him in their kind and manner.

This psalm is disposed into excellent distribution.

1. He calls upon celestial creatures in general; 2. In particular. 1. On angels: "Praise ye the Lord from the heavens," &c. Ye of celestial order. 2. "Praise him in the heights," &c. The heavens above. 3. "Praise him, all his hosts," &c. Which in St. Luke are called *the heavenly host*.

2. "Praise ye him, sun, moon, and stars." Though not with the voice, yet by your beauty, motion, light, efficacy, &c.

He mentions the whole body of the heavenly orbs.

1. "Praise him, ye heavens of heavens," &c. The highest state of bliss.

2. "And ye waters," &c. All the orbs above the air, in Scripture called *heavens*; and the *waters* that are above the firmament.

And in the two next verses he gives the reason.

1. "He commanded," &c. They are his creatures, therefore,—

2. "He hath established them," &c. They are incorruptible.

From the heavens he now descends to the earth, air, water, &c.: "Praise the Lord from the earth," &c. All ye elementary substances.

1. "Ye dragons." Whales, great fishes.

2. "All deeps." All kinds of waters.

3. "Fire and hail," &c. Meteors, &c.

4. "Mountains and hills," &c.

5. "Fruitful trees," &c. Trees fit to build with, and fruit-trees.

6. "Beasts and all cattle." Both wild and tame.

7. "Creeping things," &c. Worms and serpents.

8. "And all flying fowls."

And, lastly, he cites all mankind to praise God.

1. "The highest kings," &c. They who command, and they who obey.

2. "Princes, and all judges," &c. All inferior magistrates.

3. "Both young men and maidens." Both sexes.

4. "Old men and children,"—all ages: "Let them praise the name of the Lord."

And for this reason:—

1. "For his name is excellent alone." No name is so sublime and worthy.

2. "His glory is above the earth and heaven." All good comes from him.

The prophet concludes this psalm with God's goodness to the church, which furnishes him with another reason:—

1. He also "exalts the horn," &c. The power and glory of his people.

2. "He is the praise," &c. The Guide of *Israel*.

3. "Even of the children of *Israel*," &c. A people consecrated to God. All which is to be understood not merely of *Israel* according to the flesh, but God's spiritual church. Now those who are true *Israelites*, and those especially, he excites to sing,—

"Hallelujah! Praise ye the Lord!"

## PSALM CXLIX.

All the congregation are invited to praise God for his mercies, 1—3. Their great privileges, 4, 5. Their victories, 6, 9.

**PRAISE** <sup>a</sup> ye the LORD. <sup>b</sup> Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *Hallelujah*.—<sup>b</sup> Ps. xxxiii. 3. Isai. xlii. 10.

## NOTES ON PSALM CXLIX.

This seems to be an *epinikion*, or *song of triumph*, after some glorious victory; probably in the time of the *Maccabees*. It has been also understood as predicting the success of the gospel in the nations of the earth. According to the *Syriac*, it concerns the *new temple*, by which the *Christian church* is meant. It has no *title* in the Hebrew, nor in any of the *Versions*, and no *author's name*.

Verse 1. *Sing unto the Lord a new song*] That is,

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2 Let *Israel* rejoice in <sup>c</sup> him that made him: let the children of *Zion* be joyful in their <sup>d</sup> King.

<sup>c</sup> See Job xxxv. 10. Ps. c. 3. Isai. liv. 5.—<sup>d</sup> Zech. ix. 9. Matt. xxi. 5.

as we have often had occasion to remark, an *excellent song*, the best we can possibly pronounce. So the word *chadash* is often understood; and so the word *novus*, "new," was often used among the Latin writers:—

Pollio amat nostram, quamvis sit rustica, musam.

Pollio et ipse facit nova carmina.

VING. Ecl. iii., ver. 84.

Pollio loves my lines, although rude;

Pollio himself makes *excellent* odes.

3 <sup>a</sup> Let them praise his name <sup>b</sup> in the dance : let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.

4 For <sup>c</sup> the LORD taketh pleasure in his people : <sup>d</sup> he will beautify the meek with salvation.

5 Let the saints be joyful in glory : let them sing aloud upon their beds.

6 Let the high praises of God be <sup>e</sup> in their

<sup>a</sup> Ps. lxxxi. 2. cl. 4. — <sup>b</sup> Or, with the pipe. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. xxxv. 27. — <sup>d</sup> Ps. cxxxii. 16. — <sup>e</sup> Job xxxv. 10.

Tamely and inexpressively translated by Dryden: —  
“Pollio my rural verse vouchsafes to read.

*My Pollio writes himself.”*

O what a falling off is here !

*Servius*, in his comment on *nova*, says, *magna, miranda*. *Nova* means *great, admirable*.

So on *novum nectar*, Ecl. v., ver. 71, he says, id est, *magna dulcedo*; “nectar of EXCELLENT flavour.”

*Congregation of saints.*] The *Israelites*, who were, by profession and by injunction, a holy people.

Verse 2. *In him that made him*] Let them remember in their exultations to give all glory to the Lord; for he is the Author of their being and their blessings. And let them know that he is their King also; that they should submit to his authority, and be guided and regulated in their hearts and conduct by his laws.

Verse 3. *Let them praise his name in the dance*] בְּמַחֹל *benachol*, with the pipe, or some kind of wind music, classed here with תוף *toth*, the tabor or drum, and כִּנּוֹר *kinnor*, the harp. “מַחֹל מְחֹל,” says Parkhurst, “some fistular wind-instrument of music, with holes, as a flute, pipe, or fife, from מַחַל *chal*, to make a hole or opening.” I know no place in the Bible where מַחֹל *machol* and מַחֹלָה *machalath* mean dance of any kind; they constantly signify some kind of pipe.

Verse 4. *The Lord taketh pleasure in his people*] The pleasure or good will of God is in his people: he loves them ardently, and will load them with his benefits, while they are humble and thankful; for, He will beautify] יַפְּאֵר *yephaer*, he will make fair, the meek, אַנָּוִים *anavim*, the lowly, the humble with salvation, בִּשְׁׁוּׁה *bishuah*; which St. Jerome thus translates, *Et exaltabit mansuetos in Jesu*, “And he will exalt the meek in Jesus.” Whether this rendering be correct or not, there is no other way by which the humble soul can be exalted, but by Jesus, as the redeeming Saviour.

Verse 5. *Let the saints be joyful in glory*] Let them be gloriously joyful: seeing themselves so honoured and so successful, let them be joyful. God has put glory or honour upon them; let them give him the thanks due to his name.

*Sing aloud upon their beds.*] While they are reclining on their couches. At their festal banquets, let them shout the praises of the Lord. In imitation of this we often have at our public entertainments the following words sung, taken from the *Vulgate* of Psalm cxv. 1: NON NOBIS, DOMINE, NON NOBIS; sed NOMINI

mouth, and <sup>a</sup> a two-edged sword in their hand;

7 To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;

8 To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

9 <sup>b</sup> To execute upon them the judgment written: <sup>c</sup> this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. in their throat. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. iv. 12. Rev. i. 16. <sup>c</sup> Deut. vii. 1, 2. — <sup>d</sup> Ps. cxlviii. 14.

TUO DA GLORIAM! SUPER MISERICORDIA TUA ET VERITATE TUA. “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth’s sake.” Let them mingle their feasting with divine songs. This reclining on couches, while they take their food, is still practised in Asiatic countries.

Verse 6. *Let the high praises of God*] Let them sing songs the most sublime, with the loudest noise consistent with harmony.

*And a two-edged sword in their hand*] Perhaps there is an allusion here to the manner in which the Jews were obliged to labour in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem: “Every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon,” Neh. iv. 17.

The *two-edged sword*, in Hebrew, is פִּיפְיוֹת *pipiyoth*, “mouth mouths.”

Verse 7. *To execute vengeance upon the heathen*] This may refer simply to their purpose of defending themselves to the uttermost, should their enemies attack them while building their wall: and they had every reason to believe that God would be with them; and that, if their enemies did attack them, they should be able to inflict the severest punishment upon them.

*Punishments upon the people*] The unfaithful and treacherous Jews; for we find that some, even of their nobles, had joined with *Sanballat* and *Tobiah* (see Neh. vi. 17—19): and it appears also that many of them had formed alliances with those heathens, which were contrary to the law; see Neh. xiii. 15—29.

Verse 8. *To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron*] That is, if these kings, governors of provinces, and chiefs among the people, had attacked them, God would have enabled them to defeat them, take their generals prisoners, and lead them in triumph to Jerusalem. It is certain also that in the times of the *Maccabees* the Jews had many signal victories over the *Samaritans*, *Phikazines*, and *Moabites*; and over *Antiochus*, king of Syria. See the Books of the *Maccabees*. To these the Psalmist may here refer in a hyperbolic way, not unusual in poetry and in songs of triumph.

Verse 9. *To execute upon them the judgment written*] In Deut. vii. 1, &c., God promises his people complete victory over all their enemies, and over the heathen. God repeatedly promises such victories to his faithful people; and this is, properly speaking, the judgment written, i. e., foretold.

*This honour have all his saints.*] They shall all be supported, defended, and saved by the Lord. Israel had this honour, and such victories over their enemies, while they continued faithful to their God. When they relapsed into iniquity, their enemies prevailed against them; they were defeated, their city taken, their temple burnt to the ground, more than a million of themselves slaughtered, and the rest led into captivity; and, scattered through the world, they continue without king, or temple, or true worship, to the present day.

"But do not these last verses contain a *promise* that all the nations of the earth shall be brought under the dominion of the *Church of Christ*; that all *heathen* and *ungodly kings* shall be put down, and *pious men* put in their places?" I do not think so. I believe God never intended that his church should have the civil government of the world. His *church*, like its *Founder* and *Head*, will never be a *ruler* and *divider* among men. The men who, under pretence of *superior sanctity*, affect this, are not of God; the truth of God is not in them; they are puffed up with pride, and fall into the condemnation of the devil. *Woe unto the inhabitants of the earth*, when the *church* takes the *civil government* of the world into its hand! Were it possible that God should trust *religious people* with civil government, *anarchy* would soon ensue; for every professed believer in Christ would consider himself on a par with any other and every other believer, the *right to rule* and the *necessity to obey* would be immediately lost, and every man would do what was right in his own eyes; for, where the grace of God makes *all equal*, who can presume to say, I have divine authority to govern my fellows? The church of Rome has claimed this right; and the pope, in consequence, became a secular prince; but the nations of the world have seen the vanity and iniquity of the claim, and refused allegiance. Those whom it did govern, with force and with cruelty did it rule them; and the odious yoke is now universally cast off. Certain *enthusiasts* and *hypocrites*, not of that church, have also attempted to set up a *fifth monarchy*, a *civil government* by the *Saints*! and diabolic saints they were. To such pretenders God gives neither countenance nor support. The secular and spiritual government God will ever keep distinct; and the church shall have no power but that of *doing good*; and this only in proportion to its holiness, heavenly-mindedness, and piety to God. That the verses above may be understood in a *spiritual sense*, as ap-

plicable to the influence of the *word of God preached*, may be seen in the following analysis.

## ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-NINTH PSALM.

In this psalm the saints of God are excited to give due thanks.

I. For the grace and favour received from God, ver. 1—5.

II. For the glory and privileges they shall receive, ver. 5—9.

I. "Let Israel rejoice," &c. The saints. Which he amplifies:

1. The saints: "For praise is not comely in the mouth of sinners."

2. The quality of the song: "A new song." By renewed men.

From the place in which it must be done. The public congregation.

4. From the manner. With alacrity.

5. From the object. God, their Creator and King: "Let Israel rejoice," &c.

And this part he concludes with a strong reason:

1. "For the Lord taketh pleasure, &c. He loves those who most resemble him in holiness and purity.

2. "He will beautify the meek," &c. The people who trust him he will save.

II. And now he describes their future glory.

1. "Let the saints," &c. None others will he beautify.

2. "Let them rejoice," &c. The mansions prepared for them in heaven. There they rest from labour, but not from praise.

Their work is twofold: Present and future.

1. Present: "The high praises," &c. The highest that can be thought of.

2. For the future: "Let a two-edged sword," &c. When Christ shall come to judgment, the saints at the last shall be judges.

Then the exercise of this judiciary power shall be,

1. "To execute vengeance," &c. To judge them to punishment.

2. "To bind their kings with chains," &c. The phrase is metaphorical. "Bind him hand and foot," &c.; Matt. xxii. Christ's iron sceptre shall bruise the head of his enemies.

3. "To execute upon them the judgment written," &c. Against evil-doers.

He concludes with an acclamation. This *glory* of sitting with Christ and judging the world, is the glory of all saints. *Hallelujah*.

## PSALM CL.

*A general exhortation to praise God, 1, 2. With the trumpet, psaltery, and harp, 3. With the timbrel and dance, stringed instruments and organs, 4. With the cymbals, 5. All living creatures are called upon to join in the exercise.*

**P**RAISE <sup>a</sup> ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.

<sup>b</sup> Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent <sup>c</sup> greatness.

<sup>3</sup> Praise him with the sound of the <sup>d</sup> trumpet: <sup>e</sup> praise him with the psaltery and harp.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *Hallelujah*. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. cxlv. 5, 6. — <sup>c</sup> Deut. iii. 24. <sup>d</sup> Or, *cornet*. Ps. xcvi. 6. — <sup>e</sup> Ps. lxxxi. 2. cxlix. 3. <sup>f</sup> Exod. xv. 20. — <sup>g</sup> Or, *pipe*. Ps. cxlix. 3. — <sup>h</sup> Ps. xxxiii.

NOTES ON PSALM CL.

This psalm is without title and author in the *Hebrew*, and in all the ancient Versions. It is properly the full chorus of all voices and instruments in the temple, at the conclusion of the grand *Hallelujah*, to which the five concluding psalms belong.

Verse 1. *Praise God in his sanctuary*] In many places we have the compound word הלל-יהוה *halelu-yah*, praise ye Jehovah; but this is the first place in which we find הלל-אל *halelu-el*, praise God, or the strong God. Praise him who is Jehovah, the infinite and self-existent Being; and praise him who is God, *El* or *Elohim*, the great God in covenant with mankind, to bless and save them unto eternal life.

*In his sanctuary*—in the temple; in whatever place is dedicated to his service. Or, *in his holiness*—through his own holy influence in your hearts.

*The firmament of his power.*] Through the whole expanse, to the utmost limits of his power. As רקיע *rakia* is the firmament or vast expanse that surrounds the globe, and probably that in which all the celestial bodies of the solar system are included, it may have that meaning here. Praise him whose power and goodness extend through all worlds; and let the inhabitants of all those worlds share in the grand chorus, that it may be universal.

Verse 2. *For his mighty acts*] Whether manifested in creation, government, mercy, or justice.

*His excellent greatness.*] כֶּרֶב נִרְלִי *kerob gudlo*, according to the multitude of his magnitude, or of his majesty. מְעַתָּה מְעַתָּה מְעַתָּה מְעַתָּה מְעַתָּה *mucelnyrre muelnyrre*; After the manifoldness of his mickleness.—Anglo-Saxon. After the mykelnes of his greathede.—Old Psalter. Let the praise be such as is becoming so great, so holy, and so glorious a Being.

Verse 3. *The sound of the trumpet*] שׁוֹפָר *sophar*, from its noble, cheering, and majestic sound; for the original has this ideal meaning.

*With the psaltery*] נֶבֶל *nebel*; the naba, a hollow stringed instrument; perhaps like the *guitar*, or the old *symphony*.

*And harp.*] כִּנּוֹר *kinnor*, another *stringed* instrument, played on with the hands or fingers.

Verse 4. *Praise him with the timbrel*] תּוֹפִי *toph*, drum, tabret, or tantom, or tympanum of the ancients; a skin stretched over a broad hoop; perhaps something like the *tambourine*. Anglo-Saxon: בֵּעַם *beam*, the *glad pipe*. *Taburne*; Old Psalter.

*And dance*] מַחֹל *machol*, the *pipe*. The *crowde* or *crowthe*: Old Psalter; a species of *violin*. It never

<sup>4</sup> Praise him <sup>f</sup> with the timbrel and <sup>e</sup> dance: praise him with <sup>b</sup> stringed instruments and organs.

<sup>5</sup> Praise him upon the loud <sup>i</sup> cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.

<sup>6</sup> Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

2. xcii. 3. cxliv. 9. Isai. xxxviii. 20. — <sup>1</sup> 1 Chron. xv. 16, 19, 28. xvi. 5. xxv. 1, 6.

means *dance*; see the note on Ps. cxlix. 3. *Cwth* signifies a *fiddle* in Welsh.

*Stringed instruments*] מִנִּיִּם *minnim*. This literally signifies *strings put in order*; perhaps a *triangular kind of hollow instrument* on which the strings were regularly placed, growing *shorter* and *shorter* till they came to a *point*. This would give a variety of sounds, from a deep bass to a high treble. In an ancient MS. Psalter before me, David is represented in two places, playing on such an instrument. It may be the *sambuck*, or psaltery, or some such instrument.

*Organs.*] עֹגָב *ugab*. Very likely the *syrix* or *mouth organ*; *Pan's pipe*; both of the ancients and moderns. The *fistula, septem disparibus nodis conjuncta*, made of seven pieces of cane or thick *straw*, of unequal lengths, applied to the lips, each blown into, according to the *note* intended to be expressed. This instrument is often met with in the ancient *bucolic* or *pastoral* writers.

Verse 5. *Loud cymbals*] צִלְצִלִּים *tseltselim*. Two hollow plates of brass which, being struck together, produced a sharp clanging sound. This instrument is still in use. What the *high sounding cymbals* meant I know not; unless those of a *larger make* struck above the head, and consequently emitting a louder sound.

Verse 6. *Let every thing that hath breath*] Either to make a vocal noise, or a sound by blowing into *pipes, fifes, flutes, trumpets, &c.* Let all join together, and put forth all your *strength* and all your *skill* in sounding the praises of Jehovah; and then let a *universal burst* with HALLELUJAH! close the grand ceremony. It is evident that this psalm has no other meaning than merely the summoning up all the *voices*, and all the *instruments*, to complete the service in FULL CHORUS.

Of such peculiar importance did the *Book of Psalms* appear to our blessed Lord and his apostles, that they have quoted nearly fifty of them several times in the New Testament. There is scarcely a state in human life that is not distinctly marked in them; together with all the variety of experience which is found, not merely among *pious Jews*, but among *Christians*, the most deeply acquainted with the things of Christ.

The minister of God's word, who wishes to preach *experimentally*, should have frequent recourse to this sacred book; and by considering the various parts that refer to Jesus Christ and the Christian church, he will be able to build up the people of God on their most holy faith; himself will grow in grace, and in

the knowledge of God; and he will ever have an abundance of the most profitable *matter* for the edification of the church of Christ.

## ANALYSIS OF THE HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH PSALM.

This psalm is the same with the former. In the *hundred and forty-eighth*, all creatures are invited to praise God; in the *hundred and forty-ninth*, men especially, and those who are in the church; but in this, that they praise him with all kinds of instruments.

I. An invitation to praise God, which word he repeats thirteen times, according to the thirteen attributes of God, as the rabbins reckon them.

II. That this be done with all sorts of instruments, intimating that it is to be performed with all the care, zeal, and ardency of affection.

I. Throughout the psalm he calls on men to praise God.

1. "Praise God in his sanctuary." Or in your hearts, which are the temples of the Holy Ghost.

2. "Praise him in the firmament," &c. His magnificence when he sits on his throne. Some understand the church by it, in which his saints shine as stars in the firmament.

3. "Praise him for his mighty acts," &c. The works of his power.

4. "Praise him according," &c. Whereby he excels all things; he being absolutely great, they only comparatively so.

II. The prophet desires that no way be omitted by which we may show our zeal and ardency in praising him.

1. "Praise him with the sound of the trumpet," &c. An instrument used in their solemn feasts.

2. "Praise him with the psaltery," &c. And with these they sing, so that there is also music with the voice.

3. "Praise him with the timbrel," &c. In the choir with many voices.

4. "Praise him with stringed instruments," &c. Lutes, viols, organs, &c.

5. "Praise him upon the high sounding cymbals," &c. An instrument which yields a loud sound, as bells among us.

His conclusion is of universal reference, "Let every thing," &c.

1. "Every thing that hath breath," &c. That hath faculty or power to do it.

2. "Every thing that hath life," &c. Whether spiritual, as angels; or animal, as man and beasts. Or, metaphorically, such as, though inanimate, may be said to praise God, because they obey his order and intention. Thus, all things praise God, because all things that have life or being derive it immediately from himself.

## MABORETIC NOTES ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

*Number of verses, two thousand five hundred and twenty-seven. Middle verse, Ps. lxxviii. 36. Sections, nineteen.*

At the end of the *Syriac* we have this colophon:—  
"The hundred and fifty psalms are completed. There are *five* books, *fifteen* psalms of *degrees*, and *sixty* of *praises*. The number of *verses* is *four thousand eight hundred and thirty-two*. There are some who have added *twelve* others; but we do not need them. And may God be praised for ever!"

At the end of the *Arabic* is the following:

The end of the *five* books of psalms. The *first* book ends with the *fortieth* psalm; the *second*, with the *seventieth* psalm; the *third*, with the *eightieth* psalm; the *fourth*, with the *hundred and fiftieth*; and the *fifth*, with the *last* psalm, i. e., the *hundred and fiftieth*.

## PSALM CLI.

Besides these *hundred and fifty* psalms, there is *one* additional in the *Syriac*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*, of which it will be necessary to say something, and to give a translation.

1. The psalm is not found in the *Hebrew*, nor in the *Chaldee*, nor in the *Vulgate*.

2. It is found, as stated above, in the *Syriac*, *Septuagint*, *Æthiopic*, and *Arabic*; but not in the *Anglo-Saxon*, though *Dom. Calmet* has stated the contrary. But I have not heard of it in any MS. of that Version; nor is it in *Spelman's* printed copy.

3. It is mentioned by *Apollinaris*, *Athanasius*, *Euthymius*, *Vigilius Tapsensis*, and *St. Chrysostom*.

4. It has never been received either by the *Greek* or *Latin* church; nor has it ever been considered as *canonical*.

5. It is certainly *very ancient*, stands in the *Codex Alexandrinus*, and has been printed in the *Paris* and *London Polyglots*.

6. Though the *Greek* is considered the most authentic copy of this psalm, yet there are some things in the *Syriac* and *Arabic* necessary to make a full sense. The *Arabic* alone states the *manner* of Goliath's death.

The *title* is, "A Psalm in the hand-writing of David, beyond the number of the psalms, composed by David, when he fought in single combat with Goliath." I shall make it as complete as I can from the different Versions.



**I** WAS the least among my brethren; and the youngest in my father's house; and I kept also my father's sheep.

2 My hands made the organ; and my fingers joined the psaltery.

3 And who told it to my LORD? [*Arab.*: And who is he who taught me?] The LORD himself, he is my Master, and the Hearer of all that call upon him.

4 He sent his angel, and took me away from my father's sheep; and anointed me with the oil of his anointing. [*Others, the oil of his mercy.*]

## NOTES ON PSALM CLI.

If we were sure this was David's composition, we should not be willing to see it *out of the number of the Psalms*, or standing among the *apocryphal writings*. As a matter of *curiosity* I insert it; as, if a forgery, it is very ancient; and I leave it to the intelligent reader to add his own *notes*, and form his own *analysis*.

The subscription to the Syriac says some add *twelve* more. The *Codex Alexandrinus* has fourteen more. They are the following:—

1. The Song of Moses and the children of Israel, Exod. xv. 1, &c.
2. Ditto, from Deut. xxii. 1, &c.
3. The Song of Hannah, 1 Sam. ii. 1, &c.
4. The Prayer of Isaiah, Isai. xxvi. 2, &c.
5. The Prayer of Jonah, Jonah ii. 3, &c.
6. The Prayer of Habakkuk, Hab. iii. 2, &c.
7. The Prayer of Hezekiah, Isai. xxxviii. 10, &c.
8. The Prayer of Manasseh, see the *Apocrypha*.
9. The Prayer of Azarias, or of the Three Children.—*Apocrypha*.
10. The Hymn of our Fathers, see the *Benedicite omnia opera* in the *Liturgy*.
11. The *Magnificat*, or Song of the Blessed Virgin, Luke i. 46, &c.
12. The *Nunc dimittis*, or Song of Simeon, Luke ii. 29, &c.
13. The Prayer of Zacharias, Luke i. 68, &c.
14. The ὕμνος ἑωθινός, or Morning Hymn as used in the service of the *Greek church*.

My old Psalter seems to have copied such authority

5 My brethren were taller and more beautiful than I; nevertheless the LORD delighted not in them.

6 I went out to meet the Philistine, and he cursed me by his idols.

7 [*Arab.*: In the strength of the LORD I cast three stones at him. *I smote* him in the forehead, and felled him to the earth.]

8 And I drew out his own sword from its sheath, and cut off his head, and took away the reproach from the children of Israel.

as the *Codex Alexandrinus*, for it has added several similar pieces, after the *hundred and fiftieth* psalm, where we read, *Explicit Psalmos, incipit canticum Ysaie*.

1. The Hymn of Isaiah, Isai. xii. 1, &c.
2. The Prayer of Hezekiah, Isai. xxxviii. 10—20, inclusive.
3. The Prayer of Hannah, 1 Sam. ii. 1, &c.
4. The Song of Moses at the Red Sea, Exod. xv. 1—19.
5. The Prayer of Habakkuk.
6. The Song of Moses, Deut. xxii. 1—43.
7. The *Magnificat*, or Song of the Blessed Virgin, Luke i. 46—55.
8. The ten commandments.
9. There are several curious maxims, &c., which follow the commandments, such as *Seven werkes of Mercy; Seven gastely werkes of Mercy; Seven Virtues; The keeping of the five senses; Fourteen points of trouthe*. Another head, which is torn off. Lastly, *Some godly advices* in poetry, which terminate the book.

I suppose these hymns were added on the same principle that the general assembly of the Kirk of Scotland added, by an act in 1479 and 1750, a number of verses and portions of the sacred writings, among which are several of the above, to their authorized Version of the Psalms of David in metre, to be sung in all kirks and families.

# SKETCH

OF THE

## LIFE AND CHARACTER OF DAVID.

WHEN the historical books of the Old Testament were under consideration, I formed the resolution to say but little on those parts where the history of David is concerned, till I should come to the end of the Psalms, where, if I did not give a general history of his life, I might at least draw his character. But so many facts in David's history were found to require illustration, I was obliged often to anticipate my design, and enter into discussions which I had hoped to be able to produce with good effect at the end of his writings. I must therefore refer back to several particulars in the Books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, that concern the history of this most extraordinary man; and the objections produced against his spirit and conduct by persons not friendly to divine revelation.

Where I have found David to blame, I have not palliated his conduct; and though it is with me a maxim to lean to the most favourable side when examining the characters of men, yet I hope I have nowhere served the cause of *Antinomianism*, which I abominate, nor endeavoured to render any thing, morally evil, venial, because it was found in the conduct of a religious man or a prophet. Vice must never be countenanced, though individuals, on the whole highly respectable, suffer by its disclosure, which disclosure should take place only when the interests of religion and truth absolutely require it.

*David*, *Doud* or *Daoud* דוד, the son of Jesse, of an obscure family in the tribe of Judah, and of the inconsiderable village of Bethlehem, in the same tribe, was born, according to the best accounts, A. M. 2919, B. C. 1085. He was the youngest of eight sons, and was keeper of his father's sheep. David was descended from *Jacob* by his son *Judah*, in that line which united both the *regal* and *sacerdotal* functions; and in his own person were conjoined the *regal* and *prophetic* offices. It is supposed he was anointed by Samuel, about A. M. 2934, when he was but about fifteen years of age; and that he slew Goliath in A. M. 2942, when he was in the *twenty-third* or *twenty-fourth* year of his age. He became king of Judah after the death of Saul, A. M. 2949; and king of all Israel, A. M. 2956, when he was about *thirty-seven* years of age, and died A. M. 2989, B. C. 1015, when he was about *seventy-one* years old.

He is often mentioned by the *Asiatic* writers, and by *Mohammed*, in the *Koran*, in these words: "Daoud slew Gheelout (Goliath); and God gave him a kingdom and wisdom, and taught him whatsoever he wished to know."

*Hussain Vaez*, one of the commentators on the *Koran*, observes on the above passage: "That Goliath was of such an enormous size that his armour, which was of iron, weighed one thousand pounds; and that

his helmet alone weighed *three hundred*; nevertheless David slung a stone with such force as to break through the helmet, pierce the skull, and beat out the Philistine's brains.

"God gave him the gift of prophecy, and the Book *Ziboor* (Psalms); and taught him to make hair and sackcloth, which was the work of the prophets; and instructed him in the language of birds, which, with the stones of the field, were obedient to him, and iron was softened by his hands. During the *forty* days which he spent in bewailing his sins, plants grew where he watered the ground with his tears."

The Mohammedans all allow that the *Ziboor*, or Book of Psalms, was given to David by *immediate inspiration*, and that it contains 150 sourats or chapters. His skill in music is also proverbial among the Mohammedans. Hence some verses in the *Anvari Soheely*, which are to this effect: "You decide the greatest difficulties with as much ease as *Daoud* touched the chords of his lyre when he chanted his psalms."

If we could persuade the Mohammedans that the *Book of Psalms* which we now possess was the real work of David, something would be gained towards their conversion. But they say the Jews have corrupted it, as the Christians have the *Anjeel* (Gospel), and the book which they produce as the psalms of David consists of extracts only from the psalms, with a variety of other matters which have no relation either to David or his work.

In the sacred writings David is presented to our view—1. As a shepherd; 2. A musician; 3. A skilful military leader; 4. A hero; 5. A king; 6. An ecclesiastical reformer; 7. A prophet; 8. A type of Christ; 9. A poet; and 10. A truly pious man.

1. David stands before the world in his history and writings as a private person destitute of ambition, apparently in a low, if not mean, situation in life, contributing to the support of a numerous family, of which he formed a part, by keeping the sheep of his father in the wilderness or campaign country in the vicinity of Bethlehem. In those times, and in such a rocky and mountainous country as Judea, this situation required a person of considerable *address*, *skill*, *courage*, and *muscular strength*. The flock must not only be led out and in to find the proper pasture, but their maladies must be skilfully treated, and they defended against the attacks of wild beasts, than which none could be more formidable for rapacity and strength than the *lion* and the *bear*. These were among the savage inhabitants of the country of Judea, and were the destroyers of the flocks, and the terror of the shepherds. The land was also infested with *banditti*, or lawless solitary rovers who sought by depredations among the flocks

## Sketch of the Life and Character of David.

to live at the expense of others. The office therefore of a *shepherd* was neither *mean* nor *unimportant*, as a principal part of the property of the Jews consisted in their flocks.

From the ancient history of all civilized nations we learn that the persons thought qualified for it were such as had a liberal education, good natural parts, and were highly trustworthy and courageous. These most evidently were all combined in the character of David. That his *education* was good, his language and skill in music prove; and that his *mind* was highly cultivated, the depth, sublimity, and purity of his compositions demonstrate; and that his *courage* and *personal strength* must have been great, his slaying the lion and bear that had attacked the flock under his protection, are the clearest proofs.

2. His *skill in music* was so great as to be proverbial. In this curious art he excelled all his contemporaries, so as alone to acquire the character of the *sweet singer of Israel*. His success in quieting the turbulent and maniacal spirit of Saul by his performances on the lyre stands strongly marked in his history; and the effects produced were equal to any mentioned in the now fabulous histories of Greece or Rome. The wondrous harp of Orpheus, by which beasts and birds were enraptured, and the very stones and trees moved in harmony together, so as to compose of themselves the celebrated city of Thebes, we may well leave out of the question, as the fable is too gross to be credited, unless we take the exposition of an ancient author, *Philodemus*, some fragments of whose works have been recovered from the ruins of Herculaneum, from which we learn that the fable of the building of Thebes by the melody of his lyre arose from the fact that he was a musician who attended the builders, played to them during their labour, by whose contributions he earned a competent support, and caused them to go so lightly through their work, that he was hyperbolically said to have built the walls of the city by the power of his music. Nothing can be more natural than this explanation, nor could any thing serve better for the foundation of the fable. Indeed it has been conjectured by one of David's biographers, Dr. Delaney, that the history of David was the origin of that of Orpheus. The coincidence of the times, and the other circumstances alleged by this entertaining writer, have not served to persuade me of the truth of his hypothesis. We can amply support the credit of the Hebrew musician without impairing the credibility of the history and identity of the person of the ancient Greek lyrist.

It is not likely, however, that David was a performer on one kind of instrument only. There were many kinds of musical instruments in his time that were all used in the ordinances of religion, and apparently employed in those parts of it where the compositions of David were used. *Calmel* and others have properly divided these instruments into three classes. 1. *STRINGED instruments*. 2. *WIND instruments*. And 3. Such as were played on by a *PLECTRUM*.

I. *STRINGED instruments*. 1. The *naba*, or psaltery.

2. The *kinnor*. 3. The *cythera* or *azur*, an instrument of ten chords. 4. The *symphony*. 5. The *sambuck*. 6. The *minnim*.

II. *WIND instruments*. 1. The *chatsotserah*. 2. The *shophar*, or trumpet. 3. The *keren*, or horn. 4. The *ugab*, a species of organ. 5. The *mashrokitha*, or syrinx. 6. The *machalath*, a species of pipe or flue. 7. The *chalil*, or flute.

III. Instruments which required a *PLECTRUM*. 1. The *toph*, a drum, tomtom, or tambourine. 2. The *tseltselim*, or sistrum. 3. The *shalishim*, or triangle. 4. The *metseitayim* a species of bell.

As all these instruments were used in the service of God, and most of them are mentioned in the psalms, it is very likely that such a consummate musician and poet played on the whole.

3. That David was a *skilful military leader*, requires little proof. When for the safety of his own life he was obliged to leave the court of Saul, and become an exile in the wilds of a country so much indebted to his courage and valour, he was under the necessity of associating to himself men of desperate fortunes and of no character. These, to the amount of *four hundred*, he so disciplined and managed, as to soften their lawless disposition, and repress their propensity to plunder and rapine, so that they never went on any expedition that was not under his direction, and made no inroads but what tended to strengthen the hands of his countrymen, and weaken those of their enemies. Neither by day nor night, so complete was his authority over them, were they permitted to take even a lamb or a kid from the flock of any man, though they had frequent opportunities of doing so in countries so thinly inhabited, and where the flocks were numerous. On the contrary they were *protectors* of the different herds which were fed in those parts of the wilderness where they were obliged to sojourn. To have succeeded in disciplining such a description of men is highly to the credit of his address and skill, especially when we consider that they were composed of such as had run away from the claims of their *creditors*; from the authority of their *masters*; who were *distressed* in their circumstances, and *discontented* with the government, or their situation in life, 1 Sam. xxii. 2. I question much whether any of the heroes of the last or present century, from *Peter* and *Frederick* the Great down to Napoleon Buonaparte, destitute of all subsidiary authority, and without any *other officer* to assist them in the command, could have disciplined *four hundred* such men, brought them under perfect obedience, and prevented them from indulging their restless and marauding spirit with so many temptations before their eyes, while prey was so easy to be acquired, and their general privations rendered such supplies necessary.

4. As a *hero*, David appears very conspicuous, if we take this word in its general acceptation, a *man eminent for bravery*. And here his proffering to fight with Goliath, the famous Philistine champion who had defied and terrified all the hosts of Israel, is a once a proof of his *bravery* and *patriotism*. In very

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remote times, and down to a late period, military etiquette permitted feuds and civil broils to be settled by single combat. In the presence of the hostile armies, previously to the shock of general battle, a man either stepped out from the ranks, or by a *herald* bid defiance to any person in the hostile army, and stipulated certain conditions of combat, in order to spare the effusion of blood; to the exact fulfilment of which he pledged himself and his party. This was done very circumstantially in the case before us. When the Israelites and the Philistines had drawn up their forces in battle array at Ephes-dammim, a champion of Gath called *Goliath*, of gigantic stature and strength, came out of the camp of the Philistines, and stood and cried unto the armies of Israel: "Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us." And concluded with defying the armies of Israel. Saul, though he was a man of great personal courage, and the whole Israelitish army, were greatly dismayed at this challenge; and the more particularly so, because no man dared to take it up, notwithstanding the king had offered "to enrich the acceptor with great gifts, give him his daughter in marriage, and make his father's house free in Israel;" 1 Sam. xvii. 1, &c. David had come to the camp with provisions for his brothers who were in Saul's army (for it appears that the Israelitish militia bore their own expenses when their services were requisite for the safety of their country); and hearing the defiance of the Philistine, proposed to take up the challenge; and having obtained Saul's consent, went forth, fought and slew the Philistine in the manner related in the chapter quoted above.

On numerous occasions he signalized himself in the same way; his natural courage, heightened by his constant dependance on God, never forsook him, and was always invincible. He was the life of his kingdom, and the soul of his army; knew well how to distinguish and employ eminent abilities, had the ablest generals, and the address to form a multitude of heroes like himself.

He had a company of champions, or as they are generally termed, *worthies* or *mighty men*, to the number of thirty-seven. The account given of these (2 Sam. xxiii.) would almost render credible the legend of king Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table; and it is probable that the first idea of that ancient romance was taken from the genuine history of David and his thirty-seven champions.

5. How David would have acquitted himself as a *lawgiver* we cannot tell; for God had taken care to leave nothing of this kind to the wisdom, folly, or caprice of any man. The laws were all made and the constitution framed by Jehovah himself; and no legitimate king of the Jews was permitted to enact any new laws, or abrogate or change the old. The faithful and constitutional king was he who ruled according to the laws already established, as well in

religious as in civil matters; for although the Jewish theocracy was somewhat changed by the election of Saul, yet the monarch was considered only as the *vicegerent* of the Almighty; and David, taking care to abide by the laws as they then were, and governing his subjects accordingly, was said to be *after God's own heart*, or *a man after God's own heart*: and this is the sense in which this phrase is to be understood. And as David took great care that no innovation should be made in the *constitution*, that the law of God should be the law of the empire, and ruled according to that law, therefore he was most properly said to be *a man after God's own heart*, to fulfil all his counsels; and by this faithful attachment to the laws he was contradistinguished from Saul, who in several respects changed that law, and made not a few attempts to alter it in some of its most essential principles. On these grounds God rejected *him* and chose David.

But as a *civil magistrate* David's conduct was unimpeachable: his court was regulated according to the maxims of the divine law; and the universal prosperity of his kingdom is a decisive proof that judgment and justice were faithfully administered in it. The *strong* did not oppress the *weak*, nor the *rich* the *poor*: and, although the empire was seldom at rest from war during his reign, yet it was so conducted that his subjects were neither *oppressed* nor *impoverished*. Many of his psalms bear testimony to these matters, as they contain appeals to God relative to the sincerity of his heart, the uprightness of his conduct, and his impartiality in administering justice among the people. To David the cry of the distressed was never uttered in vain; and the curse of the widow and fatherless was never pronounced against him for a neglect of justice, or partiality in administering it according to the laws.

6. David, I think, may be fitly ranked among *ecclesiastical reformers*; for, although the *grand body* of the Jewish religion was so firmly fixed, that it could not be changed, yet there were *several circumstances* in the *form* of divine worship that appear to have been left to the pious discretion of the Jewish prophets, priests, and kings, to improve as time and circumstances might require. That God might be constantly worshipped, that the Jewish ritual might be carefully observed, and all the divinely appointed ecclesiastical persons have their proper share of the public service, David divided the *thirty-eight thousand Levites* into courses, assigning to each course its particular service, 1 Chron. xxiii. He did the same by the *priests, porters, singers, &c.*; and appointed *twelve captains* to serve each a month, and have the rule and inspection of the different courses and orders, to see that the worship of God was properly conducted. The *twenty-third, twenty-fourth, twenty-fifth, twenty-sixth, and twenty-seventh* chapters of the *first book of Chronicles*, give a very detailed and circumstantial account of the improvements which David made in the *form* and *execution* of the different parts of public worship. Almost every pious king of Judah had matters of this kind to regulate and settle: but it appears that David's plan was so

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perfect, that it became a standard ; and when any decay took place in the form of public worship, the chief aim of the succeeding kings was, to reduce every thing to the form in which David had left it. This is a full proof of the perfection of his plan.

7. That David was favoured with the *gift of prophecy* is, I think, universally allowed. And although there have been prophets *pro tempore*, who were not remarkable for piety, yet there never was one on whom the prophetic Spirit *rested*, that was not truly pious. All such had deep communion with God : their souls were upright, and their bodies became temples of the Holy Ghost. This was most assuredly the case with David : the prophetic Spirit overshadowed and rested upon him ; in general he held deep communion with God ; and even in his psalms, we can scarcely say *when* he does not prophesy. Some learned and very pious men consider the whole psalter as a tissue of prophecies concerning Christ and his kingdom ; and in this way our Lord and his apostles quote many of them. Could we really ascertain which were David's, perhaps we might find them all of this description ; though the subjects to which they apply might not be so clearly distinct : but there were so many written *before*, *at*, *under*, and *after*, the Babylonish captivity, that are become so mixed with those of David, that it is difficult, and in some cases impossible, to ascertain them. Where he evidently prophesies of Christ and his church, I have particularly remarked it in the notes. I have not gone so far as some learned and pious commentators have gone, in applying the psalms to Christ and his church, because I was not satisfied that they have such reference. Even those which are of David's composition, and have reference to Christ, are so mixed up with his own state, that it is often impossible to say when the Psalmist prophesies of the *Root of Jesse*, and when he simply refers to his own circumstances : and, on the whole, I am only sure of those which are thus quoted by our Lord and his apostles.

8. That David was a *type of Christ* is proved by the Scriptures themselves, see Jer. xxx. 9 : "They shall serve the Lord their God, and DAVID their king, whom I will raise up unto them ;" Ezek. xxxiv. 23 : "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant DAVID ; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd." Ver. 24 : "And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant DAVID a prince among them." See also Ezek. xxxvii. 24 ; and compare this with Jer. xxiii. 4, 5 ; John x. 11 ; Heb. xiii. 24 ; 1 Pet. ii. 25, and v. 4 ; Hosea, chap. iii. ver. 5, speaks in the same way : "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and DAVID their king ; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." That none of these Scriptures speak of *David, son of Jesse*, is evident from this, that Hosea lived three hundred years *after* David, Jeremiah four hundred and seventy-three, and Ezekiel four hundred and ninety-three.

But in what was David a *type of Christ* ? Principally, I think, in the *name* דָּוִד *David*, which signifies *the beloved one*, that one more loved than any other ; and this is what is expressed from heaven by God

himself, when he says, *This is my Son*, Ὁ Αγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα, *THE BELOVED ONE, in whom I have delighted*. This is the *genuine David* ; the man *after my own heart*. He was his *type* also, in being a *royal prophet*—one in whom the Holy Spirit dwelt, and one who was a truly *spiritual king* ; a character that seldom occurs in the history of the world.

Were we to consult those who have *laboured* on the *types*, we might find all the following resemblances *stated* ; and, in their way, wondrously *proved* ! David was a type of Christ, 1. In his originally mean appearance. 2. In his mean education. 3. In his unction. 4. In his eminent qualifications. 5. In his various persecutions. 6. In his enemies. 7. In his distresses. 8. In his deliverance. 9. "In his victories and conquests. And, 10. In his taking to wife the adulterous woman, and thereby bringing guilt upon himself." See *Parkhurst*. All the first *nine* particulars might be *controverted*, as not having any thing in them exclusively typical ; and the *tenth* is horrible, if not blasphemous. No analogies, no metaphorical meanings can support this abominable position. I have already given my opinion : to elucidate the particulars above I shall never attempt.

9. But the highest merit of David, and that which seems to have been almost exclusively *his own*, was his *poetic genius*. As a divine poet, even God himself had created none greater, either *before* or *since*. In this science and gift he is therefore the *chef-d'œuvre* of the Almighty. *Moses* wrote some fine verses ; *Solomon* two fine poems, an *ode* and an *elegy*. The prophets, particularly *Isaiah*, in several chapters of his prophecy ; *Jeremiah*, in his book of *Lamentations* ; and some of the *minor prophets*, in a few *select verses* ; have given us specimens of a profound poetical genius : but we have no *whole* like that of David. The *sublimity*, the *depth*, the *ecursive fancy*, the *discursive power*, the *vast compass of thought*, the knowledge of *heaven and earth*, of *God and nature*, the work of the Spirit, the endlessly varied temptations of Satan, the knowledge of the human heart, the travail of the soul, the full comprehension of the *prosopopœia* or *personification* of the whole of *inanimate nature*, of every *virtue*, and of every *vice*, the immense grasp of thought embodying and arranging, and afterwards clothing in suitable language, the vast assemblage of ideas furnished by the natural and spiritual world ; in a word, the spirit of poetry, the true *genie createur*, the *ροῦ ποιητοῦ ποιητής*, *framework of the framer*, the *poetry of the poet*, not the *fiction of the inventive genius* ; but the production of truth, hidden before in the bosom of God and nature, and exhibited in the most pleasing colours, with the most impressive pathos and irresistible harmonic diction : these qualities, these supra-mundane excellencies, are found in no other poet that ever graced the annals of the world ; they exist in their perfection only in David king of Israel. What is peculiarly remarkable in David is, he has succeeded to the very highest degree in every species of poetic composition that has for its *object* the glory of God and the welfare of man ; and there is not one poet who has succeeded him, that has not failed when he

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attempted to sing of God, the punishment and rewards of the future world, and the unsearchable riches of Christ.

The *hymns* which he produced have been the general song of the universal church; and men of all nations find in these compositions a language at once suitable to their feelings, and expressive of their highest joys and deepest sorrows, as well as of all the endlessly varied wishes and desires of their hearts. Hail, thou sweet singer of Israel! thy voice is still heard in all the assemblies of the saints.

In my notes on different places of the psalter I have taken the opportunity of pointing out some of the beauties of these incomparable productions. But I must here state that the true excellence of this work will never be fully known, till it be translated according to its *rythmical* order, or *hemistich plan*, in which the harmony of its versification will be felt, and the whole be much more easily apprehended and practically understood. Had we a second *Lowth* to take up *David*, as the *first* did *Isaiah*, the church of God would have the utmost reason to rejoice; and each devout penitent and believer would be enabled to sing more with the *spirit* and the *understanding*, than they can possibly do in taking up the best translation of the psalms, whether *metrical* or *prosaic*, now extant.

We have no less than *four* versions, *two in prose* and *two in verse*, given by public authority to the good people of this land. Of the former there is one in the public service of the church, compiled out of various translations; and one by king James's translators, in the authorized version of the Bible: the latter indescribably the better of this class. The *two metrical* Versions are by *Sternhold*, *Hopkins*, and *others*, and by *Brady* and *Tate*. The former is the most just and literal: but none of them worthy of the subject. All these have already passed under review.

10. That there should have been any doubt entertained as to the *piety of David* appears very strange: most certainly, no man ever gave more unequivocal proofs of piety and devotedness to God than he gave. It was utterly impossible that any man could have written such psalms as David has, whose soul was not deeply imbued with the Spirit of holiness; and this appears, not only in his *writings*, but in his *general conduct*. That in some cases he grievously departed from God, who would attempt to deny? His adultery with Bathsheba, and the consequent murder of the brave Uriah, were crimes of a very deep dye. I can say no more on these, than I have said already in my notes on 2 Sam. xi., and in the observations at the end of that chapter; and to these I beg to refer the reader. His pretended *cruelty* to the *Ammonites* has been adduced as a proof of a *hard* and *wicked heart*. See the notes on 2 Sam. xii. 31, where this charge is shown to be *unfounded*. Whatever obliquities have been charged against him, from *facts* recorded in his history, have already been amply considered where the facts are mentioned. But all these, make the worst of them we can, are but *insulated facts*; they never existed in *habit*, they made no

part of his *general character*; and his *repentance* on the account of that which was his great blot, was the deepest and most exemplary we have on record. If a man have fallen into sin, and made the speediest return to God by confession and repentance, he proves that that transgression is *no part of his character*. He does not *repeat* it; he loathes and abhors it. It requires *malice* against God's book to say this crime was a part of David's *character*. Adultery and murder were no part of the character of David: he fell *once* into the first, and endeavoured to cover it by the death of an innocent man; but who can prove that he ever *repeated* either? While it is granted that a man of God *should* never sin against his Maker, it must also be granted that, in a state of *probation*, a holy man *may* sin; that such *may* be renewed unto repentance, and sin against their God no more, are also possible cases. And it is not less possible that a holy man of God may fall into sin, continue in it, repeat it, and re-repeat it, and rise no more. Of this dreadful possibility the Scripture gives ample proof. There are but few in the church of God that have kept their garments unspotted from the world, and retained their first love: but it *should have been otherwise*; and had they watched unto prayer, they would not have fallen. I only contend for the *possibility*, not for the *necessity*, of the case. And I contend that, in the case of David, a life so long, so holy, so useful, and, except in these, instances, so truly exemplary, entitles him to the character of a *holy man of God*; and, allowing but a little for the dispensation under which he lived, *one of the holiest, if not THE holiest*, that ever wore a crown, or wielded a sceptre. For the supposition that on his death-bed he retracted the promise of life to Shimei, see the notes on 1 Kings ii. 9, where he is amply vindicated.

On the whole, I can cheerfully sum up all in the words of Dr. *Delaney*, "David was a *true believer*, a *zealous adorer* of God, *teacher* of his law and *worship*, and *inspirer* of his *praise*. A glorious *example*, a *perpetual* and *inexhaustible fountain* of true piety. A consummate and unequalled *hero*, a skilful and fortunate *captain*, a steady *patriot*, a wise *ruler*, a faithful, generous, and magnanimous *friend*; and, what is yet rarer, a no less generous and magnanimous *enemy*. A true *penitent*, a *divine musician*, a sublime *poet*, an inspired *prophet*. By birth a *peasant*, by merit a *prince*. In youth a *hero*, in manhood a *monarch*, and in age a *saint*."

The matter of Bathsheba and Uriah are almost his only *blot*. There he sinned deeply; and no man ever suffered more in his body, soul, and domestic affairs, than he did in consequence. His penitence was as deep and as extraordinary as his crime; and nothing could surpass both, but that eternal mercy that took away the guilt, assuaged the sorrow, and restored this most humbled transgressor to character, holiness, happiness, and heaven. Reader, let the God of David be exalted for ever!

Corrected for Press, March 15th 1829.—A. C.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

PROVERBS OF SOLOMON,

THE SON OF DAVID, KING OF ISRAEL.

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THERE has scarcely been any dispute concerning either the *author* or *divine authority* of this book, either in the *Jewish* or *Christian* church: all allow that it was written by Solomon; and the general belief is, that he wrote the book by *divine inspiration*.

It has, indeed, been supposed that Solomon *collected* the major part of these proverbs from those who had preceded him, whether *Hebrews* or *heathens*; but the latter opinion has been controverted, as derogating from the *authority* of the book. But this supposition has very little weight; for, whatever of *truth* is found *in* or *among* men, came originally from God; and if he employed an inspired man to collect those *rays of light*, and *embody* them for the use of his church, he had a right so to do, and to claim his *own* wheresoever found, and, by giving it a *new authentication*, to render it more useful in reference to the end for which it was originally communicated. God is the *Father of lights*, and from him came all true wisdom, not only in its discursive teachings, but in all its detached maxims for the government and regulation of life. I think it very likely that Solomon did not *compose* them all; but he collected every thing of this kind within his reach, and what was according to the Spirit of truth, by which he was inspired, he condensed in this book; and as the Divine Spirit gave it, so the providence of God has preserved it, for the use of his church.

That true Light which lightens every man that cometh into the world first taught men to acknowledge himself as the Fountain and Giver of all good; and then by *short maxims*, conveyed in terse energetic words, taught them to regulate their conduct in life, in respect to the dispensations of his providence, and in reference to each other in domestic, social, and civil life; and this was done by such *proverbs* as we find collected in this book. The different changes that take place in society; the new relations which in process of time men would bear to each other; the invention of arts and sciences; and the *experience* of those who had particularly considered the ways of the Lord, and marked the operation of his hands; would give rise to many maxims, differing from the original stock only in their application to those *new relations* and *varying circumstances*.

The *heathen* who had any connexion with the first worshippers of the Almighty would observe the maxims by which they regulated the affairs of life, and would naturally borrow from them; and hence those *original teachings* became diffused throughout the world; and we find there is not an ancient nation on earth that is without its *code of proverbs* or proverbial maxims. The ancient SANSKRIT is full of them; and they abound in the *Persian* and *Arabic* languages, and in all the *dialects* formed from these, in all the countries of the East. The HEETOPADESA of Vishnoo Sarma, the *Anvari Soheili*, the *Bahar Danush*, *Kalila we Dumna*, and all the other *forms* of that *original work*: the fables of *Lockman*, *Æsop*, *Phædrus*, *Avienus*, &c., are collections of proverbs, illustrated by their application to the most important purposes of domestic, social, and civil life.

Those nations with which we are best acquainted have their collections of proverbs; and perhaps those with which we are unacquainted have theirs also. Messrs. *Visdelou* and *Galand* formed a collection of *Asiatic* proverbs, and published it in their supplement to the *Bibliothèque Orientale* of *D'Herbelot*. This is a collection of very great worth, curiosity, and importance. Mr. *J. Ray*, F. R. S., formed a collection of this kind, particularly of such as are or have been in use in Great Britain: this is as curious as it is entertaining and useful.

The term PROVERB, *proverbium*, compounded of *pro*, for, and *verbum*, a word, speech, or saying, leads us to an original meaning of the thing itself. It was an *allegorical saying*, where "more was meant than met the eye"—a *short saying* that stood for a *whole discourse*.

the words of which are metaphorical; e. g., this of the rabbins: "I have given thee my lamp; give me thy lamp. If thou keep my lamp, I will keep thy lamp; but if thou quench my lamp, I will quench thy lamp." Here the word *lamp* is a metaphor: 1. For *divine revelation*. 2. For the *human soul*. I have given thee my *word* and *Spirit*; give me thy *soul* and *heart*. If thou *observe* my *word*, and *follow* the dictates of my *Spirit*, I will *regulate* thy *heart*, and *keep* thy *soul* from every evil: but if thou *disobey* my *word*, and *quench* my *Spirit*, I will withdraw my *Spirit*, leave thee to the *hardness* and *darkness* of thy own heart, and send thee at last into outer *darkness*. Such as this is properly the *proverb*; the *word* which stands for a *discourse*.

But the Hebrew מְשָׁלִים *meshalim*, from מָשַׁל *meshal*, to *rule* or *govern*, signifies a set or collection of *weighty*, *wise*, and therefore *authoritative*, *sayings*, whereby a man's whole conduct, civil and religious, is to be governed; sayings containing rules for the government of *life*. Or, as the divine author himself expresses it in the beginning of the first chapter, the design is to lead men "to know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words of understanding; to receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; to give ability to the simple, and to the young man knowledge and discretion," ver. 2, 3. This was the design of *proverbs*; and perhaps it would be impossible to find out a better definition of the design and object of those of Solomon, than is contained in the two preceding verses. See my Dissertation on Parabolical Writing, at the end of the notes on Matt. xiii.

Of the *three thousand proverbs* which Solomon spoke, we have only those contained in this book and in *Ecclesiastes*; and of the *one thousand and five songs* which he made, only the *anticles* have been preserved: or, in other words, of all his numerous works in *divinity*, *philosophy*, *morality*, and *natural history*, only the *three* above-mentioned, bearing his name, have been admitted into the sacred canon. His *natural history* of *trees* and *plants*, of *beasts*, *birds*, and *fishes* (for on all these he wrote), is totally lost. *Curiosity*, which never says, *It is enough*, would give up the three we have for those on the *animal* and *vegetable kingdom*, which are lost. What God judged of importance to the eternal interests of mankind, is preserved; and perhaps we know the vegetable and animal kingdoms now as well through *Linnaeus* and *Buffon*, and their *followers*, as we should have known them, had Solomon's books on natural history come down to our time. Others would investigate *nature*, and to them those researches were left. Solomon spoke by inspiration; and therefore to him *divine truths* were communicated, that he might teach them to man. *Every man in his order*.

The Book of *Proverbs* has been divided into *five* parts:

I. A *master* is represented as instructing his *scholar*, giving him admonitions, directions, cautions, and excitements to the study of wisdom, chap. i. to ix.

II. This part is supposed to contain the Proverbs of Solomon, *properly so called*; delivered in distinct, independent, general sentences. From chap. ix. to xxii. 17.

III. In this part the tutor again addresses himself to his pupil, and gives him fresh admonitions to the study of wisdom; which is followed by a set of instructions, delivered *separately* to the pupil, who is supposed all the while to be standing before him. From chap. xxii. 17 to chap. xxv.

IV. This part is distinguished by being a *selection* of Solomon's Proverbs, made by the *prophet* of *Hezekiah*, conjectured to be Isaiah, Hosea, and Micah, who all flourished under that king. This part, like the *second*, is composed of distinct, unconnected sentences, and extends from chap. xxv. to xxx.

V. The *fifth* part contains a set of wise expostulations and instructions, which *Agur*, the *son* of *Jakeh*, delivered to his pupils *Ithiel* and *Ucal*, chap. xxx. And the thirty-first chapter contains the instruction which a *mother*, who is not named, gave to *Lemuel* her son, being earnestly desirous to guard him against vice, to establish him in the principles of justice, and to have him married to a wife of the best qualities. These two last chapters may be considered a kind of *Appendix* to the Book of Proverbs: see Dr. *Taylor*; but others suppose that the thirty-first chapter contains *Bathsheba's* words to *Solomon*, and his commendation of his mother.

There are many *repetitions* and some *transpositions* in the Book of Proverbs, from which it is very probable that they were not all made at the same time; that they are the work of different authors, and have been collected by various hands: but still the sum total is ascribed to us by divine inspiration; and whoever might have been the original authors of the *distinct parts*, the divine Spirit has made them all its own by handing them to us in this manner. Some attribute the collection, *i. e.*, the formation of this collection, to *Isaiah*; others, to *Hezekiah*, and *Shebna* the scribe; and others, to *Ezra*.



That Solomon could have borrowed little from his predecessors is evident from this consideration, that all uninspired ethic writers, who are famous in history, lived *after his times*. Solomon began to reign A. M. 2989, which was 239 years before the *first Olympiad*; 479 before *Cyrus*, in whose time flourished the *seven wise men of Greece*; 679 before *Alexander the Great*, under whose reign flourished *Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle*; and 1011 before the *birth of Christ*. Therefore, to the *Gentiles* he could be but little, if at all, indebted.

It is impossible for any description of persons to read the Book of Proverbs without profit. *Kings and courtiers*, as well as those engaged in *trade, commerce, agriculture*, and the *humblest walks* of life, may here read lessons of instruction for the regulation of their conduct in their respective circumstances. *Fathers, mothers, wives, husbands, sons, daughters, masters, and servants*, may here also learn their respective duties; and the most excellent rules are laid down, not only in reference to *morality*, but to *civil policy and economy*. Many *motives* are employed by the wise man to accomplish the end at which he aims; motives derived from *honour, interest, love, fear, natural affection*, and *piety* towards God. The principal object he has in view is, to inspire a deep reverence for God, fear of his judgments, and an ardent love for wisdom and virtue. He exhibits *injustice, impiety, profligacy, idleness, imprudence, drunkenness*, and almost every vice, in such lively colours as to render every man ashamed of them who has any true respect for his interest, honour, character, or health. And as there is nothing so directly calculated to ruin young men, as *bad company, debauch, and irregular connexions*, he labours to fortify his disciple with the most convincing reasons against all these vices, and especially against *indolence, dissipation*, and the company of *lewd women*.

Maxims to regulate life in all the conditions already mentioned, and to prevent the evils already described, are laid down so copiously, clearly, impressively, and in such *variety*, that every man who wishes to be instructed may take what he chooses, and, among multitudes, those which he likes best.

Besides the original *Hebrew*, the Book of Proverbs exists in the following ancient Versions: the *Chaldee, Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and Arabic*. But the *Septuagint* takes greater liberty with the sacred text than any of the rest: it often *transposes, changes, and adds*; and all these to a very considerable extent. This is the Version which is quoted in the *New Testament*. Several of these *additions*, as well as the most important *changes*, the reader will find noticed in the following notes; but to mark them all would require a translation of almost the whole *Greek text*. How our *forefathers* understood several passages will be seen by quotations from an ancient MS. in my possession, which begins with this Book, and extends to the conclusion of the *New Testament*. It is well written upon strong vellum, in very large folio, and highly illuminated in the beginning of each book, and first letter of each chapter. The language is more antiquated than in the translation commonly attributed to *Wiclif*. It was once the property of *Thomas à Woodstock*, youngest son of *Edward III.*, and brother to *John of Gaunt* and the *Black Prince*. I have often quoted this MS. in my notes on the *New Testament*.

A. CLARKE.

# THE P R O V E R B S .

## CHAP. I.

Year from the Creation, 3004.—Year before the birth of Christ, 996.—Year before the vulgar era of Christ's Nativity, 1000.—Year since the Deluge, according to Archbishop Usher and the English Bible, 1348. Year from the destruction of Troy, 185.—Year before the first Olympiad, 224.—Year before the building of Rome, 247.

*The design of the proverbs, 1—6. An exhortation to fear God, and believe his word, because of the benefit to be derived from it, 7—9; to avoid the company of wicked men, who involve themselves in wretchedness and ruin, 10—19. Wisdom, personified, cries in the streets, and complains of the contempt with which she is treated, 20—23. The dreadful punishment that awaits all those who refuse her counsels, 24—33.*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

**T**HE <sup>a</sup>proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel ;

2 To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

3 To <sup>b</sup>receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and <sup>c</sup>equity ;

4 To give subtilty to the <sup>d</sup>simple, to the young man knowledge and <sup>e</sup>discretion.

<sup>a</sup>1 Kings iv. 32. Ch. x. 1. xxv. 1. Eccles. xii. 9.—<sup>b</sup>Ch. ii.

1, 9.—<sup>c</sup>Heb. *equities*.—<sup>d</sup>Ch. ix. 4.—<sup>e</sup>Or, *advisement*.

### NOTES ON CHAP. I.

Verse 1. *The proverbs of Solomon*] For the meaning of the word *proverb*, see the *introduction*; and be *dissertation upon parabolical writing* at the end of be notes on Matt. xiii. Solomon is the first of the aced writers whose name stands at the head of his works.

Verse 2. *To know wisdom*] That is, this is the design of parabolical writing in *general*; and the *articular* aim of the present work.

This and the two following verses contain the interretation of the term *parable*, and the author's design of the whole book. The first verse is the *title*, and the next three verses are an explanation of the nature and design of this very important tract.

*Wisdom*] חוכמה *chochmah* may mean here, and in very other part of this book, not only that divine cience by which we are enabled to *discover the best and, and pursue it by the most proper means*; but also be whole of that *heavenly teaching* that shows us oth ourselves and God, directs us into all truth, and oms the whole of *true religion*.

*And instruction*] מוסר *musar*, the *teaching* that discovers all its parts; to *understand, to comprehend* the words or doctrines which should be comprehended, in order that we may become wise to salvation.

Verse 3. *To receive the instruction*] השכל *haskel*,

the deliberately *weighing* of the points contained in the *teaching*, so as to find out their *importance*.

*Equity*] משרים *mesarim*, *rectitude*. The pupil is to receive *wisdom and instruction, the words of wisdom and understanding, justice and judgment*, so perfectly as to excel in all. *Wisdom* itself, personified, is his teacher; and when God's wisdom teaches, there is no delay in learning.

Verse 4. *To give subtilty to the simple*] The word *simple*, from *simplex*, compounded of *sine*, without, and *plica*, a fold, properly signifies *plain* and *honest*, one that has no *by-ends* in view, who is *what he appears to be*; and is opposed to *complex*, from *complico*, to *fold together*, to make *one rope* or *cord* out of *many strands*; but because *honesty and plain dealing* are so rare in the world, and none but the *truly religious man* will practise them, farther than the *fear of the law* obliges him, hence *simple* has sunk into a state of progressive deterioration. At first, it signified, as above, *without fold, unmixed, uncompounded*: this was its *radical* meaning. Then, as applied to *men*, it signified *innocent, harmless, without disguise*; but, as such persons were rather an *unfashionable* sort of people, it sunk in its meaning to *homely, homespun, mean, ordinary*. And, as worldly men, who were seeking their portion in this life, and had little to do with religion, supposed that *wisdom, wit, and under-*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

5 \* A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels :

6 To understand a proverb, and <sup>b</sup> the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their <sup>c</sup> dark sayings.

\* 1 Chron. xxvi. 14. Ch. ix. 9. Ch. xi. 30. xiii. 14, 20. xv. 2. — <sup>b</sup> Or, an eloquent speech. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 2. <sup>d</sup> Job xxviii. 28. Ps. cxi. 10. Ch. ix. 10. Eccles. xii. 13.

standing were given to men that they might make the best of them in reference to the things of this life, the word sunk still lower in its meaning, and signified silly, foolish; and there, to the dishonour of our language and morals, it stands! I have taken those acceptations which I have marked in italics out of the first dictionary that came to hand—*Martin's*; but if I had gone to *Johnson*, I might have added to SILLY, not wise, not cunning. Simplicity, that meant at first, as MARTIN defines it, openness, plain dealing, downright honesty, is now degraded to weakness, silliness, foolishness. And these terms will continue thus degraded, till downright honesty and plain dealing get again into vogue. There are two Hebrew words generally supposed to come from the same root, which in our common Version are rendered the simple, פתאים pethaim, and פתאים or פתאים pethayim; the former comes from פתא patha, to be rash, hasty; the latter, from פתח pathah, to draw aside, seduce, entice. It is the first of these words which is used here, and may be applied to youth; the inconsiderate, the unwary, who, for want of knowledge and experience, act precipitately. Hence the Vulgate renders it parvulis, little ones, young children or little children, as my old MS.; or very babes, as Coverdale. The Septuagint renders it ακατοις, those that are without evil; and the Versions in general understand it of those who are young, giddy, or inexperienced.

To the young man] נער naar is frequently used to signify such as are in the state of adolescence, grown up boys, very well translated in my old MS. punge fulwaxen; what we would now call the grown up lads. These, as being giddy and inexperienced, stand in especial need of lessons of wisdom and discretion. The Hebrew for discretion, מזימה mezimma, is taken both in a good and bad sense, as זם zam, its root, signifies to devise or imagine; for the device may be either mischief, or the contrivance of some good purpose.

Verse 5. A wise man will hear] I shall not only give such instructions as may be suitable to the youthful and inexperienced, but also to those who have much knowledge and understanding. So said St. Paul: We speak wisdom among them that are perfect. This and the following verse are connected in the old MS. and in Coverdale: "By hearynge the wyse man shall come by more wysdome; and by experience he shall be more apte to understonde a parable and the interpretation thereof; the wordes of the wyse and the darke speeches of the same."

Verse 6. Dark sayings.] חידות chidoth, enigmas or riddles, in which the Asiatics abounded. I believe

7 <sup>d</sup> The fear of the LORD is <sup>e</sup> the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

8 <sup>f</sup> My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother.

9 For <sup>g</sup> they shall be <sup>h</sup> an ornament of grace

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

<sup>e</sup> Or, the principal part. — <sup>f</sup> Ch. iv. 1. vi. 20. — <sup>g</sup> Ch. iii. 2. <sup>h</sup> Heb. an adding.

parables, such as those delivered by our Lord, nearly express the meaning of the original.

Verse 7. The fear of the Lord] In the preceding verses Solomon shows the advantage of acting according to the dictates of wisdom; in the following verses he shows the danger of acting contrary to them. The fear of the Lord signifies that religious reverence which every intelligent being owes to his Creator; and is often used to express the whole of religion, as we have frequently had occasion to remark in different places. But what is religion? The love of God, and the love of man; the former producing all obedience to the divine will; the latter, every act of benevolence to one's fellows. The love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit produces the deepest religious reverence, genuine piety, and cheerful obedience. To love one's neighbour as himself is the second great commandment; and as love worketh no ill to one's neighbour, therefore it is said to be the fulfilling of the law. Without love, there is no obedience; without reverence, there is neither caution, consistent conduct, nor perseverance in righteousness.

This fear or religious reverence is said to be the beginning of knowledge; ראשית reshith, the principal, the first moving influence, begotten in a tender conscience by the Spirit of God. No man can ever become truly wise, who does not begin with God, the fountain of knowledge; and he whose mind is influenced by the fear and love of God will learn more in a month than others will in a year.

Fools despise] אילימ evilim, evil men. Men of bad hearts, bad heads, and bad ways.

Verse 8. My son, hear] Father was the title of preceptor, and son, that of disciple or scholar, among the Jews. But here the reference appears to be to the children of a family; the father and the mother have the principal charge, in the first instance, of their children's instruction. It is supposed that these parents have, themselves, the fear of the Lord, and that they are capable of giving the best counsels to their children, and that they set before them a strict example of all godly living. In vain do parents give good advice if their own conduct be not consistent. The father occasionally gives instruction; but he is not always in the family, many of those occupations which are necessary for the family support being carried on abroad. The mother—she is constantly within doors, and to her the regulation of the family belongs; therefore she has and gives laws. The wise man says in effect to every child, "Be obedient to thy mother within, and carefully attend to the in-

A. M. cir. 3074. unto thy head, and chains about  
B. C. cir. 1000. thy neck.

Ante I. Ol. 10 My son, if sinners entice  
cir. 224. thee, consent thou not.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

11 If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause :

12 Let us swallow them up alive as they lie in the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit :

13 We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil :

14 Cast in thy lot among us ; let us all have one purse :

15 My son, walk not thou in the way with

them ; \*refrain thy foot from their path :

16 For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.

17 Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.

18 And they lay wait for their own blood ; they lurk privily for their own lives.

19 So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain ; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof.

20 Wisdom crieth without ; she uttereth her voice in the streets :

21 She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates : in the city

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

\* Gen. xxxix. 7, &c. Ps. i. 1. Eph. v. 11. — b Jer. v. 26. Ps. xxviii. 1. cxliiii. 7. — d Ps. i. 1. Ch. iv. 14. — e Ps. cxix. 101. — f Isai. lix. 7. Rom. iii. 15. — s Heb. in the

eyes of every thing that hath a wing. — h Ch. xv. 27. 1 Tim. vi. 10. — i Heb. Wisdoms, that is, excellent wisdom. k Ch. i. 8, &c. ix. 3. John vii. 37.

structions of thy father, that thou mayest the better see the reasons of obedience ; and learn from him how thou art to get thy bread honestly in the world."

Verse 9. An ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains] That is, filial respect and obedience will be as ornamental to thee as crowns, diadems, and golden chains and pearls are to others.

Political dignity has been distinguished in many nations by a chain of gold about the neck. Solomon seems here to intimate, if we follow the metaphor, that the surest way of coming to distinguished eminence, in civil matters, is to act according to the principles of true wisdom, proceeding from the fear of God.

Verse 10. If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.] אל תתן אל תתן אל תתן — not. They can do thee no harm unless thy will join in with them. God's eternal purpose with respect to man is, that his will shall be free, or rather, that the will, which is essentially FREE, shall never be forced nor be forceable by any power. Not even the devil himself can lead a man into sin till he consents. Were it not so, how could God judge the world?

Verse 11. If they say, Come with us] From all accounts, this is precisely the way in which the workers of iniquity form their partisans, and constitute their marauding societies to the present day.

Let us lay wait for blood] Let us rob and murder.

Let us lurk privily] Let us lie in ambush for our prey.

Verse 12. Let us swallow them up alive] Give them as hasty a death as if the earth were suddenly to swallow them up. This seems to refer to the destruction of a whole village. Let us destroy man, woman, and child ; and then we may seize on and carry away the whole of their property, and the booty will be great.

Verse 14. Cast in thy lot] Be a frater conjuratus, a sworn brother, and thou shalt have an equal share of all the spoil.

Common sense must teach us that the words here used are such as must be spoken when a gang of cut-throats, pickpockets, &c., are associated together.

Verse 16. For their feet run to evil] The whole of this verse is wanting in the Septuagint, and in the Arabic.

Verse 17. Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.] This is a proverb, of which the wise man here makes a particular use ; and the meaning does not seem as difficult as some imagine. The wicked are represented as lurking privily for the innocent. It is in this way alone that they can hope to destroy them and take their substance ; for if their designs were known, proper precautions would be taken against them ; for it would be vain to spread the net in the sight of those birds which men wish to ensnare. Attend therefore to my counsels, and they shall never be able to ensnare thee.

Verse 18. They lay wait for their own blood] I believe it is the innocent who are spoken of here, for whose blood and lives these lay wait and lurk privily ; certainly not their own, by any mode of construction.

Verse 19. Which taketh away the life] A covetous man is in effect, and in the sight of God, a murderer ; he wishes to get all the gain that can accrue to any or all who are in the same business that he follows—no matter to him how many families starve in consequence. This is the very case with him who sets up shop after shop in different parts of the same town or neighbourhood, in which he carries on the same business, and endeavours to undersell others in the same trade, that he may get all into his own hand.

Verse 20. Wisdom crieth] Here wisdom is again personified, as it is frequently, throughout this book ; where nothing is meant but the teachings given to man, either by divine revelation or the voice of the Holy Spirit in the heart. And this voice of wisdom is opposed to the seducing language of the wicked mentioned above. This voice is every where heard, in public, in private, in the streets, and in the house. Common sense, universal experience, and the law of justice written on the heart, as well as the law of God, testify against rapine and wrong of every kind.

Verse 22. Ye simple ones] פתאים pethayim, ye who have been seduced and deceived. See on ver. 4.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

she uttereth her words, *saying*,  
22 How long, ye simple ones,  
will ye love simplicity? and  
the scorers delight in their

scorning, and fools hate knowledge?

23 Turn you at my reproof: behold, \*I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.

24 <sup>b</sup> Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

25 But ye <sup>c</sup> have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof.

26 <sup>d</sup> I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;

27 When <sup>e</sup> your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish cometh upon you.

28 'Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

29 For that they <sup>a</sup> hated knowledge, and did not <sup>b</sup> choose the fear the LORD:

30 'They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.

31 Therefore <sup>k</sup> shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

32 For the <sup>l</sup> turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

33 But <sup>m</sup> whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and <sup>n</sup> shall be quiet from fear of evil.

\* Joel ii. 28.—<sup>b</sup> Isai. lxxv. 12. lxxvi. 4. Jer. vii. 13. Zech. vii. 11.—<sup>c</sup> Ps. cvii. 11. Ver. 30. Luke vii. 30.—<sup>d</sup> Ps. ii. 4.—<sup>e</sup> Ch. x. 24.—<sup>f</sup> Job xxvii. 9. xxxv. 12. Isai. i. 15. Jer. xi. 11. xiv. 12. Ezek. viii. 18. Mic. iii. 4. Zech. vii.

13. James iv. 3.—<sup>s</sup> Job xxi. 14. Ver. 22.—<sup>t</sup> Pa. cxix. 173.—<sup>u</sup> Ver. 25. Ps. lxxxv. 11.—<sup>v</sup> Job iv. 8. Ch. xiv. 14. xxii. 8. Isai. iii. 11. Jer. vi. 19.—<sup>w</sup> Or, ease of the simple.  
<sup>x</sup> Pa. xxv. 12, 13.—<sup>y</sup> Pa. cxii. 7.

Verse 23. Turn you at my reproof] *לְחַכְּמֵי לֵחוּכַחְתִּי* *lethochachti*, at my convincing mode of arguing; attend to my demonstrations. This is properly the meaning of the original word.

I will pour out my spirit unto you] "I will express my mynde unto you;" COVERDALE. *Too I shall brngren forth to you my spirit*; *Old MS. Bible*. If you will hear, ye shall have ample instruction.

Verse 24. Because I have called] These and the following words appear to be spoken of the persons who are described, ver. 11—19, who have refused to return from their evil ways till arrested by the hand of justice; and here the wise man points out their deplorable state.

They are now about to suffer, according to the demands of the law, for their depredations. They now wish they had been guided by wisdom, and had chosen the fear of the Lord; but it is too late: die they must, for their crimes are proved against them, and justice knows nothing of mercy.

This, or something like this, must be the wise man's meaning; nor can any thing spoken here be considered as applying or applicable to the *eternal* state of the persons in question, much less to the case of any man convinced of sin, who is crying to God for mercy. Such persons as the above, condemned to die, may call upon justice for pardon, and they may do this *early, earnestly*; but they will call in vain. But no poor penitent sinner on this side of eternity can call upon God early, or seek him through Christ Jesus earnestly, for the pardon of his sins, without being heard. Life is the time of probation, and while it lasts the vilest of the vile is within the reach of mercy. It is only in *eternity* that the state is irreversibly fixed, and where that which was guilty must be guilty still. But let none harden his heart because of this long-suffering of God; for if he die in his sin,

where God is he shall never come. And when once shut up in the unquenchable fire, he will not pray for mercy, as he shall clearly see and feel that the hope of his redemption is entirely cut off.

Verse 27. Your destruction cometh as a whirlwind] *כְּשׁוּפַח* *kesuphah*, as the all-prostrating blast. *Sense and sound* are here well expressed. *Suphah* here is the gust of wind.

Verse 29. They hated knowledge] This argues the deepest degree of intellectual and moral depravity.

Verse 32. For the turning away of the simple] This difficult place seems to refer to such a case as we term *turning king's evidence*; where an accomplice saves his own life by impeaching the rest of his gang. This is called his *turning or repentance*. *משׁוּבָה* *meshubah*; and he was the most likely to turn, because he was of the *פְּתָאִיִּם* *pehayim*, *seduced or deceived persons*. And this evidence was given against them when they were in their prosperity. *שְׁלוּוָה* *shalwah*, their *security*, enjoying the fruits of their depredations; and being thus in a state of fancied *security*, they were the more easily taken and brought to justice.

Verse 33. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely] The man who hears the *voice of wisdom* in preference to the *enticements of the wicked*. He shall dwell in *safety*, *יֵשׁוּבִין בְּטוֹחַ* *yishubin betach*, he shall inhabit *safety* itself; he shall be completely safe and secure; and shall be *quiet from the fear of evil*, having a full consciousness of his own innocence and God's protection. COVERDALE translates, "And have yonough without eney feare of evell." What the just man has he got honestly; and he has the blessing of God upon it. It is the reverse with the thief, the knave, the cheat, and the extortioner: *Male partu, pejus dilabantur*; "Ill gotten, worse spent."

CHAPTER II.

The teacher promises his pupil the highest advantages, if he will follow the dictates of wisdom, 1—9. He shall be happy in its enjoyment, 10, 11; shall be saved from wicked men, 12—15; and from the snares of bad women, 16—19; be a companion of the good and upright; and be in safety in the land, when the wicked shall be rooted out of it, 20—22.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

**M**Y son, if thou wilt receive my words, and <sup>a</sup>hide my commandments with thee;

2 So that thou incline thine

ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;

3 Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and <sup>b</sup>listest up thy voice for understanding;

4 <sup>c</sup>If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;

5 Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

6 <sup>d</sup>For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.

7 He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: <sup>e</sup>he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.

8 He keepeth the paths of judgment, and <sup>f</sup>preserveth the way of his saints.

9 Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.

10 When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;

11 Discretion shall preserve thee, <sup>g</sup>understanding shall keep thee:

12 To deliver thee from the way of the evil

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

<sup>a</sup>Ch. iv. 21. vil. 1.—<sup>b</sup>Heb. givest thy voice.—<sup>c</sup>Ch. iii. 14. Matt. xiii. 43.—<sup>d</sup>1 Kings iii. 9, 12. James i. 5.

<sup>e</sup>Ps. lxxxiv. 11. Ch. xxx. 5.—<sup>f</sup>1 Sam. ii. 9. Ps. lxxvi. 9. <sup>g</sup>Ch. vi. 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. II.

Verse 1. *My son*] Here the *tutor* still continues to instruct his *disciple*.

*Hide my commandments with thee*] Treasure them up in thy *heart*, and then act from them through the medium of thy *affections*. He who has the rule of his *duty* only in his *Bible* and in his *head* is not likely to be a steady, consistent character; his heart is not engaged, and his obedience, in any case, can be only *forced*, or done from a *sense of duty*: it is not the obedience of a *loving, dutiful child* to an *affectionate father*. But he who has the word of God in his *heart*, works *from his heart*; his heart goes with him in all things, and he delights to do the will of his heavenly Father, because *his law is in his heart*. See chap. iii. 3.

Verse 4. *If thou seekest her as silver*] How do men seek money? What will they not do to get rich? Reader, seek the salvation of thy soul as earnestly as the covetous man seeks wealth; and be ashamed of thyself, if thou be less in earnest after the *true riches* than he is after *perishing wealth*.

*Hid treasures.*] The original word signifies property of any kind *concealed* in the earth, in caves or such like; and may also mean *treasures*, such as the *precious metals* or *precious stones*, which are presumptively known to exist in such and such *mines*. And how are these sought? Learn from the following circumstance: In the *Brazils slaves* are employed to scrape up the soil from the bed of the Rio Janeiro, and wash it carefully, in order to find particles of *gold* and *diamonds*; and it is a law of the state, that he who finds a diamond of so many carats shall have his *freedom*. This causes the greatest ardour and diligence in searching, washing out the soil, picking, &c., in order to find such diamonds, and the greatest

anxiety for success; so precious is *liberty* to the human heart. This method of searching for gold and precious stones is alluded to in chap. iii. 13—15. In this way Solomon wishes men to seek for wisdom, knowledge, and understanding; and he who succeeds finds the *liberty* of the children of God, and is saved from the *slavery of sin* and the *empire of death*.

Verse 7. *He layeth up sound wisdom*] תושבה *tushiyah*. We have met with this word in Job; see chap. v. 12, vi. 13, xi. 6, xii. 16. See especially the note on Job xi. 6, where the different acceptations of the word are given. *Coverdale* translates, "He preserveth the welfare of the righteous." It is difficult to find, in any language, a term proper to express the original meaning of the word; it seems to mean generally the *essence* or *substance* of a thing, *the thing itself*—that which is *chief of its kind*. *He layeth up* WHAT IS ESSENTIAL *for the righteous*.

Verse 9. *Then shalt thou understand*] He who is taught of God understands the whole law of *justice, mercy, righteousness, and truth*; God has written this on his heart. He who understands these things by *books* only is never likely to practise or profit by them.

Verse 11. *Discretion shall preserve thee*] נחמה *mezimma*. See on chap. i. 4. Here the word is taken in a good sense, a *good device*. The man *invents purposes of good*; and all his *schemes, plans, and devices* have for their object God's glory and the good of man: he deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things he shall stand. *Coverdale* translates, "Then shall *counsel* preserve thee." A very good translation, much better than the present.

Verse 12. *The man that speaketh froward things.*] תפוחות *taphuchoth*, things of *subversion*; from תפח *taphach*, to *turn or change the course of a thing*. Men who wish to *subvert the state* of things, whether *civil*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U. C. c. 247.

man, from the man that speaketh froward things ;

13 Who leave the paths of uprightness, to <sup>a</sup>walk in the ways of darkness ;

14 Who <sup>b</sup>rejoice to do evil, and <sup>c</sup>delight in the frowardness of the wicked ;

15 <sup>d</sup>Whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths :

16 To deliver thee from <sup>e</sup>the strange woman, <sup>f</sup>even from the stranger which flattereth with her words ;

17 <sup>g</sup>Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God.

<sup>a</sup> John iii. 19, 20. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. x. 23. Jer. xi. 15. — <sup>c</sup> Rom. i. 32. — <sup>d</sup> Ps. cxv. 5. — <sup>e</sup> Ch. v. 20. — <sup>f</sup> Ch. v. 3. vi. 24. vii. 5.

or *religious* ; who are seditious themselves, and wish to make others so. These speak much of *liberty* and *oppression*, deal greatly in *broad assertions*, and endeavour especially to corrupt the minds of *youth*.

Verse 16. *The stranger which flattereth with her words* החליקה *hechelikah*, she that smooths with her words. The original intimates the *glib, oily* speeches of a *prostitute*. The English *lick* is supposed to be derived from the original word.

Verse 17. *Which forsaketh the guide of her youth*] Leaves her father's house and instructions, and abandons herself to the public.

*The covenant of her God.*] Renounces the *true religion*, and mixes with *idolaters* ; for among them prostitution was enormous. Or by the *covenant* may be meant the *matrimonial contract*, which is a *covenant made in the presence of God between the contracting parties*, in which they bind themselves to be faithful to each other.

Verse 18. *For her house inclineth unto death*] It is generally in *by* and *secret places* that such women establish themselves. They go out of the *high road* to get a residence ; and every step that is taken towards their house is a step towards *death*. The path of sin is the path of ruin : the path of duty is the way of safety. For *her paths* incline unto the *dead*, רפאים *rephaim*, the *inhabitants of the invisible world*. The woman who abandons herself to prostitution soon *contracts*, and generally *communicates*,

18 For <sup>b</sup>her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead.

19 None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.

20 That thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous.

21 <sup>1</sup>For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.

22 <sup>2</sup>But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U. C. c. 247.

<sup>1</sup> See Mal. ii. 14, 15. — <sup>2</sup> Ch. vii. 27. — <sup>1</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 39. <sup>2</sup> Job xviii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 28. civ. 35. — <sup>1</sup> Or, *plucked up*.

*that disease* which, above all others, signs the speediest and most effectual *passport* to the *invisible world*. Therefore it is said,

Verse 19. *None that go unto her return again*] There are very few instances of prostitutes ever returning to the paths of sobriety and truth ; perhaps *not one* of such as become prostitutes *through a natural propensity to debauchery*. Among those who have been *deceived, debauched, and abandoned*, many have been reclaimed ; and to such alone *penitentiaries* may be useful : to the others they may only be incentives to farther sinning. *Rakes and debauchees* are sometimes converted : but most of them *never lay hold on the path of life* ; they have had their *health* destroyed, and never *recover* it. The original, חיי *chayim*, means *lives* ; not only the *health of the body* is destroyed, but the *soul* is *ruined*. Thus the unhappy man may be said to be *doubly slain*.

Verse 20. *That thou mayest walk*] Therefore thou shalt walk.

Verse 22. *Transgressors*] בוגדים *bogedim*. The *garment men*, the *hypocrites* ; those who *act borrowed characters*, who go under a *cloak* ; *dissemblers*. All such shall be *rooted out of the land* ; they shall not be blessed with *posterity*. In general it is so : and were it not so, one evil offspring succeeding another, *adding their own to their predecessors' vices*, the earth would become so exceedingly corrupt that a *second flood*, or a *fire*, would be necessary to purge it.

### CHAPTER III.

*An exhortation to obedience, 1—4 ; to trust in God's providence, 5, 6 ; to humility, 7, 8 ; to charity, 9, 10 ; to submission to God's chastenings, 11, 12. The profitableness of wisdom in all the concerns of life, 13—26. No act of duty should be deferred beyond the time in which it should be done, 27, 28. Brotherly love and forbearance should be exercised, 29, 30. We should not envy the wicked, 31, 32. The curse of God is in the house of the wicked ; but the humble and wise shall prosper, 33—35.*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C.c. 247.

**M**Y son, forget not my law ;  
but let thine heart keep  
my commandments :

2 For length of days, and  
long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.  
3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee :  
bind them about thy neck ; write them upon  
the table of thine heart :  
4 So shalt thou find favour and good under-  
standing in the sight of God and man.

<sup>a</sup> Deut. viii. 1. xxx. 16, 20. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. years of life. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. cxix. 165. — <sup>d</sup> Exod. xiii. 9. Deut. vi. 8. Ch. vi. 21. vii. 3. Jer. xvii. 1. 2 Cor. iii. 3. — <sup>e</sup> Ps. cxi. 10. See 1 Sam. ii. 26. Luke ii. 52. Acts ii. 47. Rom. xiv. 18. — <sup>f</sup> Or, good success. — <sup>g</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 3, 5. — <sup>h</sup> Jer. ix. 23. — <sup>i</sup> 1 Chron.

NOTES ON CHAP. III.

Verse 1. *My son*] The preceptor continues to deliver his lessons.

*Forget not my law*] Remember what thou hast heard, and practise what thou dost remember ; and let all obedience be from the heart : “ Let thy heart keep my commandments.”

Verse 2. *For length of days*] THREE eminent blessings are promised here : 1. ארבע ימים *orech yamim*, long days ; 2. שנתו חיים *shenoth chaimim*, years of lives ; 3. שלום *shalom*, prosperity ; i. e. health, long life, and abundance.

Verse 3. *Let not mercy and truth forsake thee*] Let these be thy constant companions through life.

*Bind them about thy neck*] Keep them constantly in view. Write them upon the table of thine heart—let them be thy moving principles ; feel them as well as see them.

Verse 4. *So shalt thou find favour*] Thou shalt be acceptable to God, and thou shalt enjoy a sense of his approbation.

*And good understanding*] Men shall weigh thy character and conduct ; and by this appreciate thy motives, and give thee credit for sincerity and uprightness. Though religion is frequently persecuted, and religious people suffer at first, where they are not fully known ; yet a truly religious and benevolent character will in general be prized wherever it is well known. The envy of men is a proof of the excellence of that which they envy.

Verse 5. *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart*] This is a most important precept : 1. God is the Fountain of all good. 2. He has made his intelligent creatures dependant upon himself. 3. He requires them to be conscious of that dependance. 4. He has promised to communicate what they need. 5. He commands them to believe his promise, and look for its fulfilment. 6. And to do this without doubt, fear, or distrust ; “ with their whole heart.”

*Lean not unto thine own understanding*] אל תישאן *al tishshaen*, do not prop thyself. It is on God, not on thyself, that thou art commanded to depend. He who trusts in his own heart is a fool.

Verse 6. *In all thy ways acknowledge him*] Begin, continue, and end every work, purpose, and device, with God. Earnestly pray for his direction at the

5 Trust in the LORD with  
all thine heart ; and lean not  
unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknow-  
ledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

7 Be not wise in thine own eyes : fear the  
LORD, and depart from evil.

8 It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow  
to thy bones.

9 Honour the LORD with thy substance,

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xxviii. 9. — <sup>1</sup> Jer. x. 23. — <sup>2</sup> Rom. xii. 16. — <sup>3</sup> Job i. 1. Ch. xvi. 6. — <sup>4</sup> Heb. medicine. — <sup>5</sup> Heb. watering or moistening. — <sup>6</sup> Job xxi. 24. — <sup>7</sup> Exod. xxii. 29. xxiii. 19. xxxiv. 26. Deut. xxvi. 2, &c. Mal. iii. 10, &c. Luke xiv. 13.

*commencement* ; look for his continued support in the progress ; and so begin and continue that all may terminate in his glory : and then it will certainly be to thy good ; for we never honour God without serving ourselves. This passage is well rendered in my old MS. Bible :—*Habe trust in the Lord of all thin hertie and ne lene thou to thi prudence : in alle thi weyes think hym, and he shal right ruler thi goynge ; ne be thou wits anentis thyself. Self-sufficiency and self-dependance have been the ruin of mankind ever since the fall of Adam. The grand sin of the human race is their continual endeavour to live independently of God : i. e., to be without God in the world. True religion consists in considering God the fountain of all good, and expecting all good from him.*

Verse 8. *It shall be health to thy navel*] We need not puzzle ourselves to find out what we may suppose to be a more delicate meaning for the original word *shor* than *navel* ; for I am satisfied a more proper cannot be found. It is well known that it is by the umbilical cord that the fetus receives its nourishment all the time it is in the womb of the mother. It receives nothing by the mouth, nor by any other means : by this alone all nourishment is received, and the circulation of the blood kept up. When, therefore, the wise man says, that “ trusting in the Lord with the whole heart, and acknowledging him in all a man’s ways, &c., shall be health to the navel, and marrow to the bones ; ” he in effect says, that this is as essential to the life of God in the soul of man, and to the continual growth in grace, as the umbilical cord is to the life and growth of the fetus in the womb. Without the latter, no human being could ever exist or be born ; without the former, no true religion can ever be found. Trust or faith in God is as necessary to derive grace from him to nourish the soul, and cause it to grow up unto eternal life, as the navel string or umbilical cord is to the human being in the first stage of its existence. I need not push this illustration farther : the good sense of the reader will supply what he knows. I might add much on the subject.

*And marrow to thy bones.*] This metaphor is not less proper than the preceding. All the larger bones of the body have either a large cavity, or they are spongy, and full of little cells : in both the one and



A. M. cir. 3004.  
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and with the first-fruits of all  
thine increase :

10 <sup>a</sup> So shall thy barns be  
filled with plenty, and thy  
presses shall burst out with new wine.

11 <sup>b</sup> My son, despise not the chastening of  
the LORD : neither be weary of his correction :

12 For whom the LORD loveth he cor-  
recteth ; <sup>c</sup> even as a father the son in whom  
he delighteth.

<sup>a</sup> Deut. xxviii. 8. — <sup>b</sup> Job v. 17. Ps. xciv. 12. Hebr. xii. 5, 6. Rev. iii. 19. — <sup>c</sup> Deut. viii. 5. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. viii. 34, 35. <sup>e</sup> Heb. the man that draweth out understanding. — <sup>f</sup> Job

the other the *oleaginous* substance, called *marrow*, is contained in proper vesicles, like the fat. In the larger *bones* the *fine oil*, by the gentle heat of the body, is exhaled through the pores of its small vesicles, and enters some narrow passages which lead to certain fine canals excavated in the substance of the bone, that the marrow may supply the *fibres of the bones*, and render them less liable to break. *Blood-vessels* also penetrate the *bones* to supply this *marrow* and this *blood* ; and consequently the *marrow* is supplied in the infant by means of the *umbilical cord*. From the *marrow* diffused, as mentioned above, through the *bones*, they derive their *solidity* and *strength*. A simple experiment will cast considerable light on the use of the *marrow* to the *bones* :—Calcine a *bone*, so as to destroy all the *marrow* from the cells, you will find it exceedingly *brittle*. Immerse the same bone in *oil* so that the cells may be all replenished, which will be done in a few minutes ; and the bone reacquires a considerable measure of its *solidity* and *strength* ; and would acquire the *whole*, if the *marrow* could be *extracted* without otherwise injuring the texture of the *bone*. After the calcination, the bone may be reduced to powder by the hand ; after the *impregnation with the oil*, it becomes *hard*, *compact*, and *strong*. What the marrow is to the *support* and *strength* of the *bones*, and the *bones* to the *support* and *strength* of the *body* ; that, *faith* in God is to the *support*, *strength*, *energy*, and *salvation* of the *soul*. Behold, then, the force and elegance of the wise man's metaphor. Some have rendered the last clause, a *lotion for the bones*. What is this ? How are the *bones washed* ? What a pitiful destruction of a most beautiful metaphor !

Verse 9. *Honour the Lord with thy substance* ] The מִנְחָה MINCHAH or gratitude-offering to God, commanded under the *law*, is of endless obligation. It would be well to give a portion of the *produce* of every *article* by which we get our support to God, or to the *poor*, the representatives of Christ. This might be done either in *kind*, or by the *worth* in *money*. Whatever God sends us in the way of secular prosperity, there is a *portion* of it always for the *poor*, and for God's cause. When that *portion* is thus disposed of, the rest is *sanctified* ; when it is *withheld*, God's curse is upon the whole. Give to the *poor*, and God will give to thee.

13 <sup>d</sup> Happy is the man that  
findeth wisdom, and <sup>e</sup> the man  
that getteth understanding.

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14 <sup>f</sup> For the merchandise of it  
is better than the merchandise of silver, and  
the gain thereof than fine gold.

15 She is more precious than rubies : and  
<sup>g</sup> all the things thou canst desire are not to be  
compared unto her.

16 <sup>h</sup> Length of days is in her right hand ;

xxviii. 13, &c. Ps. xix. 10. Ch. ii. 4. viii. 11, 19. xvi. 16. <sup>g</sup> Matt. xiii. 44. — <sup>h</sup> Ch. viii. 18. 1 Tim. iv. 8.

Verse 11. *Despise not the chastening of the Lord* ] The word מוּסָר musar signifies *correction*, *discipline*, and *instruction*. *Teaching* is essentially necessary to show the man the way in which he is to go ; *discipline* is necessary to render that *teaching* *effectual* ; and, often, *correction* is requisite in order to bring the mind into *submission*, without which it cannot acquire *knowledge*. Do not therefore reject this procedure of God ; humble thyself under his mighty hand, and open thy eyes to thy own interest ; and then thou wilt learn *speedily* and *effectually*. It is of no use to *rebel* ; if thou do, thou *rickest* against the *pricks*, and every act of rebellion against him is a *wound* to thine own *soul*. God will either *end* thee or *mend* thee ; wilt thou then *kick* on ?

Verse 12. *Whom the Lord loveth* ] To encourage thee to bear correction, know that it is a proof of God's love to thee ; and thereby he shows that he treats thee as a father does his son, even that one to whom he bears the fondest affection.

The last clause of the *Septuagint* translate μαρτυροῦσι πάντα σὺν ἐν παραδείξειαι, "and chasteneth every son whom he receiveth ;" and the *apostle*, Heb. xii. 6, quotes this *literatim*. Both clauses certainly amount to the same sense. *Every son whom he receiveth*, and *the son in whom he delighteth*, have very little difference of meaning.

Verse 13. *Happy is the man that findeth wisdom* ] This refers to the advice given in chap. ii. 4 ; where see the note.

Verse 14. *For the merchandise* ] שָׂכָר sachar, the *traffic*, the *trade* that is carried on by *going through countries* and *provinces* with such articles as they could carry on the backs of camels, &c. ; from שָׂכָר sachar, to go about, traverse. *Chafarpage* ; Old MS. Bible.

*And the gain thereof* ] תְּבוּאָתָהּ tebuathah, its *produce* ; what is gained by the articles after all expenses are paid. The *slaves*, as we have already seen, got their *liberty* if they were so lucky as to find a diamond of so many carats' weight ; he who *finds wisdom*—the *knowledge* and *salvation* of God, gets a greater prize ; for he obtains the *liberty* of the *gospel*, is adopted into the *family* of God, and made an *heir* according to the hope of an eternal life.

Verse 15. *She is more precious than rubies* ] מִיְּפֵי מִיִּפְּנִימִי mippenimim. The word principally means *pearls*, but

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and in her left hand riches and honour.

17 <sup>a</sup> Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths

are peace.

18 She is <sup>b</sup> a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.

19 <sup>c</sup> The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he <sup>d</sup> established the heavens.

<sup>a</sup> Matt. xi. 29, 30. — <sup>b</sup> Gen. ii. 9. iii. 22. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. civ. 24. cxlvi. 5. Ch. viii. 27. Jer. x. 12. li. 15. — <sup>d</sup> Or, prepared. — <sup>e</sup> Gen. i. 9. — <sup>f</sup> Deut. xxxiii. 28. Job xxxvi. 28.

may be taken for *precious stones* in general. The root is *panah*, he looked, beheld; and as it gives the idea of the eye always being turned towards the observer, Mr. Parkhurst thinks that it means the *loadstone*; see the note on Job xxviii. 18, where this subject is considered at large. If the oriental *ruby*, or any other precious stone, be intended here, the word may refer to their being *cut* and *polished*, so that they present different *faces*, and reflect the light to you in whatever direction you may look at them.

*All the things thou canst desire*] Superior to every thing that can be an object of desire here below. But who believes this?

Verse 16. *Length of days is in her right hand*] A wicked man shortens his days by *excesses*; a righteous man prolongs his by *temperance*.

*In her left hand riches and honour.*] That is, her hands are full of the choicest benefits. There is nothing to be understood here by the *right hand* in preference to the *left*.

Verse 17. *Her ways are ways of pleasantness*] These blessings of true religion require little comment. They are well expressed by the poet in the following elegant verses:

“Wisdom divine! Who tells the price  
Of Wisdom’s costly merchandise?  
Wisdom to silver we prefer,  
And gold is dross compared to her.  
Her hands are filled with length of days,  
True riches, and immortal praise;—  
Riches of Christ, on all bestowed,  
And honour that descends from God.  
To purest joys she all invites,  
Chaste, holy, spiritual delights;  
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,  
And all her flowery paths are peace.  
Happy the man that finds the grace,  
The blessing of God’s chosen race;  
The wisdom coming from above,  
The faith that sweetly works by love!”

WESLEY.

Verse 18. *She is a tree of life*] *עץ חיים* *ets chayim*, “the tree of lives,” alluding most manifestly to the tree so called which God in the beginning planted in the garden of Paradise, by eating the fruit of which

20 <sup>a</sup> By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and <sup>b</sup> the clouds drop down the dew.

21 My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion:

22 So shall they be life unto thy soul, and <sup>c</sup> grace to thy neck.

23 <sup>b</sup> Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.

24 <sup>i</sup> When thou liest down, thou shalt not

<sup>e</sup> Ch. i. 9. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 24. xci. 11, 12. Ch. x. 9. <sup>f</sup> Lev. xxvi. 6. Ps. iii. 5. iv. 8.

all the wastes of nature might have been continually repaired, so as to prevent death for ever. This is an opinion which appears probable enough. The blessings which wisdom—true religion, gives to men, preserve them *in* life, comfort them *through* life, cause them to triumph *in* death, and insure them a glorious *immortality*.

Verse 19. *The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth*] Here wisdom is taken in its proper acceptation, for that infinite knowledge and skill which God has manifested in the creation and composition of the earth, and in the structure and economy of the heavens. He has established the *order* as well as the *essence* of all things; so that though they *vary* in their *positions*, &c., yet they never *change* either their *places* or their *properties*. *Composition* and *analysis* are not *essential* changes; the original *particles*, their *forms* and *properties*, remain the same.

Verse 20. *By his knowledge the depths are broken up*] He determined in his wisdom how to *break up* the *fountains of the great deep*, so as to *bring a flood of waters upon the earth*; and by his knowledge those fissures in the earth through which *springs* of water arise have been appointed and determined; and it is by his skill and influence that *vapours* are exhaled, suspended in the *atmosphere*, and afterwards precipitated on the earth in *rain*, *dews*, &c. Thus the wisest of men attributes those effects which we suppose to spring from *natural causes* to the Supreme Being himself.

Verse 21. *Let not them depart from thine eyes*] Never forget that God, who is the author of nature, directs and governs it in all things; for it is no self-determining agent.

*Keep sound wisdom and discretion*] *ושמה נזמה* *tushiyah umezimma*. We have met with both these words before. *Tushiyah* is the *essence* or *substance* of a thing; *mezimma* is the *resolution* or *purpose* formed in reference to something good or excellent. To acknowledge God as the author of all good, is the *tushiyah*, the *essence*, of a godly man’s creed; to *resolve to act according* to the directions of his wisdom, is the *mezimma*, the *religious purpose*, that will bring good to ourselves and glory to God. These bring *life to the soul*, and are *ornamental* to the man who acts in this way, ver. 22.

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be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.

25 <sup>a</sup> Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked when it cometh.

26 For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.

27 <sup>b</sup> Withhold not good from <sup>c</sup> them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.

28 <sup>d</sup> Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee.

29 <sup>e</sup> Devise not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. xci. 5. cxii. 7. — <sup>b</sup> Rom. xiii. 7. Gal. vi. 10. <sup>c</sup> Heb. the owners thereof. — <sup>d</sup> Lev. xix. 13. Deut. xxiv. 15. — <sup>e</sup> Or, Practise no evil. — <sup>f</sup> Rom. xii. 48. — <sup>g</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 1. lxxiii. 3. Ch. xxiv. 1. — <sup>h</sup> Heb. a man of violence.

Verse 24. *When thou liest down*] In these verses (23—26) the wise man describes the confidence, security, and safety which proceed from a consciousness of innocence. Most people are afraid of *sleep*, lest they should never awake, because they feel they are not prepared to appear before God. They are neither innocent nor pardoned. True believers know that God is their keeper night and day; they have strong confidence in him that he will be their director, and not suffer them to take any *false step* in life, ver. 23. They go to rest in perfect confidence that God will watch over them; hence their *sleep*, being undisturbed with foreboding and evil dreams, is *sweet* and refreshing, ver. 24. They are not apprehensive of any *sudden destruction*, because they know that all things are under the control of God; and they are satisfied that if *sudden destruction* should fall upon their wicked neighbour, yet God knows well how to preserve *them*, ver. 25. And all this naturally flows from the Lord being their confidence, ver. 26.

Verse 27. *Withhold not good from them to whom it is due*] מִבְּעָלָיו *mibbealav*, from the lords of it. But who are they? The poor. And what art thou, O rich man? Why thou art a steward, to whom God has given substance that thou mayest divide with the poor. They are the right owners of every farthing thou hast to spare from thy own support, and that of thy family; and God has given the surplus for their sakes. Dost thou, by hoarding up this treasure, deprive the *right owners* of their property? If this were a *civil case*, the law would take thee by the throat, and lay thee up in prison; but it is a case in which God alone judges. And what will he do to thee? Hear! "He shall have judgment without mercy, who hath showed no mercy;" James ii. 13. *Read, feel, tremble, and act justly.*

Verse 28. *Say not unto thy neighbour*] Do not refuse a kindness when it is in thy power to perform it. If thou have the means *by thee*. and thy neigh-

30 <sup>f</sup> Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.

31 <sup>g</sup> Envy thou not <sup>h</sup> the oppressor, and choose none of his ways.

32 For the froward *is* abomination to the LORD: <sup>i</sup> but his secret *is* with the righteous.

33 <sup>k</sup> The curse of the LORD *is* in the house of the wicked: but <sup>l</sup> he blesseth the habitation of the just.

34 <sup>m</sup> Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.

35 The wise shall inherit glory: but shame <sup>n</sup> shall be the promotion of fools.

<sup>f</sup> Ps. xxv. 14. — <sup>g</sup> Lev. xxvi. 14, &c. Ps. xxxvii. 22. Zech. v. 4. Mal. ii. 2. — <sup>h</sup> Ps. i. 3. — <sup>i</sup> James iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5. — <sup>j</sup> Heb. exalseth the fools.

bour's necessities be pressing, do not put him off till the *morrow*. Death may take either him or thee before that time.

Verse 30. *Strive not with a man*] Do not be of a litigious, quarrelsome spirit. Be not under the influence of too nice a sense of honour. If thou must appeal to judicial authority to bring him that wrongs thee to reason, avoid all enmity, and do nothing in a spirit of revenge. But, if he *have done thee no harm*, why contend with him? May not others in the same way contend with and injure *thee*?

Verse 31. *Envy thou not the oppressor*] O how bewitching *is power*! Every man desires it; and yet all hate *tyrants*. But query, if all had *power*, would not the major part be *tyrants*?

Verse 32. *But his secret*] סֵדֶר *sodo*, his secret assembly; godly people meet there, and God dwells there.

Verse 33. *The curse of the Lord*] No godly people meet in such a house; nor is God ever an inmate there.

*But he blesseth the habitation of the just.*] He considers it as his *own temple*. There he is worshipped in spirit and in truth; and hence God makes it his *dwelling place*.

Verse 34. *Surely he scorneth the scorners; but he giveth grace unto the lowly.*] The *Septuagint* has Κυριος ὑπερηφανους αντιστασεται, ταπεινους δε διδωσιν χαριν. *The Lord resisteth the proud; but giveth grace to the humble.* These words are quoted by St. Peter, 1st Epist. v. 5, and by St. James, chap. iv. 6, just as they stand in the *Septuagint*, with the change of ὁ Θεος, *God*, for Κυριος, *the Lord*.

Verse 35. *The wise*] The person who follows the dictates of wisdom, as mentioned above, *shall inherit glory*; because, being one of the *heavenly family*, a *child of God*, he has thereby heaven for his *inheritance*; but *fools*, such as those mentioned chap. i. and ii. shall have *ignominy* for their *exaltation*. Many such fools as Solomon speaks of are exalted to the *gibbet* and *gallows*. The way to prevent this and the like evils, is to attend to the voice of wisdom.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
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cir. 224.  
Ante U. C. c. 247.

CHAPTER IV.

The preceptor calls his pupils, and tells them how himself was educated, 1—4; specifies the teachings he received, 5—19; and exhorts his pupil to persevere in well-doing, and to avoid evil, 20—27.

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**H**EAR, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

2 For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.

3 For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother.

4 He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.

\* Pa. xxxiv. 11. Ch. i. 8.—<sup>b</sup> 1 Chron. xxix. 1.—<sup>c</sup> 1 Chron. xxix. 9. Eph. vi. 4.—<sup>d</sup> Ch. vii. 2.

NOTES ON CHAP. IV.

Verse 1. *Hear, ye children*] Come, my pupils, and hear how a father instructed his child. Such as I received from my father I give to you; and they were the teachings of a wise and affectionate parent to his only son, a peculiar object of his regards, and also those of a fond mother.

He introduces the subject thus, to show that the teaching he received, and which he was about to give them, was the most excellent of its kind. By this he insured their attention, and made his way to their heart. Teaching by precept is good; teaching by example is better; but teaching both by precept and example is best of all.

Verse 4. *He taught me also, and said*] Open thy heart to receive my instructions—receive them with affection; when heard, retain and practise them; and thou shalt live—the great purpose of thy being brought into the world shall be accomplished in thee.

Verse 5. *Get wisdom*] True religion is essential to thy happiness; never forget its teachings, nor go aside from the path it prescribes.

Verse 6. *Forsake her not*] Wisdom personified is here represented as a guardian and companion, who, if not forsaken, will continue faithful; if loved, will continue a protector.

Verse 7. *Wisdom is the principal thing*] רִשְׁתִּי חֹכְמָה *reshith chochmah*, “wisdom is the principle.” It is the *punctum saliens* in all religion to know the true God, and what he requires of man, and for what he has made man; and to this must be added, under the Christian dispensation, to know Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, and for what end he was sent, the necessity of his being sent, and the nature of that salvation which he has bought by his own blood.

*Get wisdom*] Consider this as thy chief gain; that in reference to which all thy wisdom, knowledge, and endeavours should be directed.

*And with all thy getting*] Let this be thy chief property. While thou art passing through things temporal, do not lose those things which are eternal;

5 Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

6 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.

7 Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

8 Exalt her, and she shall promote thee:

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\* Ch. ii. 2, 3.—<sup>f</sup> 2 Thess. ii. 10.—<sup>g</sup> Matt. xiii. 44. Luke x. 42.—<sup>h</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 30.

and, while diligent in business, be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

*Get understanding.*] Do not be contented with the lessons of wisdom merely; do not be satisfied with having a sound religious creed; devils believe and tremble; but see that thou properly comprehend all that thou hast learnt; and see that thou rightly apply all that thou hast been taught.

*Wisdom* prescribes the best end, and the means best calculated for its attainment. *Understanding* directs to the ways, times, places, and opportunities of practising the lessons of wisdom. *Wisdom* points out the thing requisite; *understanding* sees to the accomplishment and attainment. *Wisdom sees*; but *understanding feels*. One discovers, the other possesses.

*Coverdale* translates this whole verse in a very remarkable manner: “The chefe poynte of wysdomme is, that thou be wyllynge to opteyne wysdomme; and before all thy goodes to get the understandynge.” This is *paraphrase*, not *translation*. In this Version *paraphrase* abounds.

The translation in my old MS. Bible is very simple: *Weggnunge of wisdam, welle thou wisdam: in al thi wisdam, and in al thi possioun, purchas prudence.* He is already wise who seeks wisdom; and he is wise who knows its value, and seeks to possess it. The whole of this verse is wanting in the *Arabic*, and in the best copies of the *Septuagint*.

Instead of רִשְׁתִּי חֹכְמָה *keneth chochmah*, *get wisdom*, the *Complutensian Polyglot* has כֵּנֶת בִּינָה *keneth binah*, *get understanding*; so that in it the verse stands, “Wisdom is the principle, get understanding; and in all thy getting, get understanding.” This is not an error either of the scribe, or of the press, for it is supported by seven of the MSS. of *Xennicott* and *De Rossi*.

The *Complutensian*, *Antwerp*, and *Paris Polyglots* have the seventh verse in the *Greek* text; but the two latter, in general, copy the former.

Verse 8. *She shall bring thee to honour*] There is nothing, a strict life of piety and benevolence ex-

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she shall bring thee to honour,  
when thou dost embrace her.

9 She shall give to thine head  
an ornament of grace: b a  
crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

10 Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings;  
and the years of thy life shall be many.

11 I have taught thee in the way of wisdom;  
I have led thee in right paths.

12 When thou goest, d thy steps shall not be  
straitened; e and when thou runnest, thou shalt  
not stumble.

13 Take fast hold of instruction; let her

a Ch. i. 9. iii. 22.—b Or, she shall compass thee with a crown of glory.—c Ch. iii. 2.—d Ps. xviii. 36.—e Ps. xci. 11, 12.—f Ps. i. 1. Ch. i. 10, 15.—g Pa. xxxvi. 4.

cepted, that has such a direct tendency to reflect honour upon a man, as the careful cultivation of his mind. One of Bacon's aphorisms was, *Knowledge is power*; and it is truly astonishing to see what influence true learning has. Nothing is so universally respected, provided the learned man be a consistent moral character, and be not proud and overbearing; which is a disgrace to genuine literature.

Verse 9. *A crown of glory*] A tiara, diadem, or crown, shall not be more honourable to the princely wearer, than sound wisdom—true religion, coupled with deep learning, shall be to the Christian and the scholar.

Verse 10. *The years of thy life shall be many.*] Vice and intemperance impair the health and shorten the days of the wicked; while true religion, sobriety, and temperance prolong them. The principal part of our diseases springs from "indolence, intemperance, and disorderly passions." Religion excites to industry, promotes sober habits, and destroys evil passions, and harmonizes the soul; and thus, by preventing many diseases, necessarily prolongs life.

Verse 12. *Thy steps shall not be straitened*] True wisdom will teach thee to keep out of embarrassments. A man under the influence of true religion ponders his paths, and carefully poises occurring circumstances; and as the fear of God will ever lead him to act an upright and honest part, so his way in business and life is both clear and large. He has no by-ends to serve; he speculates not; he uses neither trick nor cunning to effect any purpose. Such a man can never be embarrassed. His steps are not straitened; he sees his way always plain; and when a favourable tide of providence shows him the necessity of increased exertion, he runs, and is in no danger of stumbling.

Verse 13. *Take fast hold*] חֲזַק hachazek, seize it strongly, and keep the hold; and do this as for life. Learn all thou canst, retain what thou hast learnt, and keep the reason continually in view—it is for thy life.

Verse 14. *Enter not into the path of the wicked*] Never associate with those whose life is irregular and

not go: keep her; for she is thy life.

14 Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.

15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

16 For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.

17 For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.

18 But the path of the just is as the

Isai. lvii. 20.—b Matt. v. 14, 45. Phil. ii. 15.—c Sam. xxiii. 4.

sinful; never accompany them in any of their acts of transgression.

Verse 15. *Avoid it*] Let it be the serious purpose of thy soul to shun every appearance of evil.

*Pass not by it*] Never, for the sake of worldly gain, or through complaisance to others, approach the way that thou wouldst not wish to be found in when God calls thee into the eternal world.

*Turn from it*] If, through unwatchfulness or unfaithfulness, thou at any time get near or into the way of sin, turn from it with the utmost speed, and humble thyself before thy Maker.

*And pass away.*] Speed from it, run for thy life, and get to the utmost distance; eternally diverging so as never to come near it whilst thou hast a being.

Verse 16. *Except they have done mischief*] The night is their time for spoil and depredation. And they must gain some booty before they go to rest. This I believe to be the meaning of the passage. I grant, also, that there may be some of so malevolent a disposition, that they cannot be easy unless they can injure others, and are put to excessive pain when they perceive any man in prosperity, or receiving a kindness. The address, in *Virgil*, to an ill-starred shepherd is well known:—

Et cum vidisti puero donata, dolebas:  
Et si non aliqua nocuisses, mortuus esses.  
Ecl. iii. 14.

"When thou sawest the gifts given to the lad, thou wast distressed; and hadst thou not found some means of doing him a mischief, thou hadst died."

Verse 17. *For they eat the bread of wickedness*] By privately stealing.

*And drink the wine of violence.*] By highway robbery.

Verse 18. *But the path of the just*] The path of the wicked is gloomy, dark, and dangerous; that of the righteous is open, luminous, and instructive. This verse contains a fine metaphor; it refers to the sun rising above the horizon, and the increasing twilight till his beams shine full upon the earth. The original חוֹלֵחַ הַבַּיִת holech vaor ad nechon haiyom, may be translated, "going and illuminating unto the pre-

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shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

19 <sup>a</sup> The way of the wicked is as darkness : they know not

at what they stumble.

20 My son, attend to my words ; incline thine ear unto my sayings.

21 <sup>b</sup> Let them not depart from thine eyes ; <sup>c</sup> keep them in the midst of thine heart.

22 For they are life unto those that find them, and <sup>d</sup> health <sup>e</sup> to all their flesh.

23 Keep thy heart <sup>f</sup> with all diligence ; for

<sup>a</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 9. Job xviii. 5, 6. Isai. lix. 9, 10. Jer. xxiii. 12. John xii. 35. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. iii. 3, 21. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. ii. 1. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. iii. 8. xii. 18. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. *medicine*. — <sup>f</sup> Heb. *above all keeping*.

pared day." This seems plainly to refer to the progress of the rising sun while below the horizon ; and the gradual increase of the light occasioned by the reflection of his rays by means of the atmosphere, till at last he is completely elevated above the horizon, and then the prepared day has fully taken place, the sun having risen at the determined time. So, the truly wise man is but in his twilight here below ; but he is in a state of glorious preparation for the realms of everlasting light ; till at last, emerging from darkness and the shadows of death, he is ushered into the full blaze of endless felicity. Yet, previously to his enjoyment of this glory, which is prepared for him, he is going—walking in the commandments of his God blameless ; and illuminating—reflecting the light of the salvation which he has received on all those who form the circle of his acquaintance.

Verse 21. *Keep them in the midst of thine heart.*] Let them be wrapped up in the very centre of thy affections ; that they may give spring and energy to every desire, word, and wish.

Verse 23. *Keep thy heart with all diligence*] "Above all keeping," guard thy heart. He who knows any thing of himself, knows how apt his affections are to go astray.

For out of it are the issues of life.] חַיִּים מֵהַלֵּב *chayyim*, "the goings out of lives." Is not this plain allusion to the arteries which carry the blood from the heart through the whole body, and to the utmost extremities ? As long as the heart is capable of receiving and propelling the blood, so long life is continued. Now as the heart is the fountain whence all the streams of life proceed, care must be taken that the fountain be not stopped up nor injured. A double watch for its safety must be kept up. So in spiritual things : the heart is the seat of the Lord of life and glory ; and the streams of spiritual life proceed from him to all the powers and faculties of the soul. Watch with all diligence, that this fountain be not sealed up, nor these streams of life be cut off. Therefore "put away from thee a froward mouth and perverse lips—and let thy eyes look straight on."

out of it are the issues of life.

24 Put away from thee <sup>a</sup> a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.

25 Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

26 Ponder the path of thy feet, and <sup>b</sup> let all thy ways be established.

27 <sup>c</sup> Turn not to the right hand nor to the left : <sup>d</sup> remove thy foot from evil.

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<sup>a</sup> Heb. *frowardness of mouth, and perverseness of lips*. <sup>b</sup> Or, *all thy ways shall be ordered aright*. — <sup>c</sup> Deut. v. 32. xxviii. 14. Josh. i. 7. — <sup>d</sup> Isai. i. 16. Rom. xii. 9.

Or, in other words, look inward—look onward—look upward.

I know that the twenty-third verse is understood as principally referring to the evils which proceed from the heart, and which must be guarded against ; and the good purposes that must be formed in it, from which life takes its colouring. The former should be opposed ; the latter should be encouraged and strengthened. If the heart be pure and holy, all its purposes will be just and good. If it be impure and defiled, nothing will proceed from it but abomination. But though all this be true, I have preferred following what I believe to be the metaphor in the text.

Verse 24. *A froward mouth*] Beware of hastiness, anger, and rash speeches.

*And perverse lips*] Do not delight in nor acquire the habit of contradicting and gainsaying ; and beware of calumniating and backbiting your neighbour.

Verse 26. *Ponder the path of thy feet*] Weigh well the part thou shouldst act in life. See that thou contract no bad habits.

Verse 27. *Turn not to the right hand nor to the left*] Avoid all crooked ways. Be an upright, downright, and straight-forward man. Avoid tricks, wiles, and deceptions of this kind.

To this the Septuagint and Vulgate add the following verse : *Αυτος δε ορθας ποιησει τας τροχιας σου, τας δε πορειας σου εν ειρηνη προαξει*. Ipse autem rectos faciet cursus tuos ; itinera autem tua in pace producet. "For himself will make thy paths straight, and thy journeyings will he conduct in prosperity." The Arabic has also a clause to the same effect. But nothing like this is found in the Hebrew, Chaldee, or Syriac ; nor in the Vulgate, as printed in the Complutensian Polyglot ; nor in that of Antwerp or of Paris ; but it is in the Greek text of those editions, in the editio princeps of the Vulgate, in five of my own MSS., and in the old MS. Bible. De Lyra rejects the clause as a gloss that stands on no authority. If an addition, it is certainly very ancient ; and the promise it contains is true, whether the clause be authentic or not.

CHAPTER V.

Farther exhortations to acquire wisdom, 1, 2. The character of a loose woman, and the ruinous consequences of attachment to such, 3—14. Exhortations to chastity and moderation, 15—21. The miserable end of the wicked, 22, 23.

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**M**Y son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding :

2 That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may <sup>a</sup> keep knowledge.

3 <sup>b</sup> For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her <sup>c</sup> mouth is <sup>d</sup> smother than oil :

4 But her end is <sup>e</sup> bitter as wormwood, <sup>f</sup> sharp as a two-edged sword.

5 <sup>g</sup> Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell.

6 Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them.

<sup>a</sup> Mal. ii. 7.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. ii. 16. vi. 24.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. palate.—<sup>d</sup> Ps. lv. 21.—<sup>e</sup> Eccles. vii. 26.—<sup>f</sup> Hebr. iv. 12.

NOTES ON CHAP. V.

Verse 1. *Attend unto my wisdom*] Take the following lessons from my own experience.

Verse 3. *The lips of a strange woman*] One that is not thy own, whether Jewess or heathen.

*Drop as an honeycomb*] She uses the most deceitful, flattering, and alluring speeches: as the droppings of the honey out of the comb are the sweetest of all.

Verse 4. *Bitter as wormwood*] כלאנא kelaanah, like the detestable herb wormwood, or something analogous to it: something as excessive in its bitterness, as honey is in its sweetness.

Verse 5. *Her feet go down to death*] She first, like a serpent, infuses her poison, by which the whole constitution of her paramour is infected, which soon or late brings on death.

*Her steps take hold on hell.*] First, the death of the body; and then the damnation of the soul. These are the tendencies of connexions with such women.

Verse 6. *Lest thou shouldest ponder*] To prevent thee from reflecting on thy present conduct, and its consequences, her ways are moveable—she continually varies her allurements.

*Thou canst not know them.*] It is impossible to conceive all her tricks and wiles: to learn these in all their varieties, is a part of the science first taught in that infernal trade.

Verse 7. *Hear me—O ye children*] בנים banim, sons, young men in general: for these are the most likely to be deceived and led astray.

Verse 8. *Come not nigh the door of her house*] Where there are generally such exhibitions as have a natural tendency to excite impure thoughts, and irregular passions.

7 Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.

8 Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house:

9 Lest thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel :

10 Lest strangers be filled with <sup>h</sup> thy wealth; and thy labours be in the house of a stranger;

11 And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed,

12 And say, How have I <sup>i</sup> hated instruction, and my heart <sup>k</sup> despised reproof;

13 And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!

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<sup>h</sup> Ch. vii. 27.—<sup>i</sup> Heb. thy strength.—<sup>j</sup> Ch. i. 29.—<sup>k</sup> Ch. i. 25. xii. 1.

Verse 9. *Lest thou give thine honour*] The character of a debauchee is universally detested: by this, even those of noble blood lose their honour and respect.

*Thy years unto the cruel*] Though all the blandishments of love dwell on the tongue, and the excess of fondness appear in the whole demeanour of the harlot and the prostitute; yet cruelty has its throne in their hearts; and they will rob and murder (when it appears to answer their ends) those who give their strength, their wealth, and their years, to them. The unfaithful wife has often murdered her own husband for the sake of her paramour, and has given him over to justice in order to save herself. Murders have often taken place in brothels, as well as robberies: for the vice of prostitution is one of the parents of cruelty.

Verse 11. *When thy flesh and thy body are consumed*] The word נשאר shear, which we render body, signifies properly the remains, residue, or remnant of a thing: and is applied here to denote the breathing carcase, putrid with the concomitant disease of debauchery: a public reproach which the justice of God entails on this species of iniquity. The mourning here spoken of, is of the most excessive kind: the word נחם naham is often applied to the growling of a lion, and the hoarse incessant murmuring of the sea. In the line of my duty, I have been often called to attend the deathbed of such persons, where groans and shrieks were incessant through the jaculating pains in their bones and flesh. Whoever has witnessed a closing scene like this will at once perceive with what force and propriety the wise man speaks. And *How have I hated instruction, and despised the voice of my teachers!* is the unavailing cry in that terrific time.

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14 I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly.

15 Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.

16 Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets.

17 Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee.

18 Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with <sup>a</sup>the wife of thy youth.

19 <sup>b</sup>Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts <sup>c</sup>satisfy thee at all

<sup>a</sup> Mal. ii. 14. — <sup>b</sup> See Cant. ii. 9. iv. 5. vii. 3. — <sup>c</sup> Heb. *water thee*. — <sup>d</sup> Heb. *err thou always in her love*. — <sup>e</sup> Ch. ii. 16. vii. 5. — <sup>f</sup> 2 Chron. xvi. 9. Job xxxi. 4. xxxiv. 21.

Reader, whosoever thou art, lay these things to heart. Do not enter into their sin: once entered, thy return is nearly hopeless.

Verse 14. *I was almost in all evil*] This vice, like a whirlpool, sweeps all others into its vortex.

*In the midst of the congregation and assembly.*] In the midst of the Church and of the Synagogue. Old MS. Bible. Such persons, however sacred the place, carry about with them eyes full of adultery which cannot cease from sin.

Verse 15. *Drink waters out of thine own cistern*] Be satisfied with thy own wife; and let the wife see that she reverence her husband; and not tempt him by inattention or unkindness to seek elsewhere what he has a right to expect, but cannot find, at home.

Verse 16. *Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad*] Let thy children lawfully begotten be numerous.

Verse 17. *Let them be only thine own*] The offspring of a legitimate connexion: a bastard brood, however numerous, is no credit to any man.

Verse 18. *Let thy fountain be blessed*] יי מקורך ברוך *yehi mekorecha baruch*. Sit vena tua benedicta. Thy vein; that which carries off streams from the fountain of animal life, in order to disperse them abroad,

times; and <sup>d</sup>be thou ravished always with her love.

20 And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with <sup>e</sup>a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?

21 <sup>f</sup>For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.

22 <sup>g</sup>His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his <sup>h</sup>sins.

23 <sup>i</sup>He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

Ch. xv. 3. Jer. xvi. 17. xxxii. 19. Hos. vii. 2. Hebr. iv. 13. — <sup>f</sup> Ps. ix. 15. — <sup>g</sup> Heb. *sin*. — <sup>h</sup> Job iv. 21. xxxvi. 12.

and through the streets. How delicate and correct is the allusion here! But anatomical allusions must not be pressed into detail in a commentary on Scripture.

Verse 19. *The loving hind and pleasant roe*] By אילר *aiyleth*, the deer; by יאלר *yaalah*, the ibex or mountain goat, may be meant.

*Let her breasts satisfy thee*] As the infant is satisfied with the breasts of its mother; so shouldst thou be with the wife of thy youth.

Verse 21. *For the ways of a man*] Whether they are public or private, God sees all the steps thou takest in life.

Verse 22. *He shall be holden with the cords of his sins*] Most people who follow unlawful pleasures, think they can give them up whenever they please; but sin repeated becomes customary; custom soon engenders habit; and habit in the end assumes the form of necessity; the man becomes bound with his own cords, and so is led captive by the devil at his will.

Verse 23. *He shall die without instruction*] This is most likely, and it is a general case: but even these may repent and live.

## CHAPTER VI.

Exhortations against becoming surety for others, 1—5; against idleness, from the example of the ant, 6—11; description of a worthless person, 12—15; seven things hateful to God, 16—19; the benefits of instruction, 20—23; farther exhortations against bad women, and especially against adultery, 24—33; what may be expected from jealousy, 34, 35.



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cir. 224.  
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**MY** son, \*if thou be surety  
for thy friend, *if* thou hast  
stricken thy hand with a  
stranger,

2 Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.

3 Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go, humble thyself, <sup>b</sup>and make sure thy friend.

4 <sup>c</sup> Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids.

5 Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.

\* Ch. xi. 15. xvii. 18. xx. 16. xxii. 26. xxvii. 13. — <sup>b</sup> Or, so shalt thou prevail with thy friend. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. cxxxii. 4.

NOTES ON CHAP. VI.

Verse 1. *If thou be surety for thy friend*] לִרְעָא le-reacha, for thy neighbour; i. e., any person. If thou pledge thyself in behalf of another, thou takest the burden off him, and placest it on thine own shoulders; and when he knows he has got one to stand between him and the demands of law and justice, he will feel little responsibility; his spirit of exertion will become crippled, and listlessness as to the event will be the consequence. His own character will suffer little; his property nothing, for his friend bears all the burden: and perhaps the very person for whom he bore this burden treats him with neglect; and, lest the restoration of the pledge should be required, will avoid both the sight and presence of his friend. *Give what thou canst*; but, except in extreme cases, be *surety* for no man. *Striking or shaking hands* when the *mouth had once made the promise*, was considered the *ratification* of the engagement; and thus the man became *snared with the words of his mouth*.

Verse 3. *Do this—deliver thyself*] Continue to press him for whom thou art become surety, to pay his creditor; give him no rest till he do it, else thou mayest fully expect to be left to pay the debt.

Verse 5. *Deliver thyself as a roe*] תְּצַיִי tsebi, the antelope. If thou art got into the snare, get out if thou possibly canst; make every *struggle* and *exertion*, as the antelope taken in the net, and the bird taken in the snare would, in order to get free from thy captivity.

Verse 6. *Go to the ant, thou sluggard*] נְמָלָה nemalah, the ant, is a remarkable creature for *foresight*, *industry*, and *economy*. At the proper seasons they collect their food,—not in the *summer* to lay up for the *winter*; for they sleep during the winter, and eat not; and therefore such hoards would be to them useless;—but when the food necessary for them is most plentiful, then they collect it for their consumption in the proper seasons. No insect is more *laborious*,—not even the *bee* itself,—and none is more *fondly attached* to

6 <sup>d</sup> Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:

7 Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,

8 Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.

9 <sup>e</sup> How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?

10 Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

11 <sup>f</sup> So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.

12 A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth.

13 <sup>g</sup> He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh

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<sup>d</sup> Job xii. 7. — <sup>e</sup> Ch. xxiv. 33, 34. — <sup>f</sup> Ch. x. 4. xiii. 4. xx. 4. — <sup>g</sup> Job xv. 12. Ps. xxxv. 19. Ch. x. 10.

or more *careful* of its young, than the ant. When the young are in their *aurelia* state, in which they appear like a small *grain of rice*, they will bring them out of their nests, and lay them near their holes, for the benefit of the sun; and on the approach of *rain*, carefully remove them, and deposit them in the nest, the hole or entrance to which they will cover with a piece of thin stone or tile, to prevent the wet from getting in. It is a fact that they do not lay up any meat for winter; nor does Solomon, either here or in chap. xxx. 25, assert it. He simply says that they provide their food in summer, and gather it in harvest: these are the most proper times for a stock to be laid in for their consumption; not in *winter*; for no such thing appears in any of their nests, nor do they need it, as they *sleep* during that season; but for autumn, during which they wake and work. Spring, summer, and autumn, they are incessant in their labour; and their conduct affords a bright example to men.

Verse 10. *Yet a little sleep, a little slumber*] This, if not the *language*, is the *feeling* of the sluggard. The *ant* gathers its food in summer and in harvest, and sleeps in winter when it has no work to do. If the sluggard would work in the day, and sleep at night, it would be all proper. The ant yields him a lesson of reproach.

Verse 11. *So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth*] That is, with slow, but surely approaching steps.

*Thy want as an armed man.*] That is with irresistible fury; and thou art not prepared to oppose it. The *Vulgate*, *Septuagint*, and *Arabic* add the following clause to this verse:—

“But if thou wilt be diligent, thy harvest shall be as a fountain; and poverty shall flee far away from thee.”

It is also thus in the Old MS. Bible: *Et tenebris non slow thou shul ben; shul comen as a welle thi rip; ant neye fer shal flien fro thee.*

Verse 12. *A naughty person*] אָדָם בְּלִיעַל adam beliyal.

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with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers;

14 Frowardness *is* in his heart; <sup>a</sup> he deviseth mischief continually; <sup>b</sup> he <sup>c</sup> soweth discord.

15 Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he <sup>d</sup> be broken <sup>e</sup> without remedy.

16 These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination <sup>f</sup> unto him:

17 <sup>g</sup> A <sup>h</sup> proud look, <sup>i</sup> a lying tongue, and <sup>j</sup> hands that shed innocent blood,

18 <sup>k</sup> An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, <sup>l</sup> feet that be swift in running to mischief,

19 <sup>m</sup> A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he <sup>n</sup> that soweth discord among brethren.

<sup>a</sup> Mic. ii. 1. — <sup>b</sup> Ver. 19. — <sup>c</sup> Heb. *casteth forth*. — <sup>d</sup> Jer. xix. 11. — <sup>e</sup> 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. — <sup>f</sup> Heb. *of his soul*. — <sup>g</sup> Ps. xviii. 27. ci. 5. — <sup>h</sup> Heb. *Haughty eyes*. — <sup>i</sup> Ps. cxv. 2, 3. — <sup>j</sup> Isai. i. 15. — <sup>k</sup> Gen. vi. 5. — <sup>l</sup> Isai. lix. 7. Rom. iii. 15. — <sup>m</sup> Ps. xxvii. 12. Ch. xix. 5, 9. — <sup>n</sup> Ver. 14.

"Adam good for nothing." When he lost his innocence. *A man apostata*; Old MS. Bible.

*A wicked man*] *נפשו אש* *ish aven*. He soon became a general transgressor after having departed from his God. All his posterity, unless restored by divine grace, are men of Belial, and sinners by trade, and most of them, in one form or other, answer the character here given. They yield their members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin.

Verse 13. *He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers*] These things seem to be spoken of debauchees; and the following quotation from Ovid, *Amor. lib. i., El. iv., ver. 15*, shows the whole process of the villany spoken of by Solomon:

Cum premit ille torum, vultu comes ipsa modesto  
Ibis, ut accumbas: clam mihi tange pedem.

Me specta, nutusque meos, vultumque loquacem.

Excipe furtivas, et refer ipsa, notas.

Verba superciliis sine voce loquentia dicam

Verba leges digitis, verba notata mero.

Cum tibi succurrit Veneris lascivia nostræ,

Purpureas tenero pollice tange genas, &c., &c.

The whole *elegy* is in the same strain: it is translated in *Garth's Ovid*, but cannot be introduced here.

Verse 14. *He deviseth mischief*] He plots schemes and plans to bring it to pass.

*He soweth discord*.] Between men and their wives, by seducing the latter from their fidelity. See the preceding quotation.

Verse 15. *Suddenly shall he be broken*] Probably alluding to some punishment of the adulterer, such as being *stoned to death*. A multitude shall join together, and so overwhelm him with stones, that he shall have his flesh and bones broken to pieces; and there shall be *no remedy*—none to deliver or pity him.

Verse 16. *These six—doth the Lord hate*] 1. *A proud look*—exalted eyes; those who will not condescend to look on the rest of mankind. 2. *A lying tongue*—

20 <sup>p</sup> My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

21 <sup>q</sup> Bind them continually upon thine heart, *and* tie them about thy neck.

22 <sup>r</sup> When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, <sup>s</sup> it shall keep thee; and *when* thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.

23 <sup>t</sup> For the commandment *is* a <sup>u</sup> lamp; and the law *is* light; and reproofs of instruction *are* the way of life:

24 <sup>v</sup> To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattering <sup>w</sup> of the tongue of a strange woman.

25 <sup>x</sup> Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eye-lids.

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<sup>p</sup> Ch. i. 8. Eph. vi. 1. — <sup>q</sup> Ch. iii. 3. vii. 3. — <sup>r</sup> Ch. iii. 23, 24. — <sup>s</sup> Ch. ii. 11. — <sup>t</sup> Ps. xix. 8. cxix. 105. — <sup>u</sup> Or, *canale*. — <sup>v</sup> Ch. ii. 16. v. 3. vii. 5. — <sup>w</sup> Or, *of the strange tongue*. — <sup>x</sup> Matt. v. 28.

he who neither loves nor tells *truth*. 3. *Hands that shed innocent blood*, whether by murder or by battery.

4. *A heart that deviseth wicked imaginations*—the heart that *fabricates* such, lays the foundation, builds upon it, and completes the superstructure of *iniquity*.

5. *Feet that be swift in running to mischief*—he who works iniquity with greediness. 6. *A false witness that speaketh lies*—one who, even on his oath before a court of justice, tells any thing but the truth.

*Seven are an abomination unto him*] *נפשו נאפשו*, "to his soul." The seventh is, *he that soweth discord among brethren*—he who troubles the peace of a family, of a village, of the state: all who, by lies and misrepresentations, strive to make men's minds evil-affected towards their brethren.

Verse 20. *Keep thy father's commandment*] See on chap. i. 8.

Verse 21. *Bind them continually upon thine heart*] See on chap. iii. 3. And see a similar command, to which this is an allusion, Deut. vi. 6—8.

Verse 22. *When thou goest, it shall lead thee*] Here the law is *personified*; and is represented as a nurse, teacher, and guardian, by night and day. An upright man never *goes* but as directed by God's word, and led by God's Spirit.

*When thou sleepest*] He commends his body and soul to the protection of his Maker when he lies down; and sleeps in peace. And when he awakes in the morning, the promises and mercies of God are the first things that present themselves to his recollection.

Verse 23. *For the commandment is a lamp*] It illuminates our path. It shows us how *we should walk and praise God*.

*And the law is light*] A general light, showing the nature and will of God, and the interest and duty of man.

*And reproofs of instruction*] Or, that instruction which reproves us for our sins and errors leads us into the way of life.

Verse 24. *To keep thee from the evil woman*] Solomon

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

26 For <sup>a</sup> by means of a whorish woman *a man is brought to a piece of bread*: <sup>b</sup> and <sup>c</sup> the adulteress will <sup>d</sup> hunt for the

precious life.

27 Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?

28 Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?

29 So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent.

30 Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry;

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xxix. 3.—<sup>b</sup> Gen. xxxix. 14.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *the woman of a man, or a man's wife.*—<sup>d</sup> Ezek. xiii. 18.

had suffered sorely from this quarter; and hence his repeated cautions and warnings to others. The *strange woman* always means one that is not a man's own; and sometimes it may also imply a *foreign harlot*, one who is also a *stranger* to the God of Israel.

Verse 25. *Neither let her take thee with her eye-lids.*] It is a very general custom in the East to *paint the eye-lids*. I have many Asiatic drawings in which this is expressed. They have a method of *polishing the eyes* with a preparation of *antimony*, so that they appear with an indescribable lustre; or, as one who mentions the fact from observation, "Their eyes appear to be swimming in bliss."

Verse 26. *By means of a whorish woman*] In following lewd women, a man is soon reduced to poverty and disease. The *Septuagint* gives this a strange turn: *Τιμη γαρ πορνής, ὅση και ἐνος ἀπρου.* "For the price or hire of a whore is about one loaf." So many were they in the land, that they hired themselves out for a *bare subsistence*. The *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic*, give the same sense. The Old MS. Bible has it thus: *The price forsothe of a strumpet is unneth oon lof: the woman forsothe taketh the precious lift of a man.* The sense of which is, and probably the sense of the *Hebrew* too, While the man hires the whore for a *single loaf* of bread; the woman thus hired taketh his *precious life*. She extracts his energy and poisons his constitution. In the first clause *יְשֻׁבָה אִשָּׁה זֹנָה ishshah zonah* is plainly a *prostitute*; but should we render *אִשָּׁה esheth*, in the second clause, an *adulteress*? I think not. The Versions in general join *אִשָּׁה אִשָּׁה esheth ish*, together, which, thus connected, signify no more than *the wife of a man*; and out of this we have made *adulteress*, and *Coverdale* a *married woman*. I do not think that the old MS. Bible gives a good sense; and it requires a good deal of paraphrase to extract the common meaning from the text. Though the following verses seem to countenance the common interpretation, yet they may contain a complete sense of themselves; but, taken in either way, the sense is good, though the construction is a little violent.

Verse 27. *Can a man take fire*] These were pro-

31 But *if* he be found, <sup>a</sup> he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house.

32 But whoso committeth adultery with a woman <sup>f</sup> lacketh <sup>g</sup> understanding: he *that* doeth it destroyeth his own soul.

33 A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

34 For jealousy *is* the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.

35 <sup>b</sup> He will not regard any ransom: neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.

<sup>a</sup> Exod. xxii. 1, 4.—<sup>f</sup> Ch. vii. 7.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. *heart.*—<sup>h</sup> Heb. *He will not accept the face of any ransom.*

verbial expressions, the meaning of which was plain to every capacity.

Verse 29. *So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife*] As sure as he who takes *fire into his bosom*, or who *walks upon live coals*, is burnt thereby; so sure he that seduces his neighbour's wife *shall be guilty*. That is, he shall be punished.

Verse 30. *Men do not despise a thief, if he steal*] Every man pities the poor culprit who was perishing for lack of food, and stole to *satisfy his hunger*; yet no law *clears* him: he is bound to make restitution; in some cases *double*, in others *quadruple* and *quintuple*; and if he have not property enough to make restitution, it be sold for a *bondman*; Exod. xxii. 1—4; Lev. xxv. 39.

Verse 32. *But whoso committeth adultery*] The case understood is that of a *married man*: he has a wife; and therefore is not in the circumstances of the *poor thief*, who stole to *appease his hunger, having nothing to eat*. In this alone the *opposition* between the two cases is found: the *thief had no food*, and he stole some; the married man had a *wife*, and yet went in to *the wife of his neighbour*.

*Destroyeth his own soul.*] Sins against *his life*; for, under the law of Moses, adultery was punished with *death*; Lev. xx. 10, Deut. xxii. 22.

Verse 33. *A wound and dishonour shall he get*] Among the *Romans*, when a man was caught in the fact, the injured husband took the law into his own hand; and a large *radish* was thrust up into the anus of the transgressor, which not only overwhelmed him with infamy and disgrace, but generally caused his death.

Verse 34. *Jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare*] He will not, when he has detected the adulterer in the fact, wait for the slow progress of the law: it is then to him the *day of vengeance*; and, in general, he avenges himself on the spot, as we see above.

Verse 35. *He will not regard any ransom*] This is an injury that admits of *no compensation*. No *gifts* can satisfy a man for the injury his honour has sustained; and to take a *bride* or a *ransom*, would be setting up *chastity* at a price.

## CHAPTER VII.

*A farther exhortation to acquire wisdom, in order to be preserved from impure connexions, 1—5. The character of a harlot, and her conduct towards a youth who fell into her snare, 6—23. Solemn exhortations to avoid this evil, 24—27.*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

**M**Y son, keep my words, and  
lay up my commandments with thee.

2<sup>b</sup> Keep my commandments, and live; <sup>c</sup> and my law as the apple of thine eye.

3<sup>d</sup> Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.

4 Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman:

5<sup>e</sup> That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words.

6 For at the window of my house I looked through my casement,

7 And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding,

<sup>a</sup> Ch. ii. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Lev. xviii. 5. Ch. iv. 4. Isai. lv. 3. Deut. xxxii. 10.—<sup>d</sup> Deut. vi. 8. xi. 18. Ch. iii. 3. vi. 21. Ch. ii. 16. v. 3. vi. 24.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. the sons.—<sup>g</sup> Ch. vi. 32. i. 4, 16.—<sup>h</sup> Job xxiv. 15.—<sup>i</sup> Heb. in the evening of the

## NOTES ON CHAP. VII.

Verse 1. *My son, keep my words*] See chap. ii. 1.

Verse 2. *As the apple of thine eye.*] As the pupil of the eye, which is of such essential necessity to sight, and so easily injured.

Verse 3. *Bind them upon thy fingers*] See on chap. i. 3.

Verse 4. *Thou art my sister*] Thou art my dearest friend, and I will treat thee as such.

Verse 5. *The strange woman*] The prostitute, the adulteress.

Verse 6. *I looked through my casement*] The casement is a small aperture in a large window, or a window opening on hinges. Here it means the lattice, for they had no glass windows in the East, and the latticed windows produced a double advantage: 1. Making the apartments sufficiently private; 2. Admitting fresh air to keep them cool.

Verse 7. *Among the simple ones*] The inexperienced, inconsiderate young men.

*A young man void of understanding*] חסר לב *chasar b,* "destitute of a heart." He had not wisdom to discern the evil intended; nor courage to resist the artifices of the seducer.

Verse 8. *He went the way to her house.*] She appears to have had a corner house sufficiently remarkable; and a way from the main street to it.

Verse 9. *In the twilight, in the evening*] Some time after sun-setting; before it was quite dark.

*In the black and dark night*] When there were either lamps nor moon-shine.

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8 Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house.

9<sup>h</sup> In the twilight, <sup>i</sup> in the evening, in the black and dark night:

10 And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart.

11 (<sup>t</sup> She is loud and stubborn; <sup>l</sup> her feet abide not in her house:

12 Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.)

13 So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him,

14<sup>n</sup> I have peace-offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows.

15 Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee.

<sup>k</sup> Ch. ix. 13.—<sup>l</sup> 1 Tim. v. 13. Tit. ii. 5.—<sup>m</sup> Heb. she strengthened her face, and said.—<sup>n</sup> Heb. Peace-offerings are upon me.

Verse 10. *A woman with the attire of an harlot*] It appears that sitting in some open place, and covering the face, or having a veil of a peculiar kind on, was the evidence of a harlot; Gen. xxxviii. 14, 15—19. No doubt, in Solomon's time, they had other distinctions. In all other countries, and in all times, *the show of their countenance did testify against them; they declared their sin as Sodom; they hid it not.* However, this does not seem to have been a mere prostitute; for she was, according to her own declaration, a *married woman*, and kept house, ver. 19. If her assertions relative to this were not falsehoods, and calculated the better to render him secure, and prevent the suspicion of endangering himself by cohabiting with a common woman; which I am rather inclined to think was the case, for she was *subtle of heart.*

Verse 11. *She is loud and stubborn*] חמיה *homiyah*, she is never at rest, always agitated; busily employed to gain her end, and this is to go into the path of error: סררה *sorereth*, "turning aside;" preferring any way to the right way. And, therefore, it is added, *her feet abide not in her house*; she gads abroad; and this disposition probably first led her to this vice.

Verse 12. *Now is she without*] She is continually exposing herself, and showing by her gait and gestures what she is, and what she wants. These two verses are a parenthesis, intended to show the character of the woman.

Verse 13. *So she caught him*] Laid fast hold on

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante 1. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C.c. 247.

16 I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with \* fine linen of Egypt.

17 I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

18 Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves.

19 For the goodman *is* not at home, he is gone a long journey:

20 He hath taken a bag of money <sup>b</sup> with him, and will come home at <sup>c</sup> the day appointed.

21 With <sup>d</sup> her much fair speech she caused him to yield, <sup>e</sup> with the flattering of her lips she forced him.

\* Isai. xix. 9.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. *in his hand*.—<sup>c</sup> Or, *the new moon*.  
<sup>d</sup> Ch. v. 3.—<sup>e</sup> Ps. xii. 2.

him, and *kissed him*, to show that she was affectionately attached to him.

And with an impudent face] הֶעֱזָזָה הַפָּנֶיהָ *heezah paneyha*, "she strengthened her countenance," assumed the most confident look she could; endeavoured to appear friendly and sincere.

Verse 14. I have *peace-offerings with me*] More literally, "the sacrifices of the peace-offerings are with me." *Peace-offerings* שְׁלָמִים *shelamim*, were offerings, the spiritual design of which was to make peace between God and man, to make up the *breach* between them which sin had occasioned; see the notes on Lev. vii., where every kind of sacrifice offered under the law is explained. When the *blood* of these was poured out at the altar, and the *fat* burnt there, the *breast* and *right shoulder* were the priests' portion; but the rest of the carcase belonged to the sacrificer, who might carry it home, and make a feast to his friends. See Lev. iii. 1—11. Much light is cast on this place by the *fact* that the gods in many parts of the East are actually worshipped in *brothels*, and fragments of the *offerings* are divided among the wretches who fall into the snare of the prostitutes.—WARD'S Customs.

Have I *payed my vows*] She seems to insinuate that she had *made a vow for the health and safety of this young man*; and having done so, and prepared the sacrificial banquet, came actually out to seek him, that he might partake of it with her, ver. 15. But, as she intended to proceed farther than mere *friendship*, she was obliged to avail herself of the *night season*, and the *absence of her husband*.

Verse 16. I have *decked my bed*] אֲרִסִי *arsi*, "my couch or sofa;" distinguished from מִשְׁכַּבִּי *mishcabi*, "my bed," ver. 17, the *place to sleep on*, as the other was the *place to recline on at meals*. The *tapestry*, מַרְבָּדִים *marbaddim*, mentioned here seems to refer to the covering of the *sopha*; exquisitely woven and *figured* cloth. *chatuboth* אֲתוּבֹת *etun*, the *Targum* translates *painted carpets*, such as were manufactured in

22 He goeth after her 'straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks;

23 Till a dart strike through his liver; <sup>a</sup> as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it *is* for his life.

24 Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth.

25 Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths.

26 For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, <sup>b</sup> many strong *men* have been slain by her.

27 <sup>c</sup> Her house *is* the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *suddenly*.—<sup>b</sup> Eccles. ix. 12.—<sup>c</sup> Neh. xiii. 26.  
<sup>d</sup> Ch. ii. 18. v. 5. ix. 13.

*Egypt*; some kind of *embroidered* or *embossed stuff* is apparently meant.

Verse 17. I have *perfumed my bed with myrrh*] מִרְיָהוֹ *miryahu*, "aloes," אֶהְלִים *ahalim*, and "cinnamon," קִינָמוֹן *kinnamon*. We have taken our names from the original words; but probably the *ahalim* may not mean *aloes*, which is no *perfume*: but *sandal-wood*, which is very much used in the East. She had used every means to excite the passions she wished to bring into action.

Verse 18. Come, let us take our fill of love] נִרְוֶה דְּדֹדִים *nirveh dodim*, "Let us revel in the breasts;" and then it is added, "let us solace ourselves with loves," נִתְהַלְּעֵשׂ בְּבוֹהָבִים *nithalleesh boohabim*; "let us gratify each other with loves, with the utmost delights." This does not half express the original; but I forbear. The speech shows the *brazen face* of this woman, well translated by the *Vulgate*, "Veni, inebriemur uberibus; et fruamur cupidinis amplexibus." And the *Septuagint* has expressed the spirit of it: ἔλθε, καὶ ἀπολαύσωμεν φιλίας—δευρο, καὶ ἐγκλισώμεθα ἐρωτῇ. "Veni, et fruamur amicitia—Veni, et colloquemur cupidine." Though varied in the words, all the *Versions* have expressed the same thing. In the old MS. Bible, the speech of this woman is as follows:— I have arrayed with cordis my littl bed, and spred with pygntw tapetis of Egypt: I have springd my liggings place with mirre and aloes and canelcum, and be inwarbly drunken with Cetis, and use be the cobertied clippings to the tyme that the dai war ligt. The original itself is too gross to be literally translated; but quite in character as coming from the mouth of an abandoned woman.

Verse 19. For the goodman] Literally, "For the man is not in his house."

Verse 20. He hath taken] Literally, "The money bag he hath taken in his hand." He is gone a journey of itinerant merchandizing. This seems to be what is intended.

And will come home at the day appointed.] אֲרִסִי

למחרת *leym hakkase*, the time fixed for a return from such a journey. The *Vulgate* says, "at the full moon." The *Targum*, "the day of the assembly." In other words, He will return by the approaching festival.

Verse 21. *With her much fair speech*] With her blandishments and lascivious talk, she overcame all his scruples, and constrained him to yield.

Verse 22. *As an ox goeth to the slaughter*] The original of this and the following verse has been variously translated. Dr. *Grey* corrects and translates thus: "He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the SLAUGHTER; as a dog to the CHAIN; and as a DEER till the DART strike through his liver; as a BIRD hasteneth to the SNARE, and knoweth not that it is for its life." Very slight alterations in the Hebrew text produce these differences; but it is not necessary to pursue them; all serve to mark the stupidity and folly of the man who is led away by enticing women, or who lives a life of intemperance.

Verse 24. *Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children*] Ye that are young and inexperienced, seriously consider the example set before your eyes, and take warning at another's expense.

Verse 26. *For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her.*] That is, such like women have been the ruin of many. חללים *chalamim*, which we render *wounded*, also signifies *soldiers* or men of war; and אצמם *atsumim*, which we render *strong men*, may be translated *heroes*. Many of those who have distinguished themselves in the field and in the cabinet have been overcome and destroyed by their mistresses. History is full of such examples.

Verse 27. *Her house is the way to hell*] שאל *sheol*, the *pit*, the *grave*, the *place of the dead*, the *eternal* and *infernal world*. And they who, through such, fall into the *grave*, descend lower, into the *chambers of death*; the place where pleasure is at an end, and *illusion* mocks no more.

CHAPTER VIII.

The fame and excellence of wisdom, and its manner of teaching, 1—4; the matter of its exhortations, 5—12; its influence among men, 13—21; its antiquity, 22—31; the blessedness of attending to its counsels, 32—35; the misery of those who do not, 36.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

**D**OTH not <sup>a</sup>wisdom cry? and <sup>b</sup>understanding put forth her voice?

2 She standeth in the top of

high places, by the way in the places of the paths.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. i. 20. ix. 3.

NOTES ON CHAP. VIII.

Verse 1. *Doth not wisdom cry?*] Here wisdom is again personified; but the *prosopopeia* is carried on to a greater length than before, and with much more variety. It is represented in this chapter in a twofold point of view: 1. Wisdom, the power of judging rightly, implying the knowledge of divine and human things. 2. As an attribute of God, particularly displayed in the various and astonishing works of creation. Nor has it any other meaning in this whole chapter, whatever some of the Fathers may have reamed, who find allegorical meanings every where. The wise man seems as if suddenly awakened from the distressful contemplation which he had before him,—of the ruin of young persons in both worlds by means of debauchery,—by the voice of wisdom, who is lifted up her voice in the most public places, here was the greatest concourse of the people, to warn the yet unsnared, that they might avoid the snare of seduction and sin; and cause those who love sin to inherit substance, and to have their treasures led with durable riches.

Verse 2. *In the places of the paths.*] בית נתיבות *beth nethiboth nistsabah*, "The constituted house of public paths." Does not this mean the house of public

3 She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.

4 Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man.

5 O ye simple, understand wisdom: and ye

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

<sup>b</sup> Ps. cxix. 130. cxlvii. 5.

worship? the tabernacle or temple, which stands a centre to the surrounding villages, the paths from all the parts leading to and terminating at it? In such a place, where the holy word of God is read or preached, there in a particular manner does wisdom cry, and understanding lift up her voice. There are the warnings, the precepts, and the promises of eternal truth; there the bread of God is broken to his children, and thither they that will may come and take the water of life freely.

Verse 3. *She crieth at the gates*] This might be well applied to the preaching of Jesus Christ and his apostles, and their faithful successors in the Christian ministry. He went to the temple, and proclaimed the righteousness of the Most High: he did the same in the synagogues, on the mountains, by the sea side, in the villages, in the streets of the cities, and in private houses. His disciples followed his track: in the same way, and in the same spirit, they proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ. God's wisdom in the hearts of his true ministers directs them to go and to seek sinners. There are, it is true, temples, synagogues, churches, chapels, &c.; but hundreds of thousands never frequent them, and therefore do not hear the voice of truth: wisdom, therefore, must go

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

6 Hear; for I will speak of  
\*excellent things; and the opening  
of my lips shall be right things.

7 For my mouth shall speak truth; and  
wickedness is <sup>b</sup>an abomination to my lips.

8 All the words of my mouth are in right-  
eousness; there is nothing <sup>c</sup>froward or per-  
verse in them.

9 <sup>d</sup>They are all plain to him that under-  
standeth, and right to them that find know-  
ledge.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xxii. 20. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. the abomination of my lips.  
<sup>c</sup> Heb. wreathed. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. xiv. 6. — Job xxviii. 15. &c.  
Ps. xix. 10. cxix. 127. Ch. iii. 14, 15. iv. 5, 7. xvi. 16.

to them, if she wishes them to receive her instructions. Hence the zealous ministers of Christ go still to the highways and hedges, to the mountains and plains, to the ships and the cottages, to persuade sinners to turn from the error of their ways, and accept that redemption which was procured by the sacrificial offering of Jesus Christ.

Verse 4. Unto you, O men] אִישׁוֹם ishim, men of wealth and power, will I call; and not to you alone, for my voice is אֵל בְּנֵי אָדָם al beney Adam, "to all the descendants of Adam;" to the whole human race. As Jesus Christ tasted death for every man, so the gospel proclaims salvation to all: to you—to every individual, my voice is addressed. Thou hast sinned; and thou must perish, if not saved by grace.

Verse 5. O ye simple] פֶּתְהַיִם pethaim, ye that are deceived, and with flattering words and fair speeches deluded and drawn away.

Ye fools] כְּסִילִים kesilim, ye stupid, stiff-necked, senseless people. That preaching is never likely to do much good, that is not pointed; specifying and describing vices, and charging them home on the consciences of transgressors. Where this is not done, the congregation is unconcerned; no man supposes he has any thing to do in the business, especially if the preacher takes care to tell them, "These were the crimes of Jews, Romans, Greeks, of the people at Corinth, Philippi, Thessalonica, Laodicea, and of heathens in general; but I hope better things of you, who have been born in a Christian land, and baptized in the Christian faith." Thus he arms their consciences in double brass against the good effects of his own teaching.

Verse 6. Hear; for I will speak of excellent things] נִגִּידִים negidim, things which are pre-eminent, and manifestly superior to all others. The teaching is not trifling, though addressed to triflers.

The opening of my lips shall be right things.] מְשָׁרִיִּים meysarim, things which are calculated to correct your false notions, and set straight your crooked ways. Hence she declares,

Verse 7. My mouth shall speak truth] TRUTH, without falsity, or any mixture of error, shall be the whole matter of my discourse.

10 Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

11 <sup>e</sup>For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

12 I wisdom dwell with <sup>f</sup>prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.

13 <sup>g</sup>The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: <sup>h</sup>pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and <sup>i</sup>the froward mouth, do I hate.

14 Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; <sup>k</sup>I have strength.

<sup>f</sup>Or, subtilly. — <sup>g</sup> Ch. xvi. 6. — <sup>h</sup> Ch. vi. 17. — <sup>i</sup> Ch. iv. 24.  
<sup>k</sup> Eccles. vii. 19. Ps. xviii. 1. xix. 14. xxii. 19. xxxi. 4.

Verse 8. All the words—are in righteousness] בְּרֵקֵי בִטְעֵדֵק, in justice and equity, testifying what man owes to his God, to his neighbour, and to himself; giving to each his due. This is the true import of צַדִּיק tsadak.

There is nothing froward] נִפְתָּל niphtal, tortuous, involved, or difficult.

Or perverse] יִקְשֵׁשׁ ikkesh, distorted, leading to obstinacy. On the contrary,

Verse 9. They are all plain] נְכוֹחִים nechochim, straight forward, over against every man, level to every capacity. This is true of all that concerns the salvation of the soul.

To them that find knowledge.] When a man gets the knowledge of himself, then he sees all the threatenings of God to be right. When he obtains the knowledge of God in Christ, then he finds that all the promises of God are right—yea and amen.

Verse 10. Receive my instruction, and not silver] A Hebrew idiom; receive my instruction in preference to silver.

Verse 11. Wisdom is better than rubies] See of chap. iii. 15.

Verse 12. I wisdom dwell with prudence] Prudence is defined, wisdom applied to practice; so wherever true wisdom is, it will lead to action, and its activity will be always in reference to the accomplishment of the best ends by the use of the most appropriate means. Hence comes what is here called knowledge of witty inventions, דַּאֲת מְצִימוֹת אֵמֶת daath mezimmoth emet. "I have found out knowledge and contrivance." The farther wisdom proceeds in man, the more practical knowledge it gains; and finding out the nature and properties of things, and the general course of providence, it can contrive by new combinations to produce new results.

Verse 13. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil] As it is impossible to hate evil without loving good; and as hatred to evil will lead a man to abandon the evil way; and love to goodness will lead him to do what is right in the sight of God, under the influence of that Spirit which has given the hatred to evil, and inspired the love of goodness: hence this implies the

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C.c. 247.

15 \* By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.

16 By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth.

17 <sup>b</sup> I love them that love me; and <sup>c</sup> those that seek me early shall find me.

\* Dan. ii. 21. Rom. xliii. 1.—<sup>b</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 30. Ps. xci. 14. John xiv. 21.

18 <sup>d</sup> Riches and honour *are* with me; *yea*, durable riches and righteousness.

19 <sup>e</sup> My fruit *is* better than gold; *yea*, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

20 I <sup>f</sup> lead in the way of righteousness, in

<sup>c</sup> James i. 5.—<sup>d</sup> Ch. iii. 16. Matt. vi. 33.—<sup>e</sup> Ch. iii. 14. Ver. 10.—<sup>f</sup> Or, walk.

sum and substance of *true religion*, which is here termed *the fear of the Lord*.

Verse 14. *Counsel is mine*] *Direction* how to act in all circumstances and on all occasions must come from *wisdom*: the *foolish* man can give no *counsel*, cannot show another how he is to act in the various changes and chances of life. The wise man alone can give this counsel; and he can give it only as continually receiving instruction from God: for this divine wisdom can say, תושיהא תושיהא, *substance, reality, essence*, all belong to me: I am the *Fountain* whence all are derived. Man may be wise, and good, and prudent, and ingenious; but these he derives from me, and they are *dependently* in him. But in *me* all these are *independently* and *essentially* inherent.

*And sound wisdom*] See above. This is a totally false translation: תושיהא *tushiyah* means essence, substance, reality; the source and substance of good. How ridiculous the support derived by certain authors from this translation in behalf of their system! See the writers on and quoters of Prov. viii.

*I have strength*.] Speaking still of wisdom, as communicating rays of its light to man, it enables him to bring every thing to his aid; to construct machines by which *one man* can do the work of *hundreds*. From it comes all *mathematical learning*, *mechanical knowledge*; from it originally came the *inclined plane*, the *wedge*, the *screw*, the *pulley* in all *multiplications*; and the *lever*, in all its *combinations* and *varieties*, came from this wisdom. And all these can produce prodigies of *power*, far surpassing all kinds of *animal energy*, and all the effects the utmost efforts of muscular force; hence the axiom of Lord Bacon, "Knowledge is power," built the maxim of the *tushiyah* itself; לי גבורה *li geburah*, *strength is power*.

Verse 15. *By me kings reign*] Every wise and prudent king is such through the influence of divine wisdom. And just laws and their righteous administration come from this source. In this and the following verse *five degrees* of *civil power* and *authority* are mentioned. 1. מלכים *melachim*, *KINGS*. 2. שופטים *shofetim*, *CONSULS*. 3. שרים *sarim*, *PRINCES, CHIEFS* of the people. 4. נדיבים *nedibim*, the *NOBLES*. And 5. שופטי צדק *shofetim tzedek*, "judges of the earth," or "judges of righteousness," is the reading of *one hundred and twenty-two* of Kennicott and De Rossi's MSS., both in

the text and in the margin, and of several ancient editions. And this is the reading of the *Vulgate*, the *Chaldee*, and the *Syriac*; and should undoubtedly supersede the other.

Verse 17. *I love them that love me*] *Wisdom* shows itself; teaches man the knowledge of himself; shows him also the will of God concerning him; manifests the snares and dangers of life, the allurements and unsatisfactory nature of all sensual and sinful pleasures, the blessedness of true religion, and the solid happiness which an upright soul derives from the peace and approbation of its Maker. If, then, the heart embraces this wisdom, follows this divine teaching, and gives itself to God, his love will be shed abroad in it by the influence of the Holy Spirit. Thus we love God because he hath first loved us; and the more we love him, the more we shall feel of his love, which will enable us to love him yet *more and more*; and thus we may go on increasing to eternity. Blessed be God!

*And those that seek me early shall find me*.] Not merely *betimes in the morning*, though he who does so shall find it greatly to his advantage (see on Ps. iv.); but *early in life*—in *youth*, and as near as possible to the first dawn of *reason*. To the *young* this gracious promise is particularly made: if *they seek*, they *shall find*. Others, who are old, may seek and find; but *never to such advantage* as they would have done, had they sought *early*. Youth is the *time of advantage* in every respect: it is the time of *learning*, the time of *discipline*, the time of *improvement*, the time of *acquiring useful, solid, and gracious habits*. As the *first-fruits* always belong to God, it is *God's time*; the time in which he is peculiarly gracious; and in which, to sincere youthful seekers, he pours out his benefits with great profusion. "They that seek me early shall find me."

Hear, ye *young*, and ye *little ones*! God offers himself now to *you*, with all his treasures of grace and glory. Thank him for his ineffable mercy, and embrace it without delay.

Verse 18. *Riches and honour are with me*] Often the wise, prudent, and discreet man arrives literally to *riches* and *honour*; but this is not *always* the case. But there are *other riches* of which he *never fails*; and these seem to be what Solomon has particularly in view, *durable riches* and *righteousness*; the treasure deposited by God in earthen vessels.

Verse 20. *I lead in the way of righteousness*] Nothing but the teaching that comes from God by his *word* and *Spirit* can do this.



A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

the midst of the paths of judgment :

21 That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance : and I will fill their treasures.

22 \*The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 <sup>b</sup> I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When *there were* no depths, I was brought forth ; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water.

25 <sup>c</sup> Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth :

26 While as yet he had not made the earth,

\* Ch. iii. 19. Eccles. xxiv. 9. John i. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Ps. ii. 6. c Job xv. 7, 8.—<sup>d</sup> Or, open places.—<sup>e</sup> Or, the chief part. f Or, a circle.—<sup>g</sup> Gen. i. 9, 10. Job xxxviii. 10, 11. Ps.

nor the <sup>d</sup> fields, nor <sup>e</sup> the highest part of the dust of the world.

27 When he prepared the heavens, I *was* there : when he set <sup>f</sup> a compass upon the face of the depth :

28 When he established the clouds above when he strengthened the fountains of the deep :

29 <sup>g</sup> When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment : when <sup>h</sup> he appointed the foundations of the earth :

30 <sup>i</sup> Then I was by him, *as* one brought up *with him* : <sup>k</sup> and I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him :

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

xxxiii. 7. civ. 9. Jer. v. 22.—<sup>b</sup> Job xxxviii. 4.—<sup>c</sup> John i. 1, 2, 18.—<sup>d</sup> Matt. iii. 17. Col. i. 13.

Verse 22. *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way*] Wisdom is not acquired by the Divine Being ; man, and even angels, learn it by slow and progressive degrees ; but in God it is as eternally inherent as any other essential attribute of his nature. The Targum makes this wisdom a creature, by thus translating the passage : אלהא בראני ברש בריתה Elaha barani bereish biriteiah, "God created me in the beginning of his creatures." The Syriac is the same. This is as absurd and heretical as some modern glosses on the same passage.

Verse 23. *I was set up from everlasting*] נסחתי nissachti, "I was diffused or poured out," from נסך nasach, "to diffuse, pour abroad, as a spirit or disposition," Isai. xxix. 10. See Parkhurst. Or from נסך sach, "to cover, overspread, smear over, as with oil ;" to be anointed king. Hence some have translated it, principatum habui, I had the principality, or was a ruler, governor, and director, from eternity. All the schemes, plans, and circumstances, relative to creation, government, providence, and to all being, material, animal, and intellectual, were conceived in the divine mind, by the divine wisdom, from eternity, or ever the earth was. There was no fortuitous creation, no jumbling concourse of original atoms, that entered into the composition of created beings ; all was the effect of the plans before conceived, laid down, and at last acted upon by God's eternal wisdom.

Verse 24. *When there were no depths*] רחמתי tehomoth, before the original chaotic mass was formed. See Gen. i. 2.

*I was brought forth*] חוללתי cholalti, "I was produced as by labouring throes." Mr. Parkhurst thinks that the heathen poets derived their idea of Minerva (wisdom) being born of Jupiter's brain, from some such high poetic personification as that in the text.

Verse 26. *The highest part of the dust of the world*] רש אפרות תבל rosh aphroth tebel, "the first particle of matter." The prima materia, the primitive atom. All these verses (3—29) are a periphrasis for I existed before creation ; consequently before time was. I

dwelt in God as a principle which might be communicated in its influences to intellectual beings when formed.

Verse 27. *When he prepared the heavens, I was there*] For there is no part of the creation of God in which wisdom, skill, contrivance, are more manifest, than in the construction of the visible heavens.

*When he set a compass upon the face of the depth*] Does not this refer to the establishment of the law of gravitation ? by which all the particles of matter, tending to a common centre, would produce in all bodies the orbicular form, which we see them have ; so that even the waters are not only retained within their boundaries, but are subjected to the circular form, in their great aggregate of seas, as other parts of matter are. This is called here making a compass, ברחק חוג bechukko chug, sweeping a circle ; and even this on the face of the deep, to bring the chaotic mass into form, regularity, and order.

Verse 28. *The clouds above*] שחקים shechakim, "the ethereal regions," taking in the whole of the atmosphere, with all its meteors, clouds, vapours, &c.

Verse 29. *When he gave to the sea his decree*] When he assigned its limits, adjusted its saltness, and proportioned the extent of the surface to the quantity of vapours to be raised from it, for the irrigation of the terrene surface.

*The foundations of the earth*] Those irreversible laws by which all its motions are governed ; its annual and diurnal rotation, and particularly its centrifugal and centripetal force ; by the former of which it has its annual motion round the sun like all other planets ; and by the latter all its particles are prevented from flying off, notwithstanding the great velocity of its motion round its own axis, which causes one thousand and forty-two miles of its equator to pass under any given point in the heavens in the course of a single hour ! These are, properly speaking, the foundations of the earth ; the principles on which it is constructed, and the laws by which it is governed.

Verse 30. *Then I was with him, as one brought up*]

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and \*my delights were with the sons of men.

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for <sup>b</sup> blessed are they that keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

\* Ps. xvi. 3. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. cxix. 1, 2. cxviii. 1, 2. Luke xi. 28. <sup>c</sup> Ch. iii. 13, 18.

from *amon*, a nursing, a darling child. Wisdom continues its parable, says *Calmet*; and represents itself as a new-born child, which is ever near its parent, and takes pleasure to see him act, and to sport in his presence. This is poetical, and highly figurative; and they who think they find the deity of Jesus Christ in these metaphors should be very cautious how they apply such terms as these; so that while they are endeavouring to defend the truth, they may do nothing against the truth, in which most of them unhappily fail.

*Rejoicing always before him*] All the images in this verse are borrowed from the state and circumstances of a darling, affectionate, playful child; as any one will be convinced who examines the *Hebrew text*.

Verse 31. *Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth*] There God displays especially his wisdom in ordering and directing human beings, and in providing for their wants. The wisdom of God is in an especial manner manifested in his providence.

*My delights were with the sons of men.*] This divine wisdom, as it delighted in the creation of man, so it continues to delight in his instruction. Hence it is represented as offering its lessons of instruction continually, and using every means and opportunity to call men from folly and vice to sound knowledge, holiness, and happiness. It is to man that God especially gives wisdom; and he has it in the form of reason beyond all other creatures; therefore it is said, "My delights are with the sons of men;" to them I open my choicest treasures. They alone are capable of sapience, intelligence, and discursive reason.

Verse 32. *Now therefore*] Since I delight so much in conveying instruction; since I have the happiness of the children of Adam so much at heart, hearken unto me; and this is for your own interest, for blessed are they who keep my ways.

Verse 34. *Watching daily at my gates*] Wisdom is represented as having a school for the instruction of men; and seems to point out some of the most forward of her scholars coming, through their intense desire to learn, even before the gates were opened, and waiting there for admission, that they might hear every word that was uttered, and not lose one accent of the heavenly teaching. Blessed are such.

Verse 35. *Whoso findeth me*] The wisdom that comes from God, teaching to avoid evil and cleave to that which is good; findeth life—gets that know-

34 <sup>c</sup> Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall <sup>d</sup> obtain <sup>e</sup> favour of the LORD.

36 But he that sinneth against me <sup>f</sup> wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
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<sup>d</sup> Heb. bring forth. — <sup>e</sup> Ch. xii. 2. — <sup>f</sup> Ch. xx. 2.

ledge which qualifies him to answer the purposes for which he was made; for he is quickened with Christ, and made a partaker of the divine life. Christ dwells in his heart by faith; he lives a new life, for Christ liveth in him; the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus makes him free from the law of sin and death. And shall obtain favour of the Lord. The more he walks after the divine counsel, the more he obtains of the divine image; and the more he resembles his Maker, the more he partakes of the divine favour.

Verse 36. *Wrongeth his own soul*] It is not Satan, it is not sin, properly speaking, that hurts him; it is himself. If he received the teaching of God, sin would have no dominion over him; if he resisted the devil, the devil would flee from him.

*Love death.*] They do it in effect, if not in fact; for as they love sin, that leads to death, so they may be justly said to love death, the wages of sin. He that works in this case, works for wages; and he must love the wages, seeing he labours so hard in the work.

I have gone through this fine chapter, and given the best exposition of it in my power. I have also, as well as others, weighed every word, and closely examined their radical import, their connexion among themselves, and the connexion of the subject of the chapter with what has gone before, and with what follows after; and I cannot come, conscientiously, to any other interpretation than that which I have given. I am thoroughly satisfied that it speaks not one word either about the divine or human nature of Christ, much less of any eternal filiation of his divinity. And I am fully persuaded, had there not been a preconceived creed, no soul of man, by fair criticism, would have ever found out that fond opinion of the eternal sonship of the divine nature, which so many commentators persuade us they find here. That it has been thus applied in early ages, as well as in modern times, I am sufficiently aware; and that many other portions of the divine records have been appealed to, in order to support a particular opinion, and many that were false in themselves, must be known to those who are acquainted with the Fathers. But many quote them who know nothing of them. As to the Fathers in general, they were not all agreed on this subject, some supposing Christ, others the Holy Spirit, was meant in this chapter. But of these we may safely state, that there is not a truth in the most

orthodox creed, that cannot be proved by their authority, nor a *heresy* that has disgraced the Romish church, that may not challenge them as its abettors. In points of *doctrine*, their authority is, *with me*, nothing. The word of God alone contains my creed. On a number of points I can go to the Greek and Latin Fathers of the church, to know what *they believed*, and what the *people of their respective communions* believed; but after all this, I must return to *God's word*, to know what he would have me to believe. No part of a *Protestant creed* stands on the decision of *Fathers* and *councils*. By appealing to the Bible alone, as the only rule for the faith and practice of Christians, they confounded and defeated their papistical adversaries, who could not prove their doctrines but by *Fathers* and *councils*. Hence their peculiar doctrines stand in their ultimate proof upon these; and those of Protestantism on the Bible. Some late writers upon this subject, whose names I spare, have presumed much on *what they have said on this subject*; but before any man, who seeks for sober truth, will receive any of their *conclusions*, he will naturally look whether their *premises* be sound, or whether from *sound principles* they have drawn *legitimate conclusions*. They say this chapter is a sufficient foundation to build their doctrine on. I say it is no foundation at all; that it never has been proved, and never can be proved, that it speaks at all of the doctrine in question. It has nothing to do with it. On this conviction of mine, their proofs drawn from this chapter must go with *me* for *nothing*. I have been even shocked with reading over some things that have been *lately written* on the subject. I have said in my heart, They have taken away my ETERNAL LORD, and I know not where they have laid him. I cannot believe their doctrine; I never did; I hope I never shall. I believe in the holy Trinity; in three Persons in the Godhead, of which none is before or after another. I believe JEHOVAH, JESUS, the HOLY GHOST to be one infinite, eternal GODHEAD, subsisting ineffably in *three Persons*. I believe Jesus the Christ to be, as to his *divine nature*, as *unoriginated* and *eternal* as JEHOVAH himself; and with the *Holy Ghost* to be one infinite Godhead, *neither* Person being *created*, *begotten*, nor *proceeding*, more than another: as to its *essence*, but *one TRINITY*, in an infinite, eternal, and inseparable UNITY. And this TRIUNE GOD is the object of my faith, my adoration, and my confidence. But I believe not in an eternal sonship or generation of the divine nature of Jesus Christ. *Here* I have long stood, *here* I now stand, and *here* I trust to stand in the hour of death, in the day of judgment, and to all eternity. Taking the Scriptures in general, I find a *plurality* in the divine nature; taking the grand *part* mentioned, Matt. iii. 16, 17, I find that *plurality* restrained to a *trinity*, in the most unequivocal and evident manner: Jesus, who was baptized in Jordan; the HOLY GHOST, who descended upon him who was baptized; and the FATHER, manifested by the voice from heaven that said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And how that person called JESUS the CHRIST, in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead

bodily, could be called the *son of God*, I have shown in my note on Luke i. 35.

Some writers, in their defence of the doctrine above, which I venture to say *I do not believe*, have made reflections, in real or pretended pity, on the belief of their Trinitarian brethren, which have very little to do with candour: viz., "How the supporters of this hypothesis can avoid either the error of Tritheism on the one hand, or Sabellianism on the other, is difficult to conceive." Now, the supporters of the doctrine of the underived and unbegotten eternity of Christ's divine nature might as well say of them: How the supporters of the eternal sonship of Christ can avoid the error of Arianism on the one hand, and Arianism on the other, it is difficult to conceive. But I would not say so; for though I know Arians who hold that doctrine, and express their belief nearly in the same words; yet I know many most conscientious Trinitarians who hold the doctrine of the eternal sonship, and yet believe in the proper deity, or eternal godhead, of Jesus Christ. After all, as a very wise and excellent man lately said: "While we have every reason to be satisfied of the soundness of each other's faith, we must allow each to explain his own sentiments in his own words: here, in the words used in explanation, a little latitude may be safely allowed." To this correct sentiment I only add:—

Scimus; et hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim.—HORACE.

"I grant it; and the license give and take."

I have passed the *waters of strife*, and do not wish to recross them: the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. I will have nothing to do with ill-tempered, abusive men; I wish them more light and better manners.

And, while I am on this subject, let me add one thing, which I am sure will not please all the generation of his people; and it is this: that Jesus Christ, having taken upon him human nature, which was afterwards crucified, and expired upon the cross, did by those acts make a full, perfect, and sufficient offering, sacrifice, and atonement for the sin of the whole world. That he died, paid down the *redemption price*, for every soul of man, that was ever born into the world, and shall ever be born into it. That all who lay hold on the hope set before them shall be saved (and all may thus lay hold); and none shall perish but those who would not come to Christ that they might have life. And that men perish, not because they were not redeemed, but because they would not accept of the redemption.

To conclude on this subject, it will be necessary to refer the reader to the remarkable *opposition* that subsists between *this* and the *preceding chapter*. There, the *prostitute* is represented as *going out into the streets* to seek her prey; and the *alluring words* of *carnal wisdom* to excite the animal appetite to sinful gratification, which she uses: *here*, heavenly wisdom is represented as *going out into the streets*, to the *high places*, the *gates of the city*, to counteract her designs, and lead back the simple to God and truth.

These *personifications* were frequent among the

Jews. In the Book of *Ecclesiasticus* we find a similar personification, and expressed in almost *similar terms*; and surely none will suppose that the writer of that Apocryphal book had either the Christian doctrine of the *Trinity*, or the *sonship of Christ*, in view.

I will give a few passages:—

“WISDOM shall glory in the midst of her people; in the congregation of the Most High shall she open her mouth, and triumph before his power. I came out of the mouth of the Most High, and covered the earth as a cloud. I dwell in the high places; I alone compassed the circuit of the heaven, and walked in the

bottom of the deep, in the waves of the sea, and in all the earth. He created me from the beginning, before the world; and I shall never fail. I am the mother of fair love, and fear, and knowledge, and holy hope. I therefore, being eternal, am given to all my children which are named of him. Come unto me, and fill yourselves with my fruits. I also came out as a brook from a river, and a conduit into a garden,” &c. &c. Eccl. xxiv. 1, &c. This kind of personification of wisdom we have had in the preceding chapters; and in the following chapter we shall find the figure still kept up.

## CHAPTER IX.

Wisdom builds her house, makes her provision for a great feast, calls her guests, and exhorts them to partake of her entertainment, 1—6. Different admonitions relative to the acquisition of Wisdom, 7—12. The character and conduct of a bad woman, 13—18.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

WISDOM hath <sup>a</sup> builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars:

2 <sup>b</sup> She hath killed <sup>c</sup> her beasts; <sup>d</sup> she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table.

3 She hath <sup>e</sup> sent forth her maidens: <sup>f</sup> she crieth <sup>g</sup> upon the highest places of the city.

4 <sup>h</sup> Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

<sup>a</sup> Matt. xvi. 18. Eph. ii. 20, 21, 22. 1 Pet. ii. 5.—<sup>b</sup> Matt. xxii. 3, &c.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. her killing.—<sup>d</sup> Ver. 5. Ch. xxiii. 30.

<sup>e</sup> Rom. x. 15.—<sup>f</sup> Ch. viii. 1, 2.—<sup>g</sup> Ver. 14.—<sup>h</sup> Ver. 16. Ch. vi. 32. Matt. xi. 25.

## NOTES ON CHAP. IX.

The same Wisdom speaks here who spoke in the preceding chapter. There she represented herself as manifest in all the works of God in the natural world; all being constructed according to counsels proceeding from an infinite understanding. Here, she represents herself as the great potentate, who was to rule all that she had constructed; and having an immense family to provide for, had made an abundant provision, and calls all to partake of it. This, says Calmet, is the continuation of the parable begun in the preceding chapter, where wisdom is represented as a venerable lady, whose real beauties and solid promises are opposed to the false allurements of PLEASURE, who was represented in the seventh chapter under the idea of a debauched and impudent woman. This one, to draw young people into her snares, describes the perfumes, the bed, and the festival which she has prepared. WISDOM acts in the same way: out, instead of the debauchery, the false pleasures, and the criminal connexions which pleasure had promised, offers her guests a strong, well-built, magnificent palace, chaste and solid pleasures, salutary instructions, and a life crowned with blessedness. This is the sum and the substance of the parable; but as in the preceding part, so in this, men have produced strange creatures of their own brain, by way of explanation. One specimen of this mode of interpretation may suffice.

The house built by wisdom is the holy humanity of Jesus Christ; the seven pillars are the seven sacraments, or the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, or the

whole of the apostles, preachers and ministers of the Church; the slain beasts are the sacrifice of Christ's body upon the cross; and the bread and mingled wine are the bread and wine in the sacrament of the Lord's supper!—FATHERS and DOCTORS.

If we have recourse to any other particulars than those given above in the summary of the chapter, let us follow the first part of the parable, where wisdom, is represented as laying the plan of the creation; and then perhaps we may say with safety, that wisdom, having produced the grand ichnograph or ground plot of the whole, with all the requisite elevations and specifications of materials, comes to show us, in this part, that the whole has been constructed on this plan; and specifies the end for which this august building has been raised.

Verse 1. *Wisdom hath builded her house*] The eternal counsel of God has framed the universe.

*She hath hewn out her seven pillars*] Every thing has been so constructed as to exhibit a scene of grandeur, stability, and durability.

Verse 2. *She hath killed her beasts*] God has made the most ample provision for the innumerable tribes of animal and intellectual beings, which people the whole vortex of created nature.

Verse 3. *She hath sent forth her maidens*] The wisdom of God has made use of the most proper means to communicate divine knowledge to the inhabitants of the earth; as a good and gracious Creator wills to teach them whence they came, how they are supported, whither they are going, and for what end they were formed. It is a custom to the

A. M. cir. 3004.  
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Ante U.C. c. 247.

5 \*Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.

6 Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.

7 He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himself a blot.

8 <sup>b</sup>Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: <sup>c</sup>rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 2. Cant. v. 1. Isai. lv. 1. John vi. 27. — <sup>b</sup> Matt. vii. 6. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. cxli. 5. — <sup>d</sup> Matt. xiii. 12. — <sup>e</sup> Job xxviii.

present day, in Asiatic countries, to send their invitations to guests by a company of females, preceded by eunuchs: they go to the doors of the invited, and deliver their message.

Verse 4. *Whoso is simple*] Let the young, heedless, and giddy attend to my teaching.

*Him that wanteth understanding*] Literally, *he that wanteth a heart*; who is without courage, is feeble and fickle, and easily drawn aside from the holy commandment.

Verse 5. *Come, eat of my bread*] Not only receive my instructions, but act according to my directions.

*Drink of the wine—I have mingled.*] Enter into my counsels; be not contented with superficial knowledge on any subject, where any thing deeper may be attained. Go by the streams to the fountain head. Look into the principles on which they were formed; investigate their nature, examine their properties, acquaint thyself with their relations, connexions, influences, and various uses. See the skill, power, and goodness of God in their creation. And when thou hast learned all within thy reach, know that thou knowest but little of the manifold wisdom of God. Let what thou hast learned humble thee, by showing thee how very little thou dost know. Thou hast drunk of the provided wine; but that wine was mingled with water, for God will hide pride from man. He dwells only on the surface of religious and philosophical learning, who does not perceive and feel that he is yet but a child in knowledge; that he sees through a glass darkly; that he perceives men like trees walking; and that there are lengths, breadths, depths, and heights, in the works and ways of God, which it will require an eternity to fathom. Here below the pure wine is mingled with water: but this is God's work. Yet there is enough; do not therefore be contented with a little. To this subject the words of the poet may be well applied:—

A little learning is a dangerous thing;  
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:  
For scanty draughts intoxicate the brain,  
But drinking largely sobers us again.

POPE.

Among the ancient Jews, Greeks, and Romans, wine was rarely drank without being mingled with water; and among ancient writers we find several

9 Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, <sup>d</sup>and he will increase in learning.

10 \*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding.

11 <sup>f</sup>For by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased.

12 <sup>g</sup>If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for

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28. Ps. cxi. 10. Ch. i. 7. — Ch. iii. 2, 16. x. 27. — Job xxxv. 6, 7. Ch. xvi. 26.

ordinances for this. Some direct three parts of water to one of wine; some five parts; and Pliny mentions some wines that required twenty waters: but the most common proportions appear to have been three parts of water to two of wine. But probably the *יין מן המדוק* *yayin masuch*, mingled wine, was wine mingled, not with water, to make it weaker; but with spices and other ingredients, to make it stronger. The ingredients were honey, myrrh, mandragora, opium, and such like, which gave it not only an intoxicating but stupifying quality also. Perhaps the mixed wine here may mean wine of the strongest and best quality, that which was good to cheer and refresh the heart of man.

If we consider the mixed wine as meaning this strong wine, then the import of the metaphor will be, a thorough investigation of the works of God will invigorate the soul, strengthen all the mental powers, enlarge their capacity, and enable the mind to take the most exalted views of the wonders of God's skill manifested in the operations of his hand.

Verse 6. *Forsake the foolish*] For the companion of fools must be a fool.

*And live*] Answer the end for which thou wert born.

Verse 7. *He that reproveth a scorner*] *רשע* *lets*, the person who mocks at sacred things; the libertine, the infidel; who turns the most serious things into ridicule, and, by his wit, often succeeds in rendering the person who reproves him ridiculous. Wisdom seems here to intimate that it is vain to attempt by reproof to amend such: and yet we must not suffer sin upon our neighbour; at all hazards, we must deliver our own soul. But no reproof should be given to any, but in the spirit of love and deep concern; and when they contradict and blaspheme, leave them to God.

Verse 9. *Give instruction to a wise man*] Literally give to the wise, and he will be wise. Whatever you give to such, they reap profit from it. They are like the bee, they extract honey from every flower.

Verse 10. *The fear of the Lord*] See on chap. i. 7. The knowledge of the holy; *קדושים* *kedoshim*, of the holy ones: *Sanctorum*, of the saints.—*Φύλαξ* *Boula* *ἀγιων*, the counsel of the holy persons.

Verse 11. *For by me thy days shall be multiplied*] Vice shortens human life, by a necessity of consequence: and by the same, righteousness lengthens it. There is a long addition here in the Septuagint.

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thyself: but *if* thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.

13 \* A foolish woman is clamorous: *she is* simple, and knoweth nothing.

14 For she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat <sup>b</sup> in the high places of the city,

15 To call passengers who go right on their ways:

\* Ch. vii. 11. — <sup>b</sup> Ver. 3. — <sup>c</sup> Ver. 4. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. xx. 17.

*Syriac*, and *Vulgate*: "He who trusts in falsity feeds on the winds; and is like him who chases the fowls of heaven. He forsakes the way of his own vineyard, and errs from the paths of his own inheritance. He enters also into lonely and desert places, and into a land abandoned to thirst; and his hands collect that which yieldeth no fruit."

Verse 12. *If thou be wise*] It is thy own interest to be religious. Though thy example may be very useful to thy neighbours and friends, yet the chief benefit is to *thyself*. But if thou *scorn*—refuse to receive the doctrines of wisdom, and die in thy sins, *thou alone* shalt suffer the vengeance of an offended God.

Verse 13. *A foolish woman is clamorous*] Vain, empty women are those that make *most noise*. And she that is *full* of clamour, has generally *little* or no *sense*. We have had this character already, see chap. vii. 11. The translation of the *Septuagint* is very remarkable: Γυνή ἀρῶν καὶ θρασύα, ἐνδεῆς ψωμῶν ζῆνεται, "A lewd and foolish woman shall be in need of a morsel of bread."

Verse 14. *For she sitteth at the door of her house*] Her conduct here marks at once her *folly*, *impudence*, and *poverty*. See above on chap. vii. 6, &c., where the reader will find a similar character.

Verse 16. *Who is simple, let him turn in hither*] FOLLY or PLEASURE, here personified, uses the very same expressions as employed by *Wisdom*, ver. 4. *Wisdom* says, "Let the simple turn in to me." No, says *Folly*, "Let the simple turn in to me." If he turn in to *Wisdom*, his folly shall be taken away, and he shall become wise; if he turn in to *Folly*, his larkness will be thickened, and his folly will remain.

*Wisdom* sets up her school to instruct the ignorant: *Folly* sets her school up next door, to defeat the designs of *Wisdom*.

Thus the saying of the satirist appears to be verified:—

16 \*Whoso *is* simple, let him turn in hither: and *as for* him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

17 <sup>d</sup> Stolen waters are sweet, and bread <sup>e</sup> eaten in secret is pleasant.

18 But he knoweth not that 'the dead *are* there; and that her guests *are* in the depths of hell.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
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cir. 224.  
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\* Heb. of *secrecies*. — <sup>e</sup> Ch. ii. 18, vii. 27.

"Wherever God crects a *house of prayer*, The devil surely builds a *chapel* there. And it is found, upon examination, The *latter* has the *larger congregation*."

DE FOE.

Verse 17. *Stolen waters are sweet*] I suppose this to be a proverbial mode of expression, importing that *illicit pleasures are sweeter than those which are legal*. The meaning is easy to be discerned; and the conduct of multitudes shows that they are ruled by this adage. On it are built all the *adulterous intercourses* in the land.

Verse 18. *But he knoweth not that the dead are there*] See on chap. ii. 18. He does not know that it was in this way the first apostates from God and truth walked. רמאים *rephaim*; γίγαντες, the GIANTS.—*Septuagint*. The *sons of men*, the *earth-born*, to distinguish them from the *sons of God*, those who were *born from above*. See the notes on Gen. vi. 1, &c.

*Her guests are in the depths of hell*.] Those who have been drawn out of the way of understanding by *profligacy* have in general lost their *lives*, if not their *souls*, by their folly. The *Septuagint*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic* make a long addition to this verse: "But draw thou back, that thou mayest not die in this place; neither fix thy eyes upon her; so shalt thou pass by those strange waters. But abstain thou from strange waters, and drink not of another's fountain, that thou mayest live a long time, and that years may be added to thy life." Of this *addition* there is nothing in the *Hebrew*, the *Chaldee*, or the *Vulgate*, as now printed: but in the *editio princeps* are the following words:—Qui enim applicabitur illi descendet ad inferos; nam qui abscesserit ab ea salvabitur. These words were in the copy *from which* my old MS. Bible has been made, as the following version proves: ~~שְׁחַל בֵּן יִפְּנֶה לְהִיר, שְׁחַל בֵּן יִפְּנֶה לְהִיר: לֹא יִהְיֶה הַזֶּה עִמָּךְ וְלֹא יִהְיֶה עִמָּךְ, שְׁחַל בֵּן יִפְּנֶה לְהִיר, שְׁחַל בֵּן יִפְּנֶה לְהִיר.~~ Three of my own MSS. have the same reading.

## CHAPTER X.

It is impossible to give summaries of such chapters as these, where almost every verse contains a separate subject. Our common Version, not being able to exhibit the contents as usual, simply says, "From this chapter to the five and twentieth are sundry observations upon moral virtues, and their opposite vices." In general the wise man states in this chapter the difference between the wise and the foolish, the righteous and the wicked, the diligent and the idle. He speaks also of love and hatred, of the good and the evil tongue, or of the slanderer and the peace-maker.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
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A. U. C. cir. 247.

**T**HE proverbs of Solomon.  
A wise son maketh a glad  
father : but a foolish son is the  
heaviness of his mother.

2<sup>b</sup> Treasures of wickedness profit nothing :  
but righteousness delivereth from death.

3<sup>d</sup> The LORD will not suffer the soul of the  
righteous to famish : but he casteth away  
the substance of the wicked.

4<sup>f</sup> He becometh poor that dealeth with a  
slack hand : but the hand of the diligent  
maketh rich.

5 He that gathereth in summer is a wise  
son : but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son  
that causeth shame.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xxv. 20. xvii. 21, 25. xix. 13. xxix. 3, 15. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. xlix. 6, &c. Ch. xi. 4. Luke xii. 19, 20. — <sup>c</sup> Dan. iv. 27. <sup>d</sup> Ps. x. 14. xxxiv. 9, 10. xxxvii. 25. — <sup>e</sup> Or, the wicked for their wickedness. — <sup>f</sup> Ch. xii. 24. xix. 15. — <sup>g</sup> Ch. xiii. 4. xxi. 5. — <sup>h</sup> Ch. xii. 4. xvii. 2. xix. 26. — <sup>i</sup> Ver. 11. Esth.

NOTES ON CHAP. X.

Verse 1. *The proverbs of Solomon*] Some ancient MSS. of the *Vulgate* have *Proverbiorum liber secundus*, "The second book of the Proverbs." The preceding nine chapters can only be considered as an introduction, if indeed they may be said to make even a part, of the proverbs of Solomon, which appear to commence only at the tenth chapter.

*A wise son maketh a glad father*] The parallels in this and several of the succeeding chapters are those which *Bishop Lowth* calls the *antithetic*; when two lines correspond with each other by an opposition of terms and sentiments; when the second is contrasted with the first; sometimes in expression, sometimes in sense only. Accordingly the degrees of antithesis are various; from an exact contraposition of word to word, through a whole sentence, down to a general disparity, with something of a contrariety in the two propositions, as:—

*A wise son rejoiceth in his father.*

But a foolish son is the grief of his mother.

Where every word has its opposite; for the terms father and mother are, as the logicians say, relatively opposite.

Verse 2. *Treasures of wickedness*] Property gained by wicked means.

*Delivered from death*] Treasures gained by robbery often bring their possessors to an untimely death; but those gained by righteous dealing bring with them no such consequences.

Verse 3. *But he casteth away the substance of the wicked.*] But instead of רשעים *reshaim*, the wicked, בוגרים *bogelim*, hypocrites, or perfidious persons, is the reading of twelve or fourteen of *Kennicott's* and *De Rossi's* MSS., and some editions; but it is not acknowledged by any of the ancient Versions.

The righteous have God for their feeder; and because of his infinite bounty, they can never famish for want of the bread of life. On the contrary, the

6 Blessings are upon the head  
of the just : but violence covereth  
the mouth of the wicked.

7<sup>k</sup> The memory of the just is  
blessed : but the name of the wicked shall rot.

8 The wise in heart will receive commandments :  
but a prating fool shall fall.

9<sup>o</sup> He that walketh uprightly walketh  
surely : but he that perverteth his ways shall  
be known.

10<sup>p</sup> He that winketh with the eye causeth  
sorrow : but a prating fool shall fall.

11<sup>s</sup> The mouth of a righteous man is a well  
of life : but violence covereth the mouth of  
the wicked.

vii. 8. — <sup>k</sup> Ps. ix. 5, 6. cxii. 6. Eccles. viii. 10. — <sup>l</sup> Ver. 10. <sup>m</sup> Heb. a fool of lips. — <sup>n</sup> Or, shall be beaten. — <sup>o</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 4. Ch. xxviii. 18. Isai. xxxiii. 15, 16. — <sup>p</sup> Ch. vi. 13. <sup>q</sup> Ver. 8. — <sup>r</sup> Or, shall be beaten. — <sup>s</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 30. Ch. xiii. 14. xviii. 4. — <sup>t</sup> Ps. cvii. 42. Ver. 6.

wicked are often, in the course of his providence, deprived of the property of which they make a bad use.

Verse 4. *He becometh poor*] God has ordered, in the course of his providence, that he who will not work shall not eat. And he always blesses the work of the industrious man.

Verse 5. *He that gathereth in summer*] All the work of the field should be done in the season suitable to it. If summer and harvest be neglected, in vain does a man expect the fruits of autumn.

Verse 6. *Violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.*] As blessings shall be on the head of the just, so the violence of the wicked shall cover their face with shame and confusion. Their own violent dealings shall be visited upon them. The mouth forsooth of ungodly men wickedness covereth.—*Old MS. Bible*. "The forehead of the ungodly is past shame, and presumptuous."—*Coverdale*.

Verse 7. *The memory of the just is blessed*] Or, is a blessing.

*But the name of the wicked shall rot.*] This is another antithesis; but there are only two antithetic terms, for memory and name are synonymous.—*Lowth*. The very name of the wicked is as offensive as putrid carrion.

Verse 8. *A prating fool shall fall.*] This clause is repeated in the tenth verse. The wise man will receive the commandment : but the shallow blabbing fool shall be cast down. See verse 10.

Verse 9. *He that walketh uprightly*] The upright man is always safe; he has not two characters to support; he goes straight forward, and is never afraid of detection, because he has never been influenced by hypocrisy or deceit.

Verse 10. *He that winketh with the eye*] Instead of the latter clause, on which see ver. 8, the *Septuagint* has, ὁ δε ελεγχων μετα παρηγοιας ειρηνοποιου. "but he that reproveh with freedom, maketh peace." This is also the reading of the *Syriac* and *Arabic*. A

A. M. cir. 3004.  
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12 Hatred stirreth up strifes : but <sup>a</sup> love covereth all sins.

13 In the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found : but <sup>b</sup> a rod <sup>is</sup> for the back of him that is void of <sup>c</sup> understanding.

14 Wise men lay up knowledge : but <sup>d</sup> the mouth of the foolish <sup>is</sup> near destruction.

15 <sup>e</sup> The rich man's wealth <sup>is</sup> his strong city : the destruction of the poor <sup>is</sup> their poverty.

16 The labour of the righteous *tendeth* to life : the fruit of the wicked to sin.

17 He <sup>is</sup> in the way of life that keepeth

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xvii. 9. 1 Cor. xiii. 4. 1 Pet. iv. 8. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. xxvi. 3. — <sup>c</sup> Heb. *heart*. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. xviii. 7. xxi. 23. — <sup>e</sup> Job xxxi. 24. Ps. lii. 7. Ch. xviii. 11. 1 Tim. vi. 17. — <sup>f</sup> Or,

faithful, open reproving of sin is more likely to promote the peace of society than the passing it by slightly, or taking no notice of it ; for if the wicked turn to God at the reproof, the law of *peace* will soon be established in his heart, and the law of kindness will flow from his tongue.

Verse 11. *The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life*] *מקור חיים mekor chayim*, is the *vein of lives* ; an allusion to the *great aorta*, which conveys the blood from the heart to every part of the body. The latter clause of this verse is the same with that of verse 6.

Verse 12. *Hatred stirreth up strifes*] It seeks for occasions to provoke enmity. It delights in broils. On the contrary, love conciliates ; removes aggravations ; puts the best construction on every thing ; and pours *water*, not *oil*, upon the *flame*.

Verse 13. *A rod is for the back of him*] He that can learn, and will not learn, should be *made to learn*. The *rod* is a most powerful instrument of knowledge. Judiciously applied, there is a lesson of profound wisdom in every *twig*.

Verse 14. *Wise men lay up knowledge*] They keep secret every thing that has a tendency to disturb domestic or public peace ; but the foolish man blabs all out, and produces much mischief. Think much, speak little, and always think before you speak. This will promote your own peace and that of your neighbour.

Verse 15. *The rich man's wealth is his strong city*] Behold a mystery in providence ; there is not a *rich man* on earth but becomes such by means of the *poor* ! Property comes from the *labour of the poor*, and the *king himself is served of the field*. How unjust, diabolically so, is it to *despise* or *oppress* those by whose labour all property is acquired !

*The destruction of the poor is their poverty.*] A man in abject poverty never arises out of this pit. They have no nucleus about which property may aggregate. The poet spoke well :

Haud facile emergunt, quorum virtutibus obstat  
Res angusta domi.

instruction : but he that re-fuseth reproof <sup>f</sup> erreth.

18 He that hideth hatred *with* lying lips, and <sup>g</sup> he that uttereth a slander, <sup>is</sup> a fool.

19 <sup>h</sup> In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin : but <sup>i</sup> he that refraineth his lips <sup>is</sup> wise.

20 The tongue of the just <sup>is</sup> as choice silver : the heart of the wicked <sup>is</sup> little worth.

21 The lips of the righteous feed many : but fools die for want <sup>k</sup> of wisdom.

22 <sup>l</sup> The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

23 <sup>m</sup> *It is* as sport to a fool to do mischief :

*causeth to err.* — <sup>n</sup> Ps. xv. 3. — <sup>o</sup> Eccles. v. 3. — <sup>p</sup> James iii. 2. — <sup>q</sup> Heb. *of heart*. — <sup>r</sup> Gen. xxiv. 35. xxvi. 12. Ps. xxxvii. 22. — <sup>s</sup> Ch. xiv. 9. xv. 21.

“ They rarely emerge from poverty, whose exertions are cramped by want at home.”

Verse 16. *The labour of the righteous*] The good man labours that he may be able to *support life* ; this is his *first* object : and then to have *something to divide with the poor* ; this is his *next* object.

*The fruit of the wicked to sin.*] This man lives to eat and drink, and his property he spends in riot and excess. God's blessings are cursed to him.

Verse 17. *He is in the way of life*] The truly religious man accumulates knowledge that he may the better know how to live to God, and do most good among men.

Verse 18. *He that hideth*] This is a common case. How many, when full of resentment and deadly hatred, meditating revenge and cruelty, and sometimes even murder, have pretended that they *thought nothing of the injury they had sustained* ; had *passed by the insult*, &c. ! Thus *lying lips* covered the malevolence of a wicked heart.

Verse 19. *In the multitude of words*] It is impossible to speak much, and yet speak nothing but truth ; and injure no man's character in the mean while.

Verse 20. *The heart of the wicked is little worth*] *כימא kimat*, is like little or nothing ; or is like *dross*, while the tongue of the just is like *silver*. A sinner's heart is worth nothing, and is good for nothing ; and yet because it is his most *hidden part*, he vaunts of its *honesty, goodness*, &c. ! Yes, yes ; it is very honest and good, only the devil is in it ! That is all.

Verse 22. *The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich*] Whatever we receive in the way of providence, has God's blessing in it, and will do us good. Cares, troubles, and difficulties come with all property not acquired in this way ; but God's blessing gives simple enjoyment, and levies no tax upon the comfort.

Verse 23. *It is as sport to a fool to do mischief*] What a millstone weight of iniquity hangs about the necks of most of the *jesters, facetious* and *witty* people ! “ How many lies do they tell in jest, to go to the devil in earnest !”



A. M. cir. 3004.  
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but a man of understanding hath wisdom.

24 <sup>a</sup> The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but

<sup>b</sup> the desire of the righteous shall be granted.

25 As the whirlwind passeth, <sup>c</sup> so is the wicked no more: but <sup>d</sup> the righteous is an everlasting foundation.

26 As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him.

27 <sup>e</sup> The fear of the LORD <sup>f</sup> prolongeth days: but <sup>g</sup> the years of the wicked shall be shortened.

28 The hope of the righteous shall be glad-

<sup>a</sup> Job xv. 21. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. cxlv. 19. Matt. v. 6. <sup>1</sup> John v. 14, 15. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 9, 10. — <sup>d</sup> Ver. 30. Ps. xv. 5. Matt. vii. 24, 25. xvi. 18. — <sup>e</sup> Ch. ix. 11. — <sup>f</sup> Heb. *addeth*. <sup>1</sup> Job xv. 32, 33. xxii. 16. Ps. lv. 23. Eccles. vii. 17.

Verse 24. *The fear of the wicked*] The wicked is full of fears and alarms; and all that he has dreaded, and more than he has dreaded, shall come upon him. The righteous is always *desiring* more of the salvation of God, and God will exceed even his utmost desires.

Verse 25. *As the whirlwind passeth*] As tornadoes that sweep every thing away before them; so shall the wrath of God sweep away the wicked; it shall leave him neither branch nor root. But the righteous, being built on the *eternal foundation*, יסוד עולם *yesod olam*, shall never be shaken.

Verse 26. *As vinegar to the teeth*] The acid softening and dissolving the *alkali* of the bone, so as to impair their texture, and render them incapable of *masticating*; and as *smoke* affects the eyes, irritating their tender vessels, so as to give pain and prevent distinct vision; so the sluggard, the lounging, thriftless messenger, who never returns in time with the desired answer.

Verse 28. *The expectation of the wicked shall perish.*] A wicked man is always imposing on himself by the *hope of God's mercy and final happiness*; and he

ness: but the <sup>h</sup> expectation of the wicked shall perish.

29 The way of the LORD is strength to the upright: but <sup>i</sup> destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.

30 <sup>k</sup> The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.

31 <sup>l</sup> The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward tongue shall be cut out.

32 The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked speaketh <sup>m</sup> frowardness.

<sup>h</sup> Job viii. 13. xi. 20. Ps. cxlii. 10. Ch. xi. 7. — <sup>i</sup> Ps. i. 6. xxxvii. 27. — <sup>k</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 22, 29. cxxy. 1. Ver. 5. <sup>l</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 30. — <sup>m</sup> Heb. *frowardnesses*.

continues *hoping*, till he dies without receiving that *mercy* which alone would entitle him to that *glory*.

Verse 29. *The way of the Lord is strength*] In the path of *obedience*, the upright man ever finds his *strength renewed*; the more he *labours*, the *stronger* he grows. The same sentiment as that in Isai. xl. 31.

Verse 30. *The righteous shall never be removed*] Because he is built on the *eternal foundation*. See on ver. 25.

Verse 31. *The froward tongue shall be cut out.*] This probably alludes to the punishment of *cutting out the tongue* for *blasphemy, treasonable speeches, profane swearing*, or such like. *The tongue of scoundrels* *schisms* *schal* *perisheth*.—Old MS. Bible. Were the tongue of every *shrew* or *scold* to be extracted, we should soon have much less *noise* in the world.

Verse 32. *The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable*] And what they believe to be most pleasing and most profitable, that they speak; but the wicked man knows as well what is *perverse*, and that he speaketh forth. As the love of God is not in his heart; so the law of kindness is not on his lips.

CHAPTER XI.

*A parallel of the advantages of the righteous and wise, opposed to the miseries of the wicked and the foolish. True and false riches.*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C.c. 247.

A <sup>a</sup> FALSE <sup>b</sup> balance is abomination to the LORD: but <sup>c</sup> a just weight is his delight.

2 <sup>d</sup> When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.

<sup>a</sup> Lev. xix. 35, 36. Deut. xxv. 13—16. Ch. xvi. 11. xx. 10, 23. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. *balances of deceit*.

<sup>c</sup> Heb. *a perfect stone*. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. xv. 33. xvi. 18. xviii. 12. Dan. iv. 30, 31.

NOTES ON CHAP. XI.

Verse 1. *A false balance is abomination*] This refers to the balance itself deceitfully constructed, so that it is sooner turned at one end than at the other. This is occasioned by *one end* of the *beam* being *longer* than the other.

*But a just weight*] שוֹמֵן מֵאֵן *eben shelemah*, the *perfect stone*, probably because weights were first made of stone; see the law, Deut. xxv. 13—35.

Verse 2. *When pride cometh*] The proud man thinks much more of himself than any other can do; and, expecting to be treated according to his own

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

3 \* The integrity of the upright shall guide them : but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.

4 <sup>b</sup> Riches profit not in the day of wrath : but <sup>e</sup> righteousness delivereth from death.

5 The righteousness of the perfect shall <sup>d</sup> direct his way : but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.

6 The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them : but <sup>e</sup> transgressors shall be taken in *their own* naughtiness.

7 <sup>f</sup> When a wicked man dieth, *his* expectation shall perish : and the hope of unjust *men* perisheth.

8 \* The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.

9 An <sup>b</sup> hypocrite with *his* mouth destroyeth

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xiii. 6. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. x. 2. Ezek. vii. 19. Zeph. i. 18. Eccl. v. 8. — <sup>c</sup> Gen. vii. 1. — <sup>d</sup> Heb. *rectify*. — <sup>e</sup> Ch. v. 22. Eccl. x. 8. — <sup>f</sup> Ch. x. 28. — <sup>g</sup> Ch. xxi. 18. — <sup>h</sup> Job viii. 13. — <sup>i</sup> Esth. viii. 15. Ch. xxviii. 12, 28. — <sup>k</sup> Ch.

supposed worth, which treatment he seldom meets with, he is repeatedly mortified, ashamed, confounded, and rendered indignant.

With the *lowly*] *tsenuim*, *ταπεινών*, the *humble*, the *modest*, as opposed to the *proud*, referred to in the first clause. The humble man looks for nothing but justice; has the meanest opinion of himself; expects nothing in the way of commendation or praise; and can never be disappointed, but in receiving praise which he neither expects nor desires.

Verse 4. *Riches profit not in the day of wrath*] Among men they can do all things; but they cannot purchase the remission of sins, nor turn aside the wrath of God when that is poured out upon the opulent transgressor.

Verse 7. *When a wicked man dieth*] *Hope* is a great blessing to man in his present state of trial and suffering; because it leads him to expect a favourable termination of his ills. But *hope* was not made for the *wicked*; and yet they are the very persons that most abound in it! They hope to be saved, and get at last to the kingdom of God; though they have their face towards perdition, and refuse to turn. But their hope goes no farther than the *grave*. There the wicked man's expectation is cut off, and his hope perishes. But to the *saint*, the *penitent*, and the *cross-bearers* in general, what a treasure is *hope*! What a balm through life!

Verse 8. *The wicked cometh in his stead.*] Often God makes this distinction; in public calamities and in sudden accidents he rescues the righteous, and leaves the wicked, who has filled up the measure of his iniquities, to be seized by the hand of death. *Justice*, then, does its own work; for *mercy* has been rejected.

Verse 9. *An hypocrite with his mouth*] *chaneph* might be better translated *infidel* than *hypocrite*.

his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.

10 <sup>l</sup> When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth: and when the wicked perish, *there is* shouting.

11 <sup>k</sup> By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

12 He that is <sup>l</sup> void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace.

13 <sup>m</sup> A <sup>n</sup> talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.

14 <sup>o</sup> Where no counsel *is*, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors *there is* safety.

15 <sup>p</sup> He that is surety for a stranger <sup>q</sup> shall

xxix. 8. — <sup>l</sup> Heb. *destitute of heart*. — <sup>m</sup> Lev. xix. 16. Ch. xx. 19. — <sup>n</sup> Heb. *He that walketh, being a talebearer*. — <sup>o</sup> 1 Kings xii. 1, &c. Ch. xv. 22. xxiv. 6. — <sup>p</sup> Ch. vi. 1. — <sup>q</sup> Heb. *shall be sore broken*.

The latter is one that pretends to religion; that uses it for *secular purposes*. The former is one who *disbelieves* divine revelation, and accordingly is *polluted*, and lives in *pollution*. This is properly the force of the original word. Such persons deal in calumny and lies, and often thus destroy the character of their neighbour. Besides, they are very zealous in propagating their own infidel notions; and thus, by this means, destroy their neighbour; but the experimental knowledge which the *just* have of God and his salvation prevents them from being ensnared.

Verse 10. *When it goeth well*] An upright, pious, sensible man is a great blessing to the neighbourhood where he resides, by his example, his advice, and his prayers. The considerate prize him on these accounts, and rejoice in his prosperity. But when the *wicked perish*, who has been a general curse by the contagion of his example and conversation, there is not only no regret expressed for his decease, but a *general joy* because God has removed him.

Verse 12. *He that is void of wisdom*] A foolish man is generally abundant in his censures; he dwells on the *defects* of his neighbour, and is sure to bring them into the most prominent view. But a *man of understanding*—a prudent, sensible man, hides those defects wherever he can, and puts the most charitable construction on those which he cannot conceal.

Verse 13. *A talebearer*] *holeh rachil*, the walking busy-body, the trader in scandal.

*Revealeth secrets*] Whatever was confided to him he is sure to publish abroad. The word means a *hawker*, or *travelling chapman*. Such are always great newsmongers; and will tell even their *own secrets*, rather than have nothing to say.

Verse 15. *He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it*] He shall find evil upon evil in it. See on chap. vi. 1.

A. M. cir. 3604.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. O.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U. C. c. 247.

smart *for it* : and he that hateth  
a suretiship is sure.  
16 <sup>b</sup> A gracious woman re-  
taineth honour : and strong men

retain riches.

17 <sup>c</sup> The merciful man doeth good to his own soul : but *he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh.*

18 The wicked worketh a deceitful work : but <sup>d</sup> to him that soweth righteousness *shall be* a sure reward.

19 As righteousness *tendeth* to life : so he that pursueth evil *pursueth it* to his own death.

20 They that are of a froward heart *are* abomination to the LORD : but *such as are upright in their way are* his delight.

21 <sup>e</sup> *Though* hand *join* in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished : but <sup>f</sup> the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.

22 *As* a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, *so is* a fair woman which <sup>g</sup> is without discretion.

23 The desire of the righteous *is* only good : *but* the expectation of the wicked <sup>h</sup> *is* wrath.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *those that strike hands.* — <sup>b</sup> Ch. xxxi. 30. — <sup>c</sup> Matt. v. 7. xxv. 34, &c. — <sup>d</sup> Hos. x. 12. Gal. vi. 8, 9. James iii. 18. — <sup>e</sup> Ch. xvi. 5. — <sup>f</sup> Ps. cxii. 2. — <sup>g</sup> Heb. *departeth from.* — <sup>h</sup> Rom. ii. 8, 9. — <sup>i</sup> Ps. cxii. 9. — <sup>k</sup> 2 Cor. ix. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. — <sup>l</sup> Or, *The soul of blessing.* — <sup>m</sup> Matt. v. 7. — <sup>n</sup> Amos viii. 5, 6. — <sup>o</sup> Job xxix. 13. — <sup>p</sup> Esth. vii.

Verse 16. *A gracious woman retaineth honour*] Instead of this clause, the *Septuagint* have, ἡ γυνὴ εὐχάριστος ἐγχεῖ ἀνδρὶ δόξαν, "A gracious woman raiseth up honour to the man;" ὀρθοῦνος δὲ ἀτιμίας γυνὴ μισοῦσα δίκαια, "But she that hateth righteous things is a throne of dishonour." A good wife is an honour to her husband; and a bad wife is her husband's reproach: if this be so, how careful should a man be whom he marries?

Verse 17. *The merciful man doeth good to his own soul*] Every gracious disposition is increased while a man is exercised in showing mercy. No man can show an act of disinterested mercy without benefiting his own soul, by improving his moral feeling.

*But he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh.*] We seldom see a peevish, fretful, vindictive man either in good health, or good plight of body. I have often heard it observed of such, "He frets his flesh off his bones."

Verse 18. *Worketh a deceitful work*] An *unstable* work; nothing is durable that he does, except his crimes.

Verse 19. *Righteousness tendeth to life*] True godliness promotes health, and is the best means of lengthening out life; but wicked men live not out half their days.

Verse 21. *Though hand join in hand*] Let them confederate as they please, to support each other,

24 There is that <sup>i</sup> scattereth, and yet increaseth : and *there is* that withholdeth more than is meet, but *it tendeth* to poverty.

25 <sup>k</sup> The <sup>l</sup> liberal soul shall be made fat : <sup>m</sup> and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

26 <sup>n</sup> He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him : but <sup>o</sup> blessing *shall be* upon the head of him that selleth *it.*

27 He that diligently seeketh good procureth favour : <sup>p</sup> but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him.

28 <sup>q</sup> He that trusteth in his riches shall fall : but <sup>r</sup> the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

29 He that troubleth his own house <sup>s</sup> shall inherit the wind : and the fool *shall be* servant to the wise of heart.

30 The fruit of the righteous *is* a tree of life ; and <sup>t</sup> he that <sup>u</sup> winneth souls *is* wise.

31 <sup>v</sup> Behold the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth : much more the wicked and the sinner.

10. Ps. vii. 15, 16. ix. 15, 16. x. 2. lviii. 6. — <sup>a</sup> Job xxxi. 24. Ps. lii. 7. Mark x. 24. Luke xii. 21. 1 Tim. vi. 17. <sup>b</sup> Ps. i. 3. lii. 8. xcii. 12, &c. Jer. xviii. 8. — <sup>c</sup> Eccles. v. 16. <sup>d</sup> Dan. xii. 3. 1 Cor. ix. 19, &c. James v. 20. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. *taketh.* — <sup>f</sup> Jer. xxv. 29. 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18.

justice will take care that they escape not punishment. The Hindoos sometimes ratify an engagement by one person *laying his right hand on the hand of another.*—WARD.

Verse 22. *A jewel of gold in a swine's snout*] That is, beauty in a woman destitute of good breeding and modest carriage, is as becoming as a gold ring on the snout of a swine. *Coverdale* translates thus: "A fayre woman without discrete maners, is like a nage of golde in a swyne's snoute." In Asiatic countries the *nose jewel* is very common: to this the text alludes.

Verse 24. *There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth*] The bountiful man, who gives to the poor, never turning away his face from any one in distress, the Lord blesses his property, and the bread is multiplied in his hand. To the same purpose the following verse.

Verse 25. *The liberal soul shall be made fat*] He who gives to the distressed, in the true spirit of charity, shall get an hundred fold from God's mercy. How wonderful is the Lord! He gives the *property*, gives the *heart* to use it aright, and *recompenseth* the man for the deed, though all the fruit was found from himself!

*He that watereth*] A man who distributes in the right spirit gets more good himself than the poor man does who receives the bounty. Thus *it is more blessed to give than to receive.*

Verse 26. He that withholdeth corn] Who refuses to sell because he hopes for a dearth, and then he can make his own price.

The people shall curse him] Yes, and God shall curse him also; and if he do not turn and repent, he will get God's curse, and the curse of the poor, which will be a canker in his money during time, and in his soul throughout eternity.

Verse 29. Shall inherit the wind] He who dissipates his property by riotous living, shall be as unsatisfied as he who attempts to feed upon air.

Verse 30. The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life] עץ חיים chayim, "the tree of lives." It is like

that tree which grew in the paradise of God; increasing the bodily and mental vigour of those who ate of it.

He that winneth souls is wise.] Wisdom seeks to reclaim the wanderers; and he who is influenced by wisdom will do the same.

Verse 31. Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth, &c.] The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic read this verse as follows: "And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" And this St. Peter quotes *literatim*, 1st Epist. iv. 18, where see the note.

CHAPTER XII.

Of the benefit of instruction, and the cultivation of piety. The virtuous woman. The different lot of the just and unjust. The humane man. The industrious man. The fool and the wise man. The uncharitable. The excellence of the righteous. The slothful is in want. Righteousness leads to life, &c.

A. M. cir. 3004. B. C. cir. 1000. Ante I. Ol. cir. 224. Ante U.C. c. 247. WHOSO loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof is brutish.

2 A good man obtaineth favour of the LORD: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn.

3 A man shall not be established by wicked-

<sup>a</sup> Ch. viii. 35. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. x. 25.

ness: but the <sup>b</sup>root of the righteous shall not be moved.

4 A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is <sup>d</sup>as rottenness in his bones.

5 The thoughts of the righteous are right:

<sup>c</sup> Ch. xxxi. 23. 1 Cor. xi. 7. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. xiv. 30.

NOTES ON CHAP. XII.

Verse 1. Whoso loveth instruction] מוסר musar, discipline or correction, loves knowledge; for correction is the way to knowledge.

But he that hateth reproof is brutish.] בער baar, he is a bear; and expects no more benefit from correction than the ox does from the goad.

Verse 2. A good man obtaineth favour] First, it is God who makes him good; for every child of Adam is bad till the grace of God changes his heart. Secondly, while he walks in the path of obedience he increases in goodness, and consequently in the favour of the Lord.

Verse 3. A man shall not be established by wickedness] Evil is always variable: it has no fixed principle, except the root that is in the human heart; and even that is ever assuming new forms. Nothing is permanent but goodness; and that is unchangeable, because it comes from God. The produce of goodness is permanent, because it has God's blessing in it: the fruit of wickedness, or the property procured by wickedness, is transitory, because it has God's curse on it. The righteous has his root in God; and therefore he shall not be moved.

Verse 4. A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband] עשת חַיִּיל eshet chayil, a strong woman. Our word virtue (virtus) is derived from vir, a man; and as man is the noblest of God's creatures, virtue expresses what is becoming to man; what is noble,

courageous, and dignified: and as vir, a man, comes from vis, power or strength; so it implies what is strong and vigorous in principle: and as in uncivilized life strength and courage were considered the very highest, because apparently the most necessary, of all virtues; hence the term itself might have become the denomination of all excellent moral qualities; and is now applied to whatever constitutes the system of morality and moral duties. In some parts of the world, however, where arts and sciences have made little progress, strength is one of the first qualifications of a wife, where the labours of the field are appointed to them. It is not an uncommon sight in different parts of Africa, to see the wives (queens) of the kings and chiefs going out in the morning to the plantations, with their mattock in their hand, and their youngest child on their back; and when arrived at the ground, lay the young prince or princess upon the earth, which when weary of lying on one side, will roll itself on the other, and thus continue during the course of the day, without uttering a single whimper, except at the intervals in which its mother gives it suck; she being employed all the while in such labour as we in Europe generally assign to our horses. In these cases, the strong wife is the highest acquisition; and is a crown to her husband, though he be king of Bonny or Calabar. It is certain that in ancient times the women in Judea did some of the severest work in the fields, such as drawing water

A. M. cir. 3004. *but the counsels of the wicked*  
 B. C. cir. 1000. *are deceit.*  
 Ante I. Ol. cir. 224. 6 <sup>a</sup> The words of the wicked  
 Ante U.C. c. 247. *are to lie in wait for blood:*

<sup>b</sup> but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them.

7 <sup>c</sup> The wicked are overthrown, and *are* not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.

8 A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: <sup>d</sup> but he that is <sup>e</sup> of a perverse heart shall be despised.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. i. 11, 18. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. xiv. 3. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 36, 37. Ch. xi. 21. Matt. vii. 24, 25, 26, 27. — <sup>d</sup> 1 Sam. xxv. 17. <sup>e</sup> Heb. *perverse of heart.* — <sup>f</sup> Ch. xiii. 7. — <sup>g</sup> Deut. xxv.

from the wells, and watering the flocks, &c. On this account, I think, the words may be taken literally; and especially when we add another consideration, that a woman healthy, and of good muscular powers, is the most likely to produce and properly rear up a healthy offspring; and children of this kind are a crown to their parents.

Is as rottenness in his bones.] Does not this refer to a woman irregular in her manners, who by her incontinence not only maketh her husband ashamed, but contracts and communicates such diseases as bring rottenness into the bones? I think so. And I think this was the view taken of the text by Coverdale, who translates thus: "A stedfast woman is a crowne unto her husbonde: but she that behaveth herself dishonestly is a corruption in his bones."

Verse 7. *The wicked are overthrown*] Seldom does God give such a long life or numerous offspring.

*But the house of the righteous shall stand.*] God blesses their progeny, and their families continue long in the earth; whereas the wicked seldom have many generations in a direct line. This is God's mercy, that the entail of iniquity may be in some sort cut off, so that the same vices may not be strengthened by successive generations. For generally the bad root produces not only a bad plant, but one worse than itself.

Verse 9. *He that is despised, and hath a servant*] I believe the *Vulgate* gives the true sense of this verse: *Melior est pauper, et sufficiens sibi; quam gloriosus, et indigens pane.* "Better is the poor man who provides for himself, than the proud who is destitute of bread." The Versions in general agree in this sense. This needs no comment. There are some who, through *pride of birth*, &c., would rather starve, than put their hands to menial labour. Though they may be lords, how much to be preferred is the simple peasant, who supports himself and family by the drudgery of life!

Verse 10. *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast*] One principal characteristic of a holy man is mercy: cruelty is unknown to him; and his benevolence extends to the meanest of the brute creation. Pity rules the heart of a pious man, and he can do nothing that is cruel. He considers what is best for

9 <sup>f</sup> *He that is despised, and hath a servant, is better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread.*

10 <sup>a</sup> *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the <sup>b</sup> tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.*

11 <sup>i</sup> *He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: but he that followeth vain persons <sup>k</sup> is void of understanding.*

12 *The wicked desireth <sup>l</sup> the net of evil men: but the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit.*

4. — <sup>b</sup> Or, bowels. — <sup>l</sup> Gen. iii. 19. — <sup>k</sup> Ch. vi. 32. — <sup>o</sup> The fortress.

the comfort, ease, health, and life of the *beast* that serves him; and he knows that God himself *careth for oxen*: and one of the ten commandments provides a seventh part of time to be allotted for the rest of labouring beasts as well as for man.

I once in my travels met with the *Hebrew* of this clause on the sign board of a public inn: *אדם ובהמה יודעו טעם נפש בהמה* *yodea tsaddik nephesh behemto.* "A righteous man considereth the life of his beast;" which, being very appropriate, reminded me that I should feed my horse.

*The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.*] *אדם אכזרי, are violent, without mercy, ruthless.* The wicked, influenced by Satan, can show no other disposition than what is in their master. If they appear at any time merciful, it is a cloak which they use to cover purposes of cruelty. To accomplish its end, iniquity will assume any garb, speak mercifully, extend benevolence, sometimes even give to the poor! *But timeo Danaos, et dona ferentes.* The cry of fire at midnight, provided it be in another's dwelling, is more congenial to their souls than the cry of mercy. Look at the human fiends, "out-heroding Herod," in horse races, bruising matches, and cock fights, and in wars for the extension of territory, and the purposes of ambition. The hell is yet undescribed, that is suited to such monsters in cruelty.

Verse 11. *He that tilleth his land*] God's blessing will be in the labour of the honest agriculturist.

*But he that followeth vain persons*] He who, while he should be cultivating his ground, preparing for a future crop, or reaping his harvest, associates with fowlers, coursers of hares, hunters of foxes, or those engaged in any champaign amusements, is void of understanding; and I have known several such come to beggary.

To this verse the *Septuagint* add the following clause: *Ὅς ἐστὶν ἡδύς ἐν οἴκῳ διατρίβας, ἐν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ οὐκ ἔρωμασι καταλείψει ἀτιμίαν.* "He who is a boon companion in banquets, shall leave dishonour in his own fortresses." This has been copied by the *Vulgate* and the *Arabic*. That is, The man who frequents the ale-house enriches that, while he impoverishes his own habitation.

Verse 12. *The wicked desireth the net of evil men:*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

13 <sup>a</sup> The <sup>b</sup> wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips : <sup>c</sup> but the just shall come out of trouble.

14 <sup>d</sup> A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth : <sup>e</sup> and the recompence of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him.

15 <sup>f</sup> The way of the fool is right in his own eyes : but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.

16 <sup>g</sup> A fool's wrath is <sup>h</sup> presently known : but a prudent man covereth shame.

17 <sup>i</sup> He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness : but a false witness deceit.

18 <sup>k</sup> There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword : but the tongue of the wise is health.

19 The lip of truth shall be established for ever : <sup>l</sup> but a lying tongue is but for a moment.

20 Deceit is in the heart of them that

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *The snare of the wicked is in the transgression of lips.*—<sup>b</sup> Ch. xviii. 7.—<sup>c</sup> 2 Pet. ii. 9.—<sup>d</sup> Ch. xiii. 2. xviii. 20.—<sup>e</sup> Isai. iii. 10, 11.—<sup>f</sup> Ch. iii. 7. Luke xviii. 11. Ch. xxix. 11.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. *in that day.*—<sup>h</sup> Ch. xiv. 5.

They applaud their ways, and are careful to imitate them in their wives.

Verse 13. *The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips*] A man who deals in lies and false oaths will sooner or later be found out to his own ruin. There is another proverb as true as this: *A liar had need of a good memory*; for as the truth is not in him, he says and unsays, and often contradicts himself.

Verse 16. *A fool's wrath is presently known*] We have a proverb very like this, and it will serve for illustration:—

*A fool's bolt is soon shot.*

A weak-minded man has no self-government; he is easily angered, and generally speaks whatever comes first to his mind.

Verse 18. *There is that speaketh*] Instead of בִּישָׁה *boteh*, blabbing out, blustering, several MSS. have בִּישָׁה *boteach*, TRUSTING: and instead of כְּדַקְרוֹת *kedakeroth*, as the piercings, seven MSS., with the Complutensian Polyglot, have בְּמַדְקְרוֹת *bemadkeroth*, in the piercings. "There is that trusteth in the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health." But I suppose the former to be the true reading.

Verse 19. *A lying tongue is but for a moment.*] Truth stands for ever; because its foundation is indestructible: but falsehood may soon be detected; and, though it gain credit for a while, it had that credit because it was supposed to be truth.

Verse 21. *There shall no evil happen to the just*] No, for all things work together for good to them

imagine evil: but to the counsellors of peace is joy.

21 There shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.

22 <sup>m</sup> Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight.

23 <sup>n</sup> A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.

24 <sup>o</sup> The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the <sup>p</sup> slothful shall be under tribute.

25 <sup>q</sup> Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but <sup>r</sup> a good word maketh it glad.

26 The righteous is more <sup>s</sup> excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them.

27 The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man is precious.

28 In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death.

<sup>k</sup> Ps. lviii. 4. lix. 7. lxi. 3.—<sup>l</sup> Ps. lii. 5. Ch. xix. 9. Ch. vi. 17. xi. 20. Rev. xxii. 15.—<sup>m</sup> Ch. xiii. 16. xv. 2. Ch. x. 4.—<sup>n</sup> Or, *deceitful.*—<sup>o</sup> Ch. xv. 43.—<sup>p</sup> Isai. l. 4.—<sup>q</sup> Or, *abundant.*

that love God. Whatever occurs to a righteous man God turns to his advantage. But, on the other hand, the wicked are filled with mischief: they are hurt, grieved, and wounded, by every occurrence; and nothing turns to their profit.

Verse 23. *A prudent man concealeth knowledge*] "If a fool hold his peace he may pass for a wise man." I have known men of some learning, so intent on immediately informing a company how well cultivated their minds were, that they have passed either for insignificant pedants or stupid asses.

Verse 24. *The hand of the diligent shall bear rule*] And why? because by his own industry he is independent; and every such person is respected wherever found.

Verse 25. *Heaviness in the heart of a man maketh it stoop*] Sorrow of heart, hopeless love, or a sense of God's displeasure,—these prostrate the man, and he becomes a child before them.

*But a good word maketh it glad.*] A single good or favourable word will remove despondency; and that word, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee," will instantly remove despair.

Verse 26. *The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour*] That is, if the neighbour be a wicked man. The spirit of the proverb lies here: The poor righteous man is more excellent than his sinful neighbour, though affluent and noble. The Syriac has it, "The righteous deviseth good to his neighbour." A late commentator has translated it, "The righteous explore their pastures." How נִרְעָה can be translated THEIR pastures I know not; but none of the Versions understood it in this way. The Vulgate is rather

singular: Qui negligit damnum propter amicum, justus est. "He who neglects or sustains a loss for the sake of his friend, is a just man." The *Septuagint* is insufferable: "The well-instructed righteous man shall be his own friend." One would hope these translators meant *not exclusively*; he should love his neighbour as himself.

Verse 27. *The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting*] Because he is a *slothful* man, he does not hunt for prey; therefore gets *none*, and cannot *roast*, that he may *eat*. There is some obscurity in the *original*, on which the *Versions* cast little light. *Coverdale* translates the whole verse thus: "A disreputful man schal fynde no vantage: but he that is content with what he hath, is more worth than golde." My old MS. Bible: *The gylful man schal not fynd wympage: and the substance of a man schal ben the pris of gold.*

By translating רמיה *remiyah* the *deceitful*, instead of the *slothful man*, which appears to be the genuine meaning of the word, we may obtain a good sense, as the *Vulgate* has done: "The deceitful man shall

not find gain; but the substance of a (just) man shall be the price of gold." But our common Version, allowing רמיה *remiyah* to be translated *fraudulent*, which is its proper meaning, gives the best sense: "The fraudulent man roasteth not that which he took in hunting," the justice of God snatching from his mouth what he had acquired *unrighteously*.

*But the substance of a diligent man*] One who by honest industry acquires all his property—is *precious*, because it has the blessing of God in it.

Verse 28. *In the way of righteousness is life*] חַיִּים *chayim*, *lives*; *life* temporal, and *life* eternal.

*And in the pathway thereof there is no death.*] Not only do the *general precepts* and *promises* of God lead to *life eternal*, and promote *life temporal*; but every *duty*, every *act of faith*, *patience of hope*, and *labour of love*, though requiring much *self-abasement*, *self-denial*, and often an *extension of corporal strength*, all lead to *life*. For in every case, in every particular, "the path of duty is the way of safety." The later clause is only a repetition of the *sense* of the former.

CHAPTER XIII.

*Various moral sentences; the wise child; continence of speech; of the poor rich man and the rich poor man; ill-gotten wealth; delay of what is hoped for; the bad consequences of refusing instruction; providing for one's children; the necessity of correcting them, &c.*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C.c. 247.

**A** WISE son heareth his father's instruction: \*but a scorner heareth not rebuke.

2 <sup>b</sup> A man shall eat good by the fruit of his mouth: but the soul of the transgressors shall eat violence.

3 <sup>c</sup> He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.

4 <sup>d</sup> The soul of the sluggard desireth, and

\* 1 Sam. ii. 25.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. xii. 14.—<sup>c</sup> Ps. xxxix. 1. Ch. xxi. 23. James iii. 2.

hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C.c. 247.

5 A righteous man hateth lying: but a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame.

6 <sup>e</sup> Righteousness keepeth him that is upright in the way: but wickedness overthroweth the sinner.

7 <sup>f</sup> There is that maketh himself rich, yet

<sup>d</sup> Ch. x. 4.—<sup>e</sup> Ch. xi. 3, 5, 6.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. *sin*.—<sup>g</sup> Ch. xii. 9.

NOTES ON CHAP. XIII.

Verse 1. *A wise son heareth his father's instruction*] The child that has had a proper *nurturing*, will profit by his father's counsels; but the child that is permitted to fulfil *its own will* and *have its own way*, will jest at the reproofs of its parents.

Verse 3. *He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life*] How often have the foolish, headstrong, and wicked forfeited their lives by the *treasonable* or *blasphemous* words they have spoken! The *government of the tongue* is a *rare* but useful talent.

*But he that openeth wide his lips*] He that puts no bounds to his loquacity, speaks on every subject, and gives his judgment and opinion on every matter. It has often been remarked that God has given us *two EYES*, that we may *SEE much*; *two EARS*, that we may *HEAR much*; but has given us but *ONE tongue*, and

that fenced in with teeth, to indicate that though we *hear* and *see much*, we should *speak* but *little*.

Verse 4. *The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing*] We often hear many religious people expressing a *desire to have more of the divine life*, and yet never get *forward* in it. How is this? The reason is, they *desire*, but do not *stir themselves up* to lay hold upon the Lord. They are always *learning*, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. They *seek* to enter in at the strait gate, but are not able, because they do not *strive*.

Verse 7. *There is that maketh himself rich*] That labours hard to acquire money, yet *hath nothing*; his excessive *covetousness* not being satisfied with what he possesses, nor permitting him to enjoy *with comfort* what he has acquired. The fable of *the dog in the manger* will illustrate this.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

*hath* nothing: *there is* that maketh himself poor, yet *hath* great riches.

8 The ransom of a man's life

are his riches: but the poor heareth not rebuke.

9 The light of the righteous rejoiceth: <sup>a</sup> but the <sup>b</sup> lamp of the wicked shall be put out.

10 Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised *is* wisdom.

11 <sup>c</sup> Wealth *gotten* by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth <sup>d</sup> by labour shall increase.

<sup>a</sup> Job xviii. 5, 6. xxi. 17. Ch. xxiv. 20. — <sup>b</sup> Or, *candle*.  
<sup>c</sup> Ch. x. 2. xx. 21. — <sup>d</sup> Heb. *with the hand*. — <sup>e</sup> Ver. 19.  
<sup>f</sup> 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. — <sup>g</sup> Or, *shall be in peace*. — <sup>h</sup> Ch. x.

There is *that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches*.] "As poor," said St. Paul, "yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things." The former is the *rich poor* man; the latter is the *poor rich* man.

As the words are here in the *hithpael* conjugation, which implies *reflex action*, or the *action performed on one's self*, and often signifies *feigning* or *pretending* to be what one *is not*, or *not* to be what one *is*; the words may be understood of persons who *feign* or *pretend* to be either *richer* or *poorer* than they *really are*, to accomplish some particular purpose. "There is that *feigneth himself* to be *rich*, yet *hath nothing*; there is that *feigneth himself* to be *poor*, yet *hath great riches*." Both these characters frequently occur in life.

Verse 8. *The ransom of a man's life*] Those who have riches have often much trouble with them; as they had much trouble to *get* them, so they have much trouble to *keep* them. In despotic countries, a rich man is often accused of some capital crime, and to save his life, though he may be quite innocent, is obliged to give up his riches; but the *poor*, in such countries, are put to no trouble.

Verse 9. *The light of the righteous rejoiceth*] They shall have that measure of prosperity which shall be best for them; but the wicked, howsoever prosperous for a time, shall be brought into desolation. *Light* and *lamp* in both cases may signify *posterity*. The righteous shall have a joyous posterity; but that of the wicked shall be cut off. So 1 Kings xi. 36: "And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a *light* (נר *ner*, a *lamp*) always before me." xv. 4: "Nevertheless for David's sake did the Lord give them a *lamp*, to set up his *son* after him." See also Ps. cxxxii. 17, and several other places.

Verse 10. *By pride cometh contention*] Perhaps there is not a *quarrel* among *individuals* in private life, nor a *war* among nations, that does not proceed from *pride* and *ambition*. Neither *man* nor *nation* will be content to be *less* than another; and to acquire the wished-for *superiority* all is thrown into general confusion, both in public and private life. It was to destroy this *spirit of pride*, that Jesus was mani-

12 Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but <sup>a</sup> when the desire cometh, *it is* a tree of life.

13 Whoso <sup>f</sup> despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment <sup>g</sup> shall be rewarded.

14 <sup>b</sup> The law of the wise *is* a fountain of life, to depart from <sup>i</sup> the snares of death.

15 Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of understanders *is* hard.

16 <sup>b</sup> Every prudent *man* dealeth with knowledge: but a fool <sup>i</sup> layeth open *his* folly.

11. xiv. 27. xvi. 22. — 2 Sam. xxii. 6. — <sup>k</sup> Ch. xii. 23. xv. 2.  
<sup>l</sup> Heb. *spreadeth*.

festes in the *extrême of humility* and *humiliation* among men. The salvation of Christ is a *deliverance from pride*, and a being clothed with *humility*. As far as we are *humble*, so far we are *saved*.

Verse 11. *Wealth gotten by vanity*] Wealth that is not the result of *honest industry* and *hard labour* is seldom permanent. All fortunes acquired by speculation, lucky hits, and ministering to the pride or luxury of others, &c., soon become dissipated. They are not gotten in the way of providence, and have not God's blessing, and therefore are not permanent.

Verse 12. *Hope deferred maketh the heart sick*] When once a *good* is discovered, *want* of it felt, *strong desire* for the possession excited, and the promise of attainment made on grounds unsuspected, so that the *reality* of the *thing* and the *certainty* of the *promise* are manifest, *hope* posts forward to *realize the blessing*. *Delay* in the gratification pains the mind; the increase of the delay prostrates and sickens the heart; and if *delay sickens the heart*, ultimate *disappointment kills it*. *But* when the thing desired, hoped for, and expected comes, it is a tree of life, חיים עץ *ets chaiyim*, "the tree of lives;" it comforts and invigorates both body and soul. To the tree of lives, in the midst of the gardens of paradise, how frequent are the allusions in the writings of Solomon, and in other parts of the holy Scriptures! What deep, and perhaps yet unknown, mysteries were in this tree!

Verse 13. *Whoso despiseth the word*] The revelation which God has in his mercy given to man, — *shall be destroyed*; for there is no other way of salvation but that which it points out.

*But he that feareth the commandment*] That respects it so as to obey it, walking as this revelation directs, — *shall be rewarded*; shall find it to be his highest interest, and shall be in *peace* or *safety*, as the Hebrew word יום may be translated.

Verse 14. *The law of the wise is a fountain of life*] Perhaps it would be better to translate, "The law is to the wise man a fountain of life." It is the same to him as the "vein of lives," מקור חיים *mekor chaiyim*, the great *aorta* which transmits the blood from the



A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

17 A wicked messenger fall-  
eth into mischief: but <sup>a</sup> a <sup>b</sup> faith-  
ful ambassador *is* health.

18 Poverty and shame *shall*  
*be* to him that refuseth instruction: but <sup>c</sup> he  
that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.

19 The desire accomplished is sweet to the  
soul: but *it is* abomination to fools to depart  
from evil.

20 He that walketh with wise *men* shall be  
wise: but a companion of fools <sup>e</sup> shall be de-  
stroyed.

21 <sup>f</sup> Evil pursueth sinners: but to the right-  
eous good shall be repayed.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xxv. 23. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. *an ambassador of faithfulness.*  
<sup>c</sup> Ch. xv. 5, 31. — <sup>d</sup> Ver. 12. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. *shall be broken.*  
<sup>f</sup> Ps. xxxii. 10. — <sup>g</sup> Job xxvii. 16, 17. Ch. xxviii. 8. *Eccles.*

22 A good *man* leaveth an in-  
heritance to his children's chil-  
dren: and <sup>h</sup> the wealth of the  
sinner *is* laid up for the just.

23 <sup>h</sup> Much food *is in* the tillage of the poor:  
but there is *that is* destroyed for want of  
judgment.

24 <sup>i</sup> He that spareth his rod hateth his  
son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him  
betimes.

25 <sup>k</sup> The righteous eateth to the satisfying  
of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall  
want.

ii. 26. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. xii. 11. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. xix. 18. xxii. 15. xxiii. 13.  
xxix. 15, 17. — <sup>d</sup> Ps. xxxiv. 10. xxxvii. 3.

heart to every part of the body. There seems to be  
here an allusion to the *garden of paradise*, to the *tree  
of lives*, to the *tempter*, to the *baleful issue* of that  
temptation, and to the *death* entailed on man by his  
*unwisely* breaking the law of his God.

Verse 15. *The way of transgressors is hard.*] Never  
was a truer saying; most sinners have *more pain* and  
*difficulty* to get their souls damned, than the righteous  
have, with all their cross-bearing, to get to the king-  
dom of heaven.

Verse 17. *A wicked messenger*] The *Septuagint*:  
*Βασιλεως θρασους, a bold king*; instead of *מלך malach,*  
a messenger, they had read *מלך melech, a king*: but  
they are singular in this rendering; none of the  
other Versions have it so. He that betrays the  
counsels of his government, or the interests of his  
country, will sooner or later fall into mischief; but  
he that faithfully and loyally fulfils his mission, shall  
produce *honour* and *safety* to the commonwealth.

Verse 19. *The desire accomplished*] See on ver. 12.

Verse 20. *He that walketh with wise men shall be  
wise*] To walk with a person implies *love* and *at-  
tachment*; and it is impossible not to *imitate those we  
love*. So we say, "Show me his company, and I'll  
tell you the man." Let me know the company he  
keeps, and I shall easily guess his moral character.

Verse 22. *A good man leaveth an inheritance*] He  
files many a *prayer* in heaven in their behalf, and his  
good *example* and *advices* are remembered and  
quoted from generation to generation. Besides,  
whatever property he left was *honestly* acquired, and  
*well-gotten goods are permanent*. The general ex-  
perience of men shows this to be a common case;  
and that *property ill-gotten seldom reaches to the third  
generation*. This even the *heathens* observed. Hence:

De male quæsitis non gaudet tertius hæres.

"The third generation shall not possess the goods  
that have been unjustly acquired."

Verse 23. *That is destroyed for want of judgment.*  
Oh, how much of the *poverty* of the *poor* arises from  
their own want of management! They have little or  
no economy, and no foresight. When they get any  
thing, they speedily spend it; and a *feast* and a  
*famine* make the chief varieties of their life.

Verse 24. *He that spareth his rod hateth his son*  
That is, if he *hated* him, he could not do him a  
greater disservice than not to correct him when his  
*obstinacy* or *disobedience* requires it. We have met  
with this subject already, and it is a favourite with  
Solomon. See the places referred to in the margin.

The Rev. Mr. Holden makes some sensible ob-  
servations on this passage: "By the neglect of early  
correction the desires (passions) obtain ascendancy:  
the temper becomes irascible, peevish, querulous.  
Pride is nourished, humility destroyed, and by the  
habit of indulgence the mind is incapacitated to bear  
with firmness and equanimity the cares and sorrows,  
the checks and disappointments, which *feast u  
heir to.*"

Verse 25. *To the satisfying of his soul*] His de-  
sires are all moderate; he is contented with his cir-  
cumstances, and is pleased with the lot which God  
is pleased to send. The wicked, though he use all  
*shifts* and *expedients* to acquire earthly good, not  
sticking even at *rapine* and *wrong*, is frequently in  
real want, and always dissatisfied with his portion.  
*A contented mind is a continual feast.* At such feasts  
he eats not.

CHAPTER XIV.

*Various moral sentiments. The antithesis between wisdom and folly, and the differ-  
effects of each.*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

**E**VERY <sup>a</sup> wise woman  
<sup>b</sup> buildeth her house : but  
the foolish plucketh it down  
with her hands.

2 He that walketh in his uprightness feareth  
the LORD : <sup>c</sup> but *he that is* perverse in his  
ways despiseth him.

3 In the mouth of the foolish *is* a rod of  
pride : <sup>d</sup> but the lips of the wise shall pre-  
serve them.

4 Where no oxen *are* the crib *is* clean : but  
much increase *is* by the strength of the ox.

5 <sup>e</sup> A faithful witness will not lie : but a false  
witness will utter lies.

6 A scorner seeketh wisdom, and *findeth it*  
not ; but <sup>f</sup> knowledge is easy unto him that  
understandeth.

7 Go from the presence of a  
foolish man, when thou per-  
ceivest not *in him* the lips of  
knowledge.

8 The wisdom of the prudent *is* to under-  
stand his way : but the folly of fools *is* deceit.

9 <sup>g</sup> Fools make a mock at sin : but among  
the righteous *there is* favour.

10 The heart knoweth <sup>h</sup> his own bitterness ;  
and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his  
joy.

11 <sup>i</sup> The house of the wicked shall be over-  
thrown : but the tabernacle of the upright  
shall flourish.

12 <sup>k</sup> There is a way which seemeth right unto  
a man, but the <sup>l</sup> end thereof *are* the ways of  
death.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xxiv. 3. — <sup>b</sup> Ruth iv. 11. — <sup>c</sup> Job xii. 4. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. xii. 6. — <sup>e</sup> Exod. xx. 16. xxiii. 1. Ch. vi. 19. xii. 17. Ver. 25. — <sup>f</sup> Ch. viii. 9. xvii. 24. — <sup>g</sup> Ch. x. 23. — <sup>h</sup> Heb. the

bitterness of his soul. — <sup>i</sup> Job viii. 15. — <sup>k</sup> Ch. xvi. 25. <sup>l</sup> Rom. vi. 21.

NOTES ON CHAP. XIV.

Verse 1. *Every wise woman buildeth her house*] By her prudent and industrious management she *increases property* in the family, *furniture* in the house, and *food and raiment* for her household. This is the true *building of a house*. The *thrifless wife* acts differently, and the opposite is the result. Household *furniture*, far from being *increased*, is *dilapidated*; and her *household* are *ill-fed, ill-clothed, and worse educated*.

Verse 3. *The mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride*] The reproofs of such a person are *ill-judged* and *ill-timed*, and generally are conveyed in *such language* as renders them not only ineffectual, but displeasing, and even *irritating*.

Verse 4. *But much increase is by the strength of the ox.*] The *ox* is the most profitable of all the *beasts* used in *husbandry*. Except merely for *speed*, he is almost in every respect superior to the horse. 1. He is *longer lived*. 2. Scarcely liable to any *diseases*. 3. He is *steady*, and always *pulls fair* in his gears. 4. He *lives, fattens, and maintains* his strength on what a *horse will not eat*, and therefore is supported on one-third of the cost. 5. His *manure* is more profitable. And 6. When he is worn out in his labour, his *flesh* is good for the nourishment of man, his *horns* of great utility, and his *hide* almost invaluable. It might be added, he is *little or no expense* in *shoeing*, and his *gears* are much more *simple*, and much less *expensive*, than those of the *horse*. In all large farms *oxen* are greatly to be preferred to *horses*. Have but patience with this most patient animal, and you will soon find that *there is much increase by the strength* and labour of the *ox*.

Verse 6. *A scorner seeketh wisdom*] I believe the *scorner* means in this book the man that *despises the counsel of God*; the *infidel*. Such may *seek wisdom*; but he never can find it, because he does not seek it

where it is to be found; neither in the *teaching of God's Spirit*, nor in the *revelation of his will*.

Verse 7. *When thou perceivest not—the lips of knowledge.*] Instead of *רָוַי daath, knowledge*, several MSS. have *שָׁקֶר sheker, a lie*. How this reading came I cannot conjecture. The meaning of the adage is plain: Never associate with a vain, empty fellow, when thou perceivest he can neither *convey* nor *receive* instruction.

Verse 8. *Is to understand his way*] Instead of *חָבַן habin, to understand*, *חָצַן hachin, to direct* his way, is found in one MS. It makes a very good sense.

Verse 9. *Fools make a mock at sin*] And only *fools* would do so. But he that makes a *sport of sinning*, will find it *no sport* to suffer the vengeance of an eternal fire. Some learned men by their criticisms have brought this verse into embarrassments, out of which they were not able to extricate it. I believe we shall not come much nearer the sense than our present Version does.

Verse 10. *The heart knoweth his own bitterness*] *מִרְרַת נַפְשׁוֹ morrath naphsho*, "The bitterness of its soul." Under spiritual sorrow, the *heart* feels, the *soul* feels; all the *animal* nature feels and suffers. But when the peace of God is spoken to the troubled soul, the joy is indescribable; the *whole man* partakes of it. And a stranger to these religious feelings, to the travail of the soul, and to the witness of the Spirit, does not *intermeddle* with them; he does not understand them: indeed they may be even foolishness to him, because they are spiritually discerned.

Verse 12. *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man*] This may be his *easily besetting sin*, the *sin of his constitution*, the *sin of his trade*. Or it may be his *own false views of religion*: he may have an *imperfect repentance*, a *false faith*, a *very false creed*; and he may persuade himself that he is in the direct way to heaven. Many of the papists, when they

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C.c.247.

13 Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness.

14 The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways; and a good man shall be satisfied from himself.

15 The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going.

16 A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.

\* Ch. v. 4. Eccles. ii. 2. — b Ch. i. 31. xii. 14. — c Ch. xxii. 3.

were burning the saints of God in the flames at Smithfield, thought they were doing God service! And in the late Irish massacre, the more of the Protestants they piked to death, shot, or burnt, the more they believed they deserved of God's favour and their church's gratitude. But cruelty and murder are the short road, the near way, to eternal perdition.

Verse 13. *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful*] Many a time is a smile forced upon the face, when the heart is in deep distress. And it is a hard task to put on the face of mirth when a man has a heavy heart.

Verse 14. *The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways*] 1. Who is the backslider? *רו sug.* 1. The man who once walked in the ways of religion, but has withdrawn from them. 2. The man who once fought manfully against the world, the devil, and the flesh; but has retreated from the battle, or joined the enemy. 3. The man who once belonged to the congregation of the saints, but is now removed from them, and is set down in the synagogue of Satan.

2. But who is the backslider in heart? 1. Not he who was surprised and overcome by the power of temptation, and the weakness of his own heart. 2. But he who drinks down iniquity with greediness. 3. Who gives cheerful way to the bent of his own nature, and now delights in fulfilling the lusts of the flesh and of the mind. 4. Who loves sin as before he loved godliness.

3. What are his own ways? Folly, sin, disappointment, and death; with the apprehension of the wrath of God, and the sharp twings of a guilty conscience.

4. What is implied in being filled with his own ways? Having his soul saturated with folly, sin, and disappointment. At last ending here below in death, and then commencing an eternal existence where the fire is not quenched, and under the influence of that worm that never dieth. Alas, alas! who may abide when God doeth this?

And a good man shall be satisfied from himself.] 1. Who is the good man? (*רוח ויש ish tob*). 1. The man whose heart is right with God, whose tongue corresponds to his heart, and whose actions correspond to both. 2. The man who is every thing that the sinner and backslider are not.

2. He shall be satisfied from himself—he shall have the testimony of his own conscience, that in sim-

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C.c.247.

17 He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.

18 The simple inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.

19 The evil bow before the good; and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

20 The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich hath many friends.

21 He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth:

d Ch. xix. 7. — e Heb. many are the lovers of the rich.

plicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, he has his conversation among men.

3. He shall have God's Spirit to testify with his spirit that he is a child of God. He hath the witness in himself that he is born from above. The Spirit of God in his conscience, and the testimony of God in his Bible, show him that he belongs to the heavenly family. It is not from creeds or confessions of faith that he derives his satisfaction: he gets it from heaven, and it is sealed upon his heart.

Verse 16. *A wise man feareth*] He can never trust in himself, though he be satisfied from himself. He knows that his sufficiency is of God; and he has that fear that causes him to depart from evil, which is a guardian to the love he feels. Love renders him cautious; the other makes him confident. His caution leads him from sin; his confidence leads him to God.

Verse 17. He that is soon angry] *קטור נפיש ketar appayim*, "short of nostrils:" because, when a man is angry, his nose is contracted, and drawn up towards his eyes.

Dealeth foolishly] He has no time for reflection; he is hurried on by his passions, speaks like a fool, and acts like a madman.

Verse 19. *The evil bow before the good*] They are almost constrained to show them respect; and the wicked, who have wasted their substance with riotous living, bow before the gates of the righteous—of benevolent men, begging a morsel of bread.

Verse 20. *But the rich hath many friends.*] Many who speak to him the language of friendship; but if they profess friendship because he is rich, there is not one real friend among them. There is a fine saying of Cicero on this subject: Ut hirundines festivo tempore præsto sunt, frigore pulsæ recedunt: ita falsi amici sereno tempore præsto sunt: simul atque fortunæ hiemem viderint, evolant omnes.—Lib. iv., ad Herenn. "They are like swallows, who fly off during the winter, and quit our cold climates; and do not return till the warm season: but as soon as the winter sets in, they are all off again." So Horace:

Donec eris felix, multos numerabis amicos:

Nullus ad amissas ibit amicus opes.

"As long as thou art prosperous, thou shalt have many friends: but who of them will regard thee when thou hast lost thy wealth?"

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<sup>a</sup> but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy *is* he.

22 Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good.

23 In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips *tendeth* only to penury.

24 The crown of the wise *is* their riches: but the foolishness of fools *is* folly.

25 <sup>b</sup> A true witness delivereth souls: but a deceitful witness speaketh lies.

26 In the fear of the LORD *is* strong confidence; and his children shall have a place of refuge.

27 <sup>c</sup> The fear of the LORD *is* a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

28 In the multitude of people *is* the king's honour: but in the want of people *is* the destruction of the prince.

29 <sup>d</sup> He that *is* slow to wrath *is* of great

<sup>a</sup> Ps. xli. 1. cxii. 9. — <sup>b</sup> Ver. 5. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. xiii. 14. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. xvi. 32. James i. 19. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. *short of spirit*. — <sup>f</sup> Ps. cxiii. 10. — <sup>g</sup> Ch. xii. 4. — <sup>h</sup> Ch. xvii. 5. Matt. xxv. 40, 45. <sup>i</sup> See Job xxxi. 15, 16. Ch. xxii. 2. — <sup>k</sup> Job xiii. 15. xix.

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understanding: but *he that is* <sup>e</sup> hasty of spirit exalteth folly.

30 A sound heart *is* the life of the flesh: but <sup>f</sup> envy <sup>g</sup> the rottenness of the bones.

31 <sup>h</sup> He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.

32 The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but <sup>i</sup> the righteous hath hope in his death.

33 Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding; but <sup>j</sup> that which *is* in the midst of fools is made known.

34 Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach <sup>m</sup> to any people.

35 <sup>n</sup> The king's favour *is* toward a wise servant: but his wrath *is* against him that causeth shame.

26. Ps. xxiii. 4. xxxvii. 37. 2 Cor. i. 9. v. 8. 2 Tim. iv. 18. — <sup>l</sup> Ch. xii. 16. xxix. 11. — <sup>m</sup> Heb. *to nations*. <sup>n</sup> Matt. xxiv. 45, 47.

phrase, and the *tree of lives*, Solomon is particularly fond. See on chap. iv. 23; x. 12.

Verse 23. In the multitude of people] It is the interest of every state to promote marriage by every means that is just and prudent; and to discourage, disgrace, and debase celibacy; to render bachelors incapable, after a given age, of all public employments: and to banish nunneries and monasteries from all parts of their dominions;—they have ever, from their invention, contributed more to vice than virtue; and are positively point blank against the law of God.

Verse 29 That is hasty of spirit] קצר רוח *ketsar ruach*, "the short of spirit;" one that is easily irritated; and, being in a passion, he is agitated so as to be literally short of breath. Here put in opposition to ארוך אפים *erech appayim*, long of nostrils; see on ver. 17; and of the same import with St. Paul's μακροθυμία, long-suffering, long-mindedness. See on Eph. iv. 2.

Verse 30. A sound heart is the life of the flesh] A healthy state of the blood, and a proper circulation of that stream of life, is the grand cause, in the hand of God, of health and longevity. If the heart be diseased, life cannot be long continued.

Verse 31. He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker] Because the poor, or comparatively poor, are, in the order of God, a part of the inhabitants of the earth; and every man who loves God will show mercy to the poor, for with this God is peculiarly delighted. The poor have we ever with us, for the excitement and exercise of those benevolent, compassionate, and merciful feelings, without which men had been but little better than brutes.

Verse 32. The wicked is driven away in his wickedness] He does not leave life cheerfully. Poor soul!

Verse 21. He that despiseth his neighbour, sinneth] To despise a man because he has some natural blemish is unjust, cruel, and wicked. He is not the author of his own imperfections; they did not occur through his fault or folly; and if he could, he would not retain them. It is, therefore, unjust and wicked to despise him for what is not his fault, but his misfortune.

But he that hath mercy on the poor] Who reproaches no man for his poverty or scanty intellect, but divides his bread with the hungry,—happy is he; the blessing of God, and of them that were ready to perish, shall come upon him.

Verse 23. In all labour there is profit] If a man work at his trade, he gains by it; if he cultivate the earth, it will yield an increase; and in proportion as he labours, so will be his profit: but he who talks much labours little. And a man of words is seldom a man of deeds. Less talk and more work, is one of our own ancient advices.

Verse 24. But the foolishness of fools is folly.] The Targum reads, The honour of fools is folly. The fool, from his foolishness, produces acts of folly. This appears to be the meaning.

Verse 26. In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence] From this, and from genuine Christian experience, we find that the fear of God is highly consistent with the strongest confidence in his mercy and goodness.

Verse 27. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life] מזור חיים *mekor chayim*, the vein of lives. Another allusion to the great aorta which carries the blood from the heart to all the extremities of the body. Of this

Thou hast no *hope* in the other world, and thou leavest the present with the utmost *regret*! Thou wilt not go off; but God will *drive* thee.

But the righteous hath hope in his death.] He rejoiceth to depart and be with Christ: to him death is gain; he is not reluctant to go—he flies at the call of God.

Verse 34. But sin is a reproach to any people.] I am satisfied this is not the sense of the original, כַּחַסְדֵּי עַמִּי וְעֵשֶׂה לְעַמִּי חַטָּאת; which would be better rendered, *And mercy is a sin-offering for the people.* The Vulgate has, *Miseros autem facit populos peccatum*, "sin makes the people wretched." Ελασσονοῦσαι δε φυλας ἀμαρτια: "But sins lessen the tribes."—Septuagint. So also the Syriac and Arabic. The plain meaning of the original seems to be, *A national disposition to mercy* appears in the sight of God as a continual sin-offering. Not that it atones for the sin of the people; but, as a sin-offering is pleasing in the sight of the God of mercy, so is a merciful disposition in a nation. This view of the verse is consistent with the purest doctrines of free grace. And what is the

true sense of the words, we should take at all hazards and consequences: we shall never trench upon a sound creed by a literal interpretation of God's words. No nation has more of this spirit than the British nation. It is true, we have too many sanguinary laws; but the spirit of the people is widely different.

If any one will contend for the common version, he has my consent; and I readily agree in the saying, *Sin is the reproach of any people.* It is the curse and scandal of man. Though I think what I have given is the true meaning of the text.

Verse 35. The king's favour is toward a wise servant.] The king should have an intelligent man for his minister; a man of deep sense, sound judgment, and of a feeling, merciful disposition. He who has not the former will plunge the nation into difficulties; and he who has not the latter will embark her in disastrous wars. Most wars are occasioned by bad ministers, men of blood, who cannot be happy but in endeavouring to unchain the spirit of discord. Let every humane heart pray, *Lord scatter thou the people who delight in war!* Amen—so be it. Selah!

CHAP. XV.

The soft answer. Useful correction. Stability of the righteous. The contented mind. The slothful man. The fool. The covetous. The impious. The wicked opposed to the righteous: to the diligent; and to the man who fears the Lord.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
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Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

A <sup>a</sup> SOFT answer turneth away wrath: but <sup>b</sup> grievous words stir up anger.

2 The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: <sup>c</sup> but the mouth of fools <sup>d</sup> poureth out foolishness.

3 <sup>e</sup> The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

4 <sup>f</sup> A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.

<sup>a</sup> Judg. viii. 1, 2, 3. Ch. xxv. 15.—<sup>b</sup> 1 Sam. xxv. 10, &c. 1 Kings xii. 13, 14, 16.—<sup>c</sup> Ver. 28. Ch. xii. 23. xiii. 16.  
<sup>d</sup> Heb. *belcheth* or *bubbleth*.—<sup>e</sup> Job xxxiv. 21. Ch. v. 21. Jer. xvi. 17. xxxiii. 19. Hebr. iv. 14.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. *The healing*

5 <sup>a</sup> A fool despiseth his father's instruction: <sup>b</sup> but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

6 In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.

7 The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish doeth not so.

8 <sup>i</sup> The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination unto the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

*of the tongue.*—<sup>g</sup> Ch. x. 1.—<sup>h</sup> Ch. xiii. 18. Ver. 31, 32.  
<sup>i</sup> Ch. xxi. 27. xxviii. 9. Isai. i. 11. lxi. 8. lxvi. 3. Jer. vi. 20. vii. 22. Amos v. 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. XV.

Verse 1. A soft answer] Gentleness will often disarm the most furious, where positive derangement has not taken place; one angry word will always beget another, for the disposition of one spirit always begets its own likeness in another: thus kindness produces kindness, and rage produces rage. Universal experience confirms this proverb.

Verse 2. Useth knowledge aright] This is very difficult to know:—when to speak, and when to be silent; what to speak, and what to leave unspoken; the manner that is best and most suitable to the occasion, the subject, the circumstances, and the persons. All these are difficulties, often even to the wisest men. Even wise counsel may be foolishly given.

Verse 3. The eyes of the Lord are in every place] He not only sees all things, by his omnipresence, but his providence is every where. And if the consideration that his eye is in every place, have a tendency to appal those whose hearts are not right before him, and who seek for privacy that they may commit iniquity; yet the other consideration, that his providence is every where, has a great tendency to encourage the upright, and all who may be in perilous or distressing circumstances.

Verse 4. A wholesome tongue is a tree of life] Here again is an allusion to the paradisaical tree, עֵץ חַיִּים *chayyim*, "the tree of lives."

Verse 8. The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination] Even the most sedulous attendance on the

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9 The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the LORD: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.

10 Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way; and he that hateth reproof shall die.

11 Hell and destruction are before the LORD; how much more then the hearts of the children of men?

12 A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him; neither will he go unto the wise.

13 A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

14 The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.

15 All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.

16 Better is little with the fear of the LORD, than great treasure and trouble therewith.

17 Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.

18 A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but

he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.

19 The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns:

but the way of the righteous is made plain.

20 A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother.

21 Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom: but a man of understanding walketh uprightly.

22 Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.

23 A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!

24 The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.

25 The LORD will destroy the house of the proud: but he will establish the border of the widow.

26 The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD: but the words of the pure are pleasant words.

27 He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house: but he that hateth gifts shall live.

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<sup>a</sup> Ch. xxi. 21. <sup>1</sup> Tim. vi. 11. — <sup>b</sup> Or, Instruction. — <sup>c</sup> 1 Kings xxii. 8. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. v. 12. x. 17. — <sup>e</sup> Job xxvi. 6. Ps. cxxxix. 8. — <sup>f</sup> 2 Chron. vi. 30. Ps. vii. 9. xlv. 21. John ii. 24, 25. xxi. 17. Acts i. 24. — <sup>g</sup> Amos v. 10. <sup>2</sup> Tim. iv. 3. — <sup>h</sup> Ch. xvii. 22. — <sup>i</sup> Ch. xii. 25. — <sup>k</sup> Ch. xvii. 22. <sup>l</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 16. Ch. xvi. 8. <sup>1</sup> Tim. vi. 6. — <sup>m</sup> Ch. xvii. 1. <sup>n</sup> Ch. xxvi. 21. xxix. 22. — <sup>o</sup> Ch. xxii. 5. — <sup>p</sup> Heb. i.

raised up as a causey. — <sup>q</sup> Ch. x. 1. xxix. 3. — <sup>r</sup> Ch. x. 23. <sup>s</sup> Heb. void of heart. — <sup>t</sup> Eph. v. 15. — <sup>u</sup> Ch. xi. 14. xx. 18. <sup>v</sup> Ch. xxv. 11. — <sup>w</sup> Heb. in his season. — <sup>x</sup> Phil. iii. 20. Col. iii. 1, 2. — <sup>y</sup> Ch. xii. 7. xiv. 11. — <sup>z</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 5. 6. cxlvi. 9. — <sup>aa</sup> Ch. vi. 16, 18. — <sup>bb</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 30. — <sup>cc</sup> Heb. words of pleasantness. — <sup>dd</sup> Ch. xi. 19. Isai v. 8. Jer. xvii. 11.

ordinances of God, and performance of the ceremonies of religion, is an abomination to the Lord, if the heart be not right with him, and the observance do not flow from a principle of pure devotion. No religious acts will do in place of holiness to the Lord.

The prayer of the upright is his delight.] What a motive to be upright; and what a motive to the upright to pray! But who is the upright? The man who is weary of sin, and sincerely desires the salvation of God; as well as he who has already received a measure of that salvation. Hence it is said in the next verse, "He loveth him that followeth after righteousness."

Verse 11. Hell and destruction] שְׁאוֹל וְאֲבַדּוֹן sheol vaabaddon. Hades, the invisible world, the place of separate spirits till the resurrection; and Abaddon, the place of torment; are ever under the eye and control of the Lord.

Verse 13. By sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.] Every kind of sorrow worketh death, but that which is the offspring of true repentance. This alone is healthful to the soul. The indulgence of a disposition to sighing tends to destroy life. Every deep sigh throws off a portion of the vital energy.

Verse 16. Better is little with the fear of the Lord]

Because where the fear of God is, there are moderation and contentment of spirit.

Verse 17. Better is a dinner of herbs] Great numbers of indigent Hindoos subsist wholly on herbs fried in oil, and mixed with their rice.

Verse 19. The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns] Because he is slothful, he imagines ten thousand difficulties in the way which cannot be surmounted; but they are all the creatures of his own imagination, and that imagination is formed by his sloth.

Verse 22. But in the multitude of counsellors] See note on chap. xi. 14. But רֹב יוֹצֵאִים rob yoatsum might be translated, chief or master of the council, the prime minister.

Verse 24. The way of life is above to the wise] There is a treble antithesis here: 1. The way of the wise, and that of the fool. 2. The one is above, the other below. 3. The one is of life, the other is of death.

Verse 25. The house of the proud] Families of this description are seldom continued long. The Lord hates pride; and those that will not be humble he will destroy.

Verse 27. He that is greedy of gain] He who will be rich; troubleth his own house—he is a torment to

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cir. 224.  
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28 The heart of the righteous  
\* studieth to answer : but the  
mouth of the wicked poureth  
out evil things.

29 <sup>b</sup> The LORD is far from the wicked : but  
<sup>c</sup> he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

30 The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart :  
and a good report maketh the bones fat.

\* 1 Pet. iii. 15. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. x. l. xxxiv. 16. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. cxlv. 18, 19.  
<sup>d</sup> Ver. 5.

himself and his family by his avariciousness and penury, and a curse to those with whom he deals.

*But he that hateth gifts*] Whatever is given to pervert judgment.

Verse 28. *The heart of the righteous studieth to answer*] His tongue never runs before his wit ; he never speaks rashly, and never unadvisedly ; because he studies—ponders, his thoughts and his words.

Verse 29. *The Lord is far from the wicked*] He is neither near to hear, nor near to help.

Verse 30. *The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart*] Nature and art are continually placing before our view a multitude of the most resplendent images, each of which is calculated to give pleasure. The man who has a correct judgment, and an accurate eye, may not only amuse, but instruct himself endlessly, by the beauties of nature and art.

Verse 31. *The ear that heareth the reproof*] That receives it gratefully and obeys it. "Advice is for them that will take it ;" so says one of our own old proverbs ; and the meaning here is nearly the same.

Verse 32. *Despiseth his own soul*] That is, con-

31 <sup>d</sup> The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.

32 He that refuseth <sup>e</sup> instruction despiseth his own soul : but he that <sup>f</sup> heareth reproof <sup>g</sup> getteth understanding.

33 <sup>b</sup> The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom ; and <sup>i</sup> before honour is humility.

\* Or, correction. — <sup>f</sup> Or, obeyeth. — <sup>g</sup> Heb. possesseth a heart. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. i. 7. — <sup>i</sup> Ch. xviii. 12.

structively ; for if the instruction lead to the preservation of life and soul, he that neglects or despises it throws all as much in the way of danger as if he actually hated himself.

Verse 33. *The fear of the Lord*] See note on chap. i. 7. Much is spoken concerning this fear ; 1. It is the beginning of wisdom. 2. It is the beginning of knowledge. And, 3. It is the instruction of wisdom. Wisdom derives its most important lessons from the fear of God. He who fears God much, is well taught.

*And before honour is humility.*] That is, few persons ever arrive at honour who are not humble ; and those who from low life have risen to places of trust and confidence, have been remarkable for humility. We may rest assured that the providence of God will never elevate a proud man ; such God beholds afar off. He may get into places of trust and profit, but God will oust him, and the people will curse him, and curse his memory. So will it ever be with bad ministers and advisers of the crown.

CHAPTER XVI.

*Man prepares, but God governs. God has made all things for himself ; he hates pride. The judgments of God. The administration of kings ; their justice, anger, and clemency. God has made all in weight, measure, and due proportion. Necessity produces industry. The patient man. The lot is under the direction of the Lord.*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
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Ante U.C. c. 247.

THE <sup>a</sup>preparations <sup>b</sup> of the heart in man, <sup>c</sup> and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.

2 <sup>d</sup> All the ways of a man are clean in his

\* Ver. 9. Ch. xix. 21. xx. 24. Jer. x. 23. — <sup>b</sup> Or, dispositions. — <sup>c</sup> Matt. x. 19, 20. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. xxi. 2. — <sup>e</sup> 1 Sam.

NOTES ON CHAP. XVI.

Verse 1. *The preparations of the heart in man*] The Hebrew is לֵב אִישׁ מְעַרְבֵי לֵב leadam maarchey leb, which is, literally, "To man are the dispositions of the heart ; but from the Lord is the answer of the tongue." Man proposes his wishes ; but God answers as he thinks proper. The former is the free offspring of the heart of man ; the latter, the free volition of God. Man may think as he pleases ; and ask as he

own eyes : but <sup>e</sup> the LORD weigheth the spirits.

3 <sup>f</sup> Commit <sup>g</sup> thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.

xvi. 7. — <sup>f</sup> Pa. xxxvii. 5. lv. 22. Matt. vi. 25. Luke xii. 22. Phil. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 7. — <sup>g</sup> Heb. Roll.

lists ; but God will give, or not give, as he thinks proper. This I believe to be the meaning of this shamefully tortured passage, so often vexed by critics, their doubts, and indecisions. God help them ! for they seldom have the faculty of making any subject plain ! The text does not say that the "preparations," rather dispositions or arrangements, מְעַרְבֵי maarchey, "of the heart," as well as "the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord ;" though it is generally understood so ; but

A. M. cir. 3004.  
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A. M. cir. 3004.  
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Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

4 \* The LORD hath made all things for himself: <sup>b</sup> yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

5 \* Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: <sup>d</sup> though

hand join in hand, he shall not be \*unpunished.

6 <sup>f</sup> By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and <sup>g</sup> by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

<sup>a</sup> Isai. xliii. 7. Rom. xi. 36.—<sup>b</sup> Job xxi. 30. Rom. ix. 22.—<sup>c</sup> Ch. vi. 17. viii. 13.—<sup>d</sup> Ch. xi. 21.

<sup>e</sup> Heb. held innocent.—<sup>f</sup> Dan. iv. 27. Tob. xii. 9. Luke xi. 41.—<sup>g</sup> Ch. xiv. 16.

it states that the *dispositions* or *schemes* of the heart (are) man's; but the answer of the tongue (is) the Lord's. And so the principal *Versions* have understood it.

Hominis est animam preparare; et Domini gubernare linguam.—VULGATE. "It is the part of man to prepare his soul; it is the prerogative of the Lord to govern the tongue." מן בר כש תרעומא דלבו וכן "מללא" *min bar nash taritha delibba; umin yeya mamlala delishana*.—CHALDEE. "From the son of man is the counsel of the heart; and from the Lord is the word of the tongue." The SYRIAC is the same. καρδια ανδρος λογιζεται δικαιο, ινα υπο του θεου διορθωθη τα διαβηματα αυτου.—SEPTUAGINT. "The heart of man deviseth righteous things, that its goings may be directed by God."

The ARABIC takes great latitude: "All the works of a humble man are clean before the Lord; and the wicked shall perish in an evil day." Of a man is to make redy the intwitt: and of the Lorde to governe the tunge.—Old MS. Bible.

"A man maye well purpose a thinge in his harte: but the answer of the tonge cometh of the Lorde." COVERDALE.

MATTHEW'S Bible, 1549; and BECKE'S Bible of the same date, and CARDMARDEN'S of 1566, follow Coverdale. The Bible printed by R. Barker, at Cambridge, 4to., 1615, commonly called the *Breeches Bible*, reads the text thus:—"The preparations of the hart are in man; but the answer of the tongue is of the Lord." So that it appears that our *first*, and all our *ancient Versions*, understood the text in the same way; and this, independently of critical torture, is the genuine meaning of the *Hebrew text*. That very valuable Version published in *Italian*, at Geneva, fol. 1562, translates thus: Le dispositioni del cuore sono de l'huomo; ma la risposta del la lingua è dal Signore. "The dispositions of the heart are of man; but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord."

The *modern European Versions*, as far as I have seen, are the same. And when the word *dispositions, arrangements, schemes*, is understood to be the proper meaning of the *Hebrew term*, as shown above, the sense is *perfectly sound*; for there may be a *thousand schemes and arrangements* made in the heart of man, which he may earnestly wish God to bring to full effect, that are neither for *his good* nor *God's glory*; and therefore it is his interest that God has the *answer* in his own power. At the same time, there is no intimation here that *man can prepare his own heart to wait upon, or pray unto, the Lord*; or that from the *human heart* any thing *good* can come, without *divine influence*; but simply, that he may have many *schemes and projects* which he may beg

God to accomplish, that are not of *God*, but from *himself*. Hence our own proverb: "Man proposes, but God disposes." I have entered the more particularly into the consideration of this text, because some are very strenuous in the support of our vicious reading, from a supposition that the other defends the *heterodox* opinion of *man's sufficiency* to think any thing *as of himself*. But while they deserve due credit for their orthodox caution, they will see that no such imputation can fairly lie against the plain grammatical translation of the Hebrew text.

Verse 3. *Commit thy works unto the Lord*] See that what thou doest is commanded; and then begin, continue, and end all in his name. *And thy thoughts shall be established*—these schemes or arrangements, though formed in the heart, are agreeable to the divine will, and therefore shall be established. His *thoughts*—his meditations, are right; and he begins and ends his work in the Lord; and therefore all issues well.

Verse 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himself*] He has so framed and executed every part of his creation, that it manifests his wisdom, power, goodness, and truth.

*Even the wicked for the day of evil.* ונת רשע ליום רעה *venegam rasha leyom raah*. The whole verse is translated by the *Chaldee* thus: "All the works of the Lord are for those who obey him; and the wicked is reserved for the evil day."

As רעה *raah* literally signifies to *feed*, it has been conjectured that the clause might be read, *yea, even the wicked he feeds by the day, or daily*.

If we take the words as they stand in our present Version, they mean no more than what is expressed by the *Chaldee* and *Syriac*; and as far as we can learn from their present *confused state*, by the *Septuagint* and *Arabic*, that "the wicked are reserved for the day of punishment." Coverdale has given, as he generally does, a good sense: "The Lorde doth all thinges for his owne sake; yea, and when he kepeth the ungodly for the daye of wrath." He does not *make the wicked or ungodly man*; but when *man has made himself such, even then* God bears with him. But if he repent not, when the measure of his iniquity is filled up, he shall fall under the wrath of God his Maker.

Verse 5. Though *hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.*] The day of wrath shall come on the wicked, whatever means he may take to avoid it. See chap. xi. 21.

Verse 6. *By mercy and truth iniquity is purged*] This may be misunderstood, as if a man, by *showing mercy and acting according to truth*, could atone for his own iniquity. The *Hebrew text* is not ambiguo-



A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. O.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

7 When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

8 <sup>a</sup> Better *is* a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right.

9 <sup>b</sup> A man's heart deviseth his way: <sup>c</sup> but the LORD directeth his steps.

10 <sup>d</sup> A divine sentence *is* in the lips of the king: his mouth transgresseth not in judgment.

11 A <sup>e</sup> just weight and balance *are* the LORD's: <sup>f</sup> all the weights of the bag *are* his work.

12 *It is* an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for <sup>g</sup> the throne is established by righteousness.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 16. Ch. xv. 16. — <sup>b</sup> Ver. 1. Ch. xix. 21. <sup>c</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 23. Prov. xx. 23. Jer. x. 24. — <sup>d</sup> Heb. *Divination*. — <sup>e</sup> Lev. xix. 36. Ch. xi. 1. — <sup>f</sup> Heb. *all the stones*. — <sup>g</sup> Ch. xxv. 5. xxix. 14. — <sup>h</sup> Ch. xiv. 35. xxii. 11.

ous: כפר שון ואתו הכפר בעשה *bechesed veemeth yechapper avon*; "By mercy and truth he shall atone for iniquity." *He*—God, by his *mercy*, in sending his Son Jesus into the world, "shall make an atonement for iniquity" according to his *truth*—the word which he declared by his holy prophets since the world began. Or, if we retain the present version, and follow the *points* in כפר *yecuppar*, reading "iniquity is purged" or "atoned for," the sense is unexceptionable, as we refer the *mercy* and the *truth* to God. But what an awful comment is that of *Dom Calmet*, in which he expresses, not only his *own opinion*, but the *staple doctrine* of his own church, the Romish! The reader shall have his own words: "L'iniquité se rachete par la misericorde et la verité." "On expie ses pechez par des œuvres de misericorde envers le prochain; par la clemence, par la douceur, par compassion, par les aumônes: et par la verité—par la fidelité, la bonne foi, la droiture, l'équité dans le commerce. Voyez Prov. iii. 3, xiv. 22, xx. 28." "Iniquity is redeemed by mercy and truth." We expiate our sins by works of *mercy* towards our neighbour; by clemency, by kindness, by compassion, and by alms: and by *truth*—by fidelity, by trust-worthiness, by uprightness, by equity in commerce." If this be so, why was Jesus incarnated? Why his agony and bloody sweat, his cross and passion, his death and burial, his resurrection and ascension? Was it only to *supply* a sufficient portion of *merit* for those who had *neglected to make a fund for themselves*? Is the guilt of sin so small in the sight of divine justice, that a man can atone for it by *manifesting good dispositions towards his neighbours*, by *giving some alms*, and not doing those things for which he might be *hanged*? Why then did God make such a mighty matter of the redemption of the world? Why send his Son at all? An *angel* would have been *more* than sufficient; yea, even a *sinner*, who had been converted by his own

13 <sup>h</sup> Righteous lips *are* the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right.

14 <sup>i</sup> The wrath of a king *is* as messengers of death: but a wise man will pacify it.

15 In the light of the king's countenance *is* life; and <sup>k</sup> his favour *is* <sup>l</sup> as a cloud of the latter rain.

16 <sup>m</sup> How much better *is it* to get wisdom than gold? and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver?

17 The highway of the upright *is* to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.

18 <sup>n</sup> Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xix. 12. xx. 2. — <sup>2</sup> Ch. xix. 12. — <sup>3</sup> Job xxix. 23. Zech. x. 1. — <sup>4</sup> Ch. viii. 11, 19. — <sup>5</sup> Ch. xi. 2. xlv. 19. xviii. 12.

compassion, alms-deeds, &c., would have been sufficient. And is not this the very doctrine of this most awfully fallen and corrupt church? Has she not provided a *fund of merit* in her *saints*, of what was more than requisite for *themselves*, that it might be *given*, or *sold out*, to those who had not enough of their own? Now such is the doctrine of the Romish church—grossly absurd, and destructively iniquitous! And because men cannot believe this, cannot believe these monstrosities, that church will burn them to ashes. Ruthless church! degenerated, fallen, corrupt, and corrupting! once a *praise*, now a *curse*, in the earth. Thank the blessed God, whose blood alone can expiate sin, that he has a church upon the earth; and that the *Romish* is not the *Catholic* church; and that it has not that political power by which it would subdue all things to itself.

Verse 7. *When a man's ways please the Lord*, God is the guardian and defence of all that fear and love him; and it is truly astonishing to see how wondrously God works in their behalf, raising them up friends, and turning their enemies into friends.

Verse 9. *A man's heart deviseth his way*] This is precisely the same sentiment as that contained in the first verse, on the true meaning of which so much has been already said.

Verse 10. *A divine sentence*] כספ *kesem*, "divination," as the margin has it. Is the meaning as follows? Though *divination* were applied to a righteous king's lips, to induce him to punish the innocent and spare the guilty, yet *would not his lips transgress in judgment*; so firmly attached is he to God, and so much is he under the divine *care* and *influence*. Whatever judgment such a one pronounces, it may be considered as a decision from God.

Verse 11. *All the weights of the bag are his*] Alluding, probably, to the *standard weights* laid up in a bag in the *sanctuary*, and to which all weights *is*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

19 Better *it is to be of an* humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.

20 <sup>a</sup> He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso <sup>b</sup> trusteth in the LORD, happy is he.

21 The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.

22 <sup>c</sup> Understanding is a well-spring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools is folly.

23 <sup>d</sup> The heart of the wise <sup>e</sup> teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.

24 Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.

25 <sup>f</sup> There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death.

<sup>a</sup> Or, *He that understandeth a matter.*—<sup>b</sup> Ps. ii. 12. xxxiv. 8. cxiv. 1. Isai. xxx. 18. Jer. xvii. 7.—<sup>c</sup> Ch. xiii. 14. xiv. 27. <sup>d</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 30. Matt. xii. 34.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. *maketh wise.* <sup>f</sup> Ch. xiv. 12.—<sup>g</sup> See ch. ix. 12. Eccles. vi. 7.—<sup>h</sup> Heb.

common use in the land were to be referred, in order to ascertain whether they were just: but some think the allusion is to the *weights* carried about by merchants in their *girdles*, by which they weigh the money, silver and gold, that they take in exchange for their merchandise. As the *Chinese* take no *coin* but *gold* and *silver* by weight, they carry about with them a sort of small *steel-yard*, by which they weigh those metals taken in exchange.

Verse 12. It is an *abomination to kings, &c.*] In all these verses the wise man refers to *monarchical government rightly administered*. And the proverbs on this subject are all plain.

Verse 16. *How much better—to get wisdom than gold?*] Who believes this, though spoken by the wisest of men, under divine inspiration?

Verse 17. *The highway of the upright*] The upright man is ever departing from evil; this is his *common road*: and by keeping on in this way, *his soul is preserved*.

Verse 18. *Pride goeth before destruction*] Here *pride* is personified: it walks along, and has destruction in its train.

*And a haughty spirit before a fall.*] Another personification. A *haughty spirit* marches on, and ruin comes after.

In this verse we find the following *Masoretic* note in most Hebrew Bibles. חֲסִי חֲסֵפֶה *chatsi hassepher*: "the middle of the book." This verse is the *middle verse*; and the first *clause* makes the middle of the words of the book of Proverbs.

Verse 22. *Understanding is a well-spring of life*] מֵקוֹר חַיִּים *mekor chaiyim*; another allusion to the *artery* that carries the blood from the heart to distribute it to all the extremities of the body.

26 <sup>a</sup> He <sup>b</sup> that laboureth laboureth for himself; for his mouth <sup>c</sup> craveth it of him.

27 <sup>d</sup> An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips *there is* as a burning fire.

28 <sup>e</sup> A froward man <sup>f</sup> soweth strife: and <sup>g</sup> a whisperer separateth chief friends.

29 A violent man <sup>h</sup> enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him in the way *that is* not good.

30 He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass.

31 <sup>i</sup> The hoary head *is* a crown of glory, *if* it be found in the way of righteousness.

32 <sup>j</sup> He *that is* slow to anger *is* better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.

33 The lot is cast into the lap: but the whole disposing thereof *is* of the LORD.

*The soul of him that laboureth.*—<sup>1</sup> Heb. *boweth unto him.* <sup>k</sup> Heb. *A man of Belial.*—<sup>l</sup> Ch. vi. 14, 19. xv. 18. xxvi. 21. xxix. 22.—<sup>m</sup> Heb. *sendeth forth.*—<sup>n</sup> Ch. xvii. 9.—<sup>o</sup> Ch. i. 10, &c.—<sup>p</sup> Ch. xx. 29.—<sup>q</sup> Ch. xix. 11.

Verse 23. *The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth*] He has a wise heart; he speaks as it dictates; and therefore his speeches are all speeches of wisdom.

Verse 24. *Pleasant words are as an honeycomb*] The honey of which is *sweeter* than that which has been expressed from it, and has a much *finer flavour* before it has come in contact with the atmospheric air.

Verse 25. *There is a way that seemeth right*] This whole verse is precisely the same as that chap. xiv. 12.

Verse 26. *He that laboureth*] No thanks to a man for his labour and industry; if he do not *work* he must starve.

Verse 27. *An ungodly man diggeth up evil*] How will the following suit?

Effodiuntur opes irritamenta malorum.

"Wealth, the incitement to all evil, is digged up out of the earth."

A wicked man labours as much to bring about an evil purpose, as the *quarry-man* does to dig up stones.

*In his lips—a burning fire.*] His words are as *inflammable*, in producing *strife* and *contention* among his neighbours, as *fire* is in igniting dry stubble.

Verse 30. *He shutteth his eyes to devise, &c.*] He *meditates deeply* upon ways and means to commit sin. He shuts his eyes that he may shut out all other ideas, that his whole soul may be in this.

Verse 31. *The hoary head is a crown of glory*] The latter part of the verse is very well added, for many a *sinner* has a *hoary head*.

Verse 32. *He that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.*] It is much easier to subdue an enemy *without* than one *within*. There have been many kings who had conquered nations, and yet were slaves to their own passions. Alexander, who con-

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quered the world, was a slave to *intemperate anger*, and in a fit of it slew *Clytus*, the best and most intimate of all his friends, and one whom he loved beyond all others.

The spirit of this maxim is so self-evident, that most nations have formed similar proverbs. The classical reader will remember the following in Hor., Odar. lib. ii., Od. 2:—

Latus regnes, avidum domando  
 Spiritum, quam si Libyam remotis  
 Gadibus jungas, et uterque Pœnus  
 Serviat uni.

“By virtue’s precepts to control  
 The furious passions of the soul  
 Is over wider realms to reign,  
 Unenvied monarch, than if Spain  
 You could to distant Libya join,  
 And both the Carthages were thine.”

FRANCIS.

And the following from OVID is not less striking:

— Fortior est qui se, quam qui fortissima vincit  
*Mania, nec virtus alius ire potest.*

“He is more of a hero who has conquered himself, than he who has taken the best fortified city.”

Beyond this self-conquest the highest courage cannot extend; nor did their philosophy teach any thing more sublime.

Verse 33. *The lot is cast into the lap*] On the lot, see the note on Numb. xxvi. 55. How far it may be proper now to put difficult matters to the lot, after earnest prayer and supplication, I cannot say. Formerly, it was both lawful and efficient; for after it was solemnly cast, the decision was taken as coming immediately from the Lord. It is still practised, and its use is allowed even by writers on civil law. But those who need most to have recourse to the lot are those those who have not *piety to pray* nor *faith to trust to God* for a positive decision. The lot should never be resorted to in indifferent matters; they should be those of the greatest importance, in which it appears impossible for human prudence or foresight to determine. In such cases the lot is an *appeal to God*, and he disposes of it according to his goodness, mercy, and truth. The result, therefore, cannot be *fortuitous*.

CHAPTER XVII.

*Contentment. The wise servant. The Lord tries the heart. Children a crown to their parents. We should hide our neighbour's faults. The poor should not be despised. Litigations and quarrels to be avoided. Wealth is useless to a fool. The good friend. A fool may pass for a wise man when he holds his peace.*

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 cir. 224.  
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**B**BETTER is a <sup>a</sup> dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of <sup>b</sup> sacrifices with strife.

Maker: and <sup>c</sup> he that is glad at calamities shall not be <sup>d</sup> unpunished.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
 B. C. cir. 1000.  
 Ante I. Ol.  
 cir. 224.  
 Ante U.C. c. 247.

6 <sup>e</sup> Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.

7 <sup>f</sup> Excellent speech becometh not a fool: much less do <sup>g</sup> lying lips a prince.

8 <sup>h</sup> A gift is as <sup>i</sup> a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.

9 <sup>j</sup> He that covereth a transgression <sup>k</sup> seeketh innocent. — <sup>l</sup> Ps. cxvii. 3. cxviii. 3. — <sup>m</sup> Heb. a lip of excellency. — <sup>n</sup> Heb. a lip of lying. — <sup>o</sup> Ch. xviii. 16. xix. 6. — <sup>p</sup> Heb. a stone of grace. — <sup>q</sup> Ch. x. 12. — <sup>r</sup> Or, procreeth.

2 A wise servant shall have rule over <sup>a</sup> a son that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren.

3 <sup>d</sup> The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts.

4 A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.

5 <sup>e</sup> Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xv. 17. — <sup>b</sup> Or, good cheer. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. x. 5. xix. 26.  
<sup>d</sup> Ps. xxvi. 2. Ch. xxvii. 21. Jer. xvii. 10. Mal. iii. 3.  
<sup>e</sup> Ch. xiv. 31. — <sup>f</sup> Job xxxi. 29. Obad. 12. — <sup>g</sup> Heb. held

NOTES ON CHAP. XVII.

Verse 1. *Better is a dry morsel*] Peace and contentment, and especially *domestic peace*, are beyond all other blessings.

*An house full of sacrifices*] A Hindoo priest, who officiates at a festival, sometimes receives so many offerings that his house is filled with them, so that many of them are damaged before they can be used.—WARD.

Verse 3. *The fining pot is for silver*] When silver is mixed, or suspected to be mixed, with *base metal*, it must be subjected to such a test as the *cupel* to purify it. And gold also must be purified by the action of

the fire. So God tries hearts. He sends afflictions which penetrate the soul, and give a man to see his state, so that he may apply to the *spirit of judgment* and the *spirit of burning*, to destroy what cannot stand the fire, to separate and burn up all the dross.

Verse 4. *A wicked doer giveth heed*] An evil heart is disposed and ever ready to receive evil; and liars delight in lies.

Verse 5. *He that is glad at calamities*] He who is pleased to hear of the misfortune of another will, in the course of God's just government, have his own multiplied.

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cir. 224.  
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love: but <sup>a</sup> he that repeateth a matter separateth *very* friends.

10 <sup>b</sup> A reproof entereth more into a wise man, than an hundred stripes into a fool.

11 An evil *man* seeketh only rebellion: therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.

12 Let <sup>c</sup> a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly.

13 Whoso <sup>d</sup> rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house.

14 The beginning of strife *is as* when one letteth out water: therefore <sup>e</sup> leave off contention, before it be meddled with.

15 <sup>f</sup> He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both *are* abomination to the LORD.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xvi. 28.—<sup>b</sup> Or, *A reproof moveth more a wise man, than to strike a fool an hundred times.*—<sup>c</sup> Hos. xiii. 8.  
<sup>d</sup> Ps. cir. 4, 5. Jer. xviii, 20. See Rom. xii. 17. 1 Thess. v. 15. 1 Pet. iii. 9.—<sup>e</sup> Ch. xx. 3. 1 Thess. iv. 11.  
<sup>f</sup> Exod. xxiii. 7. Ch. xxiv. 24. Isai. v. 23.—<sup>g</sup> Ch. xxi.

Verse 7. *Excellent speech becometh not a fool*] This proverb is suitable to those who affect, in public speaking, fine language, which neither comports with their ordinary conversation, nor with their education. Often *fine words* are injudiciously brought in, and are as unbecoming and irrelevant as a cart-wheel among clock-work.

Verse 8. *A gift is as a precious stone*] It both enriches and ornaments. In the latter clause there is an evident allusion to *cut stones*. Whithersoever you turn them, they reflect the light, are brilliant and beautiful.

Verse 10. *A reproof entereth more*] Though the rod, judiciously applied, is a *great instrument of knowledge*, yet it is of no use where incurable dullness, or want of intellect, prevails. Besides, there are *generous dispositions* on which *counsel* will work more than stripes.

Verse 12. *Let a bear robbed of her whelps*] At which times such animals are peculiarly fierce. See the note on 2 Sam. xvii. 8.

Verse 13. *Whoso rewardeth evil for good*] Here is a most awful warning. As many persons are guilty of the sin of *ingratitude*, and of paying *kindness* with *unkindness*, and *good* with *evil*, it is no wonder we find so much *wretchedness* among men; for God's word cannot fail; evil shall not depart from the houses and families of such persons.

Verse 14. *The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water*] As soon as the smallest breach is made in the dike or dam, the water begins to *press* from all parts *towards the breach*; the resistance becomes too great to be successfully opposed, so that dikes and all are speedily swept away. Such is the beginning of contentions, quarrels, law-suits, &c.

*Leave off contention, before it be meddled with.*] As

16 Wherefore *is there* a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, <sup>g</sup> seeing *he hath* no heart to it?

17 <sup>h</sup> A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

18 <sup>i</sup> A man void of <sup>k</sup> understanding striketh hands, and becometh surety in the presence of his friend.

19 He loveth transgression that loveth strife: and <sup>l</sup> he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction.

20 <sup>m</sup> He that hath a froward heart findeth no good: and he that hath <sup>n</sup> a perverse tongue falleth into mischief.

21 <sup>o</sup> He that begetteth a fool *doeth it* to his sorrow: and the father of a fool hath no joy.

22 <sup>p</sup> A merry heart doeth good <sup>q</sup> like a

25, 26.—<sup>h</sup> Ruth i. 16. Ch. xviii. 24.—<sup>i</sup> Ch. vi. 1. xi. 15.  
<sup>k</sup> Heb. *heart*.—<sup>l</sup> Ch. xvi. 18.—<sup>m</sup> Heb. *the froward of heart*.—<sup>n</sup> James iii. 8.—<sup>o</sup> Ch. x. 1. xix. 13. Ver. 25.  
<sup>p</sup> Ch. xv. 13, 15. xii. 25.—<sup>q</sup> Or, *to a medicine*.

you see what an altercation must lead to, therefore do not begin it. Before it be *mingled together*, רחוקי היתגאלה, before the spirits of the contending parties come into conflict—are joined together in battle, and begin to deal out mutual reflections and reproaches. When you see that the dispute is likely to take this turn, leave it off immediately.

Verse 17. *A friend loveth at all times*] Equally in *adversity* as in *prosperity*. And a *brother*, according to the ties and interests of consanguinity, is *born* to support and comfort a *brother* in *distress*.

Verse 18. *Striketh hands*] *Striking* each other's hands, or *shaking hands*, was anciently the *form* in concluding a contract. See notes on chap. vi. 1.

Verse 19. *He that exalteth his gate*] In different parts of Palestine they are obliged to have the doors of their courts and houses *very low*, not more than *three feet high*, to prevent the Arabs, who scarcely ever leave the backs of their horses, from *riding into the courts and houses*, and spoiling their goods. He, then, who, through pride and ostentation, made a *high gate*, exposed himself to *destruction*; and is said here to *seek it*, because he must know that this would be a necessary consequence of *exalting his gate*. But although the above is a fact, yet possibly *gate* is here taken for the *mouth*; and the *exalting of the gate* may mean proud boasting and arrogant speaking, such as has a tendency to kindle and maintain strife. And this interpretation seems to agree better with the scope of the context than the above.

Verse 22. *A merry heart doeth good like a medicine*] Instead of גֵּהָהֵ *gehah*, a *medicine*, it appears that the *Chaldee* and *Syriac* had read in their copies גֵּוָהֵ *gevah*, the body, as they translate in this way. This makes the apposition here more complete: "A merry heart doeth good to the *body*; but a broken spirit drieth the

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C.c. 247.

medicine: \* but a broken spirit drieth the bones.

23 A wicked man taketh a gift out of the bosom <sup>b</sup> to pervert the ways of judgment.

24 <sup>c</sup> Wisdom is before him that hath understanding: but the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth.

25 <sup>d</sup> A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.

\* Ps. xxii. 15. — <sup>b</sup> Exod. xxiii. 8. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. xiv. 6. Eccles. ii. 14. viii. 1. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. x. 1. xv. 20. xix. 13. Ver. 21.

bones." Nothing has such a direct tendency to ruin health and waste out life as grief, anxiety, fretfulness, bad tempers, &c. All these work death.

Verse 23. *A gift out of the bosom*] Out of his purse; as in their bosoms, above their girdles, the Asiatics carry their purses. I have often observed this.

Verse 24. *Are in the ends of the earth.*] Wisdom is within the sight and reach of every man: but he whose desires are scattered abroad, who is always aiming at impossible things, or is of an unsteady disposition, is not likely to find it.

Verse 26. *Nor to strike princes for equity.*] To fall out with the ruler of the people, and to take off his head under pretence of his not being a just or

26 \* Also to punish the just is not good, nor to strike princes for equity.

27 <sup>f</sup> He that hath knowledge spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of <sup>g</sup> an excellent spirit.

28 <sup>h</sup> Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.

<sup>e</sup> Ver. 15. Ch. xviii. 5. — <sup>f</sup> James i. 19. — <sup>g</sup> Or, a cool spirit. — <sup>h</sup> Job xiii. 5.

equitable governor, is unjust. To kill a king on the ground of justice is a most dreadful omen to any land. Where was it ever done, that it promoted the public prosperity? No experiment of this kind has ever yet succeeded, howsoever worthless the king might be.

Verse 28. *Even a fool*] He is counted wise as to that particular. He may know that he cannot speak well, and he has sense enough to keep from speaking. He is, as to that particular, a wise fool.

A man may be golden-mouthed and silver-tongued in eloquence; but to know when and where to speak and to be silent, is better than diamonds. But who that thinks he can speak well can refrain from speaking? His tongue has no rest.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The man who separates himself and seeks wisdom. The fool and the wicked man. Deep wisdom. Contention of fools. The tale-bearer and the slothful. The name of the Lord. Pride and presumption because of riches. Hastiness of spirit. The wounded spirit. The influence of gifts. The lot. The offended brother. The influence of the tongue. A wife a good from God. The true friend.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

THROUGH <sup>a</sup> desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddeth with all wisdom.

2 A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself.

3 When the wicked cometh,

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. OL.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247

\* Or, He that separateth himself, seeketh according to his

desire, and intermeddeth in every business. See Jude 19.

NOTES ON CHAP. XVIII.

Verse 1. *Through desire a man, having separated himself*] The original is difficult and obscure. The Vulgate, Septuagint, and Arabic read as follows: "He who wishes to break with his friend, and seeks occasions or pretences, shall at all times be worthy of blame."

My old MS. Bible translates, *Occasionoun secretly that will go awel fro a freend: at al tyme he schal ben wariable.*

Coverdale thus: "Who so hath pleasure to sowe discord, piketh a quarrel in every thinge."

Bible by Barker, 1615: "Fro the desire thereof he will separate himself to seeke it, and occupie himself in all wisdom." Which has in the margin the following note: "He that loveth wisdom will separate

himself from all impediments, and give himself wholly to seek it."

The Hebrew: לרשעה יבקש יקר בכל תרשה נפרד le-thaavah yebakkesh niphrad, bechol tushiyah yithgalla. The nearest translation to the words is perhaps the following: "He who is separated shall seek the desired thing (i. e., the object of his desire), and shall intermeddle (mingle himself) with all realities, or all essential knowledge." He finds that he can make little progress in the investigation of divine and natural things, if he have much to do with secular or trifling matters: he therefore separates himself as well from unprofitable pursuits as from frivolous company, and then enters into the spirit of his pursuit; is not satisfied with superficial observances, but exa-

A. M. cir. 3004. B. C. cir. 1000. Ante I. Ol. cir. 224. Ante U.C.c. 247. then cometh also contempt, and with ignominy reproach. 4 \* The words of a man's

8 \* The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

A. M. cir. 3004. B. C. cir. 1000. Ante I. Ol. cir. 224. Ante U.C.c. 247.

the well-spring of wisdom as a flowing brook.

9 He also that is slothful in his work is a brother to him that is a great waster.

5 \* It is not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.

10 \* The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.

6 A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.

11 \* The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.

7 \* A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.

12 \* Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility.

\*Ch. x. 11. xx. 5.—bPs. lxxviii. 2.—c Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 17. xvi. 19. Ch. xxiv. 23. xxviii. 21.—d Ch. x. 14. xii. 13. xiii. 3. Eccles. x. 12.—e Ch. xii. 18. xxvi. 22. Or, whisperer.—f Or, like as when men are wounded.

h Heb. chambers.—i Ch. xxviii. 24.—k 2 Sam. xxii. 3, 51. Ps. xviii. 2. xxvii. 1. lxi. 3, 4. xci. 2. cxliv. 2.—l Heb. is set aloft.—m Ch. x. 15.—n Ch. xi. 2. xv. 33. xvi. 18.

mines the substance and essence, as far as possible, of those things which have been the objects of his desire. This appears to me the best meaning: the reader may judge for himself.

Verse 5. To accept the person of the wicked] We must not, in judicial cases, pay any attention to a man's riches, influence, friends, offices, &c., but judge the case according to its own merits. But when the wicked rich man opposes and oppresses the poor righteous, then all those things should be utterly forgotten.

Verse 2. But that his heart may discover itself.] It is a fact that most vain and foolish people are never satisfied in company, but in showing their own nonsense and emptiness. But this verse may be understood as confirming the view already given of the preceding, and may be translated thus: "But a fool doth not delight in understanding, though it should even manifest itself:" so I understand כי כי ברחוק ki im behithgalloth. The separated person seeks understanding in every hidden thing, and feels his toil well repaid when he finds it, even after the most painful and expensive search: the other regards it not, though its secret springs should be laid open to him without toil or expense.

Verse 3. The words of a tale-bearer] דברי רגון dibrey nirgan, "the words of the whisperer," the busy-body, the busy, meddling croaker. Verba bilinguis, "the words of the double-tongued."—Vulgate. The words of the twisel tunge.—Old MS. Bible. "The words of a slanderer."—Coverdale.

Verse 3. When the wicked cometh, &c.] Would it not be better to read this verse thus? "When the wicked cometh, contempt cometh; and with ignominy cometh reproach." A wicked man is despised even by the wicked. He who falls under ignominy falls under reproach.

The words of a deceiver, the fair-spoken, deeply-malicious man, though they appear soft and gracious, are wounds deeply injurious.

Verse 4. The words of a man's mouth] That is, the wise sayings of a wise man are like deep waters; howsoever much you pump or draw off, you do not appear to lessen them.

The original word is כמיתלחמם kemithlahamim; they are as soft, or simple, or undesigning. But Schultens gives another meaning. He observes that מל lahamah in Arabic signifies to "swallow down quickly or greedily." Such words are like dainties, eagerly swallowed, because inviting to the taste; like gingerbread, apparently gilded over, though with Dutch leaf, which is a preparation of copper; or sweetmeats powdered over with red candied seeds, which are thus formed by red lead; both deeply ruinous to the tender bowels of the poor little innocents, but, because of their sweetness and inviting colour, greedily swallowed down. This makes a good reading, and agrees with the latter clause of the verse, "they go down into the innermost parts of the belly."

The well-spring of wisdom] Where there is a sound understanding, and a deep, well-informed mind, its wisdom and its counsels are an incessant stream, ever throwing out its healthy streams: but מקור חיים mekor chayim, "the vein of lives," is the reading of eight of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS., and is countenanced by the Septuagint, πηγὴ ζωῆς, "the fountain of life."

Verse 9. He also that is slothful] A slothful man neglects his work, and the materials go to ruin: the waster, he destroys the materials. They are both destroyers.

And so the Arabic, عين حياة This is the more likely to be the true reading, because the figure of the heart propelling the blood through the great aorta, to send it to all parts of the animal system, is a favourite with Solomon, as it was with his father David. See the note on Ps. xxxvi. 9. Prov. x. 11, &c.

Verse 10. The name of the Lord is a strong tower] The name of the Lord may be taken for the Lord himself; he is a strong tower, a refuge, and place of complete safety, to all that trust in him. What a strong fortress is to the besieged, the like is God to his persecuted, tempted, afflicted followers.

Verse 11. The rich man's wealth] See chap. x. 15.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U. C. c. 247.

13 He that <sup>a</sup> answereth a matter <sup>b</sup> before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.

14 The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?

15 The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.

16 <sup>c</sup> A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.

17 He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.

18 The lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty.

19 A brother offended is harder to be won

<sup>a</sup> Heb. returneth a word.—<sup>b</sup> John vii. 51.—<sup>c</sup> Gen. xxxii. 20. 1 Sam. xxv. 27. Ch. xvii. 8. xxi. 14.

Verse 12. *Before destruction*] See on chap. xi. 2, and xvi. 18.

Verse 13. *He that answereth a matter*] This is a common case; before a man can tell out his story, another will begin *his*. Before a man has made his *response*, the other wishes to confute *piece-meal*, though he has had his own speech already. This is foolishness to them. They are ill-bred. There are many also that *give judgment* before they hear the whole of the cause, and express an *opinion* before they hear the state of the case. How absurd, stupid, and foolish!

Verse 14. *The spirit of a man will sustain*] A man sustains the ills of his body, and the trials of life, by the strength and energy of his mind. But if the *mind* be *wounded*, if this be *cast down*, if slow-consuming care and grief have shot the dagger into the soul, what can then sustain the man? Nothing but the unseen God. Therefore, let the afflicted *pray*. A man's *own spirit* has, in general, sufficient fortitude to bear up under the *unavoidable* trials of life; but when the *conscience* is wounded by sin, and the soul is dying by iniquity, *who can lift him up*? God alone; for salvation is of the Lord.

Verse 16. *A man's gift maketh room for him*] It is, and ever has been, a base and degrading practice in Asiatic countries, to bring a gift or present to the great man into whose presence you come. Without this there is no audience, no favour, no *justice*. This arose from the circumstance that men must not approach the *altar of God* without an *offering*. Potentates, wishing to be considered as *petty gods*, demanded a similar homage:

Munera, crede mihi, capiunt hominesque deosque;  
Placatur donis Jupiter ipse suis. OVID.

Believe me, gifts prevail much with both gods and men: even Jupiter himself is pleased with his own offerings."

than a strong city: and *their* contentions are like the bars of a castle.

20 <sup>d</sup> A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled.

21 <sup>e</sup> Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

22 <sup>f</sup> Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.

23 The poor useth entreaties; but the rich answereth <sup>g</sup> roughly.

24 A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: <sup>h</sup> and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

<sup>d</sup> Ch. xii. 14. xiii. 2.—<sup>e</sup> Matt. xii. 37.—<sup>f</sup> Ch. xiv. 41. xxxi. 10.—<sup>g</sup> James ii. 3.—<sup>h</sup> Ch. xvii. 17.

Verse 17. He that is *first in his own cause*] Any man may, in the first instance, make out a fair tale, because he has the choice of circumstances and arguments. But when the neighbour cometh and searcheth him, he examines all, dissects all, swears and cross-questions every witness, and brings out truth and fact.

Verse 18. *The lot causeth contentions to cease*] See note on chap. xvi. 33.

Verse 19. *A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city*] Almost all the *Versions* agree in the following reading: "A brother assisted by a brother, is like a fortified city; and their decisions are like the bars of a city." *Coverdale* is both plain and terse: "The unity of brethren is stronger than a castell, and they that holde together are like the barre of a palace." The fable of the dying father, his sons, and the bundle of faggots, illustrates this proverb. Unity among brethren makes them invincible; small things grow great by concord. If we take the words according to the *common Version*, we see them express what, alas! we know to be too generally true: that when brothers fall out, it is with extreme difficulty that they can be reconciled. And fraternal enmities are generally strong and inveterate.

Verse 20. *With the fruit of his mouth*] Our own words frequently shape our good or evil fortune in life.

Verse 21. *Death and life are in the power of the tongue*] This may apply to all men. Many have lost their lives by their tongue, and some have saved their lives by it: but it applies most forcibly to *public pleaders*; on many of their tongues hangs *life or death*.

Verse 22. *Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing; Marriage*, with all its troubles and embarrassments, is a blessing from God; and there are *few cases* where a *wife of any sort* is not better than none, because celibacy is an evil; for God himself hath said, "It is

not good for man to be alone." None of the Versions, except the *Chaldee*, are pleased with the naked simplicity of the Hebrew text, hence they all add *good*: "He that findeth a good wife findeth a good thing;" and most people, who have not deeply considered the subject, think the assertion, without this qualification, is absurd. Some copies of the *Targum*, and apparently one of *Kennicott's MSS.*, have the addition טובה *tobah, good*; but this would be an authority too slender to justify changing the Hebrew text; yet *Houbigant*, *Kennicott*, and other able critics argue for it. The *Septuagint* is not satisfied without an addition: "But he who puts away a good wife, puts away a good thing: and he that retains an adulteress, is a fool and wicked." In this addition the *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic* agree with the *Septuagint*. The *Hebrew* text, as it stands, teaches a *general doctrine* by a *simple* but *general proposition*: "He that findeth a wife findeth a good thing." So St. Paul: "Marriage is honourable in all." Had the world been left, in this respect, to the unbridled propensities of man, in what a horrible state would society have been—if indeed society could have existed, or civilization have taken place, if *marriage* had not obtained among men! As to *good wives* and *bad wives*, they are relatively so, in general; and most of them that have been *bad* afterwards, have been *good* at first; and we well know the best things may deteriorate, and the world generally allows that where there are matrimonial contentions, there are *faults on both sides*.

Verse 24. *A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly*] Love begets love; and love requires love as its recompence. If a man do not maintain a friendly carriage, he cannot expect to retain his friends. Friendship is a good plant; but it requires cultivation to make it grow.

There is a kind of factitious friendship in the world, that, to show one's self *friendly* in it, is very expensive, and in every way utterly unprofitable: it is maintained by *parties, feasts, &c.*, where the table groans with dainties, and where the *conver-*

sation is either *jejune* and *insipid*, or *calumnious*; backbiting, talebearing, and scandal being the general topics of the different squads in company.

*There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.*] In many cases the genuine friend has shown more attachment, and rendered greater benefits, than the natural brother. Some apply this to *God*; others, to *Christ*; but the text has no such meaning.

But critics and commentators are not agreed on the translation of this verse. The original is condensed and obscure. עֵצָה לְרֵעִים אִישׁ יֵשׁ *ish reim lehithroea*, or *lehithroea*, as some would read, who translate: *A man of friends may ring again*; i. e., he may boast and mightily exult: but there is a friend, אהב, *ohab*, a *lover*, that sticketh closer, דבק, *dabek*, is *glued* or *cemented*, מעבר, *meach*, *beyond*, or more than, a brother. The former will continue during *prosperity*, but the latter continues *closely united* to his friend, even in the most disastrous circumstances.

Hence that maxim of *Cicero*, so often repeated, and so well known:—

Amicus certus in re incerta cernitur.

"In doubtful times the genuine friend is known."

A late commentator has translated the verse thus:

The man that hath many friends, is ready to be ruined:

But there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

HOLDEN.

"A friend that delyteth in love, doth a man more friendship, and sticketh faster unto him, than a brother.—*Coverdale*."

"A man that hath friends ought to show himself friendly, for a friend is nearer than a brother."—*BARKER'S Bible*, 1615.

"A man amicable to fellowship, more a friend schal ben thanne a brother."—Old MS. Bible. The two last verses in this chapter, and the two first of the next, are wanting in the *Septuagint* and *Arabic*.

These are the principal varieties; out of them the reader may choose. I have already given my opinion.

CHAPTER XIX.

*The worth of the poor upright man. Riches preserve friends. False witnesses. False friends. A king's wrath. The foolish son. The prudent wife. Slothfulness. Pity for the poor. The fear of the Lord. The spendthrift son. Obedience to parents.*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

**B**BETTER \* is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.

2 Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good; and he that hasteth with his feet sinneth.

A. M. cir. 3004  
B. C. cir. 1000  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

\* Ch.

xxviii. 6.

NOTES ON CHAP. XIX.

Verse 1. *Better is the poor*] The upright poor man is always to be preferred to the rich or self-sufficient fool.

Verse 2. *Also, that the soul be without knowledge,*  
2475

it is not good] Would it not be plainer, as it is more literal, to say, "Also, to be without knowledge, is not good for the soul." The soul was made for God; and to be without his *knowledge*, to be *unacquainted with him*, is not only *not good*, but the *greatest evil*



A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

3 <sup>a</sup> The foolishness of man  
perverteth his way; <sup>b</sup> and his  
heart fretteth against the LORD.

4 <sup>c</sup> Wealth maketh many  
friends: but the poor is separated from his  
neighbour.

5 <sup>d</sup> A false witness shall not be <sup>e</sup> unpun-  
ished, and *he that speaketh lies* shall not  
escape.

6 <sup>f</sup> Many will entreat the favour of the prince:  
and <sup>g</sup> every man *is* a friend to <sup>h</sup> him that giveth  
gifts.

7 <sup>i</sup> All the brethren of the poor do hate him:  
how much more do his friends go <sup>k</sup> far from  
him? he pursueth *them with words*, yet they  
*are wanting to him*.

8 He that getteth <sup>l</sup> wisdom loveth his own  
soul: he that keepeth understanding <sup>m</sup> shall  
find good.

9 <sup>n</sup> A false witness shall not be unpunished,

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xiv. 24. xv. 2, 14. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 7. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. xiv.  
20. — <sup>d</sup> Ver. 9. Exod. xxiii. 1. Deut. xix. 16, 19. Ch. vi.  
19. xxi. 28. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. held innocent. — <sup>f</sup> Ch. xxix. 26.  
<sup>g</sup> Ch. xvii. 8. xviii. 16. xxi. 14. — <sup>h</sup> Heb. a man of gifts.  
<sup>i</sup> Ch. xiv. 20. — <sup>k</sup> Ps. xxxviii. 11. — <sup>l</sup> Heb. a heart.  
<sup>m</sup> Ch. xvi. 20. — <sup>n</sup> Ver. 5. — <sup>o</sup> Ch. xxx. 22. Eccles. x. 6, 7.

and *he that speaketh lies* shall  
perish.

10 Delight is not seemly for  
a fool; much less <sup>o</sup> for a ser-  
vant to have rule over princes.

11 <sup>p</sup> The <sup>q</sup> discretion of a man deferreth his  
anger; <sup>r</sup> and *it is* his glory to pass over a  
transgression.

12 <sup>s</sup> The king's wrath *is* as the roaring of a  
lion: but his favour *is* <sup>t</sup> as dew upon the grass.

13 <sup>u</sup> A foolish son *is* the calamity of his father:  
<sup>v</sup> and the contentions of a wife *are* a continual  
dropping.

14 <sup>w</sup> House — and riches *are* the inheritance of  
fathers: and <sup>x</sup> a prudent wife *is* from the LORD.

15 <sup>y</sup> Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep;  
and an idle soul shall <sup>z</sup> suffer hunger.

16 <sup>aa</sup> He that keepeth the commandment  
keepeth his own soul: *but* he that despiseth  
his ways shall die.

<sup>p</sup> Ch. xiv. 29. James i. 19. — <sup>q</sup> Or, prudence. — <sup>r</sup> Ch. xvi.  
32. — <sup>s</sup> Ch. xvi. 14, 15. xx. 2. xxviii. 15. — <sup>t</sup> Hos. xiv. 5.  
<sup>u</sup> Ch. x. 1. xv. 20. xvii. 21, 25. — <sup>v</sup> Ch. xxi. 9, 19. xvii. 15.  
<sup>w</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 14. — <sup>x</sup> Ch. xviii. 22. — <sup>y</sup> Ch. vi. 9. — <sup>z</sup> Ch.  
x. 4. xx. 13. xxiii. 21. — <sup>aa</sup> Luke x. 28. xi. 28.

the soul can suffer, for it involves all other evils. The  
*Chaldee* and *Syriac* have: "He who knows not his  
own soul, it is not good to him." "Where no dis-  
cretion is, there the soul is not well."—Coverdale.

*And he that hasteth with his feet sinneth.*] And this  
will be the case with him who is not divinely in-  
structed. A child does nothing *cautiously*, because  
it is uninstructed; a *savage* is also *rash* and *precipi-  
tate*, till *experience* instructs him. A man who has  
not the knowledge of God is incautious, rash, head-  
strong, and precipitate: and hence he *sinneth*—he is  
continually *missing the mark*, and wounding his own  
soul.

Verse 3. *The foolishness of man*] Most men com-  
plain of cross providences, because they get into  
straits and difficulties through the *perverseness of  
their ways*; and thus *they fret against God*; whereas,  
in every instance, they are the causes of their own  
calamities. O how inconsistent is man!

Verse 4. *The poor is separated from his neighbour.*] Because he has the "disease of all shunned poverty."

Verse 7. *Do hate him*] They *shun* him as they  
do the person they *hate*. They neither *hate* him  
*positively*, nor *love* him: they *disregard* him; they  
will have nothing to do with him. *an sana* signifies  
not only to hate, but to show a less degree of love to  
one than another. So Jacob loved Rachel, but hated  
Leah—showed her less affection than he did to  
Rachel.

Verse 10. *Delight is not seemly for a fool*] *אמר  
טאנוג*, splendid or luxurious living, rank, equipage,  
&c. These sit ill on a *fool*, though he be by birth a  
*lord*.

*For a servant to have rule over princes.*] I pity  
the king who delivers himself into the hands of his  
own ministers. Such a one loses his character, and  
cannot be respected by his subjects, or rather *their*  
subjects. But it is still worse when a person of  
mean extraction is raised to the throne, or to any  
place of *power*; he is generally cruel and tyrannical.

Verse 11. *It is his glory to pass over a transgression.*] "No," says what is termed the *man of honour*; "he must meet me as a gentleman; I must have his blood, let God say what he will." O poor, dastardly coward! thou canst not bear the reproach of poor, flimsy, paltry fellows who ridicule thee, because thou hast refused to commit murder. Such laws should be put down by law; and the man that *gives a challenge* should be hanged, because he *intends to commit murder*.

Verse 12. *The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion*] There is nothing more dreadful than the roar-  
ing of this tyrant of the forest. At the sound of it all  
other animals tremble, flee away, and hide them-  
selves. The *king* who is above law, and rules with-  
out law, and whose will is his own law, is like the  
*lion*. This is strongly descriptive of the character of  
*Asiatic* sovereigns.

Verse 13. *The contentions of a wife are a continual dropping.*] The man who has got such a wife is like a  
tenant who has got a *cottage* with a *bad roof*, through  
every part of which the rain either *drops* or *pours*.  
He can neither *sit*, *stand*, *work*, nor *sleep* without  
being exposed to these *droppings*. God help the man  
who is in such a case, with *house or wife*!

Verse 14. *A prudent wife is from the Lord.*] One  
who has a good understanding, *אשה חכמה* *israhel*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

17 <sup>a</sup> He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and <sup>b</sup> that which he hath given will he pay him again.

18 <sup>c</sup> Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare <sup>d</sup> for his crying.

19 A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment: for if thou deliver *him*, yet thou must <sup>e</sup> do it again.

20 Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise <sup>f</sup> in the latter end.

21 <sup>g</sup> *There are* many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

22 The desire of a man *is* his kindness: and a poor man *is* better than a liar.

23 <sup>h</sup> The fear of the LORD *tendeth* to life: and *he that hath it* shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xxviii. 27. Eccles. xi. 1. Matt. x. 42. xxv. 40. 2 Cor. ix. 6, 7, 8. Hebr. vi. 10.—<sup>b</sup> Or, *his deed*.—<sup>c</sup> Ch. xiii. 24. xxiii. 13. xxix. 17.—<sup>d</sup> Or, *to his destruction, or to cause him to die*.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. *add.*—<sup>f</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 37.—<sup>g</sup> Job xxiii. 13. Ps. xxxiii. 10, 11. Ch. xvi. 1, 3. Isai. xiv. 26,

*mascaeth*; who avoids complaining, though she may often have cause for it.

Verse 15. *Into a deep sleep*] תרדמה *tardemah*, the same into which Adam was thrown, before Eve was taken from his side. Sloth renders a man utterly unconscious of all his interests. Though he has frequently felt hunger, yet he is regardless that his continual slothfulness must necessarily plunge him into more sufferings.

Verse 17. *Lendeth unto the Lord*] O what a word is this! God makes himself debtor for every thing that is given to the *poor*! Who would not *advance much* upon such *credit*? *God will pay it again*. And in no case has he ever forfeited his word.

Verse 18. *Let not thy soul spare for his crying*.] This is a hard precept for a *parent*. Nothing affects the heart of a parent so much as a child's *cries* and *tears*. But it is better that the *child* may be caused to *cry*, when the correction may be healthful to his soul, than that the parent should *cry* afterwards, when the child is grown to *man's* estate, and his evil habits are *sealed for life*.

Verse 19. *A man of great wrath*] He who is of an *irritable, fiery* disposition will necessarily get himself into many broils; and he that is *surety* for him once is likely to be called on again and again for the same friendly office.

24 <sup>i</sup> A slothful *man* hideth his hand in *his* bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.

25 <sup>k</sup> Smite a scorner, and the simple <sup>l</sup> will <sup>m</sup> beware; and <sup>n</sup> reprove one that hath understanding, *and* he will understand knowledge.

26 He that wasteth *his* father, *and* chaseth away *his* mother, *is* <sup>o</sup> a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach.

27 Cease, my son, to hear the instruction *that causeth* to err from the words of knowledge.

28 <sup>p</sup> An ungodly witness scorneth judgment: and <sup>q</sup> the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity.

29 Judgments are prepared for scorners, <sup>r</sup> and stripes for the back of fools.

27. xvi. 10. Acts v. 39. Hebr. vi. 17.—<sup>h</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 8. <sup>i</sup> Ch. xv. 19. xxvi. 13, 15.—<sup>k</sup> Ch. xxi. 11.—<sup>l</sup> Heb. *will be cunning*.—<sup>m</sup> Deut. xiii. 11.—<sup>n</sup> Ch. ix. 8.—<sup>o</sup> Ch. xvii. 2.—<sup>p</sup> Heb. *A witness of Belial*.—<sup>q</sup> Job xv. 16. xx. 12, 13. xxxiv. 7.—<sup>r</sup> Ch. x. 13. xxvi. 3.

Verse 21. There are *many devices*, &c.] The same sentiment as in chap. xvi. 1, where see the note.

Verse 24. *A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom*] Is too lazy to feed himself. If he dip his hand *once* in the dish, he is too lazy to put it in a *second* time. It is a strange case that a man, through his excessive slothfulness, would rather starve than put himself to the trouble to eat.

Verse 26. *He that wasteth his father*] Destroys his substance by riotous or extravagant living, so as to embitter his latter end by poverty and affliction; and adds to this wickedness the *expulsion of his aged widowed mother* from the paternal house; *is a son of shame*—a most shameful man; and *a son of reproach*—one whose conduct cannot be sufficiently execrated. *Who tormenteth the father, and fleeth the mother, schenful schal ben, and unblisful*.—Old MS. Bible. The common reading of the *Vulgate* is, *et fugat matrem, and expels his mother*; but the *Old Bible* was taken from a copy that had *fugit matrem, shuns his mother, flees away from her, leaves her* to affliction and penury. It is prostitution of the term to call such, *man*.

Verse 27. *Cease, my son*] Hear nothing that would lead thee away from God and his truth.

Verse 29. *Stripes for the back of fools*.] *Profane and wicked* men expose themselves to the punishments denounced against such by just laws. Avoid, therefore, both their company and their end.

CHAPTER XX.

*Against wine and strong drink. We should avoid contentions. The sluggard. The righteous man. Weights and measures. Talebearers. The wicked son. The wise king. The glory of young men. The beauty of old men. The benefit of correction.*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 2:4.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

**WINE** <sup>a</sup> is a mocker, strong  
drink <sup>b</sup> is raging: and who-  
soever <sup>c</sup> is deceived thereby is  
not wise.

2 <sup>b</sup> The fear of a king <sup>b</sup> is as the roaring of a lion: <sup>c</sup> whoso provoketh him to anger <sup>c</sup> sinneth against his own soul.

3 <sup>d</sup> It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling.

4 <sup>e</sup> The sluggard will not plow by reason of the <sup>f</sup> cold; <sup>g</sup> therefore shall he beg in harvest, and <sup>h</sup> have nothing.

5 <sup>b</sup> Counsel in the heart of man <sup>b</sup> is like deep water: but a man of understanding will draw it out.

<sup>a</sup> Gen. ix. 21. Ch. xxiii. 29, 30. Isai. xxviii. 7. Hos. iv. 11. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. xvi. 14. xix. 12. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. viii. 36. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. xvii. 14. — <sup>e</sup> Ch. x. 4. xix. 24. — <sup>f</sup> Or, winter. — <sup>g</sup> Ch. xix. 15. <sup>h</sup> Ch. xviii. 4. — <sup>i</sup> Ch. xxv. 14. Matt. vi. 2. Luke xviii. 11. <sup>j</sup> Or, bounty. — <sup>k</sup> 1 Sam. xxii. 14. Ps. xii. 10. Ch. xxviii. 20. Luke xviii. 8. — <sup>l</sup> 2 Cor. i. 12. — <sup>m</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 26.

## NOTES ON CHAP. XX.

Verse 1. *Wine is a mocker*] It deceives by its fragrance, intoxicates by its strength, and renders the intoxicated ridiculous.

*Strong drink*] שכר shechar, any strong fermented liquor, whether of the vine, date, or palm species.

Verse 2. *The fear of a king*] Almost the same with chap. xix. 12, which see.

Verse 3. It is an honour for a man] The same sentiment as chap. xix. 11.

Verse 4. *The sluggard will not plow*] For other parts of this character, see the preceding chapter. It is seldom that there is a season of very cold weather in Palestine; very cold days sometimes occur, with wind, rain, and sleet. They begin their ploughing in the latter end of September, and sow their early wheat by the middle of October. And this is often the case in England itself. The meaning of the proverb is: the slothful man, under the pretence of unfavourable weather, neglects cultivating his land till the proper time is elapsed.

Verse 5. *Counsel in the heart of man*] Men of the deepest and most comprehensive minds are rarely apt, unsolicited, to join in any discourse, in which they might appear even to the greatest advantage; but a man of understanding will elicit this, by questions framed for the purpose, and thus pump up the salubrious waters from the deep and capacious well. The metaphor is fine and expressive.

Verse 6. *Most men will proclaim*] If any men merciful ben eledid: a faithful man forsoth, who schal knite?—Old MS. Bible.

Verse 8. *A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment*] Kings should see to the administration of the laws, as well as of the state transactions, of their kingdom. In the British constitution there is a court for the King, called the King's Bench, where he should sit, and where he is always supposed to be sitting. The eyes—the presence, of the monarch in such a place,

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6 <sup>i</sup> Most men will proclaim every one his own <sup>k</sup> goodness: but <sup>l</sup> a faithful man who can find?

7 <sup>m</sup> The just man walketh in his integrity: <sup>n</sup> his children are blessed after him.

8 <sup>o</sup> A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.

9 <sup>p</sup> Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?

10 <sup>q</sup> Divers <sup>r</sup> weights, and <sup>s</sup> divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the LORD.

11 Even a child is <sup>t</sup> known by his doings,

xxii. 2. — <sup>o</sup> Ver. 26. — <sup>p</sup> 1 Kings viii. 46. 2 Chron. vi. 36. Job xiv. 4. Ps. li. 5. Eccles. vii. 20. 1 Cor. iv. 4. 1 John i. 3. — <sup>q</sup> Deut. xxv. 13, &c. Ver. 23. Ch. xi. 1. xvi. 11. Mic. vi. 10, 11. — <sup>r</sup> Heb. A stone and a stone. — <sup>s</sup> Heb. an ephah and an ephah. — <sup>t</sup> Matt. vii. 16.

*scatter evil*—he sees into the case himself, and gives right judgment, for he can have no self-interest. Corrupt judges, and falsifying counsellors, cannot stand before him; and the villain is too deeply struck with the majesty and state of the monarch, to face out iniquity before him.

Verse 9. *Who can say, I have made my heart clean*] No man. But thousands can testify that the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed them from all unrighteousness. And he is pure from his sin, who is justified freely through the redemption that is in Jesus.

Verse 10. *Divers weights, and divers measures*] A peise and a peise;—Old MS. Bible; from the French pois, weight. Hebrew: "A stone and a stone; an ephah and an ephah." One the standard, the other below it; one to buy with, the other to sell by.

Verse 11. *Even a child is known by his doings*] That is, in general terms, the effect shows the nature of the cause. "A child is known by his conversation," says Coverdale. A child is easily detected when he has done evil; he immediately begins to excuse and vindicate himself, and profess his innocence, almost before accusation takes place. Some think the words should be understood, every child will dissemble; this amounts nearly to the meaning given above. But probably the principal thing intended by the wise man is, that we may easily learn from the child what the man will be. In general, they give indications of those trades and callings for which they are adapted by nature. And, on the whole, we cannot go by a surer guide in preparing our children for future life, than by observing their early propensities. The future engineer is seen in the little handicraftsman of two years old. Many children are crossed in these early propensities to a particular calling, to their great prejudice, and the loss of their parents, as they seldom settle at, or succeed in, the business to which they are tied, and to which nature has given them no tendency. These infantine predilections to

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C.c. 247.

whether his work *be* pure, and  
whether *it be* right.

12 \* The hearing ear, and the  
seeing eye, the LORD hath  
made even both of them.

13 <sup>b</sup> Love not sleep, lest thou come to  
poverty; open thine eyes, *and* thou shalt be  
satisfied with bread.

14 *It is* naught, *it is* naught, saith the  
buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he  
boasteth.

15 There is gold, and a multitude of rubies:  
but <sup>c</sup> the lips of knowledge *are* a precious jewel.

16 <sup>d</sup> Take his garment that is surety for a  
stranger: and take a pledge of him for a  
strange woman.

<sup>a</sup> Exod. iv. 11. Ps. xciv. 9. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. vi. 9. xii. 11. xix. 15.  
Rom. xii. 11. — <sup>c</sup> Job xxiii. 12, 16, 17, 18, 19. Ch. iii. 15.  
iii. 11. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. xxii. 26, 27. xxvii. 13. — <sup>e</sup> Ch. ix. 17.  
Heb. *Bread of lying, or falsehood.* — <sup>f</sup> Ch. xv. 22. xxiv. 6.  
<sup>g</sup> Luke xiv. 31. — <sup>h</sup> Ch. xi. 13. — <sup>i</sup> Rom. xvi. 18. — <sup>j</sup> Or,

particular callings, we should consider as indications  
of Divine Providence, and its calling of them to that  
work for which they are peculiarly fitted.

Verse 12. *The hearing ear, and the seeing eye*]  
Every *good* we possess comes from God; and we should  
neither use our *eyes*, nor our *ears*, nor *any thing* we  
possess, but in strict subserviency to his will.

Verse 13. *Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty*]  
Sleep, indescribable in its nature, is an indescribable  
*curse*; but how often is it turned into a *curse*!  
It is like *food*; a certain measure of it restores and  
revivifies exhausted nature; more than *that* op-  
presses and destroys life. A lover of sleep is a paltry,  
insignificant character.

Verse 14. *It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer*]  
How apt are men to decry the goods they wish to  
purchase, in order that they may get them at a *cheaper*  
*rate*; and, when they have made their bargain and  
traded it off, *boast* to others at how much *less* than  
its *value* they have obtained it! Are such honest  
men? Is such knavery actionable? Can such be  
punished only in *another* world? St. Augustine tells  
us a pleasant story on this subject: A certain moun-  
tain was published, in the full theatre, that at the next  
entertainment he would *show to every man* present  
*what was in his heart*. The time came, and the con-  
course was immense; all waited, with death-like  
silence, to hear what he would say to each. He  
stood up, and in a single sentence redeemed his  
pledge:—

VILI VULTIS EMERE, ET CARO VENDERE.

"You all wish to BUY CHEAP, and SELL DEAR."

He was applauded; for every one felt it to be a  
description of his own heart, and was satisfied that  
all others were similar. "In quo dicto levissimi seci-  
tici omnes tamen conscientias invenerunt suas."—DE  
REPRINDE, lib. xiii., c. 3; OPER. vol. vii., col. 930.

17 \* Bread <sup>f</sup> of deceit *is* sweet  
to a man; but afterwards his  
mouth shall be filled with gravel.

18 \* Every purpose is esta-  
blished by counsel: <sup>h</sup> and with good advice  
make war.

19 <sup>i</sup> He that goeth about *as* a tale-bearer  
revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with  
him <sup>k</sup> that <sup>l</sup> flattereth with his lips.

20 <sup>m</sup> Whoso curseth his father or his mother,  
<sup>n</sup> his <sup>o</sup> lamp shall be put out in obscure dark-  
ness.

21 <sup>p</sup> An inheritance *may be* gotten hastily at  
the beginning; <sup>q</sup> but the end thereof shall not  
be blessed.

22 <sup>r</sup> Say not thou, I will recompense evil;

*enticeth.*—<sup>m</sup> Exod. xxi. 17. Lev. xx. 9. Matt. xv. 4.  
<sup>n</sup> Job xviii. 5, 6. Ch. xxiv. 20.—<sup>o</sup> Or, *candle.*—<sup>p</sup> Ch.  
xxviii. 20.—<sup>q</sup> Hab. ii. 6.—<sup>r</sup> Deut. xxxii. 35. Ch. xvii.  
13. xxiv. 29. Rom. xii. 17, 19. 1 Thess. v. 15. 1 Pet.  
iii. 9.

Verse 15. *There is gold*] *Gold* is valuable, *silver* is  
valuable, and so are *jewels*; but the *teachings of sound*  
*knowledge* are more valuable than all.

Verse 16. *Take his garment that is surety for a*  
*stranger*] I suppose the meaning to be, If a stranger  
or unknown person become surety in a case, greater  
caution should be used, and such security taken from  
this *stranger* as would prevent him from running  
away from his engagements.

Verse 17. *Bread of deceit is sweet*] Property ac-  
quired by *falsehood, speculation, &c.*, without labour,  
is pleasant to the unprincipled, slothful man; but  
there is a *curse* in it, and the issue will prove it.

Verse 18. *With good advice make war.*] Perhaps  
there is not a precept in this whole book so little  
regarded as this. Most of the *wars* that are under-  
taken are wars of injustice, ambition, aggrandizement,  
and caprice, which can have had no previous *good*  
*counsel*. A minister, who is perhaps neither a *good*  
nor a *great* man, counsels his king to make war; the  
*cabinet* must be brought into it, and a *sufficient num-*  
*ber* out of the states of the kingdom gained over to  
support it. By and by, what was begun through  
*caprice* must be maintained through *necessity*. Places  
must be created, and offices must be filled with needy  
dependants, whose interest it may be to *protract the*  
*war*, till they get enough to pay their debts, and  
secure independence for life. And for these most  
important ends the blood of the country is spilt, and  
the treasures of the people exhausted! I have met  
with a fact precisely of this kind under the reign of  
Louis XIV.

Verse 20. *Whoso curseth his father*] Such persons  
were put to death under the law; see Exod. xxi. 17,  
Lev. xx. 9; and here it is said, Their *lamp shall be*  
*put out*—they shall have no *posterity*; God shall cut  
them off both *root and branch*.

Verse 21. *An inheritance—gotten hastily*] Gotten

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

but <sup>a</sup> wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee.

23 <sup>b</sup> Divers weights are an abomination unto the LORD; and <sup>c</sup> a false balance is not good.

24 <sup>d</sup> Man's goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?

25 It is a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, and <sup>e</sup> after vows to make inquiry.

26 <sup>f</sup> A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them.

<sup>a</sup> 2 Sam. xvi. 12.—<sup>b</sup> Ver. 10.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *balances of deceit*.  
<sup>d</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 23. Ch. xvi. 9. Jer. x. 23.—<sup>e</sup> Eccles. v. 4, 5.—<sup>f</sup> Ps. ci. 5, &c. Ver. 8.—<sup>g</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 11.—<sup>h</sup> Or,

by speculation; by lucky hits; not in the fair progressive way of traffic, in which money has its natural increase. All such inheritances are short-lived; God's blessing is not in them, because they are not the produce of industry; and they lead to idleness, pride, fraud, and knavery. A speculation in trade is a public nuisance and curse. How many honest men have been ruined by such!

Verse 22. *I will recompense evil*] Wait on the Lord; judgment is his, and his judgments are sure. In the mean time pray for the conversion of your enemy.

Verse 24. *Man's goings are of the Lord*] He, by his providence, governs all the great concerns of the world. Man often traverses these operations; but he does it to his own damage. An old writer quaintly says: "They who will carve for themselves shall cut their fingers."

Verse 25. *Who devoureth that which is holy*] It is a sin to take that which belongs to God, his worship, or his work, and devote it to one's own use.

*And after vows to make inquiry.*] That is, if a man be inwardly making a rash vow, the fitness or unfitness, the necessity, expediency, and propriety of the thing should be first carefully considered. But how foolish to make the vow first, and afterwards to inquire whether it was right in the sight of God to do it! This equally condemns all rash and inconsiderate conduct. My old MS. Bible translates, *falling in of men often to bowen to septis, and after, the bowen is agen drawn*. Is it possible that Wickliff could have translated this verse thus? as it strongly countenances *vows to* and *invocations of saints*.

Verse 26. *Bringeth the wheel over them.*] He threshes them in his anger, as the wheel does the grain on the threshing-floor. Every one knows that grain was separated from its husks, in Palestine, by the feet of the oxen trampling among the sheaves, or bringing a rough-shod wheel over them. Asiatic kings often

27 <sup>a</sup> The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.

28 <sup>b</sup> Mercy and truth preserve the king; and his throne is upholden by mercy.

29 The glory of young men is their strength; and <sup>c</sup> the beauty of old men is the grey head.

30 The blueness of a wound <sup>d</sup> cleanseth away evil: so do stripes the inward parts of the belly.

*lamp.*—<sup>e</sup> Ps. ci. 1. Ch. xxix. 14.—<sup>f</sup> Ch. xvi. 31.  
<sup>g</sup> Heb. is a purging medicine against evil.

threshed their people, to bring out their property; but this is not what is intended here.

Verse 27. *The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord*] God has given to every man a mind, which he so enlightens by his own Spirit, that the man knows how to distinguish good from evil; and conscience, which springs from this, searches the inmost recesses of the soul.

Verse 28. *Mercy and truth preserve the king*] These are the brightest jewels in the royal crown; and those kings who are most governed by them have the stablest government.

Verse 29. *The glory of young men is their strength*] Scarcely any young man affects to be wise, learned, &c.; but all delight to show their strength and to be reputed strong. Agility, one evidence of strength, they particularly affect; and hence their various trials of strength and fleetness in public exercises.

*And the beauty of old men is the grey head.*] They no longer affect strength and agility, but they affect wisdom, experience, prudent counsels, &c., and are fond of being reputed wise, and of having respect paid to their understanding and experience.

Verse 30. *The blueness of a wound*] חַבְרוּת *chabroth*, from חָבַר *chabar*, to unite, to join together. Does it not refer to the cicatrice of a wound when, in its healing, the two lips are brought together? By this union the wound is healed; and by the previous discharge the lacerated ends of fibres and blood-vessels are purged away. So stripes, though they hurt for the time, become the means of correcting and discharging the moral evil of the inmost soul, the vice of the heart, the easily-besetting sin.

In this chapter, verses fourteen to nineteen, inclusive, are wanting in the Septuagint and Arabic; and the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth come in after the twenty-second. It is difficult to account for these variations, unless they were occasioned by the change of leaves in MSS.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

CHAPTER XXI.

The king's heart is in the hand of God. We should practise mercy and justice. The lying tongue. The quarrelsome woman. The punishment of the wicked. The uncharitable. The private gift. The happiness of the righteous. The wicked a ransom for the righteous. The treasures of the wise. He who guards his tongue. Desire of the sluggard. The false witness. Salvation is of the Lord.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

**T**HE king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water : he turneth it whithersoever he will.

2 Every way of a man is right in his own eyes : but the LORD pondereth the hearts.

3 To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

4 An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin.

5 The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness ; but of every one that is hasty only to want.

6 The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xvi. 2. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. xxiv. 12. Lnke xvi. 15. — <sup>c</sup> 1 Sam. xv. 22. Pa. I. 8. Ch. xv. 8. Isai. i. 11, &c. Hos. vi. 6. Mic. vi. 7, 8. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. vi. 17. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. *Haughtiness of eyes*.  
<sup>f</sup> Or, the light of the wicked. — <sup>g</sup> Ch. x. 4. xiii. 4. — <sup>h</sup> Ch.

7 The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them ; because they refuse to do judgment.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

8 The way of man is froward and strange : but as for the pure, his work is right.

9 It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.

10 The soul of the wicked desireth evil : his neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes.

11 When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise : and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.

12 The righteous man wisely considereth the house of the wicked : but God overthroweth

x. 2. xiii. 11. xx. 21. 2 Pet. ii. 3. — <sup>1</sup> Heb. *saw them, or dwell with them*. — <sup>2</sup> Ver. 19. Ch. xix. 13. xxv. 24. xxvii. 15. <sup>3</sup> Heb. *a woman of contentions*. — <sup>4</sup> Heb. *a house of society*.  
<sup>5</sup> James iv. 5. — <sup>6</sup> Heb. *is not favoured*. — <sup>7</sup> Ch. xix. 25.

NOTES ON CHAP. XXI.

Verse 1. *The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord*] The Lord is the only ruler of princes. He alone can govern and direct their counsels. But there is an allusion here to the eastern method of watering their lands. Several canals are dug from one stream ; and by opening a particular sluice, the husbandman can direct a stream to whatever part he please : so the king's heart, wherever it turns ; i. e., to whomsoever he is disposed to show favour. As the land is enriched with the streams employed in irrigation ; so is the favourite of the king, by the royal bounty : and God can induce the king to give that bounty to whomsoever he will. See Harmer.

Verse 2. *The Lord pondereth the hearts.*] Every man feels strongly attached to his own opinions, modes of acting, &c. ; and though he will not easily give up any thing to the judgment of a neighbour, whom he will naturally consider at least as fallible as himself, yet he should consider that the unerring eye of God is upon him ; and he should endeavour to see that what he does is acceptable in the eye of his Maker and Judge.

Verse 3. *To do justice and judgment*] The words of Samuel to Saul. See note on 1 Sam. xv. 23.

Verse 4. *A high look*] The evidence of pride, self-conceit, and vanity. *A proud heart*, from which the high look, &c., come.

And the plowing] *ner, lucerna, the lamp*, the prosperity and posterity of the wicked ; *is sin*—it is evil in the seed, evil in the root, evil in the branch,

and evil in the fruit. They are full of sin themselves, and what they do is sinful.

Verse 6. *Of them that seek death.*] Instead of *מבקשי mebakshay*, "them that seek," several MSS., some ancient editions, with Symmachus, the Septuagint, Vulgate, and Arabic, have *מקשי m'keshay*, the snares. He who gets treasures by a lying tongue, pursues vanity into the snares of death. Our common translation may be as good. But he who, by the snares of his tongue, endeavours to buy and sell to the best advantage, is pursuing what is empty in itself ; and he is ensnared by death, while he is attempting to ensnare others.

Verse 7. *The robbery of the wicked*] The wicked shall be terrified and ruined by the means they use to aggrandize themselves. And as they refuse to do judgment, they shall have judgment without mercy.

Verse 9. *In a corner of the housetop*] A shed raised on the flat roof :—*a wide house* ; *בית חבר beith chaber*, "a house of fellowship ;" what we should call a lodging-house or a house occupied by several families. This was usual in the East, as well as in the West. Some think a house of festivity is meant : hence my old MS. Bible has, *the house and tests*.

Verse 11. *When the scorner is punished*] When those who mock at religion, blaspheme against its Author, and endeavour to poison society, and disturb the peace of the community by their false doctrine, meet with that degree of punishment which their crimes, as far as they affect the public peace, deserve ; then the simple, who were either led away, or in danger of being led away, by their pernicious doctrines, are made wise. And when those thus made wise

A. M. cir. 3004. the wicked for *their* wickedness. B. C. cir. 1000. 13 <sup>a</sup> Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.

14 <sup>b</sup> A gift in secret pacifieth anger: and a reward in the bosom strong wrath.

15 *It is* joy to the just to do judgment: <sup>c</sup> but destruction *shall be* to the workers of iniquity.

16 The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.

17 He that loveth <sup>d</sup> pleasure *shall be* a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.

18 <sup>e</sup> The wicked *shall be* a ransom for the righteous, and a transgression for the upright.

19 <sup>f</sup> *It is* better to dwell <sup>g</sup> in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.

20 <sup>h</sup> *There is* treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up.

21 <sup>i</sup> He that followeth after righteousness

<sup>a</sup> Matt. vii. 2. xviii. 30, &c. James ii. 13. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. xvii. 8, 23. xviii. 16. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. x. 29. — <sup>d</sup> Or, sport. — <sup>e</sup> Ch. xi. 8. Isai. xliii. 3, 4. — <sup>f</sup> Ver. 9. — <sup>g</sup> Heb. in the land of the desert. — <sup>h</sup> Ps. cxii. 3. Matt. xxv. 3, 4. — <sup>i</sup> Ch. xv. 9. Matt. v. 6. — <sup>k</sup> Eccles. ix. 14, &c. — <sup>l</sup> Ch. xii. 13. xiii. 3. xviii. 21. James iii. 2. — <sup>m</sup> Heb. in the wrath of pride.

are instructed in the important truths which have been decied by those unprincipled men, then they receive knowledge; and one such public example is made a blessing to thousands. But only *blasphemy* against *God* and the *Bible* should be thus punished. Private opinion the state should not meddle with.

Verse 12. *The righteous man wisely considereth*] This verse is understood as implying the *pious concern* of a righteous man, for a wicked family, whom he endeavours by his *instructions* to bring into the way of knowledge and peace.

Verse 13. *Whoso stoppeth his ears*] See the conduct of the *priest* and *Levite* to the man who *fell among thieves*; and let every man learn from this, that he who shuts his ear against the cry of the poor, shall have the ear of God shut against his cry. The words are quite plain; there is no difficulty here.

Verse 16. *The man, once enlightened, that wandereth out of the way of understanding*, in which he had walked, *shall remain*—have a permanent residence, in the *congregation of the dead*; רפאים *rephaim*, the *lost*: either separate spirits in general, or rather the *assembly of separate spirits*, which had fallen from primitive rectitude; and shall not be restored to the divine favour; particularly those sinners who were destroyed by the deluge. This passage intimates that those called *rephaim* are in a state of conscious existence. It is difficult to assign the true meaning

and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour.

22 <sup>k</sup> A wise *man* scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof.

23 <sup>l</sup> Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.

24 Proud *and* haughty scorner *is* his name, who dealeth <sup>m</sup> in proud wrath.

25 <sup>n</sup> The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.

26 He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the <sup>o</sup> righteous giveth and spareth not.

27 <sup>p</sup> The sacrifice of the wicked *is* abomination: how much more, *when* he bringeth it <sup>q</sup> with a wicked mind?

28 <sup>r</sup> A <sup>s</sup> false witness shall perish: but the man that heareth speaketh constantly.

29 A wicked man hardeneth his face: but *as for* the upright, he <sup>t</sup> directeth his way.

30 <sup>u</sup> *There is* no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD.

31 <sup>v</sup> The horse *is* prepared against the day of battle: but <sup>w</sup> safety <sup>x</sup> *is* of the LORD.

<sup>n</sup> Ch. xiii. 4. — <sup>o</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 26. cxii. 9. — <sup>p</sup> Ps. l. 9. Ch. xv. 8. Isai. lxxvi. 3. Jer. vi. 20. Amos v. 22. — <sup>q</sup> Heb. *wickedness*. — <sup>r</sup> Ch. xix. 5, 9. — <sup>s</sup> Heb. *A witness of lies*. — <sup>t</sup> Or, *considereth*. — <sup>u</sup> Isai. viii. 9, 10. Jer. ix. 23. Acts v. 39. — <sup>v</sup> Ps. xx. 7. xxxiii. 17. Isai. xxxi. 1. — <sup>w</sup> Ps. iii. 3. — <sup>x</sup> Or, *victory*.

of the word in several places where it occurs: but it seems to mean the state of separate spirits, i. e., of those separated from their bodies, and awaiting the judgment of the great day: but the *congregation* may also include the *fallen angels*. My old MS. Bible translates, *The man that errith fro the tree of doctrine, in the felowship of geantis schal women*.

Verse 17. *He that loveth pleasure*] That follows gaming, fowling, hunting, coursing, &c., when he should be attending to the culture of the fields, *shall be a poor man*; and, I may safely add, shall be so deservedly poor, as to have none to pity him.

Verse 18. *The wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous*] God often in his judgments cuts off the *wicked*, in order to prevent them from destroying the *righteous*. And in general, we find that the wicked fall into the traps and pits they have digged for the righteous.

Verse 22. *A wise man scaleth the city of the mighty*] Wisdom is in many respects preferable to strength, even in the case of defence. See what skill does in the fortification and reduction of strong places.

Verse 25. *The desire of the slothful killeth him*] He desires to eat, drink, and be clothed: but as he does *not labour*, hence he dies with this desire in his heart, envying those who possess plenty through their labor and industry. Hence he is said to *covet greedily all the day long*, ver. 26, while the *righteous*, who has

been laborious and diligent, has enough to eat, and some to spare.

Verse 27. When he bringeth it with a wicked mind? ] If such a person even bring the sacrifices and offerings which God requires, they are an abomination to him, because the man is wicked; and if such offerings be imperfect in themselves, or of goods ill-gotten, or offered by constraint of custom, &c., they are doubly abominable.

Verse 29. He directeth his way ] Instead of יָרַח yachin, he directeth, upwards of fifty of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS., several ancient editions, with some of the Versions, read יָבִין yabin, he understands; and because he understands his way, he is able to direct himself in walking in it.

Verse 31. The horse is prepared against the day of battle] Horses were not used among the Jews before the time of Solomon. There was a divine command against them, Deut. xvii. 16; but Solomon transgressed it; see 1 Kings x. 29. But he here allows that a horse is a vain thing for safety; and that, however strong and well appointed cavalry may be, still safety, escape, and victory are of the Lord. Among the ancient Asiatics, the horse was used only for war: oxen laboured in the plough and cart; the ass and the camel carried backloads; and mules and asses served for riding. We often give the credit of a victory to man, when they who consider the circumstances see that it came from God.

CHAPTER XXII.

A good reputation. The rich and the poor. The idle. Good habits formed in infancy. Injustice and its effects. The providence of God. The lewd woman. The necessity of timely correction. Exhortation to wisdom. Rob not the poor. Be not the companion of the froward. Avoid suretiship. Be honest. The industrious shall be favoured.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

A <sup>a</sup> GOOD name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and <sup>b</sup> loving favour rather than silver and gold.

2 <sup>c</sup> The rich and poor meet together: <sup>d</sup> the LORD is the Maker of them all.  
3 <sup>e</sup> A prudent man foreseeth

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

<sup>a</sup> Eccles. vii. 1. — <sup>b</sup> Or, favour is better than, &c. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. xxix. 13. 1-Cor. xii. 21.

<sup>d</sup> Job xxxi. 15. Ch. xiv. 31. — <sup>e</sup> Ch. xiv. 16. xxvii. 12.

NOTES ON CHAP. XXII.

Verse 1. A good name] שֵׁם *shem*, a name, put for reputation, credit, fame. Used nearly in the same way that we use it: "He has got a name;" "his name stands high;" for "He is a man of credit and reputation." טוב *toba*, καλον, حمود *hamood*, and bonum, are added by the Chaldee, Septuagint, Arabic, and Vulgate, all signifying good or excellent.

Is rather to be chosen than great riches] Because character will support a man in many circumstances; and there are many rich men that have no name: but the word of the man of character will go farther than all their riches.

Verse 2. The rich and poor meet together] אֲשִׁיר *ashir*, the opulent, whether in money, land, or property; רָשׁ *rash*, the man that is destitute of these, and lives by his labour, whether a handicraftsman, or one that tills the ground. In the order of God, the rich and the poor live together, and are mutually helpful to each other. Without the poor, the rich could not be supplied with the articles which they consume; for the poor include all the labouring classes of society: and without the rich, the poor could get no *veni* for the produce of their labour, nor, in many cases, labour itself. The poor have more time to labour than the mere necessaries of life require; their extra time is employed in providing a multitude of things which are called the *superfluities* of life, and which the rich especially consume. All the poor man's time is thus employed; and he is paid for his extra labour by the rich. The rich should not

despise the poor, without whom he can neither have his comforts, nor maintain his state. The poor should not envy the rich, without whom he could neither get employment, nor the necessaries of life.

The Lord is the Maker of them all.] Both the states are in the order of God's providence, and both are equally important in his sight. Merely considered as men, God loves the simple artificer or labourer as much as he does the king; though the office of the latter, because of its entering into the plan of his government of the world, is of infinitely greater consequence than the trade of the poor artificer. Neither should despise the other; neither should envy the other. Both are useful; both important; both absolutely necessary to each other's welfare and support; and both are accountable to God for the manner in which they acquit themselves in those duties of life which God has respectively assigned them. The abject poor—those who are destitute of health and the means of life, God in effect lays at the rich man's door, that by his superfluities they may be supported. How wise is that ordinance which has made the rich and the poor! Pity it were not better understood!

Verse 3. A prudent man foreseeth the evil] God in mercy has denied man the knowledge of futurity; but in its place he has given him hope and prudence. By hope he is continually expecting and anticipating good; by prudence he derives and employs means to secure it. His experience shows him that there are many natural evils in a current state, the course of which he can neither stem nor divert: prudence



A. M. cir. 3004.  
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cir. 224.  
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the evil, and hideth himself :  
but the simple pass on, and  
are punished.

4 <sup>a</sup> By <sup>b</sup> humility *and* the fear  
of the LORD *are* riches, honour, and life.

5 <sup>c</sup> Thorns *and* snares *are* in the way of the  
froward : <sup>d</sup> he that doth keep his soul shall be  
far from them.

6 <sup>e</sup> Train <sup>f</sup> up a child <sup>g</sup> in the way he should  
go : and when he is old, he will not depart  
from it.

7 <sup>h</sup> The rich ruleth over the poor, and the  
borrower *is* servant <sup>i</sup> to the lender.

8 <sup>k</sup> He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity :

<sup>a</sup> Ps. cxiii. 3. Matt. vi. 33.—<sup>b</sup> Or, *The reward of humility*,  
&c.—<sup>c</sup> Ch. xv. 19.—<sup>d</sup> 1 John v. 18.—<sup>e</sup> Eph. vi. 4. 2  
Tim. iii. 15.—<sup>f</sup> Or, *Catechise*.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. *in his way*.  
<sup>h</sup> James ii. 6.—<sup>i</sup> Heb. *to the man that lendeth*.—<sup>k</sup> Job iv.

shows him beforehand the means he may use to step  
out of their way, and *hide* himself. The *simple*—the  
inexperienced, headstrong, giddy, and foolish, rush  
on in the *career of hope*, without *prudence* to regulate,  
chastise, and guide it ; thus they commit many faults,  
make many miscarriages, and suffer often in conse-  
quence ; and the commission of crimes leads to  
punishment.

Verse 5. *Thorns and snares*] Various difficulties,  
trials, and sufferings.

Verse 6. *Train up a child in the way he should go*] The Hebrew of this clause is curious: וְיָרַד לְפִי חָנוּךְ לַנְּאֻרָה *chanoch lannaar al pi darco*, "Initiate the child at the opening (the mouth) of his path." When he comes to the *opening of the way of life*, being able to walk alone, and to choose ; stop at this entrance, and begin a series of instructions, how he is to conduct himself in every *step* he takes. Show him the *duties*, the *dangers*, and the *blessings* of the path ; give him directions *how* to *perform the duties*, *how* to *escape the dangers*, and *how* to *secure the blessings*, which all lie before him. Fix these on his mind by *daily inculcation*, till their *impression* is become *indelible* ; then lead him to *practice* by slow and almost imperceptible degrees, till each *indelible impression* becomes a *strongly radicated habit*. Beg incessantly the blessing of God on all this teaching and discipline ; and then you have obeyed the injunction of the wisest of men. Nor is there any likelihood that such *impressions* shall ever be effaced, or that such *habits* shall ever be destroyed.

חָנוּךְ *chanac*, which we translate *train up* or *initiate*, signifies also *dedicate* ; and is often used for the *consecrating* any thing, house, or person to the service of God. *Dedicate*, therefore, in the first instance, your *child to God* ; and *nurse, teach, and discipline* him as God's child, whom he has intrusted to your care. These things observed, and illustrated by your own conduct, the child (you have God's word for it) will never depart from the path of life. *Coverdale* translates the passage thus : " Yf thou teachest a child

<sup>l</sup> and the rod of his anger shall  
fail.

9 <sup>m</sup> He <sup>n</sup> that hath a bountiful  
eye shall be blessed ; for he  
giveth of his bread to the poor.

10 <sup>o</sup> Cast out the scorner, and contention  
shall go out ; yea, strife and reproach shall  
cease.

11 <sup>p</sup> He that loveth pureness of heart, <sup>q</sup> for  
the grace of his lips the king *shall be* his  
friend.

12 The eyes of the LORD preserve know-  
ledge, and he overthroweth <sup>r</sup> the words of the  
transgressor.

8. Hos. x. 13.—<sup>l</sup> Or, *and with the rod of his anger he shall be consumed*.—<sup>m</sup> 2 Cor. ix. 6.—<sup>n</sup> Heb. *Good of eye*.  
<sup>o</sup> Gen. xxi. 9, 10. Ph. ci. 5.—<sup>p</sup> Ps. ci. 6. Ch. xvi. 12.  
<sup>q</sup> Or, and hath *grace in his lips*.—<sup>r</sup> Or, *the matters*.

what waye he shoulde go, he shall not leave it when he is olde." *Coverdale's Bible*, for generally giving the *true sense* of a passage, and in *elegant language* for the time, has no equal in any of the translations which have followed since. HORACE'S maxim is nearly like that of Solomon :—

Fingit equum tenera docilem cervicem magister  
Ire viam, quam monstrat eques ; venaticus, ex quo  
Tempore cervinam pellem latravit in aula,  
Militat in sylvis catulus. Nunc adhibe puro  
Pectore verba, puer ; nunc te melioribus offer.  
Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem  
Testa diu. Hor. Ep. lib. i., ep. 2, ver. 64.

"The docile *colt* is formed with *gentle skill*  
To *move obedient* to his *rider's will*.  
In the *loud hall* the *hound* is taught to *bay*  
The *buck-skin trailed*, then challenges his *prey*  
Through the *wild woods*. Thus, in your *hour of youth*  
From *pure instruction quaff the words of truth* :  
The *odours* of the wine that *first* shall stain  
The *virgin vessel*, it shall *long retain*." FRANCIS.

Verse 7. *The rich ruleth over the poor*] So it is in the order of God, and may be a blessing to both.

Verse 8. *He that soweth iniquity*] The *crop* must be according to the *seed*. If a man sow *thistle seed*, is it likely he shall reap *wheat* ? If he sow to the *flesh*, shall he not of the *flesh* reap *destruction* ?

Verse 9. *A bountiful eye*] One that disposes him to help all that he sees to be in want ; the *bountiful eye* means the *bountiful heart* ; for the *heart* looks through the *eye*. The *merciful heart*, even when the *hand* has little or nothing to give, shall be blessed of the Lord.

Verse 11. *He that loveth pureness of heart*] Who aims to be what God would have him to be,—*the King of kings shall be his Friend*. There is no class of men that value *uprightness* more than *kings* ; as none stand so much in need of it in their *servants*.

Verse 12. *The eyes of the Lord*—(the divine providence) *preserve knowledge*.] This providence has

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U. C. c. 247.

13 <sup>a</sup> The slothful man saith,  
There is a lion without, I shall  
be slain in the streets.

14 <sup>b</sup> The mouth of strange  
women is a deep pit: <sup>c</sup> he that is abhorred of  
the LORD shall fall therein.

15 Foolishness is bound in the heart of a  
child: but <sup>d</sup> the rod of correction shall drive it  
far from him.

16 He that oppresseth the poor to increase

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xxvi. 13.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. ii. 16. v. 3. vii. 5. xxiii. 27.  
<sup>c</sup> Eccles. vii. 26.

his riches, and he that giveth  
to the rich, shall surely come  
to want.

17 Bow down thine ear, and  
hear the words of the wise, and apply thine  
heart unto my knowledge.

18 For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep  
them <sup>e</sup> within thee; they shall withal be fitted  
in thy lips.

19 That thy trust may be in the LORD, I

<sup>d</sup> Ch. xiii. 24. xix. 18. xxiii. 13, 14. xxix. 15, 17.—<sup>e</sup> Heb.  
in thy belly.

been wonderfully manifested in *preserving the sacred oracles*, and in *preserving many ancient authors*, which have been of great use to the *civil interests of man*.

Verse 13. *The slothful man saith*, There is a lion without] But *why* does he say so? Because he is a slothful man. Remove his slothfulness, and these imaginary difficulties and dangers will be no more. He will not go abroad to work in the fields, because he thinks there is a lion in the way; he will not go out into the town for employment, as he fears to be assassinated in the streets! From both these circumstances he seeks total cessation from activity.

Verse 14. *The mouth of strange women is a deep pit*] In chap. xxiii. 27, he says, A whore is a DEEP DITCH, and a strange woman is a NARROW PIT. The allusions in these three places are too plain to be misunderstood. Virgil's hell has been adduced in illustration:—

—Sate sanguine Divum,  
Tros Anchisiade, facilis decensus Averni;  
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis:  
Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,  
Hoc opus; hic labor est. Pauci quos æquus amatit  
Jupiter, aut ardens evasit ad æthera virtus,  
Dis geniti potuere.

Virg. Æn. lib. vi., ver. 125.

"O glorious prince of brave Anchises' line!  
Great godlike hero! sprung from seed divine,  
Smooth lies the road to Pluto's gloomy shade;  
And Hell's black gates for ever stand displayed:  
But 'tis a long unconquerable pain,  
To climb to these ethereal realms again.  
The choice-selected few, whom favouring Jove,  
Or their own virtue, raised to heaven above,  
From these dark realms emerged again to day;  
The mighty sons of gods, and only they. PITT.

Verse 16. *He that oppresseth the poor*] He who, in order to obtain the favour of the rich and great, either robs or cheats the poor, to make those men presents; or gives in presents to them, for the sake of honour and reputation, what he should have given to the poor, shall surely come to want.

Verse 17. *Bow down thine ear*] From this to the end of ver. 21 are contained, not proverbs, but directions how to profit by that which wisdom has already

delivered; the nature of the instruction, and the end for which it was given.

I shall give a paraphrase of this very important passage:—

I. Solomon addresses his pupils on the use of his past teachings. See on ver. 6.

1. The wise man speaks; and all his words, not merely his sentiments, are to be carefully heard.

2. He speaks knowledge—gives doctrines true in themselves, and confirmed by observation and experience.

3. These are to be heard with humility and deep attention: "Bow down thine ear."

4. They must not only be heard, but meditated and pondered: "Apply thine heart to my knowledge."

Verse 18. *For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee*]

II. The pleasure and profit which may be derived from an attentive hearing.

1. They should be laid up in the heart—stored, treasured up within thee.

2. This will yield high satisfaction and happiness to the soul: "For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee."

3. The man who thus attends to the teachings of wisdom shall gain an experimental knowledge of them, so as to be able to speak of them suitably, pertinently, and persuasively: "They shall withal be fitted in thy lips."

Verse 19. *That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known, &c.*]

III. The end for which the wise man gives these instructions:—

1. "That thy trust may be in the Lord." That thou mayest acknowledge HIM as the Fountain of all good; and refer every thing to him.

2. That this end may be accomplished, the instructions are specific and particular: "I have made known to thee, even to thee."

3. And this has not only been done in times past, "I have made known:" but even in the present, "I have made known this day!"

IV. An appeal is made to the person himself relative to the matter and importance of the teaching.

1. "Have I not written to thee excellent things;" שְׁלִישִׁים shalishim, literally threefold, thrice, in three different ways; which some think refers to his three

A. M. cir. 3004. have made known to thee this  
 B. C. cir. 1000. day, <sup>a</sup>even to thee.  
 Ante I. Ol.  
 cir. 224. 20 Have not I written to thee  
 Ante U.C.c. 247. <sup>b</sup>excellent things in counsels

and knowledge,

21 <sup>c</sup>That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth: <sup>d</sup>that thou mightest answer the words of truth <sup>e</sup>to them that send unto thee?

22 <sup>f</sup>Rob not the poor, because he *is* poor: <sup>g</sup>neither oppress the afflicted in the gate:

23 <sup>h</sup>For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.

24 Make no friendship with an angry man;

<sup>a</sup> Or, trust thou also.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. viii. 6.—<sup>c</sup> Luke i. 3, 4. <sup>d</sup> 1 Pet. iii. 15.—<sup>e</sup> Or, to those that send thee.—<sup>f</sup> Exod. xxiii. 6. Job xxxi. 16, 21. Isai. x. 2. xvii. 14.—<sup>g</sup> Zech. vii. 10. Mal. iii. 5.—<sup>h</sup> 1 Sam. xxiv. 12, xxv. 39. Ps. xii. 5.

Books:—1. *Canticles*. 2. *Koheleth*, or *Ecclesiastes*. And 3. *Proverbs*.

Others, understanding it of the voice of divine wisdom, suppose the *three* grand divisions of the sacred oracles are intended; viz. 1. The *Law*; 2. The *Prophe- tics*; and 3. The *Hagiographa*. And others interpret it of the *three* grand intellectual sciences:—1. *Morality*, or *Ethics*. 2. *Natural Philosophy*, or *Physics*. 3. *Theology*, or the science of *divine things* as reported in the Scriptures. But Solomon's books of *Natural Philosophy* are lost.

And lastly, some of the rabbins and some Christians find in these *shalishim* the *three senses* of Scripture: 1. *Literal*; 2. *Figurative*; and 3. *Allegorical*.

After all, as we know the term *thrice* was used as the term *seven*, a *certain* number for an *uncertain* (see Amos i. 11; 2 Cor. xii. 8); it *may* mean no more here than, *I have written to thee often*. But perhaps it is safer to apply it to the *Scriptures*, and the excellent *doctrines* they contain: for *שְׁלִישִׁים shalishim* signifies also *excellent, princely things*; things which become a *king to speak*. Indeed, it would not be difficult to prove that there is not one important *art* or *science* which is not alluded to in the Holy Scriptures, and used to illustrate and inculcate heavenly truths.

2. These *excellent, princely, or threefold teachings* consist of two grand parts: 1. *COUNSELS*, מַצְוֵי מוֹעֵצוֹת, from *מַצְוֵי yaats*, to give *advice, counsel, or information*. These (1) Show thee what thou shouldst *know*; and, (2) *Advise* thee what thou shouldst *do*. 2. *KNOWLEDGE*, דַּעַת, from *יָדָה yada*, to *perceive, or feel* by means of the senses and *internal perception*; viz., what should be *felt, experienced, known to be true by mental perception*, and by their *influence on the heart and affections*.

V. All this is done to give the pupil the *fullest satisfaction*, and most plenary evidence concerning the *truths* of God.

Verse 21. *That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth*]

and with a furious man thou shalt not go:

25 Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.

26 <sup>i</sup>Be not thou *one* of them that strike hands, *or* of them that are sureties for debts.

27 If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he <sup>k</sup>take away thy bed from under thee?

28 <sup>l</sup>Remove not the ancient <sup>m</sup>landmark, which thy fathers have set.

29 Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before <sup>n</sup>mean men.

xxxv. 1, 10. lxviii. 5. cxl. 12. Ch. xxiii. 11. Jer. li. 36. <sup>i</sup> Ch. vi. 1. xi. 15.—<sup>k</sup> Ch. xx. 16.—<sup>l</sup> Deut. xix. 14. xviii. 17. Ch. xxiii. 10.—<sup>m</sup> Or, bound.—<sup>n</sup> Heb. obscure men.

1. These are words or doctrines of *truth*: 1. They are true in themselves. 2. Come from the God of truth. 3. Are truly *fulfilled* to all that believe.

2. These words of truth are *certain*, *verba coelestia*, they are not of dubious or difficult interpretation; they *point directly* to the great end for which God gave them; they *promise*, and they are *fulfilled*. He who pleads them by faith, receives their *accomplishment* in the spirit and power of divine love. The Scriptures, as far as they concern the salvation of the soul, are to be *experimentally* understood; and, by this experimental knowledge, every believer has the *witness in himself*, and knows the *certainty* of the words of truth.

VI. What we know ourselves to be true, and of infinite importance to the welfare of men in general, we should carefully proclaim and witness, that they also may believe.

*That thou mightest answer the words of truth*] 1. When the doctrine of salvation is preached, there will be many *inquirers*. What is this doctrine? Have any persons received these blessings—the remission of sins, witness of the Holy Spirit, purification of the heart, &c., &c.? *Who* are they? What are the collateral arguments that prove these things, and show us that you have not misapprehended the meaning of these Scriptures? 2. Inquiries of this kind should meet with the *speediest* and most distinct *answers*; and the doctrines of *truth* should be *supported and illustrated* with the *words of truth*. “That thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee.”

Verse 22. *Neither oppress the afflicted in the gate*] In judgment let the poor have a fair hearing; and let him not be borne down because he is *poor*. The reader has often seen that courts of justice were held at the *gates* of cities in the East.

Verse 23. *For the Lord will plead their cause*] Woe therefore to them that oppress them, for they will have *God*, not the *poor*, to deal with.

Verse 24. *Make no friendship with an angry man*]

*Spirit* has a wonderful and unaccountable influence upon *spirit*. From those with whom we associate we acquire habits, and learn *their ways*, imbibe their *spirit*, show their *tempers*, and walk in their *steps*. We cannot be too choice of our *company*, for we may soon learn *ways* that will be a *snare to our soul*.

Verse 26. *That strike hands*] See on the parallel texts in the margin.

Verse 27. *If thou hast nothing to pay*] Should any man give security for more than he is *worth*? If he does, is it not a fraud on the very face of the transaction?

*Why should he take away thy bed from under thee?*] The *creditor* will not pursue the *debtor* whom he knows to be worth nothing; but he will sue the *bail* or *bondman*. And why shouldst thou put thyself in such circumstances as to expose thyself to the loss even of thy bed?

Verse 28. *Remove not the ancient landmark*] Do not take the advantage, in ploughing or breaking up a field contiguous to that of thy neighbour, to set the dividing stones *farther* into his *field*, that thou mayest *enlarge thy own*. Take not what is not *thy own* in any case. Let all ancient *divisions*, and the *usages* connected with them, be held sacred. Bring in no new *dogmas*, nor *rites*, nor *ceremonies*, into religion, or the worship of God, that are not clearly laid down in the *sacred writings*. "Stand in the way; and see, and ask for the old paths, which is the good way, and walk therein; and ye shall find rest for your souls;" Jer. vi. 16. But if any *church* have lost sight of the *genuine doctrines* of the gospel, calling them back to these is not *removing the ancient landmarks*, as some have falsely asserted. God gave a law against removing the ancient landmarks, by which the inheritances of tribes and families were distinguished. See Deut. xix. 14, from which these words of Solomon appear to be taken.

Even among the *heathens* the *landmark* was sacred; so sacred that they made a *deity* of it. *Terminus* signifies the *stone* or *post* that served as a *landmark*. And *Terminus* was reputed a *god*, and had offerings made to him. Hence OVID:—

Tu quoque sacrorum, Termine, finis eras.  
FAST. lib. i., ver. 50.

Nox ubi transierit, solito celebratur honore,  
Separat indicio qui Deus arva suo.  
Termine, sive lapis, sive es defossus in agro  
Stipes, ab antiquis sic quoque Numen habes.  
Te duo diversa domini pro parte coronant;  
Binaque sarta tibi, binaque liba ferunt.—  
Conveniunt, celebrantque dapes vicinia simplex;  
Et cantant laudes, Termine sancte, tuas.  
Tu populos, urbesque, et regna ingentia finis:  
Omnis erit, sine te, litiginosus ager.  
FAST. lib. ii., ver. 639.

Here we find the owners of both fields bringing each his *garland* and *libation* to the honour of this god. They sung its *praises*, put on its top a *chaplet of flowers*, poured out the *libation* before it; and the inhabitants of the *country* held a *festival* in its honour. It was, in short, celebrated as the *preserver* of the *bounds* and territorial rights of tribes, cities, and whole kingdoms; and without its testimony and evidence, every field would have been a subject of litigation.

Verse 29. *He shall not stand before mean men.*] חשוכים *chashukkim*, dark or obscure persons; men of no repute. נא הֵ שָׁחַל בֵּנֵי עַמִּי לֹא יִשְׁחַל בְּפָנֵי אֲנֹכִי.—Old MS. Bible. "Not among the symple people."—*Coverdale*.

The general meaning of the proverb is, "Every diligent, active man shall be at once independent and respectable."

## CHAPTER XXIII.

*Sobriety in eating and drinking, especially at the tables of the great. Have no fellowship with the covetous. Remove not the ancient landmark. Children should receive due correction. Avoid the company of wine-bibbers. Obedience to parents. Avoid lewd connexions. The effect of an unfeeling conscience.*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

**W**HEN thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what *is* before thee:  
2 And put a knife to thy throat, if thou *be* a man given to appetite.

3 Be not desirous of his dainties: for they *are* deceitful meat.

4 \* Labour not to be rich:  
<sup>b</sup> cease from thine own wisdom.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

\* Ch. xxviii. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

<sup>b</sup> Ch. iii. 5. Rom. xii. 16.

## NOTES ON CHAP. XXIII.

Verse 1. *When thou sittest to eat with a ruler*] When invited to the table of thy betters, eat *moderately*. Do not appear as if half-starved at home. Eat not of *delicacies* to which thou art not accustomed; they are *deceitful meat*; they please, but they do not profit. They are pleasant to the *sight*, the *taste*, and the *smell*; but they are injurious to

*health*. These are prudential cautions; and should be carefully observed by all who would avoid the conduct of a *clown*, and desire to pass for a *well-bred* man.

Verse 2. *Put a knife to thy throat*] Repress thy appetite, and do not be incontinent of speech. Eat, drink, and converse, under a *check*.

Verse 4. *Labour not to be rich*] Let not this be thy

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

5 <sup>a</sup>Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for <sup>b</sup>riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as

an eagle toward heaven.

6 <sup>b</sup>Eat thou not the bread of *him that hath* <sup>c</sup>an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats:

7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he: Eat and drink, <sup>d</sup>saith he to thee; but his heart *is* not with thee.

8 The morsel *which* thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.

9 <sup>e</sup>Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.

10 <sup>f</sup>Remove not the old <sup>g</sup>landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless:

11 <sup>h</sup>For their redeemer *is* mighty: he shall plead their cause with thee.

12 Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.

13 <sup>i</sup>Withhold not correction from the child:

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *Wilt thou cause thine eyes to fly upon.*—<sup>b</sup> Ps. cxli. 4.—<sup>c</sup> Deut. xv. 9.—<sup>d</sup> Ps. xii. 2.—<sup>e</sup> Ch. ix. 8. Matt. vii. 6.—<sup>f</sup> Deut. xix. 14. xxvii. 17. Ch. xxii. 28.—<sup>g</sup> Or, *bound.*—<sup>h</sup> Job xxxi. 21. Ch. xxii. 23.—<sup>i</sup> Ch. xiii. 24. xix. 18. xxii. 15. xxix. 15, 17.—<sup>k</sup> 1 Cor. v. 5.—<sup>l</sup> Ver. 24, 25. Ch. xxix. 3.—<sup>m</sup> Or, *even I will rejoice.*—<sup>n</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 1.

object. Labour to provide things *honest* in the sight of God and all men; and if thou get wealth, do not forget the *poor*, else God's curse will be a canker even in thy *gold*.

*Cease from thine own wisdom.*] ביטך *binathecha*, thy own *understanding* or *prudence*. The world says, "Get rich if thou canst, and *how* thou canst." Rem, si possis, recte; si non, quocunque modo rem; "Get a fortune *honestly* if thou canst; but if not, get one at all events." This is the devil's counsel, and well it is followed; but Solomon says, and God says, "Cease from thine own counsel." Thou hast an immortal soul, and shalt shortly appear before God. Lay up treasure for heaven, and be rich towards God.

Verse 6. *Of him that hath an evil eye*] Never eat with a covetous or stingy man; if he entertains you at his own expense, he grudges every morsel you put in your mouth. This is well marked by the wise man in the next verse: "Eat and drink, saith he: but his heart is not with thee."

Verse 8. *The morsel which thou hast eaten*] On reflection thou wilt even blame thyself for having accepted his invitation.

Verse 10. *Remove not the old landmark*] See the preceding chapter, ver. 28.

*Enter not into the fields of the fatherless*] Take nothing that belongs to an orphan. The heaviest curse of God will fall upon them that do so.

Verse 11. *For their redeemer is mighty*] גאולם *goulam*, their *kinsman*. The word means the person

for *if* thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

14 Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and <sup>k</sup>shalt deliver his soul from hell.

15 My son, <sup>l</sup>if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, <sup>m</sup>even mine.

16 Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things.

17 <sup>n</sup>Let not thine heart envy sinners: but <sup>o</sup>be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long.

18 <sup>p</sup>For surely there is an <sup>q</sup>end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off.

19 Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and <sup>r</sup>guide thine heart in the way.

20 <sup>s</sup>Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters <sup>t</sup>of flesh:

21 For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and <sup>u</sup>drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.

22 <sup>v</sup>Hearken unto thy father that begat

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
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lxxxiii. 3. Ch. iii. 31. xxiv. 1.—<sup>o</sup> Ch. xxviii. 14.—<sup>p</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 37. Ch. xxiv. 14. Luke xvi. 25.—<sup>q</sup> Or, *reward.*—<sup>r</sup> Ch. iv. 23.—<sup>s</sup> Isai. v. 22. Matt. xxiv. 49. Luke xii. 34. Rom. xiii. 13. Eph. v. 18.—<sup>t</sup> Heb. *of their flesh.*—<sup>u</sup> Ch. xix. 15.—<sup>v</sup> Ch. i. 8. xxx. 17. Eph. vi. 1, 2.

who has a right, being next in blood, to *redeem a field* or *estate*, alienated from the family; to *avenge the blood* of a murdered relative, by slaying the murderer; and to take *to wife* a brother's widow, who had died childless, in order to preserve the family. The *strength* here mentioned refers to the *justness* of his claim, the *extent* of his *influence*, and the *powerful* *abettors* of such a cause. But in reference to the orphans here mentioned, they having no *kinsman*, God takes up, vindicates, and avenges their cause.

Verse 14. *Thou shalt beat him with the rod*] A proper correction of children was a favourite point of discipline with Solomon. We have already seen how forcibly he speaks on this subject. See the notes on the places referred to in the margin.

Verse 18. *Surely there is an end*] גאול אחרית *acharith*, there is *another* life; "and thy *expectation*" of the enjoyment of a blessed immortality "shall not be cut off." The Old MS. Bible reads thus: *for thou shalt have hope in the last; and thine abiding shall not be taken away.* "For the end is not yet come; and thy patient abiding shall not be in *vayne.*"—COVERDALE.

Verse 20. *Be not among winebibbers*] There is much of this chapter spent in giving directions concerning *eating*, *drinking*, and *entertainments* in general. First, the pupil is directed relative to the manner in which he is to conduct himself in his visits to the tables of the *rich* and *great*. 2. Relative to the *covetous*, and his intercourse with them. And 3

A. M. cir. 3004.  
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thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.

23 <sup>a</sup> Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.

24 <sup>b</sup> The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him.

25 Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.

26 My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.

27 <sup>c</sup> For a whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit.

28 <sup>d</sup> She also lieth in wait <sup>e</sup> as for a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men.

29 <sup>f</sup> Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who <sup>g</sup> hath redness of eyes?

<sup>a</sup> Ch. iv. 5, 7. Matt. xiii. 44. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. x. i. xv. 20. Ver. 15. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. xxii. 14. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. vii. 12. Eccles. vii. 26. <sup>e</sup> Or, as a robber. — <sup>f</sup> Isai. v. 11, 22. — <sup>g</sup> Gen. xlix. 12. <sup>h</sup> Ch. xx. 1. Eph. v. 18. — <sup>i</sup> Ps. lxxv. 8. Ch. ix. 2.

To public entertainments, where there were generally riot and debauch. The reasons, says *Calmet*, which induced the wise man to give these directions were, 1. The useless expense. 2. The loss of time. 3. The danger from bad company. And 4. The danger of contracting irregular habits, and of being induced to lead a voluptuous and effeminate life.

Verse 22. *Despise not thy mother when she is old.*] A very necessary caution, as very old women are generally helpless, useless, and burdensome: yet these circumstances do not at all lessen the child's duty. And this duty is strengthened by the divine command here given.

Verse 23. *Buy the truth*] Acquire the knowledge of God at all events; and in order to do this, too much pains, industry, and labour cannot be expended.

*And sell it not*] When once acquired, let no consideration deprive thee of it. Cleave to and guard it, even at the risk of thy life. *Coverdale* translates: "Labour for to get the truth; sell not away wisdom."

Verse 26. *My son, give me thine heart*] This is the speech of God to every human soul; give thy affections to God, so as to love him with all thy heart, soul, mind, and strength.

*And let thine eyes observe my ways.*] Be obedient to me in all things. My son, thou believest that I am, and that I am the Fountain of all good. Give me thy heart; it is I alone who can make thee happy. Observe my ways—follow me; do what is right in my sight. This exhortation contains three words: BELIEVE, LOVE, OBEY! This is the sum of God's counsels to every child of man.

30 <sup>b</sup> They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.

32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like <sup>a</sup> an adder.

33 Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.

34 Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down <sup>b</sup> in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.

35 <sup>m</sup> They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and <sup>n</sup> I <sup>o</sup> felt it not: <sup>p</sup> when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

<sup>k</sup> Or, a cockatrice. — <sup>l</sup> Heb. in the heart of the sea. — <sup>m</sup> Jer. v. 3. Ch. xxvii. 22. — <sup>n</sup> Heb. I knew it not. — <sup>o</sup> Eph. iv. 19. — <sup>p</sup> See Deut. xxix. 19. Isai. lvi. 12.

Verse 27. *For a whore is a deep ditch*] See on chap. xxii. 14.

Verse 28. *Increaseth the transgressors among men.*] More iniquity springs from this one source of evil, than from any other cause in the whole system of sin. Women and strong drink cause many millions to transgress.

Verse 29. *Who hath woe?*] I believe Solomon refers here to the natural effects of drunkenness. And perhaps *אבוי*, which we translate *woe*, and *אבוי*, which we translate *sorrow*, are mere natural sounds or vociferations that take place among drunken men, either from illness, or the nauseating effects of too much liquor. As to contentions among such; babblings on a variety of subjects, which they neither understand nor are fit to discuss; wounds, got by falling out about nothing; and red eyes, blood-shotten with excess of drink, or black and blue eyes with fighting;—these are such common and general effects of these *compotations*, as naturally to follow from them. So that they who tarry long at wine, and use mixed wine to make it more inebriating (see chap. ix. 2), are the very persons who are most distinguished by the circumstances enumerated above. I need scarcely add, that by wine and mixed wine all inebriating liquors are to be understood.

Verse 31. *Look not thou upon the wine*] Let neither the colour, the odour, the sparkling, &c., of the wine, when poured out, induce thee to drink of it. However good and pure it may be, it will to thee be a snare, because thou art addicted to it, and hast no self-command.

Verse 33. *Thine eyes shall behold strange women*]

Evil concupiscence is inseparable from drunkenness. Mr. Herbert shows these effects well:—

He that is drunken may his mother kill,  
Big with his sister: he hath lost the reins;  
Is outlawed by himself. All kinds of ill  
Did, with his liquor, slide into his veins.  
The drunkard forfeits man; and doth divest  
All worldly right, save what he hath by beast.

HERBERT'S Poems.—The Church Porch.

Verse 34. *Lieth down in the midst of the sea*] He is utterly regardless of life; which is expressed very forcibly by one in a state of intoxication ascending the shrouds, clasping the mast-head, and there falling

asleep; whence, in a few moments, he must either fall down upon the deck and be dashed to pieces, or fall into the sea and be drowned. Reader, if thou be a man given to this appetite, put a knife to thy throat.

Verse 35. *They have stricken me*] Though beat and abused, full of pain, and exhibiting a frightful figure; yet so drunk was he, as to be insensible who had struck him: still, after all this abuse and disgrace, he purposes to embrace the next opportunity of repeating his excesses! SIN makes a man contemptible in life, miserable in death, and wretched to all eternity. Is it not strange, then, that men should LOVE it.

CHAP. XXIV.

*Do not be envious. Of the house wisely built. Counsel necessary in war. Save life, when thou canst. Of honey and the honeycomb. Of the just that falleth seven times. We should not rejoice at the misfortune of others. Ruin of the wicked. Fear God and the king. Prepare thy word. The field of the sluggard, and the vineyard of the foolish, described.*

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

**B**E not thou <sup>a</sup>envious against evil men, <sup>b</sup>neither desire to be with them.

2 <sup>c</sup>For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.

3 Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established:

4 And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.

5 <sup>d</sup>A wise man <sup>e</sup>is <sup>f</sup>strong; yea, a man of knowledge <sup>f</sup>increaseth strength.

6 <sup>g</sup>For by wise counsel thou shalt make

thy war: and in multitude of counsellors *there is* safety.

7 <sup>h</sup>Wisdom *is* too high for a fool: he openeth not his mouth in the gate.

8 He that <sup>i</sup>deviseth to do evil shall be called a mischievous person.

9 The thought of foolishness *is* sin: and the scorner *is* an abomination to men.

10 *If* thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength *is* <sup>k</sup>small.

11 <sup>l</sup>If thou forbear to deliver *them that are*

A. M. cir. 304.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

*sight.*—<sup>m</sup>Ch. xi. 15. xiii. 22. xx. 18. Luke xiv. 31. <sup>n</sup>Ps. x. 6. Ch. xiv. 6.—<sup>o</sup>Rom. i. 30.—<sup>p</sup>Heb. *narros*. <sup>q</sup>Ps. lxxviii. 4. Isai. lviii. 6, 7. 1 John iii. 16.

NOTES ON CHAP. XXIV.

Verse 3. *Through wisdom is an house builded*] That is, a family; household affairs. See the notes on chap. ix. 1, &c.

Verse 5. *A wise man is strong*] His wisdom enables him to construct a great variety of machines, by which, under his own influence, he can do the labour of a hundred or even a thousand men. But in all cases *wisdom gives power and influence*; and he who is *wise to salvation* can overcome even Satan himself. The *Septuagint* has: "The wise is better than the strong; and the man who has prudence, than a stout husbandman."

Verse 6. *By wise counsel thou shalt make thy war*] See note on chap. xx. 18.

Verse 7. *A fool—openeth not his mouth in the gate.*] Is not put into public offices of trust and responsibility.

Verse 9. *The thought of foolishness is sin*] וְחַטְאת הַשִּׁמְמַת זִמְמַת וְעֵלֶת חַטְאֵת. "The device of folly is transgression;" or, "an evil purpose is

sinful;" or, perhaps more literally, "the device of the foolish is sin." It has been variously understood by the *Versions*.

"The cunning of the fool is sin."—*Targum*.

"The imprudent man (or fool, *אפור*) shall die in sins."—*Septuagint*.

So the *Arabic*.

The *thinkings of the fool is* *synne*.—Old MS. Bible.

*Fool* is here taken for a *wicked* man, who is not only evil in his *actions*, but every thought of his heart is evil, and that continually. A simple thought about foolishness, or about *sin* itself, is not sinful; it is the *purpose* or *device*, the *harbouring* evil thoughts, and *devising how to sin*, that is criminal.

Verse 10. *If thou faint*] If thou give way to discouragement and despair *in the day of adversity*—time of trial or temptation.

*Thy strength is small.*] וְעַתָּה לֹא תִּצְלַח לְעֵלֶת הַחַטְאֵת, thy strength is contracted. So the old MS. Bible excellently: עַתָּה אִלְמָנָה תִּצְלַח לְעֵלֶת הַחַטְאֵת

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drawn unto death, and *those*  
*that are* ready to be slain;

12 If thou sayest, Behold,

we knew it not: doth not <sup>a</sup> he  
that pondereth the heart consider *it*? and he  
that keepeth thy soul, doth *not* he know *it*?  
and shall *not* he render to *every* man <sup>b</sup> accord-  
ing to his works?

13 My son, <sup>c</sup> eat thou honey, because *it* is  
good; and the honeycomb, *which* is sweet <sup>d</sup> to  
thy taste.

14 <sup>e</sup> So *shall* the knowledge of wisdom *be*  
unto thy soul: when thou hast found *it*, <sup>f</sup> then

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xxi. 2. — <sup>b</sup> Job xxxiv. 11. Ps. lxxii. 12. Jer. xxxii. 19.  
Rom. ii. 6. Rev. ii. 23. xxii. 12. — <sup>c</sup> Cant. v. 1. — <sup>d</sup> Heb.  
upon thy palate. — <sup>e</sup> Ps. xix. 10. cxix. 103. — <sup>f</sup> Ch. xxiii.  
18. — <sup>g</sup> Ps. x. 9, 10. — <sup>h</sup> Job v. 19. Ps. xxxiv. 19. xxxvii.

angapft, ſchäl be made littl thy strength. In times of  
trial we should endeavour to be doubly courageous;  
when a man loses his courage, his strength avails  
him nothing.

Verse 11. *If thou forbear to deliver*] If thou seest  
the innocent taken by the hand of lawless power or  
superstitious zeal, and they are about to be put to  
death, thou shouldst rise up in their behalf, boldly  
plead for them, testify to their innocence when thou  
knowest it; and thus thou wilt not be *guilty of*  
*blood*; which thou wouldst be, if, through any pre-  
tence, thou shouldst neglect to save the life of a  
man unjustly condemned.

Verse 13. *And the honeycomb*] I have often had  
occasion to remark how much finer the flavour of  
honey is in the honeycomb than it is after it has been  
*expressed* from it, and exposed to the action of the  
air. But it has been asserted that the *honeycomb* is  
*never eaten*; it must be by those who have no ac-  
quaintance with the *apiary*. I have seen the *comb*  
with its contained honey eaten frequently, and of it I  
have repeatedly partaken. And that our Lord ate it,  
is evident from Luke xxiv. 42. Nor can any man  
who has not eaten it in this way feel the full force  
of the allusions to the *honeycomb* and its *sweetness*  
in several parts of the sacred writings. See 1 Sam. xiv.  
27; Ps. xix. 10; Prov. v. 3, xvi. 24, xxvii. 7; Cant.  
iv. 11, v. 1; and the place before us.

Verse 14. *So shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto*  
*thy soul*] True religion, experimental godliness,  
shall be to thy soul as the honeycomb is to thy  
mouth.

*Then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation*  
*shall not be cut off.*] This is precisely the same with  
that in the preceding chapter, ver. 18, where see the  
note. The word אַחַרִית *acharith* we translate in the  
former place an *end*, and here we translate it a *re-  
ward*; but there is no place I believe in the sacred  
writings in which it has any such acceptance; nor  
can such a meaning be deduced from the root אָחַר  
*achar*, which always refers to *behind*, *after*, *extremity*,  
*latter part*, *time*, &c., but never carries the idea of  
*recompence*, *compensation*, or such like; nor has one  
of the *Versions* understood it so. There is another

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there shall be a reward, and  
thy expectation shall not be  
cut off.

15 <sup>a</sup> Lay not wait, O wicked  
*man*, against the dwelling of the righteous;  
spoil not his resting-place.

16 <sup>b</sup> For a just *man* falleth seven times, and  
riseth up again: <sup>c</sup> but the wicked shall fall  
into mischief.

17 <sup>d</sup> Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth,  
and let not thine heart be glad when he  
stumbleth:

18 Lest the LORD see *it*, and <sup>e</sup> *it* displease

24. Mic. vii. 8. — <sup>1</sup> Esth. vii. 10. Amos v. 2. viii. 14.  
Rev. xviii. 21. — <sup>2</sup> Job xxxi. 27. Ps. xxxv. 15, 19. Ch.  
xvii. 5. Obad. 12. — <sup>3</sup> Heb. *it be evil in his eyes.*

*state or life, and thy expectation of happiness in a*  
*future world shall not be cut off.* In this sense the  
*Versions* all understood it. I will take them as they  
lie before me.

"Which (wisdom) when thou shalt have found,  
thou shalt have hope in thy *last days*; and thy hope  
shall not perish."—*Vulgate.*

"And if thou find it, thou shalt have a *good death*;  
and hope shall not forsake thee."—*Septuagint.*

"Which, if thou have found, thy *latter days* shall  
be better than the former; and thy hope shall not  
be consumed."—*Chaldee.*

"There shall be an *end*, and thy hope shall not be  
cut off."—*Syriac.*

"For, if thou shalt find her (wisdom), *thy death*  
*shall be glorious*, and thy hope will not fail thee."—  
*Arabic.*

װײל װאן װוּ ןװיסט װוּ ןװײל האָן אין די לעצטע  
זאַכן, הױפּ װײל און דײַן הױפּ ןװײל נישט פּערישען.—  
Old MS. Bible.

"And there is *good hope*; yee that hope shall not  
be in *vayne*."—*Coverdale.*

This rendering is indefinite, which is not the usual  
custom of the translator.

Verse 15. *The dwelling of the righteous*] תְּדַדִּיק  
*tsaddik*, the man who is walking unblameably in all  
the testimonies of God; who is rendering to every  
man his due.

Verse 16. *For a just man*] תְּדַדִּיק *tsaddik*, the *right-  
eous*, the same person mentioned above.

*Falleth seven times*] Gets *very often* into dis-  
tresses through his *resting-place* being *spoiled* by the  
*wicked man*, the robber, the spoiler of the desert,  
*lying in wait* for this purpose, ver. 15.

*And riseth up again*] Though God permit the  
hand of *violence* sometimes to spoil his *tent*, *tempta-  
tions* to assail his *mind*, and *afflictions* to press down  
his *body*, he constantly emerges; and every time he  
passes through the furnace, he comes out *brighter*  
and more refined.

*But the wicked shall fall into mischief.*] And there  
they shall *lie*; having no strong arm to uphold  
them. Yet,



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cir. 224.  
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him, and he turn away his wrath from him.

19 <sup>a</sup> Fret <sup>b</sup> not thyself because of evil *men*, neither be thou envious at the wicked;

20 For <sup>c</sup> there shall be no reward to the evil *man*; <sup>d</sup> the <sup>e</sup> candle of the wicked shall be put out.

21 My son, 'fear thou the LORD and the king: and meddle not with <sup>f</sup> them that are given to change :

22 For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both ?

<sup>a</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 1. lxxvii. 3. Ch. xxiii. 17. Ver. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Or, *Keep not company with the wicked.*—<sup>c</sup> Pa. xl. 6.—<sup>d</sup> Job xviii. 5, 6. xxi. 17. Ch. xiii. 9. xx. 20.—<sup>e</sup> Or, *lamp.*—<sup>f</sup> Rom. xiii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 27.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. *changers.*—<sup>h</sup> Lev.

Verse 17. *Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, (into this mischief) and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth*] When he meets with any thing that injures him; for God will not have thee to avenge thyself, or feel any disposition contrary to love; for if thou do, the Lord will be angry, and may turn away his wrath from him, and pour it out on thee.

This I believe to be the true sense of these verses: but we must return to the *sixteenth*, as that has been most sinfully misrepresented.

For a just man *falleth seven times*.—That is, say many, "the most righteous man in the world sins seven times a day on an average." Solomon does not say so:—1. There is not a word about *sin* in the text. 2. The word *day* is not in the Hebrew text, nor in any of the *Versions*. 3. The word גִּפּוֹל *yippol*, from נָפַל *naphal*, to fall, is never applied to *sin*. 4. When set in opposition to the words *riseth up*, it merely applies to affliction or calamity. See Mic. vii. 8; Amos viii. 4; Jer. xxv. 27; and Ps. xxxiv. 19, 20. "The righteous falls into trouble." See above.

Mr. Holden has a very judicious note on this passage: "Injure not a righteous man; for, though he frequently falls into distress, yet, by the superintending care of Providence, 'he riseth up again,' is delivered from his distress, while the wicked are overwhelmed with their misfortunes. That this is the meaning is plain from the preceding and following verses: yet some expound it by the just man often relapsing into sin, and recovering from it; nay, it has even been adduced to prove the doctrine of the final perseverance of the elect. But נָפַל is never used for falling into sin, but into distress and affliction,—as chap. xi. 5, 14; xiii. 17; xvii. 20; xxvi. 27; xxviii. 10, 14, 18."

Verse 18. *And he turn away his wrath from him.*] Wrath is here taken for the effect of wrath, punishment; and the meaning must be as paraphrased above,—lest he take the punishment from him, and inflict it upon thee. And in this way Coverdale understood it: "Lest the Lorde be angry, and turn his wrath from him unto thee." Or we may under-

23 These things also belong to the wise. <sup>h</sup> It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment.

24 <sup>i</sup> He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him:

25 But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and <sup>k</sup> a good blessing shall come upon them.

26 Every man shall kiss his lips <sup>l</sup> that giveth a right answer.

27 <sup>m</sup> Prepare thy work without, and make it

xix. 15. Dent. xi. 7. xvi. 19. Ch. xviii. 5. xxviii. 21. Job vii. 24.—<sup>i</sup> Ch. xvii. 15. Isai. v. 23.—<sup>k</sup> Heb. *a blessing of good.*—<sup>l</sup> Heb. *that answereth right words.*—<sup>m</sup> 1 Kings v. 17, 18. Luke xiv. 28.

stand it thus: Lest the Lord inflict on thee a *similar punishment*; for if thou get into his *spirit*, rejoicing in the calamities of another, thou deservest punishment.

Verse 20. *For there shall be no reward to the evil man*] אַחַרִּית *acharith*. There shall not be the *future state of blessedness* to the wicked. See the note on ver. 14. *His candle shall be put out*; his *prosperity* shall finally cease, or he shall have no *posterity*. Some have thought that this text intimates the *annihilation* of sinners; but it refers not to *being*, but to the *state or condition* of that being. The wicked shall be; but they shall not be *happy*.

Verse 21. *My son, fear thou the Lord and the king*] Pay to each the homage due: to the Lord, divine honour and adoration; to the king, civil respect, civil honour, and political obedience.

*Meddle not with them that are given to change*] מְדַבֵּרִים אֶל שׂוֹמְרֵי עַם שׂוֹמְרֵי אֱלֹהִים *im shonim al titharab*; "And with the changlings mingle not thyself." The *innovators*; those who are always for making experiments on modes of government, forms of religion, &c. The most dangerous spirit that can infect the human mind.

Verse 22. *The ruin of them both ?*] Of *them* who do not fear the LORD; and of *them* that do not reverence the king.

Verse 23. *These things also belong to the wise.*] גַּם אֵלֶּם לַחֲכָמִים *gam elleh lachachamim*, "These also to wise." This appears to be a *new section*; and perhaps, what follows belongs to *another collection*. Probably fragments of sayings collected by wise men from the Proverbs of Solomon.

*It is not good to have respect*] Judgment and justice should never be perverted.

Verse 26. *Kiss his lips*] Shall treat him with affection and respect.

Verse 27. *Prepare thy work without*] Do nothing without a *plan*. In *winter* prepare seed, implements, tackle, geers, &c., for *seed-time and harvest*.

Verse 28. *Be not a witness*] Do not be forward to offer thyself to bear testimony against a neighbour. in a matter which may prejudice him, where the essential claims of justice do not require such inter-

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Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house.

28 \* Be not a witness against thy neighbour without cause;

and deceive not with thy lips.

29 <sup>b</sup> Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work.

30 I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;

31 And, lo, <sup>c</sup> it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down.

32 Then I saw, and <sup>d</sup> considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction.

33 \* Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

34 So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as <sup>f</sup> an armed man.

A. M. cir. 3004.  
B. C. cir. 1000.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 224.  
Ante U.C. c. 247.

\* Eph. iv. 25.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. xx. 22. Matt. v. 39, 44. Rom. xii. 17, 19.—<sup>c</sup> Gen. iii. 18.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. set my heart.—<sup>e</sup> Ch. vi. 9, &c.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. a man of shield.

ference: and especially do not do this in a spirit of revenge, because he has injured thee before.

Verse 30. *I went by the field of the slothful*] This is a most instructive parable; is exemplified every day in a variety of forms; and is powerfully descriptive of the state of many a backslider and trifler in religion. Calmet has an excellent note on this passage. I shall give the substance of it.

Solomon often recommends diligence and economy to his disciples. In those primitive times, when agriculture was honourable, no man was respected who neglected to cultivate his grounds, who sunk into poverty, contracted debt, or engaged in ruinous securities. With great propriety, a principal part of wisdom was considered by them as consisting in the knowledge of properly conducting one's domestic affairs, and duly cultivating the inheritances derived from their ancestors. Moses had made a law to prevent the rich from utterly depressing the poor, by obliging them to return their farms to them on the sabbatic year, and to remit all debts at the year of jubilee.

In the civil state of the Hebrews, we never see those enormous and suddenly raised fortunes, which never subsist but in the ruin of numberless families. One of the principal solicitudes of this legislator was to produce, as far as possible in a monarchical state, an equality of property and condition. The ancient Romans held agriculture in the same estimation, and highly respected those who had applied themselves to it with success. When they spoke in praise of a man, they considered themselves as giving no mean commendation when they called him a good husbandman, an excellent labourer. From such men they formed their most valiant generals and intrepid soldiers. CATO *De Re Rustica*, cap. 1. The property which is acquired by these means is most innocent, most solid, and exposes its possessor less to envy than property acquired in any other way. See CICERO *De Officiis*, lib. 1. In Britain the merchant is all in all; and yet the waves of the sea are not more uncertain, nor more tumultuous, than the property acquired in this way, or than the agitated life of the speculative merchant.

But let us look more particularly into this very instructive parable:—

I. The owner is described. 1. He was אִישׁ עָלָא ish

atsef, the loitering, sluggish, slothful man. 2. He was אִישׁ חָסֵר לֵב adam chasar leb, a man that wanted heart; destitute of courage, alacrity, and decision of mind.

II. His circumstances. This man had, 1st, שָׂדֶה sadeh, a sowed field, arable ground. This was the character of his estate. It was meadow and corn land. 2. He had כֶּרֶם kerem, a vineyard, what we would call perhaps garden and orchard, where he might employ his skill to great advantage in raising various kinds of fruits and culinary herbs for the support of his family.

III. The state of this heritage: 1. "It was grown over with thorns." It had been long neglected, so that even brambles were permitted to grow in the fields: 2. "Nettles had covered the face thereof." It was not weeded, and all kinds of rubbish had been suffered to multiply: 3. "The stone wall was broken down." This belonged to the vineyard: it was neither pruned nor digged; and the fence, for want of timely repairs, had all fallen into ruins, ver. 31.

IV. The effect all this had on the attentive observer. 1. I saw it, אֶחֶזֶק אַנְוִי echezek anochi, I fixed my attention on it. I found it was no mere report. It is a fact. I myself was an eye-witness of it. 2. I considered it well, אָשִׁיחַ לִבִּי ashith libbi, I put my heart on it. All my feelings were interested. 3. I looked upon it, רָעִיתִי raithi, I took an intellectual view of it. And, 4. Thus I received instruction, לָקַחְתִּי לִמּוּסָר lakachti musar, I received a very important lesson from it: but the owner paid no attention to it. He alone was uninstructed; for he "slumbered, slept, and kept his hands in his bosom." Ver. 33. "Hugged himself in his sloth and carelessness."

V. The consequences of this conduct. 1. Poverty, described as coming like a traveller, making sure steps, every hour coming nearer and nearer to the door. 2. Want, מַחֲסוֹר machoor, total destitution; want of all the necessaries, conveniences, comforts of life; and this is described as coming like an armed man, לֵאשׁ מָגֵן leish magen, as a man with a shield, who comes to destroy this unprofitable servant: or it may refer to a man coming with what we call an execution into the house, armed with the law, to take even his bed from the slumberer.

From this literal solution any minister of God may make a profitable discourse.

## CHAPTER XXV.

*A new series of Solomon's proverbs. God's glory in mysteries. Observations concerning kings. Avoid contentions. Opportune speech. The faithful ambassador. Delicacies to be sparingly used. Avoid familiarity. Amusements not grateful to a distressed mind. Do good to your enemies. The misery of dwelling with a scold. The necessity of moderation and self-government.*

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Ol. vigesima  
cir. annum  
primom.  
A.U.C. cir. 54.

THESE <sup>a</sup>are also proverbs  
of Solomon, which the men  
of Hezekiah king of Judah  
copied out.

2 <sup>b</sup>It is the glory of God to conceal a thing:  
but the honour of kings is <sup>c</sup>to search out a  
matter.

3 The heaven for height, and the earth for  
depth, and the heart of kings is <sup>d</sup>unsearch-  
able.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Kings iv. 33.—<sup>b</sup> Deut. xxix. 29. Rom. xi. 33.—<sup>c</sup> Job  
xxix. 16.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. there is no searching.—<sup>e</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 21.

## NOTES ON CHAP. XXV.

Verse 1. *These are also proverbs of Solomon*] In my old MS. Bible, this verse concludes the preceding chapter. It seems that the remaining part of this book contains Proverbs which had been collected by the order of king Hezekiah, and were added to the preceding book as a sort of supplement, having been collected from traditionary sayings of Solomon. And as the men of Hezekiah may mean *Isaiah, Shebna*, and other *inspired* men, who lived in that time, we may consider them as of equal authority with the rest, else such men could not have united them to the sacred book. The chronological notes in the margin of this and the five following chapters denote the time when the proverbs contained in them were collected together in the reign of Hezekiah, about *two hundred and seventy years* after the death of Solomon.

Verse 2. *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing*] This has been understood as referring to the revelation of God's will in his word, where there are many things concealed in *parables, allegories, metaphors, similitudes, &c.* And it is becoming the majesty of God so to publish his will, that it must be *seriously studied* to be understood, in order that the truth may be more prized when it is discovered. And if it be God's glory thus partially to conceal his purposes, it is the glory of a king to search and examine this word, that he may understand how by Him kings reign and princes decree judgment. *Prophecies* are partially concealed; and we cannot fully know their meaning till their accomplishment; and then the *glory of God's wisdom and providence* will be more particularly evident, when we see the event correspond so particularly and exactly with the *prediction*. I know not, however, that there are not matters in the Book of God that will not be fully opened till mortality is swallowed up of life. For *here* we see through a glass darkly; but *there*, face to face: *here* we know in part; but *there* we shall know as we also are known.

4 <sup>e</sup>Take away the dross from  
the silver, and there shall come  
forth a vessel for the finer.

5 <sup>f</sup>Take away the wicked  
from before the king, and <sup>g</sup>his throne shall  
be established in righteousness.

6 <sup>h</sup>Put not forth thyself in the presence of  
the king, and stand not in the place of great  
men:

7 <sup>i</sup>For better *it is* that it be said unto thee,

[Ch. xx. 8.—<sup>f</sup> Ch. xvi. 12. xxix. 14.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. *Set not out  
thy glory.*—<sup>h</sup> Luke xiv. 8, 9, 10.

On this subject I cannot withhold an extract of a letter sent to myself, by a *royal and learned personage*.\*

"As far as I have presumed to dive into and occupy myself with the sacred Volumes, I feel satisfied of their divine origin and truth. And I am satisfied, likewise, that they contain more matter than any one, and myself in particular, can ever aspire fully to understand. This belief, however, ought in no wise to slacken our diligence, or damp our ardour, in attempting a constant pursuit after the attainment of knowledge and truth; as we may flatter ourselves, although unable to reach the *gate*. we are still approaching nearer to its portals, which of itself is a great blessing." This sentiment will be approved by every pious and enlightened mind.

Verse 3. *The heaven for height*] The simple meaning of this is, the *reasons of state*, in reference to many acts of the *executive government*, can no more be fathomed by the *common people*, than the *height of the heavens* and the *depth of the earth*.

Verse 4. *Take away the dross from the silver*] You cannot have a *pure silver vessel* till you have purified the silver; and no nation can have a *public blessing* till the *wicked*—all bad counsellors, wicked and interested ministers, and sycophants, are banished from the court and cabinet. When the *wise and good* only are the king's ministers and advisers, then the throne will be established in *righteousness*, and his administration be a universal blessing.

Verse 7. *Come up hither*] Our Lord refers to this, see Luke xiv. 8, and the notes there. Be humble; affect not high things; let those who are desperate climb dangerous precipices; keep thyself quiet, and thou shalt live at ease, and in peace. Hear the speech of a *wise heathen* on this subject:—

\* His Royal Highness, the Duke of Sussex.

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Ol. vigesima.  
cir. annum  
primum.  
A.U.C. cir. 54.

Come up hither; than that thou  
shouldest be put lower in the  
presence of the prince whom  
thine eyes have seen.

8<sup>a</sup> Go not forth hastily to strive, lest *thou*  
know not what to do in the end thereof, when  
thy neighbour hath put thee to shame.

9<sup>b</sup> Debate thy cause with thy neighbour  
*himself*; and <sup>c</sup>discover not a secret to another:  
10 Lest he that heareth *it* put thee to

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xvii. 14. Matt. v. 25. — <sup>b</sup> Matt. v. 25. xviii. 15.  
<sup>c</sup> Or, discover not the secret of another.

Quid fuit, ut tutas agitare Dædalus alas;  
Icarus immensas nomine signet aquas?  
Nempe quod hic alte, dimissus ille volabat.  
Nam pennas ambo nonne habuere suas?  
Crede mihi; bene qui latuit, bene vixit; et infra  
Fortunam debet quisque manere suam.  
Vive sine invidia; mollesque inglorius annos  
Exige: amicitiâs et tibi junge pares.  
OVID. *Trist.* lib. iii., El. 4, ver. 21.

“Why was it that *Dædalus* winged his way safely,  
while *Icarus* his son fell, and gave name to the  
Icarian sea? Was it not because the son flew  
aloft, and the father skimmed the ground? For  
both were furnished with the same kind of wings.  
Take my word for it, that he who lives privately  
lives safely; and every one should live within  
his own income. Envy no man; pray for a quiet  
life, though it should not be dignified. Seek a  
friend, and associate with thy equals.”

Verse 8. *Go not forth hastily to strive*] לרִיב *lerib*,  
to enter into a law-suit. Keep from this *pit of the*  
*bottomless deep*, unless urged by the direst necessity.

Verse 9. *Debate thy cause with thy neighbour*] Take  
the advice of friends. Let both sides attend to their  
counsels; but do not tell the *secret* of thy business to  
any. After squandering your money away upon  
lawyers, both *they* and the *judge* will at last leave it  
to be settled by *twelve* of your fellow-citizens! O  
the folly of going to law! O the blindness of men,  
and the rapacity of unprincipled lawyers!

On this subject I cannot but give the following  
extract from Sir *John Hawkins's* Life of Dr. Johnson,  
which he quotes from Mr. *Selwin*, of London: “A  
man who deliberates about going to law should have,  
1. A good cause; 2. A good purse; 3. A good  
skilful attorney; 4. Good evidence; 5. Good able  
counsel; 6. A good upright judge; 7. A good intelli-  
gent jury; and with all these on his side, if he have  
not, 8. *Good luck*, it is odds but he miscarries in his  
suit.” O the glorious uncertainty of the law!

Verse 11. *A word fitly spoken*] על אֹפְהַנַּיִם *al ophannaim*,  
upon its wheels. An observation, caution, reproof, or  
advice, that comes in *naturally*, runs smoothly  
along, is not *forced* nor *dragged* in, that appears to be  
without *design*, to rise out of the conversation, and  
though particularly relative to *one point*, will appear  
to the company to suit all.

shame, and thine infamy turn  
not away.

11<sup>d</sup> A word *fitly spoken is*  
*like apples of gold in pictures*  
of silver.

12 *As* an earring of gold, and an ornament  
of fine gold, *so is* a wise reprover upon an  
obedient ear.

13<sup>f</sup> As the cold of snow in the time of har-  
vest, *so is* a faithful messenger to them that

<sup>d</sup> Ch. xv. 23. Isai. l. 4. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. spoken upon his wheels.  
<sup>f</sup> Ch. xiii. 17.

[*Is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.*] Is like  
the refreshing *orange* or beautiful *citron*, served up in  
*open work* or *filigree baskets*, made of *silver*. The  
Asiatics excel in *filigree silver work*. I have seen  
much of it, and it is exquisitely beautiful. The  
silver wire by which it is done they form into the  
appearance of numerous *flowers*; and though these  
wires are *soldered* every where at their junctions with  
each other, yet this is done with such *delicacy* and  
*skill* as to be scarcely perceptible. I have seen  
*animals* formed of this *filigree work*, with all their  
*limbs*, and every *joint* in its *natural play*. *Fruit-*  
*baskets* are made also in this way, and are exquisitely  
fine. The wise man seems to have this kind of work  
particularly in view; and the contrast of the *golden*  
*yellow fruit* in the exquisitely wrought *silver basket*,  
which may be all termed *picture work*, has a fine  
and pleasing effect upon the *eye*, as the contained  
*fruit* has upon the *palate* at an entertainment in a  
sultry climate. So the word spoken judiciously and  
opportunistly is as much in its place, as the *golden*  
*apples* in the *silver baskets*.

Verse 12. *As an earring of gold*] I believe תִּנְזֵם  
*nezem* to mean the *nose ring*, with its *pendants*; the  
left nostril is pierced, and a ring put through it, as  
in the ear. This is very common in almost every  
part of the East, among women of condition. This  
is a further illustration of the above metaphor.

Verse 13. *As the cold of snow*] That *snow* was  
frequent in *Judea*, is well known; and that in the East  
they have *snow-houses*—places dug under ground,  
where they lay up snow for *summer* use, is also a  
fact. By means of the mass of snow deposited in  
them the icy temperature is kept up, so that the  
snow is easily preserved. The *common method* of  
*cooling their wine*, which is as *easy* as it is *effectual*,  
is by dipping a cloth in *water*, wrapping it round the  
*bottle*, and then hanging the bottle in the *heat of the*  
*sun*. The strong *evaporation* carries off the *caloric*  
from the wine, and the repetition of the wet cloth  
in the same exposure, makes the wine almost as  
cold as *ice*.

How agreeable this must be in a burning climate,  
may be easily conceived. Perhaps it is this to which  
the wise man refers; for it is a fact that they could  
have no *snow in harvest*, unless such as had been  
*preserved* as mentioned above; but this could be only  
in a *few places*, and within the reach of a *very few*

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cir. annum  
primum.  
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send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.

14 <sup>a</sup> Whoso boasteth himself <sup>b</sup> of a false gift *is like* <sup>c</sup> clouds and wind without rain.

15 <sup>d</sup> By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.

16 <sup>e</sup> Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.

17 <sup>f</sup> Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be <sup>g</sup> weary of thee, and so hate thee.

18 <sup>h</sup> A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour *is* a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.

19 Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble *is like* a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.

20 *As* he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and *as* vinegar upon nitre, so *is* he that <sup>i</sup> singeth songs to an heavy heart.

21 <sup>k</sup> If thine enemy be hungry, give him

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xx. 6.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. *in a gift of falsehood*.—<sup>c</sup> Jude 12. <sup>d</sup> Gen. xxxiii. 4, &c. 1 Sam. xxy. 24, &c. Ch. xv. 1. xvi. 14. <sup>e</sup> Ver. 27.—<sup>f</sup> Or, *Let thy foot be seldom in thy neighbour's house*.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. *full of thee*.—<sup>h</sup> Ps. lvii. 4. cxx. 3, 4. Ch. xii. 18.—<sup>i</sup> Dan. vi. 18. Rom. xii. 15.—<sup>k</sup> Exod. xxiii. 4.

*persons*. But cooling their liquors by the simple mode of evaporation already explained, was within the reach even of the labourers in the harvest field. I think the text favours this supposition; for *לשון שלג* *letsinnath sheleg*, need not be referred to snow itself procuring cold, but to a coldness like that of snow, procured by evaporation. If this interpretation be allowed, all difficulty will be removed.

Verse 14. *A false gift* *שקר מתת* *mattath shaker*, a lying gift, one promised, but never bestowed. "Whoso maketh greates boasts, and giveth nothing;" COVERDALE. So the VULGATE: "Vir gloriosus, et promissa non complens." "A bragging man, who does not fulfil his promises," is like clouds which appear to be laden with vapour, and like the wind which, though it blow from a rainy quarter, brings no moistness with it. So the vain boaster; he is big with promise, but performs nothing.

Verse 15. *A soft tongue breaketh the bone.*] This is similar to another proverb on the same subject: "A soft answer turneth away wrath." An angry word does nothing but mischief.

Verse 16. *Hast thou found honey?*] Make a moderate use of all thy enjoyments. "Let thy moderation be known unto all, and appear in all things."

Verse 17. *Withdraw thy foot*] Another proverb will illustrate this: "Too much familiarity breeds contempt."

Verse 20. *As vinegar upon nitre*] The original

bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

22 For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.

23 <sup>m</sup> The <sup>n</sup> north wind driveth away rain: so doth an angry countenance <sup>o</sup> a backbiting tongue.

24 <sup>p</sup> It is better to dwell in the corner of the house-top, than with a brawling woman, and in a wide house.

25 *As* cold waters to a thirsty soul, so *is* good news from a far country.

26 A righteous man falling down before the wicked *is as* a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.

27 <sup>q</sup> It is not good to eat much honey: so for men <sup>r</sup> to search their own glory *is* not glory.

28 <sup>s</sup> He that *hath* no rule over his own spirit *is like* a city that *is* broken down, and without walls.

5. Matt. v. 44. Rom. xii. 20.—<sup>2</sup> Sam. xvi. 12.—<sup>3</sup> Job xxxvii. 22.—<sup>n</sup> Or, *The north wind bringeth forth rain: so doth a backbiting tongue an angry countenance*.—<sup>o</sup> Ps. ci. 5. <sup>p</sup> Ch. xix. 13. xxi. 9, 19.—<sup>q</sup> Ver. 16.—<sup>r</sup> Ch. xvii. 2. <sup>s</sup> Ch. xvi. 32.

word *נָתַר* *nather* is what is known among chemists as the *natron* of the ancients and of the Scriptures, and carbonate of soda. It is found native in Syria and India, and occurs as an efflorescence on the soil. In Tripoli it is found in crystalline incrustations of from one third to half an inch thick. It is found also in solution in the water of some lakes in Egypt and Hungary. The borders of these lakes are covered with crystalline masses, of a greyish white or light brown colour; and in some specimens the *natron* is nearly pure carbonate of soda, and the carbonate is easily discovered by effervescing with an acid. It appears to have its Hebrew name from *נָתַר* *nather*, to dissolve or loosen: because a solution of it in water is abstersive, taking out spots, &c. It is used in the East for the purposes of washing. If vinegar be poured on it, Dr. Shaw says a strong fermentation immediately takes place, which illustrates what Solomon says here: "The singing of songs to a heavy heart is like vinegar upon *natron*:" that is, "there is no affinity between them; and opposition, colluctation, and strife, are occasioned by any attempt to unite them."

And poureth vyneger upon chalke.—COVERDALE. This also will occasion an effervescence. See Jer. ii. 22.

Verse 21. *If thine enemy be hungry*] See this and the next verse explained, Rom. xii. 20.

Verse 22. *Thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head*] Not to consume, but to melt him into kindness; a metaphor taken from smelting metallic ores:

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cir. annum  
primum.  
A. U. C. cir. 54.

So artists melt the sullen ore of lead,  
By heaping coals of fire upon its head :  
In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow,  
And pure from dross the silver runs below.

S. WESLEY.

Verse 23. *The north wind driveth away rain*] The margin has, "The north wind bringeth forth rain." It is said that the "north wind brings forth rain at Jerusalem, because it brings with it the vapours arising from the sea that lies north of it." The marginal is the true reading; and is supported by the Chaldee, Syriac, and Septuagint; but the Arabic reads south wind.

*A backbiting tongue*] *A hidden tongue.*

Verse 24. It is better to dwell in a corner] See the note on chap. xxi. 9.

Verse 27. It is not good to eat much honey] Coverdale translates the whole passage thus: "Like as it is not good to eat to much hony; even so, he that wyll search out hie things, it shal be to hevvy for him." As he that stith myche honpe, and it is not to him goode; so, that is a sercher of mageste, schal ben oppressid of glorie.—Old MS. Bible. He that searches too much into *mysteries*, is likely to be confounded by them. I really think this is the meaning of the place; and shall not puzzle either myself or my reader with the discordant explanations which have been brought forward with the hope of illustrating this passagc.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Honour is not seemly in a fool. The correction and treatment suitable to such. Of the slothful man. Of him who interferes with matters which do not concern him. Contentions to be avoided. Of the dissembler and the lying tongue.

A. M. cir. 3304.  
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Ol. vicesimæ  
cir. annum  
primum.  
A. U. C. cir. 54.

AS snow in summer, <sup>a</sup> and as rain in harvest; so honour is not seemly for a fool.

2 As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so <sup>b</sup> the curse causeless shall not come.

3 <sup>c</sup> A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.

4 Answer not a fool accord- ing to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.

5 <sup>d</sup> Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in <sup>e</sup> his own conceit.

6 He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool cutteth off the feet, and drinketh <sup>f</sup> damage.

A. M. cir. 3304.  
B. C. cir. 700.  
Ol. vicesimæ  
cir. annum  
primum.  
A. U. C. cir. 54.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Sam. xii. 17.—<sup>b</sup> Numb. xxiii. 8. Deut. xxxiii. 5.—<sup>c</sup> Ps. xxxii. 9. Ch. x. 13.

<sup>d</sup> Matt. xvi. 1—4. xxi. 24—27.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. *his own eyes.*  
<sup>f</sup> Or, *violence.*

NOTES ON CHAP. XXVI.

Verse 1. *As snow in summer*] None of these is suitable to the time; and at this unsuitable time, both are unwelcome: so a fool to be in honour is unbecoming.

Verse 2. *As the bird*] תַּיִט tsippor is taken often for the sparrow; but means generally any small bird. As the sparrow flies about the house, and the swallow emigrates to strange countries; so an undeserved malediction may flutter about the neighbourhood for a season: but in a short time it will disappear as the bird of passage; and never take effect on the innocent person against whom it was pronounced.

Verse 3. *A whip for the horse*] Correction is as suitable to a fool, as a whip is for a horse, or a bridle for an ass.

Verse 4. *Answer not a fool*] On this and the following verse Bishop Warburton, who has written well on many things, and very indifferently on the doctrine of grace, has written with force and perspicuity: "Had this advice been given simply, and without circumstance, to answer the fool, and not to answer him, one who had reverence for the text would satisfy himself in supposing that the different directions referred to the doing a thing in and out of reason; 1. The reason given why a fool should not

be answered according to his folly, is, "lest he (the answerer) should be like unto him." 2. The reason given why the fool should be answered according to his folly, is, "lest he (the fool) should be wise in his own conceit."

"1. The cause assigned for forbidding to answer, therefore, plainly insinuates that the defender of religion should not imitate the insulter of it in his modes of disputation, which may be comprised in sophistry, buffoonery, and scurrility.

"2. The cause assigned for directing to answer, as plainly intimates that the sage should address himself to confute the fool upon his own false principles, by showing that they lead to conclusions very wide from, very opposite to, those impieties he would deduce from them. If any thing can allay the fool's vanity, and prevent his being wise in his own conceit, it must be the dishonour of having his own principles turned against himself, and shown to be destructive of his own conclusions."—*Treatise on Grace. Preface.*

Verse 6. *Cutteth off the feet*] Sending by such a person is utterly useless. My old MS. Bible translates well: *Halt in feet and drinking wickednesse that sendith words by a foole messenger.* Nothing but lameness in himself can vindicate his sending it by such hands; and, after all, the expedient will be worse

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B. C. cir. 700.  
Ol. vigesima  
cir. annum  
primum.

A. U. C. cir. 54.

7 The legs of the lame <sup>a</sup> are not equal: so *is* a parable in the mouth of fools.

8 <sup>b</sup> As he that bindeth a stone in a sling, so *is* he that giveth honour to a fool.

9 *As* a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard; so *is* a parable in the mouth of fools.

10 <sup>c</sup> The great *God* that formed all *things* both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors.

11 <sup>d</sup> As a dog returneth to his vomit; <sup>e</sup> so a fool <sup>f</sup> returneth to his folly.

12 <sup>g</sup> Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? *there is* more hope of a fool than of him.

13 <sup>h</sup> The slothful *man* saith, *There is* a lion in the way; a lion *is* in the streets.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. are lifted up.—<sup>b</sup> Or, As he that putteth a precious stone in an heap of stones.—<sup>c</sup> Or, A great man grieveth all, and he hireth the fool, he hireth also transgressors.—<sup>d</sup> 2 Pet. ii. 22.—<sup>e</sup> Exod. viii. 15.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. iterateth his folly.—<sup>g</sup> Ch. xxix. 20. Luke xviii. 11. Rom. xii. 16. Rev. iii. 17.

than the total omission, for he is likely to *drink wickedness*, i. e., the mischief occasioned by the fool's misconduct. *Coverdale* nearly hits the sense, as usual: "He is lame of his fete, yee drunken is he in vanite, that committeth eny thinge to a foole."

Verse 8. *As he that bindeth a stone in a sling, so is he that giveth honour to a fool.*] It is entirely thrown away. This, however, is a difficult proverb; and the *Versions* give but little light on the subject. The Hebrew may be translated, "As a piece of precious stone among a heap of stones, so is he that giveth honour to a fool." See the *margin*, and *Parkhurst*: but on this interpretation the meaning would rather be, "It is as useless to throw a jewel among a heap of stones to increase its bulk, as to give honour to a fool."

*As he that sendith a stoon into a hepe of moner; so he that gebeth to an untwilsman wtrschip.*—Old MS. Bible.

"He that setteth a foole in hye dignite, that is even as yf a man dyd caste a precious stone upon the galous."—*Coverdale*. This translator refers to the custom of throwing a stone to the *heap* under which a *criminal lay buried*. The *Vulgate* gives some countenance to this translation: "He who gives honour to a fool is like one who throws a stone to Mercury's heap." *Mercury* was considered the deity who *presided over the highways*; and stones were erected in different places to guide the traveller. Hence those lines of *Dr. Young*:

Death stands like Mercuries in every way;  
And kindly points us to our journey's end."

Verse 10. *The great God that formed all things*] See the *margin*, where this verse is very differently

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14 *As* the door turneth upon his hinges, so *doth* the slothful upon his bed.

15 <sup>i</sup> The slothful hideth his hand in *his* bosom; <sup>k</sup> it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.

16 The sluggard *is* wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.

17 He that passeth by, *and* <sup>l</sup> meddleth with strife *belonging* not to him, *is like* one that taketh a dog by the ears.

18 As a mad *man* who casteth <sup>m</sup> firebrands, arrows, and death;

19 So *is* the man *that* deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, <sup>n</sup> Am not I in sport?

20 <sup>o</sup> Where no wood is, *there* the fire goeth out: so <sup>p</sup> where *there is* no <sup>q</sup> talebearer, the strife <sup>r</sup> ceaseth.

21 <sup>s</sup> *As* coals *are* to burning coals, and

<sup>b</sup> Ch. xxii. 13.—<sup>c</sup> Ch. xix. 24.—<sup>k</sup> Or, he is weary.—<sup>l</sup> Or, is enraged.—<sup>m</sup> Heb. flames, or sparks.—<sup>n</sup> Eph. v. 4.—<sup>o</sup> Heb. without wood.—<sup>p</sup> Ch. xxii. 10.—<sup>q</sup> Or, whisperer.—<sup>r</sup> Heb. is silent.—<sup>s</sup> Ch. xv. 18. xxix. 22.

translated. I shall add that of *Coverdale*: "A man of experience discerneth all things well: but whose hyreth a foole, hyreth soch one as wyl take no hede." The *rab* may mean either the great God, or a great man: hence the two renderings, in the *text* and in the *margin*.

Verse 11. *As a dog returneth to his vomit*] See note on 2 Pet. ii. 22.

Verse 13. *The slothful man saith*] See the note on chap. xxii. 13.

Verse 16. *Than seven men that can render a reason.*] *Seven* here only means *perfection, abundance, or multitude*. He is wiser in his own eyes than a *multitude* of the wisest men. "Than seven men that sytt and teach."—*Coverdale*; i. e., than seven *doctors of the law, or heads of the schools of the prophets, who always sat while they taught*.

Verse 17. *He that passeth by*] This proverb stands true *ninety-nine* times out of a *hundred*, where people meddle with *domestic broils, or differences between men and their wives*.

Verse 19. *Am not I in sport?*] How many hearts have been made sad, and how many reputations have been slain, by this kind of *sport*! "I designed no harm by what I said;" "It was only in jest," &c. *Sportive* as such persons may think their conduct to be, it is as ruinous as that of the *madman* who shoots arrows, throws *firebrands*, and projects in all directions *instruments of death*, so that some are wounded, some burnt, and some slain.

Verse 20. *Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out*] The *tale-receiver* and the *tale-bearer* are the agents of discord. If none received the slander in the *first* instance, it could not be propagated. Hence our proverb, "The receiver is as bad as the thief."

A. M. cir. 3304. wood to fire; so is a conten-  
B. C. cir. 700. tious man to kindle strife.

Ol. vigesima<sup>e</sup> 22 <sup>a</sup> The words of a talebearer  
cir. annum are as wounds, and they go  
primum. down into the <sup>b</sup> innermost part of the belly.

A. U. C. cir. 54. 23 Burning lips and a wicked heart are like  
a potsherd covered with silver dross.

24 He that hateth <sup>c</sup> dissembleth with his  
lips, and layeth up deceit within him :

25 <sup>d</sup> When he <sup>e</sup> speaketh fair, believe him not:  
for there are seven abominations in his heart.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xviii. 8. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. chambers. — <sup>c</sup> Or, is known.  
<sup>d</sup> Ps. xxviii. 3. Jer. ix. 8. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. maketh his voice gra-

And our laws treat them equally ; for the receiver of  
stolen goods, knowing them to be stolen, is hanged,  
as well as he who stole them.

Verse 22. The words of a talebearer] The same  
with chap. xviii. 8, where see the note.

Verse 23. Burning lips and a wicked heart] Splendid, shining, smooth lips ; that is, lips which  
make great professions of friendship are like a vessel  
plated over with base metal to make it resemble  
silver ; but it is only a vile pot, and even the outside  
is not pure.

Verse 25. When he speaketh fair] For there are  
such hypocrites and false friends in the world.

26 <sup>f</sup> Whose hatred is covered  
by deceit, his wickedness shall  
be shewed before the whole  
congregation.

A. M. cir. 3304.  
B. C. cir. 700.  
Ol. vigesima<sup>e</sup>  
cir. annum  
primum.  
A. U. C. cir. 54.

27 <sup>g</sup> Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein :  
and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon  
him.

28 A lying tongue hateth those that are  
afflicted by it ; and a flattering mouth worketh  
ruin.

cious. — <sup>f</sup> Or, Hatred is covered in secret. — <sup>g</sup> Ps. vii. 15,  
16. ix. 15. x. 2. lvii. 6. Ch. xxviii. 10. Eccles. x. 8.

Believe him not] Let all his professions go for  
nothing.

For there are seven abominations in his heart.]  
That is, he is full of abominations.

Verse 27. Whoso diggeth a pit] See note on Ps.  
vii. 15. There is a Latin proverb like this: *Malum  
consilium consultori pessimum*, "A bad counsel, but  
worst to the giver." *Harm watch ; harm catch.*

Verse 28. A lying tongue hateth those that are  
afflicted by it] He that injures another hates him in  
proportion to the injury he has done him ; and,  
strange to tell, in proportion to the innocence of the  
oppressed. The debtor cannot bear the sight of his  
creditor ; nor the knave, of him whom he has injured.

CHAPTER XXVII.

To-morrow is uncertain. Self-praise forbidden. Anger and envy. Reproof from a friend.  
Want makes us feel the value of a supply. A good neighbour. Beware of suretiship.  
Suspicious praise. The quarrelsome woman. One friend helps another. Man insatiable.  
The incorrigible fool. Domestic cares. The profit of flocks for food and raiment.

A. M. cir. 3304. **B**OAST <sup>a</sup> not thyself of <sup>b</sup> to-  
B. C. cir. 700. morrow ; for thou knowest  
Ol. vigesima<sup>e</sup> not what a day may bring  
cir. annum forth.  
primum.  
A. U. C. cir. 54.

2 <sup>c</sup> Let another man praise thee, and not  
thine own mouth ; a stranger, and not thine  
own lips.

<sup>a</sup> Luke. xii. 19, 20. James iv. 13, &c. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. to-morrow  
day. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. xxv. 27. — <sup>d</sup> Heb. heaviness. — <sup>e</sup> Heb.

NOTES ON CHAP. XXVII.

Verse 1. Boast not thyself of to-morrow] See note  
on James iv. 13, &c. Do not depend on any future  
moment for spiritual good which at present thou  
needest, and God is willing to give, and without  
which, should death surprise thee, thou must be  
eternally lost ; such as repentance, faith in Christ,  
the pardon of sin, the witness of the Holy Spirit, and  
complete renovation of soul. Be incessant in thy  
application to God for these blessings.

My old MS. Bible translates thus: *Ne glorie thou*  
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3 A stone is <sup>d</sup> heavy, and the  
sand weighty ; but a fool's wrath  
is heavier than them both.

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primum.  
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4 <sup>e</sup> Wrath is cruel, and anger  
is outrageous ; but <sup>f</sup> who is able to stand before  
<sup>g</sup> envy ?

5 <sup>h</sup> Open rebuke is better than secret love.

Wrath is cruelty, and anger an overflowing. — <sup>f</sup> 1 John iii. 12.  
<sup>g</sup> Or, jealousy. Ch. vi. 34. — <sup>h</sup> Ch. xxviii. 23. Gal. ii. 14.

into the morewenning. Here we see the derivation of  
our word morning ; morewenning, from more, and  
wen or won, to dwell, i. e., a continuance of time to  
live or dwell in your present habitation. Every man  
wishes to live longer, and therefore wishes for to-  
morrow ; and when to-morrow comes, then to-  
morrow, and so on.

Verse 2. Let another man praise thee, and not thine  
own mouth] We have a similar proverb, which il-  
lustrates this : " Self-praise is no commendation."

Verse 4. Who is able to stand before envy ?] The



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primum.

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6 \* Faithful are the wounds  
of a friend; but the kisses of  
an enemy are <sup>b</sup> deceitful.

7 The full soul <sup>c</sup> loatheth an  
honeycomb; but <sup>d</sup> to the hungry soul every  
bitter thing is sweet.

8 As a bird that wandereth from her nest,  
so is a man that wandereth from his place.

9 Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart:  
so doth the sweetness of a man's friend <sup>e</sup> by  
heartly counsel.

10 Thine own friend, and thy father's  
friend, forsake not; neither go into thy  
brother's house in the day of thy calamity:  
for <sup>f</sup> better is a neighbour that is near, than a  
brother far off.

11 <sup>g</sup> My son, be wise, and make my heart

<sup>a</sup> Ps. cxli. 5. — <sup>b</sup> Or, earnest, or frequent. — <sup>c</sup> Heb.  
treadeth under foot. — <sup>d</sup> Job vi. 7. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. from the  
counsel of the soul. — <sup>f</sup> Ch. xvii. 17. xviii. 24. See ch. xix.

rabbins have a curious story on this subject, and it  
has been formed by the moderns into a fable. There  
were two persons, one *covetous* and the other *envious*,  
to whom a certain person promised to grant what-  
ever they should ask; but *double* to him who should  
ask last. The *covetous* man would not ask first, be-  
cause he wished to get the *double* portion; and the  
*envious* man would not make the first request, be-  
cause he could not bear the thoughts of thus bene-  
fitting his neighbour. However, at last he requested  
that one of his eyes should be taken out, in order  
that his neighbour might lose both.

Verse 5. *Open rebuke is better than secret love.*]  
*Plutarch* gives an account of a man who, aiming a  
blow at his enemy's life, cut open an imposthume,  
which by a salutary discharge saved his life, that was  
sinking under a disease for which a remedy could  
not be found. *Partial friendship* covers faults; envy,  
malice, and revenge will exhibit, heighten, and even  
multiply them. The former conceals us from our-  
selves; the latter shows us the worst part of our  
character. Thus we are taught the necessity of  
amendment and correction. In this sense *open re-  
buke is better than secret love*. Yet it is a *rough  
medicine*, and none can desire it. But the genuine  
open-hearted friend may be intended, who tells you  
your faults *freely*, but conceals them from all *others*;  
hence the sixth verse: "Faithful are the wounds of  
a friend."

Verse 8. *As a bird that wandereth from her nest*]  
Leaving her own brood, places of retreat, and feeding-  
ground behind, and going into strange countries,  
where she is exposed to every kind of danger. So is  
the man who leaves his family connexions and  
country, and goes into strange parts to find employ-  
ment, better his circumstances, make a fortune, &c.  
I have seen multitudes of such *wanderers from their  
place* come to great misery and wretchedness. God's

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glad, <sup>h</sup> that I may answer him  
that reproacheth me.

12 <sup>i</sup> A prudent man foreseeth  
the evil, and hideth himself;  
but the simple pass on, and are punished.

13 <sup>k</sup> Take his garment that is surety for a  
stranger, and take a pledge of him for a  
strange woman.

14 He that blesseth his friend with a loud  
voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be  
counted a curse to him.

15 <sup>l</sup> A continual dropping in a very rainy  
day and a contentious woman are alike.

16 Whosoever hideth her hideth the wind,  
and the ointment of his right hand, which  
betrayeth itself.

17 Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharp-

7. — <sup>g</sup> Ch. x. 1. xxiii. 15, 24. — <sup>h</sup> Ps. cxvii. 5. — <sup>i</sup> Ch.  
xxii. 3. — <sup>k</sup> See Exod. xxii. 26. Ch. xx. 16. — <sup>l</sup> Ch.  
xix. 13.

general advice is, "Do good, and dwell in the land;  
and verily thou shalt be fed."

Verse 9. *Ointment and perfume*] Anointing the  
head and various parts of the body with aromatic oil  
is frequent in the East, and fumigating the beards of  
the guests at the conclusion of an entertainment is  
almost universal; as is also sprinkling rose-water,  
and water highly odoriferous. Two of the curious  
vessels which are used for this purpose are now  
before me; they hold some quarts each, and are  
beautifully inlaid with silver in the form of sprigs,  
leaves, &c.

Verse 10. *Thine own friend*] A well and long  
tried friend is invaluable. Him that has been a friend  
to thy family never forget, and never neglect. And  
in the time of adversity, rather apply to such a one  
than go to thy nearest relative, who keeps himself at  
a distance.

Verse 12. *A prudent man foreseeth the evil*] The  
very same as chap. xxii 3.

Verse 13. *Take his garment*] The same as chap.  
xx. 16.

Verse 14. *He that blesseth his friend*] He who  
makes loud and public protestations of acknowledg-  
ments to his friend for favours received, subjects his  
*sincerity* to suspicion; and remember the Italian  
proverb elsewhere quoted:—"He who praises you  
more than he was wont to do, has either deceived you,  
or is about to do it." Extravagant public professions  
are little to be regarded.

Verse 15. *A continual dropping*] See chap. xix. 13.

Verse 16. *Whosoever hideth her hideth the wind*]  
You may as well attempt to repress the blowing of  
the wind, as the tongue of a scold; and to conceal  
this unfortunate propensity of a wife is as impossible  
as to hush the storm, and prevent its sound from being  
heard.

*The ointment of his right hand*] You can no more

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eneth the countenance of his friend.

18 <sup>a</sup> Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.

19 As in water face *answereth* to face; so the heart of man to man.

20 <sup>b</sup> Hell and destruction are <sup>c</sup> never full, so <sup>d</sup> the eyes of man are never satisfied.

21 <sup>e</sup> As the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so *is* a man to his praise.

22 <sup>f</sup> Though thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, *yet* will not his foolishness depart from him.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 7, 13.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. xxx. 16. Hab. ii. 5.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *not*.—<sup>d</sup> Eccles. i. 8. vi. 7.—<sup>e</sup> Ch. xvii. 3.—<sup>f</sup> Isai. i. 5. Jer. v. 3. Ch. xxxiii. 35.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. *set thy heart*.—<sup>h</sup> Heb.

conceal such a woman's conduct, than you can the smell of the aromatic oil with which your hand has been anointed. The Hebrew is very obscure, and is variously translated. *Coverdale* thus: "He that refrayneth her, refrayneth the wynde; and holdith oyle fast in his honde." That is, he attempts to do what is impossible to be done.

Verse 17. *Iron sharpeneth iron*] As *hard iron*, viz., *steel*, will bring a knife to a better edge when it is properly *whetted against* it; so one friend may be the means of *exciting* another to *reflect*, dive deeply into, and illustrate a subject, without which *whetting* or *excitement*, this had never taken place. Had *Horace* seen this proverb in the *Septuagint* translation when he wrote to the *Pisos*?

Ergo fugar vice cotis, acutum  
Reddere quæ ferrum valet, exors ipsa secandi  
HOR. ARS POET. ver. 304.

"But let me sharpen others, as the hone  
Gives edge to razors, though itself have none."  
FRANCIS.

Verse 19. *As in water face answereth to face*] All men's hearts are pretty nearly alike; water is not more like to water, than one heart is to another. Or, as a man sees his face perfectly reflected by the water, when looking into it; so the wise and penetrating man sees generally what is in the heart of another by considering the general tenor of his words and actions.

"Surely, if each man saw another's heart  
There would be no commerce;  
All would disperse,  
And live apart."  
HERBERT.

Verse 20. *Hell and destruction are never full*] How hideous must the soul of a covetous man be, when God compares it to *hell and perdition*!

*The eyes of man are never satisfied.*] As the *grave* can never be filled up with *bodies*, nor *perdition* with *souls*; so the restless desire, the lust of power, riches, and splendour, is never satisfied. Out of this ever unsatisfied desire spring all the changing fashions, the

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23 Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and <sup>a</sup> look well to thy herds.

24 For <sup>b</sup> riches *are* not for ever: and doth the crown *endure* <sup>c</sup> to every generation?

25 <sup>d</sup> The hay appeareth, and the tender grass sheweth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered.

26 The lambs *are* for thy clothing, and the goats *are* the price of the field.

27 And *thou shalt have* goats' milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household, and for the <sup>e</sup> maintenance for thy maidens.

*strength*.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. *to generation and generation*. Ps. xxxiii. 11. xlv. 17. xlix. 11. lxxii. 5. lxxxv. 5. lxxxix. 1.—<sup>g</sup> Ps. civ. 14.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. *life*.

varied amusements, and the endless modes of getting money, prevalent in every age, and in every country.

Verse 21. *As the fining pot for silver*] As silver and gold are tried by the art of the refiner, so is a man's heart by the praise he receives. If he *feels* it not, he *deserves* it; if he be *puffed up* by it, he is *worthless*.

Verse 22. *Though thou shouldst bray a fool*] Leaving all other conjectures, of which commentators are full, I would propose, that this is a metaphor taken from *pounding metallic ores* in very large mortars, such as are still common in the East, in order that, when subjected to the action of the fire, the metal may be the more easily separated from the ore. However you may try, by *precept* or *example*, or both, to instruct a stupid man, your labour is lost; his foolishness cannot be separated from him. You may purge metals of all their dross; but you cannot purge the fool of his folly.

Verse 23. *The state of thy flocks*] The directions to the end of the chapter refer chiefly to *pastoral* and *agricultural* affairs. Do not trust thy flocks to the shepherd merely; number them thyself; look into their condition; see how they are tended; and when, and with what, and in what proportion, they are fed.

Verse 24. *For riches are not for ever*] All other kinds of property are very transitory. Money and the highest civil honours are but for a short season. Flocks and herds, properly attended to, may be multiplied and continued from generation to generation. The *crown* itself is not naturally so permanent.

Verse 25. *The hay appeareth*] Take care that this be *tineously mown*, carefully dried, and safely ricked or housed. And when the *tender grass* and the proper herbs *appear* in the *mountains* in the spring, then send forth the *lambs*, the young of the flock, that they may get suitable pasturage, without too much impoverishing the *home fields*; for by the sale of the *lambs* and *goats*, the *price of the fields* is paid—all the landlord's demands are discharged. Either a certain number of lambs, goats, and other cattle was given

to the landlord; or so much money as so many lambs, &c. were then worth.

Verse 26. *The lambs are for thy clothing*] So many fleeces are given in some places as *rent* to the landlord.

Verse 27. *Goats' milk enough for thy food*] ללחמך ללחמך, "to thy bread;" for they ate the *bread* and *sucked the milk* to assist mastication, and help deglutition. And it seems that *bread, with goats'*

*milk*, was the general article of food for the *master* and his *family*; and for the *servant maids* who assisted in the household work, and performed the operations required in the *dairy*.

The reader who wishes to see these maxims detailed and illustrated at large, may consult the writers *De Re Rustica*, where he will find much curious information.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

*The timidity of the wicked. Quick succession in the government of a country is a punishment to the land. Of the poor who oppress the poor. The upright poor man is preferable to the wicked rich man. The unprofitable conduct of the usurer. The prosperity of the righteous a cause of rejoicing. He is blessed who fears always. A wicked ruler a curse. The murderer generally execrated. The faithful man. The corrupt judge. The foolishness of trusting in one's own heart. The charitable man. When the wicked are elevated, it is a public evil.*

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**T**HE <sup>a</sup>wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.

2 For the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof: but <sup>b</sup>by a man of understanding and knowledge the state thereof shall be prolonged.

3 <sup>c</sup>A poor man that oppresseth the poor is like a sweeping rain <sup>d</sup>which leaveth no food.

4 <sup>e</sup>They that forsake the law praise the wicked: 'but such as keep the law contend with them.

<sup>a</sup> Lev. xxvi. 17, 36. Ps. liii. 5. — <sup>b</sup> Or, by men of understanding and wisdom shall they likewise be prolonged. <sup>c</sup> Matt. xviii. 23. — <sup>d</sup> Heb. without food. — <sup>e</sup> Ps. x. 3. xlix. 18. Rom. i. 32. — <sup>f</sup> 1 Kings xviii. 18, 21. Matt. iii. 7. xiv.

NOTES ON CHAP. XXVIII.

Verse 1. *The wicked flee*] Every wicked man, however *bold* he may appear, is full of dreary apprehensions relative to both worlds. But the righteous has true courage, being conscious of his own innocence, and the approbation of his God. *The unprofitable fleeth*.—Old MS. Bible. This word is often used for *impious, wicked, ungodly*; hence it appears that our word *pity* anciently meant *piety* or *godliness*.

Verse 2. *Many are the princes*] *Nations*, as nations, cannot be judged in a future world; therefore, God judges them *here*. And where the *people* are very *wicked*, and the *constitution* very *bad*, the *succession of princes is frequent*—they are generally taken off by an untimely death. Where the people know that the constitution is in their favour, they seldom disturb the prince, as they consider him the guardian of their privileges.

*But by a man of understanding*] Whether he be a *king*, or the king's *prime minister*, the prosperity of the state is advanced by his counsels.

Verse 3. *A poor man that oppresseth the poor*] Our Lord illustrates this proverb most beautifully, by the

5 <sup>f</sup>Evil men understand not judgment: but <sup>g</sup>they that seek the LORD understand all things.

6 <sup>h</sup>Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than *he that is perverse in his ways*, though he be rich.

7 <sup>i</sup>Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son: but he that <sup>j</sup>is a companion of riotous men shameth his father.

8 <sup>k</sup>He that by usury and <sup>l</sup>unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.

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4. Eph. v. 11. — <sup>f</sup> Ps. xcii. 6. — <sup>g</sup> John vii. 17. 1 Cor. i. 15. 1 John ii. 20, 27. — <sup>h</sup> Ch. xix. 1. Ver. 18. — <sup>i</sup> Ch. xxix. 3. — <sup>j</sup> Or, feedeth gnattons. — <sup>k</sup> Job xxvii. 16, 17. Ch. xiii. 22. Eccles. ii. 26. — <sup>l</sup> Heb. by increase.

parable of the *two debtors*, Matt. xviii. 23. One owed *ten thousand talents*, was insolvent, begged for time, was forgiven. A fellow-servant owed this one a *hundred pence*: he was insolvent; but prayed his fellow-servant to give him a little time, and he would pay it all. He would not, took him by the throat, and cast him into prison till he should pay that debt. Here the *poor* oppressed the *poor*; and what was the consequence? The oppressing poor was delivered to the tormentors; and the forgiven debt charged to his amount, because *he showed no mercy*. The *comparatively poor* are often shockingly uncharitable and unfeeling towards the *real poor*.

*Like a sweeping rain*] These are frequent in the East; and sometimes carry flocks, crops, and houses away with them.

Verse 4. *They that forsake the law*] He that transgresses says, in fact, that it is *right to transgress*; and thus other wicked persons are encouraged.

Verse 5. *They that seek the Lord understand all things*.] They are wise unto salvation; they "have the unction from the Holy One, and they know all things." 1 John ii. 20. every thing that is essentially

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9 <sup>a</sup> He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, <sup>b</sup> even his prayer shall be abomination.

10 <sup>c</sup> Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit : <sup>d</sup> but the upright shall have good things in possession.

11 The rich man is wise <sup>e</sup> in his own conceit ; but the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out.

12 <sup>f</sup> When righteous men do rejoice, there is great glory : but when the wicked rise, a man is <sup>g</sup> hidden.

13 <sup>h</sup> He that covereth his sins shall not prosper : but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

<sup>a</sup> Zech. vii. 11. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. lxxvi. 18. cix. 7. Ch. xv. 8. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. xxvi. 27. — <sup>d</sup> Matt. vi. 33. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. in his eyes. — <sup>f</sup> Ver. 28. Ch. xi. 10. xxix. 2. Eccles. x. 6. — <sup>g</sup> Or, sought for. — <sup>h</sup> Ps. xxxii. 3, 5. 1 John i. 8, 9, 10. — <sup>i</sup> Ps. xvi. 8. Ch.

14 Happy is the man <sup>i</sup> that feareth alway : <sup>k</sup> but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.

15 <sup>l</sup> As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear ; <sup>m</sup> so is a wicked ruler over the poor people.

16 The prince that wanteth understanding is also a great oppressor : but he that hateth covetousness shall prolong his days.

17 <sup>n</sup> A man that doeth violence to the blood of any person shall flee to the pit ; let no man stay him.

18 <sup>o</sup> Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved : but <sup>p</sup> he that is perverse in his ways shall fall at once.

19 <sup>q</sup> He that tilleth his land shall have plenty

xxiii. 17. — <sup>r</sup> Rom. ii. 5. xi. 20. — <sup>s</sup> 1 Pet. v. 8. — <sup>t</sup> Exod. i. 14, 16, 22. Matt. ii. 16. — <sup>u</sup> Gen. ix. 6. Exod. xxi. 14. — <sup>v</sup> Ch. xix. 9, 25. — <sup>w</sup> Ver. 6. — <sup>x</sup> Ch. xii. 11.

needful for them to know, in reference to both worlds.

Verse 8. *He that by usury—increase his substance*] By taking unlawful interest for his money ; lending to a man in great distress money, for the use of which he requires an exorbitant sum. O that the names of all those unfeeling, hard-hearted, consummate villains in the nation, who thus take advantage of their neighbour's necessities to enrich themselves, were published at every market cross ; and then the delinquents all sent to their brother savages in New Zealand. It would be a happy riddance to the country.

Verse 9. *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law*] Many suppose, if they do not know their duty, they shall not be accountable for their transgressions ; and therefore avoid every thing that is calculated to enlighten them. They will not read the Bible, lest they should know the will of God ; and they will not attend divine ordinances for the same reason. But this pretence will avail them nothing ; as he that might have known his master's will, but would not, shall be treated as he shall be who did know it, and disobeyed it. Even the prayers of such a person as this are reputed sin before God.

Verse 10. *Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray*] He who strives to pervert one really converted to God, in order that he may pour contempt on religion, shall fall into that hell to which he has endeavoured to lead the other.

Verse 12. *When righteous men do rejoice*] When true religion is no longer persecuted, and the word of God duly esteemed, there is great glory ; for the word of the Lord has then free course, runs, and is glorified : but when the wicked rise—when they are elevated to places of trust, and put at the head of civil affairs, then the righteous man is obliged to hide himself ; the word of the Lord becomes scarce, and there is no open vision. The first was the case in this country,

in the days of EDWARD VI. ; the second, in the days of his successor, MARY I. Popery, cruelty, and knavery, under her, nearly destroyed the Church and the State in these islands.

Verse 13. *He that covereth his sins*] Here is a general direction relative to conversion. 1. If the sinner do not acknowledge his sins ; if he cover and excuse them, and refuse to come to the light of God's word and Spirit, lest his deeds should be reproved, he shall find no salvation. God will never admit a sinful, unhumbled soul into his kingdom. 2. But if he confess his sin, with a penitent and broken heart, and, by forsaking every evil way, give this proof that he feels his own sore, and the plague of his heart, then he shall have mercy. Here is a doctrine of vital importance to the salvation of the soul, which the weakest may understand.

Verse 14. *Happy is the man that feareth alway*] That ever carries about with him that reverential and filial fear of God, which will lead him to avoid sin, and labour to do that which is lawful and right in the sight of God his Saviour.

Verse 16. *The prince that wanteth understanding*] A weak prince will generally have wicked ministers, for his weakness prevents him from making a proper choice ; and he is apt to prefer them who flatter him, and minister most to his pleasures. The quantum of the king's intellect may be always appreciated by the mildness or oppressiveness of his government. He who plunges his people into expensive wars, to support which they are burdened with taxes, is a prince without understanding. He does not know his own interest, and does not regard that of his people. But these things, though general truths, apply more particularly to those despotic governments which prevail in Asiatic countries.

Verse 17. *That doeth violence to the blood*] He who either slays the innocent, or procures his destruction, may flee to hide himself : but let none give him

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of bread : but he that followeth after vain persons shall have poverty enough.

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20 A faithful man shall abound with blessings : <sup>a</sup> but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be <sup>b</sup> innocent.

21 <sup>c</sup> To have respect of persons is not good ; for <sup>d</sup> for a piece of bread that man will transgress.

22 <sup>e</sup> He <sup>f</sup> that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

23 <sup>g</sup> He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.

24 Whoso robbeth his father or his mother,

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xiii. 11. xx. 21. xxiii. 4. Ver. 22. 1 Tim. vi. 9. <sup>b</sup> Or, unpunished. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. xviii. 5. xxiv. 23. — <sup>d</sup> Ezek. xiii. 19. <sup>e</sup> Or, He that hath an evil eye hasteth to be rich. — <sup>f</sup> Ver. 20. — <sup>g</sup> Ch. xxvii. 5, 6. — <sup>h</sup> Ch. xviii. 9. — <sup>i</sup> Heb. a man

protection. The law demands his life, because he is a murderer ; and let none deprive justice of its claim. Murder is the most horrid crime in the sight of God and man ; it scarcely ever goes unpunished, and is universally execrated.

Verse 18. Shall fall at once.] Shall fall without resource, altogether.

Verse 19. He that tilleth his land] See chap. xii. 11.

Verse 20. He that maketh haste to be rich] See chap. xiii. 11, xx. 21.

Verse 24. Whoso robbeth his father] The father's property is as much his own, in reference to the child,

and saith, It is no transgression ; the same <sup>b</sup> is the companion of <sup>a</sup> a destroyer.

25 <sup>b</sup> He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife : <sup>c</sup> but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat.

26 He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool : but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.

27 <sup>m</sup> He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack : but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.

28 <sup>n</sup> When the wicked rise, <sup>o</sup> men hide themselves : but when they perish, the righteous increase.

destroying. — <sup>k</sup> Ch. xiii. 10. — <sup>l</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 6. — <sup>m</sup> Deut. xv. 7, &c. Ch. xix. 17. xxii. 9. — <sup>n</sup> Ver. 12. Ch. xxix. 2. <sup>o</sup> Job xxiv. 4.

as that of the merest stranger. He who robs his parents is worse than a common robber ; to the act of dishonesty and rapine he adds ingratitude, cruelty, and disobedience. Such a person is the companion of a destroyer ; he may be considered as a murderer.

Verse 25. Shall be made fat.] Shall be prosperous.

Verse 26. He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool] For his heart, which is deceitful and desperately wicked, will infallibly deceive him.

Verse 27. He that giveth unto the poor] See the notes on the passages referred to in the margin.

CHAPTER XXIX.

We must not despise correction. The prudent king. The flatterer. The just judge. Contend not with a fool. The prince who opens his ears to reports. The poor and the deceitful. The pious king. The insolent servant. The humiliation of the proud. Of the partner of a thief. The fear of man. The Lord the righteous Judge.

A. M. cir. 3304.  
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Ol. vigesima  
cir. annum  
primum.  
A. U. C. cir. 54.

<sup>a</sup> HE, <sup>b</sup> that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

2 <sup>c</sup> When the righteous are <sup>d</sup> in authority, the people rejoice : but when the wicked beareth rule, <sup>e</sup> the people mourn.

3 <sup>f</sup> Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father :

<sup>a</sup> Heb. A man of reprofs. — <sup>b</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 25. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. Ch. i. 24—27. — <sup>c</sup> Esth. viii. 15. Ch. xi. 10. xxviii. 12, 28. — <sup>d</sup> Or, increased. — <sup>e</sup> Esth. iii. 15. — <sup>f</sup> Ch.

<sup>g</sup> but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth his substance.

4 The king by judgment establisheth the land : but <sup>b</sup> he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.

5 A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet.

6 In the transgression of an evil man there

x. 1. xv. 20. xxvii. 11. — <sup>g</sup> Ch. v. 9, 10. vi. 26. xxviii. 7. Luke xv. 13, 30. — <sup>h</sup> Heb. a man of oblations.

NOTES ON CHAP. XXIX.

Verse 1. Hardeneth his neck] Becomes stubborn and obstinate.

Verse 3. But he that keepeth company] רעה רעה, 2504

he that feedeth harlots, יאבד, shall utterly destroy his substance. Has there ever been a single case to the contrary ?

Verse 4. He that receiveth gifts] This was nota-

A. M. cir. 3304. *is* a snare: but the righteous  
B. C. cir. 700. doth sing and rejoice.  
Ol. vigesima  
cir. annum  
primum.  
A. U. C. cir. 54. 7 <sup>a</sup>The righteous considereth  
the cause of the poor: *but* the  
wicked regardeth not to know *it*.

8 <sup>b</sup> Scornful men <sup>c</sup> bring a city into a snare: *but* wise *men* <sup>d</sup> turn away wrath.

9 *If* a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, <sup>e</sup> whether he rage or laugh, *there is* no rest.

10 <sup>f</sup> The <sup>g</sup> bloodthirsty hate the upright: *but* the just seek his soul.

11 A <sup>h</sup> fool uttereth all his mind: *but* a wise *man* keepeth it in till afterwards.

12 *If* a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants *are* wicked.

13 The poor and <sup>i</sup> the deceitful man <sup>k</sup> meet together: <sup>l</sup> the LORD lighteneth both their eyes.

14 <sup>m</sup> The king that <sup>n</sup> faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established for ever.

<sup>a</sup> Job xxix. 16. xxxi. 13. Ps. xli. 1. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. xi. 11.  
<sup>c</sup> Or, set a city on fire. — <sup>d</sup> Ezek. xxii. 30. — <sup>e</sup> Matt. xi. 17.  
<sup>f</sup> Heb. Men of blood. — <sup>g</sup> Gen. iv. 5, 8. 1 John iii. 12.  
<sup>h</sup> Judg. xvii. 17. Ch. xii. 16. xiv. 33. — <sup>i</sup> Or, the usurer.  
<sup>j</sup> Ch. xxii. 2. — <sup>k</sup> Matt. v. 45. — <sup>l</sup> Ch. xx. 28. xxv. 5.  
<sup>m</sup> Ps. lxxii. 2, 4, 13, 14. — <sup>n</sup> Ver. 17. — <sup>p</sup> Ch. x. 1. xvii. 21,

riously the case in this kingdom, before the passing of the *Magna Charta*, or *great charter of liberties*. Hence that article in it, *Nulli vendemus justitiam; "We will not sell justice to any."* I have met with cases in our ancient records where, in order to get his *right*, a man was obliged almost to ruin himself in *presents to the king, queen, and their favourites*, to get the case decided in his favour.

Verse 5. *Spreadeth a net for his feet.*] Beware of a flatterer; he does not flatter merely to please you, but to deceive you and profit himself.

Verse 9. *Whether he rage or laugh*] Coverdale translates, "Yf a wyse man go to lawe with a foole, whether he deale with him frendly or roughly he geteth no rest."

Verse 11. *A fool uttereth all his mind*] A man should be careful to keep his *own secret*, and never tell his whole mind upon any subject, while there are other opinions yet to be delivered; else, if he speak *again*, he must go over his old ground; and as he brings out nothing *new*, he injures his former *argument*.

Verse 12. *If a ruler hearken to lies*] Wherever the system of *espionage* is permitted to prevail, there the system of *falsity* is established; for he who is capable of being a *spy* and informer, is not only capable of telling and swearing lies, but also of cutting his king's or even his *father's* throat. I have seen cases, where the *same spy* received pay from both parties, and deceived both.

Verse 13. *The poor and the deceitful man*] It is difficult to fix the meaning of תכחִים *techachim*, which

15 <sup>o</sup> The rod and reproof give wisdom: *but* <sup>p</sup> a child left to *himself* bringeth his mother to shame.

16 When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth: <sup>q</sup> *but* the righteous shall see their fall.

17 <sup>r</sup> Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.

18 <sup>s</sup> Where *there is* no vision, the people <sup>t</sup> perish: *but* <sup>u</sup> he that keepeth the law, happy *is* he.

19 A servant will not be corrected by words: for though he understand he will not answer.

20 Seest thou a man *that is* hasty <sup>v</sup> in his words? <sup>w</sup> *there is* more hope of a fool than of him.

21 He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child shall have him become *his* son at the length.

22 <sup>x</sup> An angry man stirreth up strife, and a

25. — <sup>y</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 36. lviii. 10. xci. 8. xcii. 11. — <sup>r</sup> Ch. xiii. 24. xix. 18. xxii. 15. xxiii. 13, 14. Ver. 15. — <sup>s</sup> 1 Sam. iii. 1. Amos viii. 11, 12. — <sup>t</sup> Or, is made naked. — <sup>u</sup> John xiii. 17. James i. 25. — <sup>v</sup> Or, in his matters. — <sup>w</sup> Ch. xxvi. 12. <sup>x</sup> Ch. xv. 18. xxvi. 21.

we here render the *deceitful man*. The TARGUM has, "The poor and the man of LITTLE WEALTH." The SEPTUAGINT, "The usurer and the DEBTOR." The VULGATE, "The poor and CREDITOR." COVERDALE, "The poor and the LENDER." OTHERS, "The poor and the RICH;" "The poor and the OPPRESSORS." I suppose the meaning may be the same as in chap. xxii. 2: "The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the Maker of them all." Where see the note.

Verse 16. *When the wicked are multiplied*] That, in the multiplication of the wicked transgression is increased, requires no proof; but an important doctrine attaches to this. On this account wicked nations and wicked families are cut off and rooted out. Were it not so, righteousness would in process of time be banished from the earth. This will account for many of the numerous instances in which whole families fail.

Verse 18. *Where there is no vision*] My old MS. Bible, following the *Vulgate*, translates: ~~San~~ *prophete schal fallen, the peple schal ben to scatered*. Where divine revelation, and the faithful preaching of the sacred testimonies, are neither revered nor attended, the ruin of that land is at no great distance.

*But he that keepeth the law, happy is he.*] Go how it may with others, *he* shall be safe. So our Lord: "Blessed are they who hear the word of God, and keep it."

Verse 21. *He that delicately bringeth up his servant*] Such persons are generally forgetful of their obligations, assume the rights and privileges of children and are seldom good for any thing.

A. M. cir. 3304. B. C. cir. 700. Ol. vigesima cir. annum primum.

furious man aboundeth in transgression.

23 \* A man's pride shall bring him low : but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

24 Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth it not.

25 c The fear of man bringeth a snare : but

a Job xxii. 29. Ch. xv. 33. xviii. 12. Isai. lxvi. 2. Dan. iv. 30, 31, &c. Matt. xxiii. 12. Luke xiv. 11. xviii. 14. Acts xii. 23. James iv. 6, 10. 1 Pet. v. 5. b Lev. v. 1.

Verse 22. An angry man stirreth up strife] His spirit begets its like wherever he goes.

And a furious man aboundeth in transgression.] His furious spirit is always carrying him into extremes, and each of these is a transgression.

Verse 23. A man's pride shall bring him low] A proud man is universally despised, and such are often exposed to great mortifications.

Verse 24. Hateth his own soul] נפשו naphsho, his life, as the outraged law may at any time seize on and put him to death.

He heareth cursing] אלה alah, the execration or adjuration (for all culprits were charged, as before God, to tell the truth), ואל ירד velo yaggid, but he will not tell it. He has no fear of God, nor reverence for an oath, because his heart is hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Verse 25. The fear of man bringeth a snare] How often has this led weak men, though sincere in their general character, to deny their God, and abjure his people! See the case of Peter; and learn from this, O reader, that where the mighty have been slain, thou

whoso putteth his trust in the LORD d shall be safe.

26 \* Many seek the ruler's favour : but every man's judgment cometh from the LORD.

27 An unjust man is an abomination to the just; and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked.

A. M. cir. 3304. B. C. cir. 700. Ol. vigesima cir. annum primum. A. U. C. cir. 54.

c Gen. xii. 12. xx. 2, 11. d Heb. shall be set on high. e Sec. Ps. xx. 9. Ch. xix. 6. f Heb. the face of a ruler.

wilt fall, unless thou call on the Strong for strength, and for courage to use it. Be not ashamed of Jesus, nor of his people, nor of his cross. Glory in this, that thou knowest him, art joined to them, and art counted worthy to bear it.

Verse 26. Many seek the ruler's favour] To be screened from the punishment determined by the law; but should he grant the favour sought, and pardon the criminal, this takes not away his guilt in the sight of God, from whom all just judgment proceeds.

Verse 27. And he that is upright in the way] "But as for those that be in the right way, the wicked hate them."—COVERDALE.

To this verse the VULGATE adds the following: Verbum custodiens filius extra perditionem erit. "The son that keeps the word shall not fall into perdition." This is not in all copies of the Vulgate: but it was in that from which my old MS. Bible was made, where it is thus translated: The some keeping the words schal ben out of perdition. I believe verbum here is intended for the divine word; the revelation from God.

CHAPTER XXX.

Agur's confession of faith, 1—6. His prayer, 7—9. Of wicked generations, 10—14. Things that are never satisfied, 15, 16. Of him who despises his parents, 17. Three wonderful things, 18—20. Three things that disquiet the land, 21—23. Four little but very intelligent animals, 24—28. Four things that go well, 29—31. A man should cease from doing foolishly, and from strife, 32, 33.

A. M. cir. 3304. B. C. cir. 700. Ol. vigesima cir. annum primum. A. U. C. cir. 54.

THE words of Agur the son of Jakeh, even a the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal,

2 b Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.

3 I neither learned wisdom, nor c have the knowledge of the holy.

A. M. cir. 3304. B. C. cir. 700. Ol. vigesima cir. annum primum. A. U. C. cir. 54.

a Ch. xxxi. 1. b Ps. lxxiii. 22.

c Heb. know.

NOTES ON CHAP. XXX.

Verse 1. The words of Agur the son of Jakeh] The words Agur, Jakeh, Ithiel, and Ucal, have been considered by some as proper names: by others, as descriptive characters. With some, Agur is Solomon; and Jakeh, David; and Ithiel and Ucal are epithets of Christ.

The Vulgate translates, Verba congregantis filii

vomentis: visio, quam locutus est vir, cum quo est Deus, et qui Deo secum morante confortatus, ait. "The words of the collector, the son of the vomiter: the vision of the man who has God with him, and who is fortified by God dwelling with him, saith."

COVERDALE makes the following words a title to the chapter:

"The wordes of Agur the sonne of Jake.

A. M. cir. 3304.  
B. C. cir. 700.  
Ol. vigesima  
cir. annum  
primum.  
A. U. C. cir. 54.

4 <sup>a</sup> Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended?

<sup>b</sup> who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound

the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name,

<sup>a</sup> John iii. 13.—<sup>b</sup> Job xxxviii. 4, &c. Ps. civ. 3, &c. Isai. xl. 12, &c.—<sup>c</sup> Ps. xii. 6. xviii. 30. xix. 8. cxix. 140.

“The prophecies of a true faithful man, whom God hath helped; whom God hath comforted and nourished.”

The whole might be thus translated, keeping near to the letter:—

“The words of the epistle of the obedient son.”  
Or,

“The words of the collector, the son of Jakeh. The parable which *הגבער* *haggeber*, the strong man, the hero, spake unto him who is God with me; to him who is God with me, even the strong God.”

The vision that a man spake with which is God, and that God with him, bringing comfort.—Old MS. Bible.

From this introduction, from the names here used, and from the style of the book, it appears evident that Solomon was not the author of this chapter; and that it was designed to be distinguished from his work by this very preface, which specifically distinguishes it from the preceding work. Nor can the words in verses 2, 3, 8, and 9 be at all applied to Solomon: they suit no part of Solomon's life, nor of his circumstances. We must, therefore, consider it an appendix or supplement to the preceding collection; something in the manner of that part which the *men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, had collected*. As to mysteries here, many have been found by them who sought for nothing else; but they are all, in my view of the subject, hazarded and precarious. I believe *Agur, Jakeh, Ithiel, and Ucal* to be the names of persons who did exist, but of whom we know nothing but what is here mentioned. *Agur* seems to have been a public teacher, and *Ithiel* and *Ucal* to have been his scholars; and what he delivers to them was done by prophecy. It was what the prophets generally term *מסה* *massa*, an ORACLE, something immediately delivered by the Holy Spirit for the benefit of man.

Verse 2. *Surely I am more brutish*] These words can in no sense, nor by any mode of speech, be true of Solomon: for while he was the wisest of men, he could not have said that he was more brutish than any man, and had not the understanding of a man. It is saying nothing to the purpose, to say he was so independently of the divine teaching. Had he put this in, even by innuendo, it might be legitimate: but he does not; nor is it by fair implication to be understood. Solomon is not supposed to have written the Proverbs after he fell from God. Then indeed he might have said he had been more brutish than any man. But *Agur* might have used these words with strict propriety, for aught we know; for it is very probable that he was a rustic, without education, and without any human help, as was the prophet Amos;

and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?

5 <sup>c</sup> Every word of God is <sup>d</sup> pure: <sup>e</sup> he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

6 <sup>f</sup> Add thou not unto his words, lest he

A. M. cir. 3304.  
B. C. cir. 700.  
Ol. vigesima  
cir. annum  
primum.  
A. U. C. cir. 54.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. purified.—<sup>e</sup> Ps. xviii. 30. lxxxiv. 11. cxv. 9, 10, 11. <sup>f</sup> Deut. iv. 2. xii. 32. Rev. xxiii. 18, 19.

and that all that he knew now was by the inspiration of the Almighty, independently of which he was rustic, and uneducated.

Verse 3. *I neither learned wisdom*] I have never been a scholar in any of those schools of the wise men, nor have the knowledge of the holy, *קדושים* *kedoshim*, of the saints or holy persons.

The Septuagint give this a different turn: *θεος δέδωκε με σοφίαν, και γινωσκω αγίων εγγωσκα* “God hath taught me wisdom, and the knowledge of the saints I have known.”

This may refer to the patriarchs, prophets, or holy men that lived before the days of Solomon. That is, the translators might have had these in view.

Verse 4. *Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended?*] *Calmet* paraphrases this passage thus: “*Who hath descended*, &c. In order to show the truth of what he was about to say, he observes: *I have not the science of the saints*; for how could I have acquired it? Who is he who could attain to that? *Who has ascended to heaven* to learn that science; and *who has descended* in order to publish it? Is the science of salvation one of those things that can be apprehended only by study? Is it not a pure gift of the goodness of God? Moses, after having shown to the people the will of God, said to them: ‘This commandment which I command thee this day, is not hidden from thee; neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?’ Deut. xxx. 11, 12. The person whose words we are here examining speaks a knowledge more sublime than that contained in the simple laws of the Lord, common to all the people of Israel. He speaks of the sublime science of the designs of God, of his ways, and of his secrets; and in this sense he affirms he has no knowledge.”

*Who hath gathered the wind in his fists?*] It is as difficult for a mortal man to acquire this divine science by his own reason and strength, as to collect the winds in his fists. And who can command the spirit of prophecy, so that he can have it whensoever he pleases?

*What is his name*] Show me the nature of this Supreme Being. Point out his eternity, omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence; comprehend and describe him, if thou canst.

*What is his son's name*] Some copies of the Septuagint have *η τι ονομα τοις τεκνοις αυτου* “Or the name of his sons;” meaning, I suppose, the holy angels, called his saints or holy ones, ver. 3.

The Arabic has *What is his name?* وما اسم والده



A. M. cir. 3304. reprove thee, and thou be found  
 B. C. cir. 700. a liar.  
 Ol. vigesima<sup>e</sup> 7 Two things have I required  
 cir. annum primam. of thee; <sup>a</sup> deny me them not  
 A. U. C. cir. 54. before I die :

<sup>a</sup> Heb. withhold not from me. — <sup>b</sup> Matt. vi. 11. — <sup>c</sup> Heb. of my allowance. — <sup>d</sup> Deut. viii. 12, 14, 17. xxxi. 20. xxxii.

and what is the name of his father? him who begat him. But the Chaldee, the Syriac, and the Vulgate read as the Hebrew.

Many are of opinion that Agur refers here to the first and second persons of the ever-blessed TRINITY. It may be so; but who would venture to rest the proof of that most glorious doctrine upon such a text, to say nothing of the obscure author? The doctrine is true, sublimely true; but many doctrines have suffered in controversy, by improper texts being urged in their favour. Every lover of God and truth should be very choice in his selections, when he comes forward in behalf of the more mysterious doctrines of the Bible. Quote nothing that is not clear; advance nothing that does not tell. When we are obliged to spend a world of critical labour, in order to establish the sense of a text which we intend to allege in favour of the doctrine we wish to support, we may rest assured that we are going the wrong way to work. Those who indiscriminately amass every text of Scripture they think bears upon the subject they defend, give their adversaries great advantage against them. I see many a sacred doctrine suffering through the bad judgment of its friends every day. The Godhead of Christ, salvation by faith, the great atoning sacrifice, and other essential doctrines of this class, are all suffering in this way. My heart says with deep concern,

Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis,  
 Tempus eget.

When truth is assailed by all kinds of weapons, handled by the most powerful foes, injudicious defenders may be ranked among its enemies. To such we may innocently say, "Keep your cabins; you do assist the storm."

Verse 5. Every word of God is pure] כל אמרהוה כול אמתהוה *col imrath eloah tseruphah*, "Every oracle of God is purified." A metaphor taken from the purifying of metals. Every thing that God has pronounced, every inspiration which the prophets have received, is pure, without mixture of error, without dross. Whatever trials it may be exposed to, it is always like gold: it bears the fire, and comes out with the same lustre, the same purity, and the same weight.

He is a shield unto them] And this oracle among the rest. "He is the defence of all them that put their trust in him. לכל *lechol*, to all, is added here by nineteen of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS.; for instead of לחסים *lachosim*, to the trusters, they read לכל החסים *lechol hachosim*, "to every one of them that trust." Where the preposition and adjective are not only added, but the noun is written more full,

8 Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; <sup>b</sup> feed me with food <sup>c</sup> convenient for me.  
 9 <sup>d</sup> Lest I be full, and <sup>e</sup> deny thee, and say,

15. Neh. ix. 25, 26. Job xxxi. 24, 25, 28. Hos. xiii. 6. <sup>c</sup> Heb. belie thee.

and more emphatic: but a translation cannot well express it without paraphrase.

Verse 6. Add not thou unto his words] You can no more increase their value by any addition, than you can that of gold by adding any other metal to it. Take care that you do not any thing that this word forbids, nor leave undone any thing that it commands; for this is adding and diminishing in scripture phrase.

Lest he reprove thee] Lest he try thy word by fire, as his has been tried; and it appears that, far from abiding the test, the fire show thine to be reprobate silver; and so thou be found a falsifier of God's word, and a liar.

How amply has this been fulfilled in the case of the Romish church! It has added all the gross stuff in the Apocrypha, besides innumerable legends and traditions, to the word of God! They have been tried by the refiner's fire. And this church has been reprov'd, and found to be a liar, in attempting to filiate on the most holy God spurious writings discreditable to his nature.

Verse 7. Two things have I required of thee] These two petitions are mentioned in the next verse; and he wishes to have them answered before he should die. That is, he wishes the answer now, that he may live the rest of his life in the state he describes.

Verse 8. Remove far from me vanity and lies.] 1. *שאו shav*, all false shows, all false appearances of happiness, every vain expectation. Let me not set my heart on any thing that is not solid, true, durable, and eternal. 2. *לשואו debar cazab*, all words of deception, empty pretensions, false promises, uncertain dependencies, and words that fail; promises which, when they become due, are like bad bills; they are dishonoured because they are found to be forged, or the drawer insolvent.

From the import of the original, I am satisfied that Agur prays against idolatry, false religion, and false worship of every kind. *שאו shav* is used for an idol, a false god. Jer. xviii. 15: "My people have forsaken me; they have burnt incense to VANITY;" *לשואו lashshav*, "to an idol." Ps. xxxi. 6: "I have hated them that regard lying VANITIES;" *לשואו habley shave*, "vain IDOLS." See also Hos. xii. 11; Jon. ii. 8. And *קזב cazab*, a thing that fails or deceives, may well apply to the vain pretensions, false promises, and deceptive religious rites of idolatry. So Jer. xv. 18: "Wilt thou be unto me as a liar, *כגור אכזב achzob*, like the false, failing promises of the false gods;" and as waters that fail; *לשואו lo neeman*, that are not faithful; not like the true God, whose promises never fail. According to this view of the subject, Agur prays, 1. That he may be preserved from idolatry. 2. That he may put no confidence in

A. M. cir. 3304.

B. C. cir. 700.

Ol. vigesimæ  
cir. annum  
primum.

A. U. C. cir. 54.

Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God *in vain*.

10 <sup>a</sup> Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty

11 *There is* a generation *that* curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.

12 *There is* a generation <sup>b</sup> *that are* pure in their own eyes, and *yet* is not washed from their filthiness.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *Hurt not with thy tongue*. — <sup>b</sup> Luke xviii. 11.  
<sup>c</sup> Ps. cxxxi. 1. Ch. vi. 17.

any words but those *pure words* of God that never fail them that trust in him.

*Give me neither poverty nor riches*] Here are three requests: 1. *Give me not poverty*. The reason is added: *Lest, being poor, I shall get into a covetous spirit, and, impelled by want, distrust my Maker, and take my neighbour's property; and in order to excuse, hide, or vindicate my conduct, I take the name of my God in vain*; תפאסתי *taphasti*, "I catch at the name of God." Or, by swearing falsely, endeavour to make myself pass for innocent. *Forget the name of my God*.—Old MS. Bible. *Coverdale*, "deny or apostatize from him."

2. *Give me not riches*. For which petition he gives a reason also: *Lest I be full, and addict myself to luxurious living, pamper the flesh and starve the soul, and so deny thee, the Fountain of goodness; and, if called on to resort to first principles, I say, Who is Jehovah?* Why should I acknowledge, why should I serve him? And thus cast aside all religion, and all moral obligation.

3. The *third* request is, *Feed me with food convenient for me*, חתפני לחם החרפי *hatripheni lechem chukki*; the meaning of which is, "give me as prey my statute allowance of bread," i. e., my *daily bread*, a sufficient portion for each day. There is an allusion made to *hunting*: "Direct so by thy good providence, that I may each day find sufficient portion to subsist on, as a hunter in the forest prays that he may have good speed." It is the province of a *preacher* to show the importance and utility of such a *prayer*, and *dilate the circumstances*, and *expand the reasons*, after the *commentator* has shown the *literal sense*.

Verse 10. *Accuse not a servant*] Do not bring a *false accusation against a servant*, lest thou be found *guilty of the falsehood*, and he *curse thee* for having traduced his character, and in his turn traduce thine. In general, do not meddle with other people's servants.

Verse 11. *There is a generation*] There are *such persons* in the world. In this and the three following verses the wise man points out *four grand evils* that prevailed in his time.

The *first*, Those who not only did not honour, but who *evil-treated*, their parents.

13 *There is* a generation, O how <sup>c</sup> *lofty* are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up.

14 <sup>d</sup> *There is* a generation, whose teeth *are as* swords, and their jaw teeth *as* knives, <sup>e</sup> to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from *among* men.

15 The horseleach hath two daughters, *crying*, Give, give. There are three *things that are never satisfied*, *yea*, four *things say not*, <sup>f</sup> *It is enough* :

A. M. cir. 3304.

B. C. cir. 700.

Ol. vigesimæ  
cir. annum  
primum.

A. U. C. cir. 54.

<sup>d</sup> Job xxix. 17. Ps. lii. 2. lvii. 4. Ch. xii. 18.—<sup>e</sup> Ps. xiv. 4. Amos viii. 4.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. *Wealth*.

Verse 12. The *second*, Those who were *self-righteous*, supposing themselves *pure*, and were *not so*.

Verse 13. The *third*, Those who were *full of vanity, pride, and insolence*.

Verse 14. The *fourth*, The *greedy, cruel, and oppressive*, and, especially, *oppressive to the poor*.

Verse 15. The *horseleach hath two daughters, crying, Give, give*.] "This horseleech," says *Calmel*, "is *COVETOUSNESS*, and her two daughters are *Avarice* and *Ambition*. They never say, It is enough; they are never satisfied; they are never contented."

Many explanations have been given of this verse; but as all the *Versions* agree in rendering מלוקח *alukah* the *horseleech* or *bloodsucker*, the general meaning collected has been, "There are persons so excessively covetous and greedy, that they will scarcely let any live but themselves; and when they lay hold of any thing by which they may profit, they never let go their hold till they have extracted the last portion of good from it." *Horace* has well expressed this disposition, and by the *same emblem*, applied to a *poor poet*, who seizes on and extracts all he can from an *author of repute*, and obliges all to hear him read his wretched verses.

Quem vero arripuit, tenet, occiditque legendo,  
Non missura cutem, nisi plena cruoris, HIRUDO.

DE ARTE POET., ver. 476.

"But if he seize you, then the torture dread;  
He fastens on you till he read you dead;  
And like a LEECH, voracious of his food,  
Quits not his cruel hold till gorged with blood."

FRANCIS.

The word מלוקח *alukah*, which we here translate *horseleech*, is read in no other part of the Bible. May it not, like *Agur, Jakeh, Ithiel, and Ucal*, be a *proper name*, belonging to some well-known *woman of his acquaintance*, and well known to the *public*, who had *two daughters* notorious for their *covetousness* and *lechery*? And at first view the following verse may be thought to confirm this supposition: "There are three things that are never satisfied, *yea*, four things say not, It is enough:" the *grave*, the *barren womb*, the *earth*, the *fire*. What an astonishing similarity there is between this and the following *institute*.

A. M. cir. 3304.  
B. C. cir. 700.  
Ol. vigesima  
cir. annum  
primum.  
A. U. C. cir. 54.

16 <sup>a</sup> The grave; and the barren womb; the earth *that* is not filled with water; and the fire *that* saith not, *It is enough.*

17 <sup>b</sup> The eye *that* mocketh at *his* father, and despiseth to obey *his* mother, the ravens of <sup>c</sup> the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.

18 There be three *things which* are too won-

Ch. xxvii. 20. Hab. ii. 5.—<sup>b</sup> Gen. ix. 22. Lev. xx. 9.  
Ch. xx. 20. xxiii. 22.

taken from the *Code of Hindoo Laws*, chap. xx., sect. i., p. 203.

“A woman is never satisfied with the copulation of man, no more than a fire is satisfied with burning fuel; or the main ocean is with receiving the rivers; or death, with the dying of men and animals.” You can no more satisfy these two daughters of Alukah than you can the grave, &c.

Some of the rabbins have thought that *alukah* signifies *destiny*, or the *necessity of dying*, which they say has two daughters, *Eden* and *Gehenna*, paradise and hell. The former has never enough of *righteous souls*; the latter, of the *wicked*. Similar to them is the opinion of *Bochart*, who thinks *alukah* means *destiny*, and the two daughters the *grave* and *hell*; into the *first* of which the *body* descends after death, and into the *second*, the *soul*.

The *Septuagint* gives it a curious turn, by connecting the *fifteenth* with the *sixteenth* verse: Τη Βδελλη θυγατρεις ησαν αγαπησει αγαπωμεναι, και αι τρεις αυται ουκ ενεπιπλασαν αυτην, και η τεταρτη ουκ ηρησθη ιπειν ‘ικανον. “The horseleech had three well-beloved daughters; and these three were not able to satisfy her desire: and the fourth was not satisfied, so as to say, *It is enough.*”

After all, I think my own conjecture the most probable. *Alukah* is a proper name, and the two daughters were of the description I have mentioned.

Verse 17. *The eye that mocketh at his father*] This seems to be spoken against those who *curse their father*, and *do not bless their mother*, ver. 11.

*The ravens of the valley*] Those which frequent the places where dead carcasses and offal are most likely to be found. The *raven*, the *crow*, the *rook*, the *daw*, the *carrion crow*, and the *Cornish chough*, appear to be all of the same genus. Some of them live on *pulse* and *insects*; others, the *raven* in particular, live on *carrion*.

*The young eagles shall eat it.*] The mother eagle shall scoop out such an eye, and carry it to the nest to feed her young. Many of the *disobedient to parents* have come to an *untimely end*, and, in the *field of battle*, where many a profligate has fallen, and upon *gibbets*, have actually become the prey of ravenous birds.

Verse 19. *The way of an eagle*] I borrow, with thanks, the very sensible note of the Rev. Mr. Holden on this passage.

“The particle *κ* *ken* plainly shows that verses 19 and 20 are to be taken in connexion; consequently,

derful for me, yea, four which I know not:

19 The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the <sup>d</sup> midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid.

20 Such *is* the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.

A. M. cir. 3304.  
B. C. cir. 700.  
Ol. vigesima  
cir. annum  
primum.  
A. U. C. cir. 54.

<sup>c</sup> Or, *the brook*.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. *heart*.

it is a comparison between the *way of an adulterous woman*, and the *way of the things* here described.

“The *adulterous woman* goes about in search of her deluded victim, like as the *eagle* takes its flight into the air to spy out its prey. She uses every species of blandishment and insinuation to allure and beguile, as the *serpent* employs its winding and sinuous motions to pass along the *rocks*; she pursues a course surrounded with danger, as a *ship in the midst of the sea* is continually exposed to the fury of the tempest, and the hazard of shipwreck; and she tries every means, and exercises all her sagacity, to prevent the discovery of her illicit enjoyments, as a man attempts to conceal his clandestine intercourse *with a maid*. Such is the conduct of a lewd woman, marked by species dissimulation and traitorous blandishment; *she eateth, and wipeth her mouth*—she indulges her adulterous lust, yet artfully endeavours to conceal it, and with unblushing countenance asserts her innocence, exclaiming, *I have done no wickedness.*”

CHAUCER’S *January* and *May* is an excellent comment on such *wiles* and *protestations*.

*The way of a man with a maid.*] בעלמה בעלמה *bealmah*, with or in a maid; but one of *De Rossi’s* MSS. has בעלמה *bealmav*, in his youth; and with this the *SEPTUAGINT*, εν νεοτη, the *VULGATE*, in *adulescentia*, the *SYRIAC* and the *ARABIC* agree; and so also my own MS. Bible:—*The wile of a man in his taxing youth.* Dr. *Kennicott*, in a *sermon preached at Oxford*, 1765, p. 46, has defended the reading of the *Versions*, corroborating it by two MSS., one in the *Harleian*, and the other in the *Bodleian* library, besides that mentioned by *De Rossi*. See *De Rossi’s* Var. Lect. Certainly the *way of a man in his youth* contains too many intricacies for human wisdom to explore. He only who searches the heart knows fully its various corrupt principles, and their productions. The common reading may refer to the formation of a child in the womb. But some have understood it of the *immaculate conception*. See my note on *Matt. i. 23*, where the subject is largely considered.

If we take the *four things* which *Agur* says were *too wonderful for him*, in their *obvious sense*, there is little difficulty in them. 1. The passage which a bird makes *through the air*; 2. That which is made by a *serpent on a rock*; and, 3. That *made by a ship through the sea*, are such as cannot be ascertained: for who can possibly show the *track* in which either of them has passed? And as to the *fourth*, if it refer

A. M. cir. 3304.  
B. C. cir. 700.  
Ol. vigesima  
cir. annum  
primum.

21 For three *things* the earth is disquieted, and for four *which* it cannot bear.

A. U. C. cir. 54.

22 \* For a servant when he reigneth; and a fool when he is filled with meat;

23 For an odious *woman* when she is married; and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress.

24 There be four *things which are* little upon the earth, but they *are* <sup>b</sup> exceeding wise:

25 <sup>c</sup> The ants *are* a people not strong; yet they prepare their meat in the summer;

26 <sup>d</sup> The conies *are* but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks;

27 The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them <sup>e</sup> by bands;

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xix. 10. Eccles. x. 7. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. *wise, made wise.*  
<sup>c</sup> Ch. vi. 6, &c. — <sup>d</sup> Pa. civ. 18. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. *gathered together.*

to the *suspected incontinence* of one *reputed a virgin*, the *signs* are so *equivocal*, as to be absolutely unascertainable. The existence of the *hymen* has been denied by the ablest anatomists; and the signs of *continence* or *incontinence*, except in the most recent cases, are such as neither *man* nor *woman* can swear to, even to the present day; and they were certainly not less difficult to *Agur* and his contemporaries. I shall carry this matter no farther.

Verse 21. For three things the earth is disquieted, and for four which it cannot bear] This is another enigma. Four things insupportable to men. 1. A slave, when he becomes ruler. 2. An overfed fool. 3. An ill-tempered woman, when mistress of a family. And, 4. A servant maid, when the rule of the house is committed to her.

1. A slave, when he comes to bear rule, is an unprincipled tyrant. It has been often observed both in *America* and in the *West Indies*, when it was judged necessary to arm some of the most confidential slaves, that no regiments were used so cruelly in the drill, &c., as those *black regiments* that had *black officers*.

2. The overfed fool. The intellectually weak man, who has every thing at his command, has generally manners which none can bear; and, if a favourite with his master, he is insupportable to all others.

3. An ill-tempered woman, when she gets embarrassed with domestic cares, is beyond bearing.

4. A servant maid, when, either through the death of the mistress, or the sin of the husband, she is in fact exalted to be head over the family, is so insolent and impudent, as to be hateful to every one, and execrated by all.

Verse 24. There be four things] Of which it is said, they are very little, but very wise. 1. The Ants. 2. The Rabbits. 3. The Locusts. 4. The Spider.

1. The ants show their wisdom by preparing their meat in the summer; seeking for it and storing it when it may be had; not for winter consumption, for they sleep all that time; but for autumn and spring. See the note on chap. vi. 6. The ants are a people;

28 The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in king's palaces.

29 There be three things which go well, yea, four are comely in going:

30 A lion which is strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any;

31 A greyhound; <sup>e</sup> an he-goat also; and a king, against whom there is no rising up.

32 If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, <sup>b</sup> lay thine hand upon thy mouth.

33 Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood: so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife.

<sup>f</sup> Or, horse. — <sup>g</sup> Heb. *girl in the loins.* — <sup>h</sup> Job xxi. 5. xl. 4. Eccles. viii. 3. Mic. vii. 16.

they have their houses, towns, cities, public roads, &c. I have seen several of these, both of the brown and large black ant.

2. The rabbits act curiously enough in the construction of their burrows; but the word *שׂוֹפָן* *shaphan* probably does not here mean the animal we call coney or rabbit. It is most likely that this is what Dr. Shaw calls the *Daman Israel*; a creature very like a rabbit, but never burrowing in the ground, but dwelling in clefts and holes of rocks.

3. The locusts. These surprising animals we have already met with and described. Though they have no leader; yet they go forth by troops, some miles in circumference, when they take wing.

4. The spider. This is a singularly curious animal, both in the manner of constructing her house, her nets, and taking her prey. But the habits, &c. of these and such like must be sought in works on natural history.

Verse 20. There be three things which go well] Here is another set of emblems; four things which walk beautifully and with majesty. 1. The lion. 2. The greyhound. 3. The he-goat. And, 4. A king.

1. Nothing can be more majestic than the walk of the lion. It is deliberate, equal, firm, and in every respect becoming the king of the forest.

2. The greyhound. *זרזיר* *zarzir* *mothnayim*, the girl in the loins; but what this beast is we do not distinctly know. It is most likely that this was the greyhound, which in the East are remarkably fine, and very fleet. Scarcely any thing can be conceived to go with greater fleetness, in full chase, than a greyhound with its prey in view: it seems to swim over the earth.

3. The goat, *טַיִשׁ* *tayish*. This is generally allowed to be the he-goat; and how he walks, and what state he assumes, in the presence of his part of the flock, every one knows, who has at all noticed this animal. The ram also, which some suppose to be intended, is both fierce and majestic at the head of the sheep.

4. And a king, against whom there is no rising up.

That is, a king whose court, counsels, and troops are so firmly united to him, as to render all hopes of successful conspiracy against him utterly vain. He walks boldly and majestically about, being safe in the affections of his people. But the *Hebrew* is singular; it makes but *two words*; and these are they, ומלך אלקום *umelech Alkum*, "and king Alkum." It is a doubt whether this may not be a *proper name*, as *Agur* abounds in them; see *Ithiel*, *Ucal*, and probably *Alukah*, ver. 15. But it is said, "We know nothing of a king named Alkum." True; nor do we know anything of *Agur*, *Ithiel*, *Ucal*, to say nothing of *Alukah*. And this might have been some remarkable *chieftain*, who carried his victories wherever he went, and was remarkably fortunate. If, however, we separate the word into אל *al*, "not," and קום *kum*, "he arose," we may make the interpretation above given.

Verse 32. *If thou hast done foolishly*] And who has not, at one time or other of his life?

*Lay thine hand upon thy mouth.*] Like the *leper*; and cry to God, *Unclean! unclean!* and *keep silence* to all besides. God will blot out thy offence, and neither the world nor the church ever know it, for he is merciful; and *man* is rarely able to pass by a sin committed by his fellows, especially if it be one to which himself is by nature not liable or inclined.

Verse 33. *And the wringing*] חָצְבוּ חֲגָלִי טַחֲתֵי דַבְרֵי שִׁטְמוֹ *drabith out blood*.—Old MS. Bible. This is well expressed in homely phrase. The *Septuagint* have, "draw the milk, and you may have butter; if you press the nostrils, you may bring out blood; and if you draw out your discourse to a great length, you may have strife and contention." Avoid, therefore, all strong *excitements* and irritations. *Coverdale's* translation of this verse is very simple: "Whoso chyrneth mylck maketh butter; he that rubbeth his nose, maketh it blede; and he that causeth wrath, bryngeth forth strife."

CHAPTER XXXI.

The words and prophecy of king Lemuel, and what his mother taught him, 1, 2. Debauchery and much wine to be avoided, 3—7. How kings should administer justice, 8, 9. The praise of a virtuous woman and good housewife, in her economy, prudence, watchfulness, and assiduity in labour, 10—29. Frailty of beauty, 30, 31.

THE words of king Lemuel, <sup>a</sup> the prophecy that his mother taught him.

2 What, my son? and what, <sup>b</sup> the son of my

womb? and what, the son of my vows?

3 <sup>c</sup> Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways <sup>d</sup> to that which destroyeth kings.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xxx. 1. — <sup>b</sup> Isai. xlix. 15. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. v. 9. — <sup>d</sup> Deut.

xvii. 17. Neh. xiii. 26. Ch. vii. 26. Hos. iv. 11.

NOTES ON CHAP. XXXI.

Verse 1. *The words of king Lemuel*] דברי למואל מלך *dibrej lemuel melech*, "The words to Muel the king." So the *Syriac*; and so I think it should be read, the *lamed* being the article or preposition.

But who is *Muel* or *Lemuel*? *Solomon*, according to general opinion; and the *mother* here mentioned, *Bath-sheba*. I cannot receive these sayings; for 1. Whoever this was, he appears to have been the *first-born* of his mother; called here emphatically בר בטרני *bar bitni*, the *son of my womb*; which is not likely to be true of *Solomon*, as his mother had been the wife of *Uriah*, and possibly had borne that rough and faithful soldier some children. 2. It is intimated here that this son had come by a *lawful marriage*: hence בר נדרי *bar nedarai*, the *son of my vow*, her *matrimonial covenant*; for so it is most natural to understand the words. But is there any proper sense in which we can say that this was correct in reference to *David*, *Bath-sheba*, and *Solomon*? For although the son born in adultery died, it is by no means likely that *Bath-sheba* made any particular *vows* relative to *Solomon*; for of her piety, so much vaunted of by some writers, we yet want the proofs.

But, however this may be, there is no evidence whatever that *Muel* or *Lemuel* means *Solomon*; the chapter seems to be much later than his time, and the several *Chaldaisms* which occur in the very opening

of it are no mean proof of this. If *Agur* was not the author of it, it may be considered as another *supplement* to the Book of Proverbs. Most certainly *Solomon* did not write it.

*The prophecy that his mother taught him.*] מסו מסו may here signify the *oracle*; the subject that came by *divine inspiration*; see on chap. xxx. 1. From this and some other circumstances it is probable that both these chapters were written by the *same author*. *Houbigant* thinks that *Massa* here is the name of a *place*; and, therefore, translates, "The words of *Lemuel*, king of *Massa*, with which his mother instructed him."

Verse 2. *What, my son?*] The Chaldee בר *bar* is used twice in this verse, instead of the Hebrew בן *ben*, son. This verse is very elliptical; and commentators, according to their different tastes, have inserted words, indeed some of them a whole *sentence*, to make up the sense. Perhaps *Coverdale* has hit the sense as nearly as any other: "These are the wordes of kynge Lemuel; and the lesson that his mother taughte him. My sonne, thou son of my body, O my deare beloved sonne!"

*The son of my vows?*] A child born after *vows* made for offspring is called the *child* of a person's *vows*.

Verse 3. *Give not thy strength*] Do not waste thy substance on *women*. In such intercourse the *strength*

4 <sup>a</sup> *It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink :*

5 <sup>b</sup> *Lest they drink, and forget the law, and 'pervert the judgment <sup>d</sup> of any of the afflicted.*

6 <sup>e</sup> *Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be <sup>f</sup> of heavy hearts.*

7 *Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.*

8 <sup>g</sup> *Open thy mouth for the dumb <sup>h</sup> in the cause of all <sup>i</sup> such as are appointed to destruction.*

<sup>a</sup> Eccles. x. 17.—<sup>b</sup> Hos. iv. 11.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *alter*.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. *of all the sons of affliction*.—<sup>e</sup> Pa. civ. 15.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. *bitter of soul*. 1 Sam. i. 10.—<sup>g</sup> See Job xxix. 15, 16.—<sup>h</sup> 1 Sam. ix. 4. Esth. iv. 16.—<sup>i</sup> Heb. *the sons of destruction*.

of body, soul, and substance is destroyed. Such connexions are those which destroy kings, מלכין melachin, the Chaldee termination, instead of the Hebrew.

Verse 4. *It is not for kings—to drink wine*] An intemperate man is ill fit to hold the reins of government.

Verse 5. *Lest they drink, and forget the law*] When they should be administering justice, they are found incapable of it; or if they go into the judgment seat, may pervert justice.

Verse 6. *Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish*] We have already seen, that inebriating drinks were mercifully given to condemned criminals, to render them less sensible of the torture they endured in dying. This is what was offered to our Lord; but he refused it. See note on Ps. civ. 15.

Verse 8. *Open thy mouth for the dumb*] For such accused persons as have no counsellors, and cannot plead for themselves.

*Are appointed to destruction.*] בני חלוף beney chaloph, variously translated, children of passage—indigent travellers; children of desolation—those who have no possessions, or orphans. I believe it either signifies those who are strangers, and are travelling from place to place, or those who are ready to perish in consequence of want or oppression.

Verse 10. *Who can find a virtuous woman ?*] This and the following verses are acrostic, each beginning with a consecutive letter of the Hebrew alphabet: ver. 10, א aleph; ver. 11, ב beth; ver. 12, ג gimel; and so on to the end of the chapter, the last verse of which has the letter ט tau. From this to the end of the chapter we have the character of a woman of genuine worth laid down; first, in general, ver. 10, 11, and 12; secondly, in its particular or component parts, ver. 13—29; and, thirdly, the summing up of the character, ver. 30, 31.

I. Her general character.

1. She is a virtuous woman—a woman of power and strength. חיל עשה, esheth chayil a strong or virtuous wife, full of mental energy.

2. She is invaluable; her price is far above rubies—no quantity of precious stones can be equal to her worth.

9 *Open thy mouth, <sup>k</sup> judge righteously, and <sup>l</sup> plead the cause of the poor and needy.*

10 <sup>m</sup> *Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.*

11 *The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.*

12 *She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.*

13 *She seeketh wool, and flax, and <sup>n</sup> worketh willingly with her hands.*

14 *She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar.*

15 <sup>o</sup> *She riseth also while it is yet night, and*

<sup>k</sup> Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 16.—<sup>l</sup> Job xxix. 12. Isai. i. 17. Jer. xxii. 16.—<sup>m</sup> Ch. xii. 4. xviii. 22. xix. 14.—<sup>n</sup> Eccles. ix. 10. 2 Thess. iii. 10, 12.—<sup>o</sup> Rom. xii. 11.

Verse 11. *The heart of her husband*]

3. She is an unspotted wife. *The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her*—he knows she will take care that a proper provision is made for his household, and will not waste any thing. He has no need for spoil—he is not obliged to go out on predatory excursions, to provide for his family, at the expense of the neighbouring tribes.

Verse 12. *She will do him good*]

4. She has her husband's happiness in view constantly. She recompenses all his kindness to her in beneficent acts. For kind words she returns kind deeds. Her good is unmixed; she will do him good, and not evil. 2. Her good is not capricious; it is constant and permanent, while she and her husband live. His heart safely trusts in her, for she will do him good all the days of her life. This is her general character.

Verse 13. *She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly, &c.*]

II. This is the second part of her character, giving the particulars of which it is composed.

1. She did not buy ready woven cloth: she procured the raw material, if wool, most probably from her own flocks; if flax, most probably from her own fields.

2. Here she manufactured; for she worketh willingly with her hands. And all her labour is a cheerful service; her will, her heart, is in it.

It needs no arguments to prove that women, even of the highest ranks, among the Greeks, Romans, and Israelites, worked with their hands at every kind of occupation necessary for the support of the family. This kind of employment was not peculiar to the virtuous woman in the text.

Verse 14. *She is like the merchants' ships*]

3. She acts like merchants. If she buy any thing for her household, she sells sufficient of her own manufactures to pay for it; if she imports, she exports: and she sends articles of her own manufacturing or produce to distant countries; she traffics with the neighbouring tribes.

Verse 15. *She riseth also while it is yet night*]

4. She is an economist of time; and when the nights are long, and the days short, her family not only spend

\*giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.

16 She considereth a field and <sup>b</sup> buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.

17 She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.

18 <sup>c</sup> She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night.

19 She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.

\* Luke xii. 42.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. *taketh*.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *She tasteth*.  
<sup>d</sup> Heb. *She spreadeth*.

a part of the *evening* after sunset in domestic labour, but they all arise *before daylight*, and prepare the *day's food*, that they may not have their labour interrupted. To those who are going to the *fields*, and to the *flocks*, she gives the food necessary for the day: תֵּרֵף *teref*, *prey*, a term taken from *hunting*, the object of which was, the supplying their natural wants; hence applied to *daily food*. See notes on chap. xxx. 8. And to the women who are to be employed within she gives *pr chok*, the *task*—the *kind of work* they are to do, the *materials* out of which they are to form it, and the *quantity* she expects from each. Thus all the servants are settled: their food, work, and tasks appointed. Every thing is done *orderly*.

Verse 16. *She considereth a field, and buyeth it*]

5. She provides for the growing wants of her family. More land will shortly be needed, for the family is growing up; and having *seen a field* contiguous to her own, which was on sale, she estimates its worth, and purchases it a good bargain; and she pays for it by the *fruit of her own industry*.

6. She does not restrict herself to the bare *necessaries* of life; she is able to procure some of its *comforts*. She plants a *vineyard*, that she may have wine for a *beverage*, for *medicine*, and for *sacrifice*. This also is procured of her own labour. Whatever *goes out* brings its worth *in*; and *barter*, not *buying*, is her chief mode of traffic.

Verse 17. *She girdeth her loins with strength*]

7. She takes care of her own health and strength, not only by means of useful labour, but by healthy exercise. She avoids what might enervate her body, or soften her mind—she is ever active, and *girt* ready for every necessary exercise. Her *loins* are *firm*, and her *arms* *strong*.

Verse 18. *She perceiveth that her merchandise is good*]

8. She takes care to manufacture the *best articles* of the kind, and to lay on a *reasonable price* that she may secure a *ready sale*. Her *goods* are in high repute, and she knows she can *sell* as much as she can *make*. And she finds that while she pleases her customers, she *increases her own profits*.

9. She is *watchful* and careful. Her *candle*—her *lamp*, burns all night, which is of great advantage in case of sudden alarms; and in the times and places

20 <sup>d</sup> She <sup>e</sup> stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.

21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with <sup>f</sup> scarlet.

22 She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple.

23 <sup>g</sup> Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.

\* Eph. iv. 28. Hebr. xiii. 16.—<sup>f</sup> Or, *double garments*.  
<sup>g</sup> Ch. xii. 4.

where there were so many *banditti*, this was a very necessary family regulation. Perhaps some works were carried on *during the night*, those employed *sleeping in the day-time*. Thus labour never stood still; whilst some slept, others worked. This was no unusual thing in *ancient times*; and it prevails *now*; but, alas! little children are often thus employed to help to support their indigent parents, and to fill the coffers of their unfeeling taskmasters.

Verse 19. *She layeth her hands to the spindle*]

10. She gives an example of *skill* and *industry* to her household. She takes the *distaff*, that on which the *wool* or *flax* was *rolled*; and the *spindle*, that by *twisting* of which she *twisted the thread* with the *right hand*, while she held the *distaff* in the *guard* of the left arm, and drew *down the thread* with the fingers of the left hand. Allowing that *spindle* and *distaff* are proper translations of קִשׁוֹר *kishor*, and פֶּלֶח *pelech*, this was their *use*, and the *way* in which they were used. The *spindle* and *distaff* are the most *ancient* of all the instruments used for *spinning*, or making *thread*. The *spinning-wheel* superseded them in these countries; but still they were in considerable use till *spinning machinery* superseded both them and the *spinning wheels* in general.

Verse 20. *She stretcheth out her hand to the poor*]

11. She is truly charitable. She knows that in *every portion* of a man's *gain* God requires a *lot for the poor*; and if this is not given, God's blessing is not in the rest. And she is not contented to give common alms. While with *one hand* (יָד *yad*) she relieved the *general poor*, with *both hands* (שְׁנֵי יָדָיו *shenay yadayim*) she gives to the *needy*, לֵצַד *leazad*, to the *afflicted poor*.

Verse 21. *She is not afraid of the snow*]

12. She is not anxious relative to the health and comfort of her family in the winter season, having provided *clothes sufficient* for each in the cold weather. In addition to those which they wore in the *warm* season.

*For all her household are clothed with scarlet.*] Not *scarlet*, for the *colour* can avail nothing in keeping off the cold; nor would it be a proper colour for the bogs and dirt of winter. But שָׁנַח *shanah*, from שָׁנָה *shanah*, to *iterate*, to *double*, signifies not only *scarlet*, so called from being twice or doubly dyed, but also *double garments*, not only the *ordinary coat*, but the

24 She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.

25 Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.

26 She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of \*kindness.

27 She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

\* 1 Tim. iii. 4.—<sup>b</sup> Or, have gotten riches.

*surcoat* or *great coat* also, or a *cloak* to cover all. But most probably *double garments*, or *twofold* to what they were accustomed to wear, are here intended. If the *general clothing* be intended, *scarlet* cannot be the meaning, nor did our translators entirely rely on it; and therefore put *double garments*, the true meaning, in the *margin*, from which it cannot be too speedily transferred to the *text*. The *Vulgate* has, "duplicibus." And my old MS. very properly, *Alle fersoth hir boomli men, ten clothe with double.* And *Coverdale*, with equal propriety, "For all hir household folk are duple clothed." But if her *husband* and *children* alone are referred to, *scarlet*, which is the general meaning of the term, may be proper enough; as even in *these countries* of ours, *scarlet*, as being a *lively bright colour*, is used in the *winter dresses*.

Verse 22. *She maketh herself coverings of tapestry*]

13. She is not regardless either of her own person, or of the decent, proper appearance of her presses and wardrobe. She has coverings or carpeting for her *guests to sit upon*; she has also tapestry, מרבדים *marbaddim*, either tapestry, carpeting, or quilted work for her *beds*; and her own *clothing* is *vw shesh*, fine flax, or linen cloth, and *purple*; probably for a cloak or mantle. The *fine linen* or *cotton cloth* of Egypt is probably intended. I have often seen it wrapping the bodies of mummies; it is something like our coarse calico. The *purple* was supposed to have been dyed by a precious liquor obtained from the *pinna magna*, a large shell fish, of the *muscle* kind, found on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. I have seen some of them nearly *two feet* in length. But it is a doubt whether any such liquor was ever obtained from this or any other fish; and the story itself is invented merely to *hide the secret*, the proper method of *dying purple*; which was kept so well that it certainly died with the ancients.

Verse 23. *Her husband is known in the gates*]

14. She is a loving wife, and feels for the *respectability* and *honour* of her husband. He is an *elder* among his people, and he sits as a *magistrate* in the *gate*. He is respected not only on account of the *neatness* and *cleanness* of his *person* and *dress*; but because he is the husband of a woman who is justly held in universal esteem. And her complete management of household affairs gives him full leisure to devote himself to the civil interests of the community.

Verse 24. *She maketh fine linen, and selleth it*]

15. She is *here* remarkable for carrying on a traffic

28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband *also*, and he praiseth her.

29 Many daughters <sup>b</sup> have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.

30 Favour is deceitful, and <sup>c</sup> beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.

31 Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

<sup>c</sup> Isai. xxviii. 1, 4.

of *splendid* and *ornamental dresses*, or *habits*, as she is ver. 13, for "a coarser manufacture." The כרמון *sidon* is supposed to come from سدن in Arabic; and to signify a kind of *loose inner garment*, *shirt*, *chemise*, or *fine muslin covering*. Some of these are so exceedingly fine, like the *abroam*, that when spread on the grass, they are scarcely discernible. Some such garments as these are still worn by *ladies* in *India* and in *China*, and are so *thin* and *transparent* that every part of the body may be seen through them. I have many representations of persons clothed in this way before me both of the *Chinese*, the *Hindoo*, and the *Malabar ladies*. Probably this eminent Jewish matron had such articles manufactured in her own house. She dealt also in *girdles*. These are still a very general and very expensive article of dress. I have seen them made of *silk*, and highly ornamented with *gold* and *silver thread*, worked into *flowers* and various *curious devices*. The *loose Eastern robe* is confined by these; and the word may also take in the *shawl* of the *turban*, which is often *superb* and *costly*. It is properly the *girdle* for the *head*. As these were generally woven, the consumption was great; and an able artist must have had a good trade.

The *Arabic* gives a remarkable translation of this verse: "She maketh towels (or table-cloths) and sells them to the inhabitants of Basra (a city in Mesopotamia), and fine linens, and sells them to the Canaanites." My old MS. Bible has, *Sandel sche made and sold, and a lutil girdil sche toke to Chanane.* Perhaps לכתמי לכתמי *lakkenaanim*, for the merchant, may stand here for לכתמי לכתמי *lakkenaanim*, the *Canaanites*.

Verse 25. *Strength and honour are her clothing*]

16. All the articles manufactured by herself or under her care have a double perfection: 1. They are *strong*. 2. They are *elegant*; *Strength and honour are her clothing*; and on account of this *she shall rejoice in time to come*; she shall never have occasion to blush for any thing she has *made*, for any thing she or hers have *worn*, or for any thing she has *sold*. Besides, she has so conducted herself that she has reason to expect that the hand of the Lord shall be still with her, and shall keep her from evil that it may not grieve her.

Verse 26. *She openeth her mouth with wisdom*]

17. He comes now to the *moral management* of her family. 1. She is *wise* and *intelligent*; she has not neglected the cultivation of her *mind*. 2. She is



amiable in her carriage, full of good nature, well tempered, and conciliating in her manners and address.

*In her tongue is the law of kindness.*] This is the most distinguishing excellence of this woman. There are very few of those who are called managing women who are not *lords* over their husbands, *tyrants* over their servants, and *insolent* among their neighbours. But this woman, with all her eminence and excellence, was of a *meek* and *quiet spirit*. Blessed woman!

Verse 27. *She looketh well to the ways of her household*]

18. She is a *moral* manager; she takes care that all shall behave themselves well; that none of them shall keep bad company or contract vicious habits. A religious industry, or an industrious religion, is the law of her house. She can instruct them in religion, as well as she can teach them in their labour. In her house, diligence in business, and fervency of spirit serving the Lord, go hand in hand.

*And eateth not the bread of idleness.*]

19. She knows that *idleness* leads to *vice*; and therefore every one has *his work*, and every one has *his proper food*. That they may *work well*, they are *fed well*; and every one, at least, earns the bread that he eats—*eateth not the bread of idleness*.

Verse 28. *Her children arise up, and call her blessed*]

20. She considers a *good education* next to *divine influence*; and she knows also that if she train up a child in the way he should go, when he is old he will not depart from it. 1. Her children are *well bred*; they *rise up* and pay *due respect*. 2. They are *taught the fear of the Lord*, and obedience to his testimonies; therefore they *call her blessed*. So they are of a decent, orderly, respectable, religious behaviour. 3. Her husband is so satisfied with her conduct towards *himself*, his *household*, his *business*, and their *children*, that he *praiseth her*. He shows himself sensible of her excellence, and encourages her, in her work, by the *commendations* he bestows.

Verse 29. *Many daughters have done virtuously*]

This is undoubtedly the speech of the husband, giving testimony to the excellence of his wife: "Her husband also, and he praiseth her, saying, 'Many daughters, women, 'have done virtuously,' with due propriety as wives, mistresses, and mothers; 'but thou,' my incomparable wife, 'excellest them all'; *veath alith al cullanah*, but thou hast ascended above the whole of them—thou hast carried every duty, every virtue, and every qualification and excellency, to a *higher perfection*, than any of whom we have ever read or heard." And let the reader seriously consider the above particulars, as specified under the different heads and subdivisions; and he will be probably of the same mind. But high as the character of this Jewish matron stands in the preceding description, I can say that I have met at least *her equal*, in a daughter of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Annesly, the wife of Samuel Wesley, sen., rector of Epworth in Lincolnshire, and mother of the late extraordinary brothers, John and Charles Wesley. I am constrained to add this testimony, after having traced her from her *birth* to her *death*, through all the

relations that a woman can bear upon earth. Her Christianity gave to her virtues and excellences a heightening, which the Jewish matron could not possess. Besides, she was a woman of great *learning* and information, and of a depth of mind, and reach of thought, seldom to be found among the daughters of Eve, and not often among the sons of Adam.

Verse 30. *Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain, &c.*]

III. Here is the *summing up* of the character. 1. *Favour*, *חן* *chen*, grace of manner may be *deceitful*, many a *fair appearance* of this kind is *put on*, assumed for certain secular or more unworthy purposes; it is learned by *painful drilling* in *polished seminaries*, and, being the effect of mere *physical discipline*, it continues while the *restraint* lasts; but it is *אפר שֶׁכֶּר*, a *lie*, a *mere semblance*, an *outward varnish*. It is not the effect of *internal moral regulation*; it is an *outside*, at which the *inside* murmurs; and which, because not *ingenuous*, is a *burden to itself*.

2. *Beauty*, *חַיּוֹפִי* *haiyophi*, elegance of shape, symmetry of features, dignity of mien, and beauty of countenance, are all *hebel*, *vanity*; *sickness* impairs them, *suffering* deranges them, and *death* destroys them.

3. "But a woman that feareth the Lord," that possesses *true religion*, has that *grace* that *harmonizes the soul*, that *purifies and refines* all the *tempers and passions*, and that ornament of beauty, a *meek and quiet mind*, which in the sight of God is of *great price*;

*She shall be praised.*] This is the lasting grace, the unfading beauty.

Verse 31. *Give her of the fruit of her hands*] This may be a *prayer*. May she long enjoy the fruit of her labours! May she see her children's children, and peace upon Israel!

*And let her own works praise her in the gates.*] Let what she has done be spoken of for a memorial of her; let her bright example be held forth in the most *public places*. Let it be set before the eyes of every *female*, particularly of every *wife*, and especially of every *mother*; and let them learn from this exemplar, what men have a right to expect in their *wives*, the *mistresses of their families*, and the *mothers of their children*. Amen.

#### MASORETIC NOTES ON THIS BOOK.

Number of verses in the Book of Proverbs, 915.

Middle verse, chap. xvi. 18.

Sections, 8.

The Syriac reckons 1863 verses.

The Arabic concludes thus:—"The discipline of Solomon written out by the friends of Hezekiah, king of Judah, the interpretation or translation of which is extremely difficult, (but) is now completed by the assistance and influence of the Son of God."

In the *introduction* to the Book of Proverbs, among the several *collections* of a similar nature which are mentioned there, I have referred to M. Galand's *Maximes des Orientaux*. From this work, as contained in the supplement to the *Bibliothèque Orientale*, I have translated the following *selection*. They will

serve to show the curious reader how many sayings similar to those of Solomon still abound in the East.

ASIATIC PROVERBS.

I fear God; and beside him I fear none, but that man who fears him not.

He who knows not his Maker cannot know himself.

Godliness is the greatest wisdom, and impiety the greatest of follies.

The fear of God is the greatest safeguard.

To sin once is too much; but a thousand acts of devotion towards God are not sufficient to honour him.

If a man foresaw his end, and his exit from life, he would abhor his actions, and their deceitfulness.

Life is a sort of sleep, from which many awake not but in death.

The life of man is a path that leads to death.

The orphan is not the person who has lost his father; but he who has neither wisdom, nor a good education.

Want of good sense is worse than all the degrees of poverty.

Nothing so effectually hides what we are as *silence*.

He who has least wisdom, has most vanity.

There is no greatness of soul in avenging one's self.

The heart of the fool is in his mouth, and the tongue of the wise man is in his heart.

He who runs with a slack rein, guided only by *hope*, encounters the last moment of his life, and falls.

Envy has no rest.

When you have once received a benefit, render yourself not unworthy of it, by a want of gratitude.

The desire of revenge is a constant hinderance to a happy and contented life.

When you have got an advantage over your enemy, pardon him, in returning God thanks for that advantage.

When you are in prosperity, you need seek no other revenge against him who envies you than the mortification he has from it.

How advantageous must wisdom be to its possessor, seeing it is of so great value as not to be purchased by money!

Nothing obtains pardon more speedily than repentance.

There is no disease so dangerous as the want of common sense.

Of all vices, vanity and a love of contention are the most difficult to be corrected.

Visiting your neighbour is no crime; but your visits should not be so often repeated, as to induce him to say, *It is enough*.

If a prince would worship God in truth, he must remain in his limits, be true to his treaties, be content with what he has, and suffer patiently the privation of what he has not.

Nothing so much resembles flowers planted on a dunghill, as the good which is done to an ignorant or worthless man.

In whatsoever company or society you be, engage not in those matters which concern the *whole*; for if you succeed, the whole company will attribute the

success to itself; and if you succeed not, each person will lay the blame on *you*.

When the soul is ready to depart, what avails it whether a man die on a throne, or in the dust?

Take and give with equity.

We need not be surprised when those who ask or seek for improper things, fall into misfortunes which they did not expect.

Riches dwell no longer in the hand of a liberal man, than patience in the heart of a lover, or water in a sieve.

As soon as a person takes pleasure in hearing slander, he is to be ranked in the number of slanderers.

That which a man suffers for this world, fills his heart with darkness; but that which he suffers for the other, fills it with light.

The greatest repose which a man can enjoy, is that which he feels in *desiring nothing*.

One seldom finds that which he seeks, when he searches for it with *impatience*.

Do not reproach a man for the sin which he has committed, when God has forgiven him.

He who pushes a jest farther than good breeding requires, shall never fail to be hated or despised.

He who is worthy of being called a *man*, is unshaken in adversity, humble in prosperity, active and bold in danger; and, if he be not learned, has at least a love for learning.

The man who is governed by his passions is in a worse state than the most miserable slave.

Men often give themselves much trouble to succeed in an affair from which they derive only vexation in the end.

He is a free man who desires nothing; and he is a slave who expects that which he wishes.

The advice of a wise man is to be considered as a *prediction*.

Be sincere, though your sincerity should cost you your life.

Live not on credit, and you shall live in liberty.

A wise man practises the three following things: he abandons the world before it abandons him; he builds his sepulchre before the time of entering it; and he does all with a design to please God, before entering into his presence.

He who lords it over those who are below him, shall one day find a master who will lord it over him.

Sin not, if you would have less vexation in the hour of death.

He who takes not counsel before hand, will surely fail in accomplishing his projects.

Covetousness leads to poverty; but he is truly rich who desires nothing.

He who relates the faults of others to you, designs to relate yours to them.

Watch your friends; except those of whom you are certain; but know, that none can be a *true* friend but he who has the fear of God.

The most perfect pleasures in this world are always mingled with some bitterness.

He who considers consequences with too much attention, is ordinarily a man of no courage.

The world is the hell of the good, and the heaven

of the wicked ; i. e., it is all the evil that the former shall meet with, and all the good that the latter shall enjoy.

By doing good to those who have evil intentions against you, you thereby shut their mouth.

He who knows well what he is capable of, has seldom bad success.

He who has too good an opinion of himself, drives all others away from him.

He who loves jesting and raillery, brings himself into many troubles.

Partial knowledge is better than total ignorance ; if you cannot get what you wish, get what you can.

He who has lost shame, may bury his heart.

The poor should get learning in order to become rich ; and the rich should acquire it for their ornament.

A man should accommodate himself to the weakness of his inferiors, in order to derive from them the services he requires.

An avaricious man runs straight into poverty. He leads a life of poverty here below ; but he must give the account of a *rich man* in the day of judgment.

The greatest advantage that a man can procure for his children, is to have them well educated.

Do good to him who does you evil, and by this means you will gain the victory over him.

Men, because of *speech*, have the advantage over beasts ; but brutes are preferable to men whose language is indecent.

If you can do good *to-day*, defer it not till *to-morrow*.

The excellence of many discourses consists in their brevity.

Two things are inseparable from lying ; many promises, and many excuses.

Deceivers, liars, and all persons who lead an irregular life, are intoxicated by the prosperity which smiles upon them in all things ; but that intoxication is the just recompence of their evil actions.

He lives in true repose, who bridles his passions.

It is in vain to expect these five things from the following persons. A present from a poor man ; service from a lazy man ; succour from an enemy ; counsel from an envious man ; and true love from a prude.

It is unbecoming the character of a wise man to commit the fault for which he reproves others.

A passionate man is capable of nothing ; how unfit then is such a person for a governor !

A rich man who is not liberal, resembles a tree without fruit.

You cannot keep your own secret ; what cause then have you to complain, if another to whom you have declared it, should reveal it ?

It is the same with the administration of the affairs of kings, as with *sea-voyages* ; you may lose, gain, amass treasures, and lose your life.

He who submits to a voluntary poverty neither possesses, nor is possessed by, any thing.

A wicked man should be considered as dead while he is alive ; but a good man lives even in the tomb.

No man should undertake any thing till he has thoroughly examined it.

He who possesses any art or science, is at least equal to a great lord.

Honours, employments, and dignities cannot recompense a man for the pains he has taken to acquire them.

On many occasions a good book supplies the place of an agreeable companion.

That day in which a man neither does some good action, nor acquires some useful knowledge, should not be (if possible) numbered in the days of his life.

He who is of a surly and unyielding disposition never fails to excite troubles even among relatives and friends.

A great monarch should fix a *good reputation* as an object to which he should continually bend his pursuits ; because, of all the *grandeurs* and eminences of this world, this is the only thing that shall survive him.

Leave not till to-morrow what you can perform to-day.

To have pity on one's enemy, when he is in distress, is the mark of a great soul.

He who does good shall not lose his reward. A good action never perishes, neither before God nor before men.

Covetousness proceeds *ad infinitum* ; therefore, determine the bounds of your desires, and the objects of your pursuits. He who does not act thus, shall never become either rich or happy.

A monarch who considers his own interest should ever abide in his kingdom, and consider himself as a *rose* in the midst of a garden, which continually reposes on *thorns*.

Never despise a man because his employment is mean, or his clothing bad. The *bee* is an insect which is not very pleasing to the sight, yet its hive affords abundance of honey.

The people enjoy *repose* when governed by princes who take none. The monarch who watches causes his people to repose in safety.

Confer your opinion with that of another, for truth is more easily discovered by two than one.

Do not rejoice at the death of your enemy ; ~~your~~ life is not eternal.

Be always employed, that ye become not slothful ; and refer to God all that you acquire by labour, otherwise you shall live in a continual and condemnable idleness.

It is extremely difficult to render him wise who knows nothing ; because his ignorance causes him to believe that he knows more than he who attempts to instruct him.

One coat, one house, and one day's food, is enough for you ; and should you die at noonday you will have one-half too much.

A covetous man is an enemy to all the poor ; and is cursed both in this and the coming world.

Interested friends resemble dogs in public places, who love the bones better than those who throw them.

In order to live well, a man should die to all his passions, and every thing that depends on them.

A thousand years of delight do not deserve the risk of our lives for a single moment.

*Asiatic Proverbs.*

You shall only receive in proportion to what you give.

The service of kings may be compared to a vast sea, where many merchants traffic, some of whom acquire great riches, and others are shipwrecked.

Fear the man who fears you.

Do nothing without design.

Humble yourself in asking, that you may be raised up in obtaining what you request.

A wicked woman in the house of a good man is a hell to him in this world.

It cannot be said of a miser that he possesses his riches, however attached he may be to them.

The thought of evil frequently derives its origin from idleness.

Kings and subjects are equally unhappy, where persons of merit are despised, and where ignorant men occupy the chief places of trust.

Answer those who ask questions of you in such a manner as not to offend them.

The most proper method of punishing an envious person is, to load him with benefits.

Prudence suffers between *impossibility* and *irresolution*.

When you speak, let it be in such a manner as not to require an explanation.

The most precious acquisition is that of a friend.

Never trust to appearance. Behold the *drum* : notwithstanding all its noise, it is *empty* within.

Keep not an evil conscience : but be diffident, to the end that you be never surprised nor deceived.

Nothing remains with punishment or reward.

A wise man by his speeches does things which a hundred armies conjoined could not execute.

Do not speak till you have thought on what you intend to say.

Those who believe they may gain by seditions and commotions never fail to excite them.

The best friends we have in this world are the spies of our actions, who publish our faults.

Hope for nothing from this world, and your soul will enjoy rest.

He who applies himself to acquire knowledge, puts himself in the capacity of possessing all good things.

He who does not succeed in the business in which he is employed, because he is incapable of it, deserves to be excused ; for it is to be believed that he has done all he could to accomplish his end.

Every kind of employment requires a particular sort of genius.

Riches increase in proportion as you give to the poor.

The greatest reputation is frequently an embarrassment.

Do not despise a poor man because he is such : the lion is not less noble because he is chained.

A young man, who has the wisdom of an old man, is considered as an old man among those who are wise.

A righteous prince is the image and shadow of God upon earth.

As soon as virtue begins to discover itself, vice begins its insolent insults.

Can it be said that a man has wisely considered what he has done, when the end corresponds not with what he proposed ?

To the end that what you desire may be advantageous to you, never desire any thing but that which is proper for you.

Those who will not forgive an offence are the most accursed of all men.

Though it be pretended that no man can shun his destiny, yet it is well to do nothing without precaution.

It is a double present when given with a cheerful countenance.

Nobility is nothing, unless supported by good actions.

Evil speaking and calumny never quit their hold till they have destroyed the innocent on whom they have once seized.

Consider your estate, and leave playing and jesting to children.

Soft words may appease an angry man ; bitter words never will.

Would you throw fire on a house in flames to extinguish them ?

Continue to speak the truth, though you know it to be hateful.

It is a blessing to a house to have a number of guests at table.

Five things are useless when they are not accompanied each with another thing : advice without effect ; riches without economy ; science without good manners ; almsgiving to improper objects, or without a pure intention ; and life without health.

If you wish your enemy never to know your secret, never divulge it to your friend.

Art thou a man in honour ? Wouldst thou live without inquietude or remorse ? Then do actions worthy of thy character.

When subjects are ill-treated by subaltern officers, and cannot make remonstrances to the prince, because the too great authority of ministers of state deprives them of the means ; their lot is like to that of a man who, half dead with thirst, approaches the river Nile to drink ; but, perceiving a *crocodile*, is obliged to perish for lack of water, or submit to be devoured.

It is better to perish with hunger, than to deprive the poor of their bread.

If you be reprov'd for your faults, do not be angry with him who does it : but turn your anger against the things for which he has reprov'd you.

Poisonous food is preferable to bad discourse.

Do not discover the faults of others, if you be unwilling to have your own known.

Wage war against yourself, and you will thereby acquire true peace of soul.

One resembles those the company of whom he most frequents.

The best expended riches are those which are given for God's sake.

*Asiatic Proverbs.*

If you have a dispute with any person, take heed that you say not of him all the evil which you know; otherwise you will leave no room for accommodation.

Your conversation is the index of your intellect, and your actions show the bottom of your heart.

It is more difficult to manage riches well, than to acquire them.

The grandeur of kings is evidenced in the administration of justice.

Honour your parents, and your children will honour you.

Cultivate no friendship with him who loves your enemy.

If you have a friend who takes offence at trifles, break entirely with him, for he is not to be trusted.

The happiness of life is only to be found, when the conscience is pure and clean.

Measure every man with his own measure; i. e., "Do not expect or require from him more than is in him."

Can any man boast who considers what he is come from?

In whatever corner of the world you are, you will have something to suffer.

It will be more profitable for thee to adorn thy inside than thy outside.

*The Words of LOCKMAN to his SON.*

My son, I wish thee to observe these *six* maxims,

which comprehend all the morality of the ancients and moderns.

1. Have no attachment to the world, but in proportion to the short duration of thy life.

2. Serve God with all that fervour which the need thou hast of him demands.

3. Labour for the other life that awaits thee, and consider the time it must endure.

4. Strive to escape that fire, out of which those who are once cast in can never escape.

5. If thou hast temerity enough to sin, measure before hand the strength thou shalt require to endure the fire of hell, and the chastisements of God.

6. When thou wishest to transgress, seek for a place where God cannot see thee.

*The Words of ALI to his Sons.*

My sons, never despise any person: consider your superior as your father, your equal as your brother, and your inferior as your son.

*Words addressed by a Mohammedan to the MESSIAH.*

The heart of the afflicted draws all its consolation from thy words.

The soul receives life and vigour at the bare mention of thy name.

If ever the human spirit be rendered capable of contemplating the mysteries of the Divinity, it is thou alone who givest it the light by which it understands, and the attractions by which it is penetrated.

## INTRODUCTION

TO THE

# BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.

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THE Book, entitled *Koheleth*, or *Ecclesiastes*, has ever been received, both by the Jewish and Christian church, as written under the *inspiration* of the Almighty; and was held to be properly a part of the sacred canon. But while this has been almost universally granted, there has been but little unanimity among learned men and critics as to its *author*. To *Solomon* it has been most generally attributed, both in ancient and modern times.

*Grotius*, however, conjectured that it was written a long time after *Solomon*; and he says, at the close of his notes on it, that it was revised in the days of *Zerubbabel* by some learned man, who in the twelfth verse of the last chapter addresses his son *Abihud*: "And further, by these, my son, be admonished." But such a conjecture appears to have little foundation. This great man was more successful in his criticism on the *language* of the book; showing that there are many words in it which do not savour of the purity of the Hebrew tongue; and are found in the times of the *captivity*, and *afterwards*, and such as appear principally in the Books of *Ezra* and *Daniel*.

*Calovius* has on the other hand, not with so much success as he imagined, argued against *Grotius* for the *purity* of the language.

Mr. G. Zirkel of Wurtzburgh published an examination of this book in 1792, in which he endeavours to prove:—

1. That the *style* of *Ecclesiastes* is that of the *later Hebrew writers*, as appears by the *Chaldaisms*, *Syriasms*, and *Hellenisms* that occur in it.

2. That it may have been written between the years 380 and 130 before *Jesus Christ*, if not later.

The *Jena* reviewers seem to have thought it to be a *translation* from the *Greek*, and to have been written by a *Jew* of *Alexandria*, while the famous *library* was founding by *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, king of *Egypt*, about the year 240 before *Christ*. And that it is to this circumstance that chap. xii. 12 alludes, "Of making many books there is no end;" which could not have entered into the head of a *Palestine Jew*; and such a person might speak with propriety of an *Israel in Jerusalem*, chap. i. 12, being acquainted with an *Israel in Alexandria*.

The *Jews* in general, and *St. Jerome*, hold the book to be the composition of *Solomon*, and the fruit of his repentance when restored from his idolatry, into which he had fallen through means of the strange or *heathenish women* whom he had taken for *wives* and *concubines*.

Others, of no mean note, who consider *Solomon* as the author, believe that he wrote it *before* his fall; there being no evidence that he wrote it afterwards; nor, indeed, that he ever recovered from his fall. Besides, it was in his *old age* that his wives turned away his heart from *God*; and the book bears too many evidences of mental *energy* to allow the supposition that in his *declining age*, after so deep a fall from *God*, he was *capable* of writing such a treatise. This opinion goes far towards destroying the *divine inspiration* of the book; for if he did recover and repent, there is no evidence that *God* gave him back that *divine inspiration* which he before possessed; for we hear of the *Lord* appearing to him *twice before his fall*, but of a *third appearance* there is no intimation. And, lastly. Of the restoration of *Solomon* to the favour of *God* there is no proof in the sacred history; for in

the *very place* where we are told that “in his old age his wives turned away his heart from the Lord, we are told of his *death*, without the slightest intimation of his *repentance*. See my character of Solomon at the end of 1 Kings xi.

Nothing, however, of this uncertainty can affect either the character, importance, or utility of the book in question. It is a production of singular worth; and the finest monument we have of the wisdom of the ancients, except the *Book of Job*.

But the chief difficulty attending this book is the *principle* on which it should be interpreted. Some have supposed it to be a *dialogue* between a *true believer* and an *infidel*, which makes it to the unwary reader appear abounding with contradiction, and, in some instances, false doctrine; and that the parts must be attributed to their respective speakers, before interpretation can be successfully attempted. I am not convinced that the book has any such structure; though in some places the *opinions* and *sayings* of *infidels* may be quoted; *e. g.*, chap. vii. 16, and in some of the following chapters.

In the year 1763, M. *Desvœux*, a learned foreigner then resident in England, and who was in the British service, wrote and published a *Philosophical and Critical Essay* on this book, in which he endeavours to prove, that the design of the author was to *demonstrate the immortality of the soul*; and that it is on this principle alone that the book can be understood and explained.

As a late commentator on the Bible has adopted this plan, and interwoven the major part of this dissertation with his notes on the book, I shall introduce the whole of M. *Desvœux's analysis of its contents*, the *propositions*, *arguments*, *proofs*, *illustrations*, *corollaries*, &c., on the ground of which he attempts its illustration:—

The whole of the discourse (he says) may be reduced to the three following *propositions*, each of which is attended with its *apparatus of proofs* and *special observations*.

### PROPOSITION I.

No labour of man in this world can render him contented, or give him true satisfaction of soul.

### PROPOSITION II.

Earthly goods and possessions are so far from making us happy, that they may be even viewed as real obstacles to our ease, quiet, and tranquillity of mind.

### PROPOSITION III.

Men know not what is or is not truly advantageous to them; because they are either ignorant or unmindful of that which must come to pass after their death.

The *three propositions*, with their *proofs* and *illustrations*, are contained in the following analysis.

### PROPOSITION I.

Chap. Ver.	Chap. Ver.
i. 2, 3. No labour of man, &c.	of whatever befalls us in this world.
4—11. First proof.—The course of nature.	iii. 16, 17. First corollary.—God shall redress all grievances.
12, &c. Second proof.—Men's occupations.	18—21. Second corollary.—God must be exalted, and man humbled.
16—18. First head.—Wisdom or philosophy.	22. Third corollary.—God allows men to enjoy the present life.
ii. 1, 2. Second head.—Pleasure.	iv. 1. Fourth proof.—Men's neglect of proper opportunities, evidenced in several instances, viz.,
3—10. Both jointly.	1—3. i. Oppression.
11. General conclusion of the second proof.	4. ii. Envy.
A review of the second proof, with special conclusions, relating to every particular therein mentioned, viz.,	5, 6. iii. Idleness.
12—17. i. Wisdom.	7—12. iv. Avarice.
18—23. ii. Riches.	v. 13—19. v. Misapplication of esteem and regard.
24—26. iii. Pleasure.	N. B. 1—9 is a digression containing several admonitions, in order to prevent any misconstruction of the foregoing remarks.
iii. 1, &c. Third proof.—Inconstancy of men's wills.	10—12. iv. Expensive living.
9. Conclusion of the third proof.	
A review of the second and third proofs, considered, jointly, with special observations and corollaries.	
10, 11. First observation.—God is inculpable.	
12, 16. Second observation.—God is the author	

PROPOSITION II.—Chap. v. 13.

- Chap. Ver.  
 v. 14—17. First proof. Instability of riches.  
 vi. 18. 2. Second proof. Insufficiency of riches to make men happy.  
 3—6. Corollary. The fate of an *abortive* is, on the whole, preferable to that of

- Chap. Ver.  
 vi. 7—9. Third proof. Men's insatiableness.  
 10, 11. General *conclusion* from the *first* and *second propositions*.  
 him who lives without enjoying life.

PROPOSITION III.—Chap. vi. 12.

- Chap. Ver.  
 vii. 1, &c. First proof. Wrong estimation of things.  
 A *digression*, intended, like that ver. 1—9, to prevent any misconstruction of the preceding observations; and containing several *advices*, together with a strong commendation of him who gives them, in order to enforce the observation of the *rules* he lays down.  
 9—12. First advice. Do not blame Providence.  
 13. Second advice. Do not judge of Providence.  
 14, 15. Third advice. Submit to Providence.  
 16—20. Fourth advice. Avoid excesses.  
 21, 22. Fifth advice. Do not heed idle reports.  
 23—25. Commendation of the foregoing advices from the author's application of every thing; and, especially,

- Chap. Ver.  
 26—29. i. Wickedness and ignorance.  
 viii. 1—8. ii. Wisdom.  
 Second proof. Anticipated judgments.  
 9—14. i. That sin shall go unpunished, because it is so in this world.  
 ix. 15—6. ii. That life is preferable to death.  
 7—9. First corollary. Earthly enjoyments are not criminal.  
 10. Second corollary. We must make a proper use of our faculties.  
 11—15. Third proof. Judgments that are seemingly right, but entirely false.  
 16, &c. Fourth proof. Little regard paid to wisdom.  
 16. i. Past services are forgotten.  
 ii. The least fault is noticed.  
 x. 5—19. iii. Favour gets what is due to merit.  
 20. A caution, to prevent the abuse of the preceding remarks.

PRACTICAL INFERENCES.

- Chap. Ver.  
 xi. 1—4. i. From the *first* PROPOSITION,—We must give to earthly goods that stability of which they are capable.  
 5, 6. ii. From the *first* and *second* PROPOSITIONS,—We must, in all our conduct, conform to the design of Providence, and leave the success to God.

- Chap. Ver.  
 xii. 7, 8. iii. From the *three* PROPOSITIONS, but especially from the *third*, we must seek for happiness beyond the grave.  
 9—12. Commendation of the work, from several considerations.  
 13, 14. CONCLUSION of the whole.

This is the whole of M. Desvœux's *Analysis*; and I place it here, that the reader who approves of the *plan* may keep it in view while he is passing through the book. For my own part, I doubt whether the author made any such technical arrangement.

The three propositions which M. Desvœux lays down, and which are so essential to the interpretation he gives of the book, would have been expressly propounded by the inspired writer had he intended such; but they appear nowhere in it, and M. D. is obliged to *assume* or gather them from the general scope of the work. However, on his plan, he has certainly made a number of judicious observations on different passages, though his translations are *generally* too bold, and *seldom* well supported by the original text.

In 1768 was published "Choheth, or the Royal Preacher, a Poetical Paraphrase of the Book of Ecclesiastes. Most humbly inscribed to the King." 4to. There is no name to this work. The late Rev. John Wesley gives the following account of the work and its author in his *Journals* :—

"Monday, Feb. 8, 1768. I met with a surprising poem, entitled, Choheth, or the Preacher: it is a paraphrase in tolerable verse on the Book of Ecclesiastes. I really think the author of it (a Turkey merchant) understands both the difficult expressions, and the connexion of the whole, better than any other either ancient or modern writer whom I have seen. He was at Lisbon during the great earthquake, just then sitting in his night-gown and slippers. Before he could dress himself, part of the house he was in fell, and blocked him up. By this means his life was saved; for all who had run out were dashed to pieces by the falling houses."

Mr. W. seems to have known the author well, but did not like to tell his name. About the year 1789 that eminent man recommended the work to me, and told me several particulars relative to it, which have escaped my memory. I procured the book the first oppor-



tunity, and read it with great satisfaction; and from it derived no small portion of information. Having now examined it anew, I can most cordially subscribe to Mr. Wesley's opinion. I really believe that the author understood both the difficult expressions, and the connexion of the whole, better than any other writer, whether ancient or modern, at least known to me. Had it comported with my plan, I should have thought a reprint of his work, with the *text*, which he does not insert, and a few philological notes, would have been quite sufficient to have given my readers a safe and general view of the whole work and its design; though I can by no means adopt the author's hypothesis, that the book was written by Solomon *after* he was restored from his grievous apostasy. This is an assumption that never was proved, and never can be.

From the *preface* to this work I have selected some general observations, which I consider to be important, and subjoin to this introduction; and what I borrow from the *work* itself I mark with a C, not knowing the author's name. Of the *authenticity* of the Book of *Ecclesiastes* I have no doubt; but I must say, the *language* and *style* puzzle me not a little. *Chaldaisms* and *Syriasms* are certainly frequent in it, and not a few *Chaldee words* and terminations; and the style is such as may be seen in those writers who lived at or after the captivity. If these can be reconciled with the age of Solomon, I have no objection; but the attempts that have been made to deny this, and overthrow the evidence, are in my view often trifling, and generally ineffectual. That Solomon, son of David, might have been the *author* of the whole *matter* of this, and a *subsequent writer* put it in his own language, is a possible case; and were this to be allowed, it would solve all difficulties. Let us place the supposition thus: Solomon said all these things, and they are highly worthy of his wisdom; and a divine writer, *after his time*, who does not mention his name, gives us a faithful version of the whole in his own language.

On other subjects relative to this book, the author of *Choheleth* shall speak for me.

"I. Not to perplex our readers with the various expositions of the word *Choheleth*, the title of the book in the original (for in truth we can find none better or more significant than that commonly received, *viz.*, *Ecclesiastes*, or *the Preacher*), let us now come to the book itself. Nothing can be more interesting than the subject it treats of, to wit, *the chief or sovereign good* which man, as a rational and accountable being, should here propose to himself. Every human creature, it is certain, naturally aims at happiness; but though all apply themselves with equal ardour to this desirable end, yet such is the violence of passion, and want of reflection in the generality of mankind, that the means they use for obtaining it, instead of conducting them to the safe and direct road, only serve to mislead and bewilder them in dark and intricate labyrinths, where it is impossible to find what they seek for. Now as it was absolutely necessary to convince such men of the vanity of their pursuits in order to induce them to turn back in the right way, Solomon shows, in the first place, what is *not* happiness, and then what really *is*. Like a skilful physician, he searches deeply into the latent cause of the malady, and then prescribes a radical cure.

"II. In the former disquisition he enumerates all those particulars which mankind are most apt to fix their hearts upon, and shows, from his own dear-bought experience, and the transient and unsatisfactory nature of the things themselves, that no such thing as solid felicity is to be found in any of them. What he asserts on this head carries with it the greater weight, as no man upon earth was ever better qualified to speak decisively on such a subject, considering the opportunities he had of enjoying to the utmost all that this world affords. After having thus cleared away the obstacles to happiness, he enters on the main point, which is to direct us how and where it may be found. This, he affirms at the conclusion of the book, where he recapitulates the sum and substance of the sermon, as some not improperly have styled it, consists in a religious and virtuous life, with which, as he frequently intimates, a man in the lowest circumstances may be happy, and without which one in the highest must be miserable. As the whole book tends to this single point, so, in discussing thereof, many excellent observations are interspersed relating to the various duties of life, from the highest to the lowest station; the advantages resulting even from poverty; the genuine use of riches, and extreme folly of abusing them; the unequal dispensations of Divine Providence; the immortality of the human soul; and great day of final retribution. All these noble and important subjects are treated of in such a style and manner as nothing among the ancients can parallel.

"We have here given the genuine character of this inestimable piece; yet such has been the ignorance, inattention, or depravity of some persons, that it would be hard to find an

instance of any thing written on so serious and interesting a subject, which has been so grossly misrepresented. How often has a handle been taken from certain passages, ill understood, and worse applied, to patronise libertinism, by such as pretend to judge of the whole from a single sentence, independent of the rest, without paying the least regard to the general scope or design! According to which rule the most pious discourse that ever was written may be perverted to atheism. Some fanatics have fallen into the contrary extreme; for, on reading that all here below was vanity, they have been so wrong-headed, as to condemn every thing as evil in itself. This world, according to them, cannot be too bitterly inveighed against; and man has nothing else to do with it, but to spend his days in sighing and mourning. But it is evident that nothing could be further from the preacher's intention: for notwithstanding he speaks so feelingly of the instability and unsatisfactory nature of all sublunary things, and the vanity of human cares, schemes, and contrivances; yet, lest any one should mistake his meaning, he advises every man, at the same time, to reap the fruit of his honest labours, and take the comfort of what he possesses with a sober freedom and cheerful spirit. Not to harass and disturb his mind with anxious cares and restless solitudes about future events; but to pass the short space which heaven has allotted him here, as pleasantly as his station will admit, with a quiet conscience. He does not condemn the things themselves, such as science, prudence, mirth, riches, honours, &c.; but only their abuse, that is, the useless studies, unreasonable pursuits, and immoderate desires, of those who pervert God's blessings to their own destruction.

“On this head Solomon gives his sentiments, not only as a divine and philosopher, but like one thoroughly acquainted with the foibles of the human heart. It was not his design to drive people out of the world, or to make them live wretchedly in it; but only that they should think and act like rational creatures; or, in other words, be induced to consult their own happiness.

“There is nothing in the whole body of pagan philosophy so elevated and magnificent, as what some have written on the important subject of this poem: but we find their opinions so various and contradictory, and the most plausible so blended with errors, even those of the *divine Plato* not excepted, that their sublimest sentiments on the *sovereign good* or *ultimate happiness* of man, when compared with those of the Royal preacher, not only appear cold and languid, but always leave the mind unsatisfied and restless. We are lost in a pompous flow of words; and dazzled, but not illuminated. One sect, by confining happiness to sensual pleasures, so greatly slackened the cord as to render it wholly useless: another, by their too austere and rigid maxims, stretched it so tight that it snapped asunder; though the experience of all ages has evinced that these latter imposed both on themselves and the world, when they taught that virtue, however afflicted here, was its own reward, and sufficient of itself to render a man completely happy. Even in the brazen bull of *Perillus*, truth will cry out from the rack against such fallacious teachers, and prove them liars. The extravagant figments, therefore, of the *stoical apathy*, no less than those of the *voluptuous epicurean*, both equally vanish at the splendour of the divine truth delivered by Solomon. He alone decides the great question in such a manner that the soul is instantly convinced; it need seek no farther.

“III. To prevent all misapprehensions, which a slight and cursory reading of this book is apt to raise in many persons, it will be requisite to observe two cautions: First, that Solomon, who tells us that he applied his heart not only to the search of wisdom and knowledge, but also of folly and madness, frequently speaks, not according to his own sentiments, though he proposes the thing in a naked and simple manner, designedly making use of such terms as might set the picture in a fuller and clearer light, so that we often meet with certain expressions which, unless we search into their true design, seem to have a quite different force and meaning from what the author really intended. We must therefore take particular care to distinguish the doubts and objections of others from Solomon's answers; the want of attending to which has made this book much more obscure than otherwise it would appear. Secondly, we should not judge of the entire discourse from some parts of it; since many things are pertinently said, according to the present subject, which, in themselves, and strictly taken, are far from true. In order to come at the genuine sense, we should form our opinion from the different circumstances of the matter treated of, comparing the antecedent with the consequent passages, and always considering the preacher's real scope and design. By carefully attending to these two cautions, this book will be seen in a very different light from what it now appears in to the generality of readers.

“IV. This book, besides the figurative and proverbial expressions to be found in no other part of the Scripture, is undoubtedly metrical; and, consequently, the grammatization, in many places, not a little perplexed, from the frequent ellipses, abbreviations, transposition of words, and other poetical licenses, allowed in all languages; to say nothing of the carelessness or ignorance of transcribers, as appears from the variety of readings. Yet, notwithstanding we are so little acquainted with the nature of the Hebrew metre, and the propriety of certain phrases which, at this vast distance of time, in a language that has been dead upwards of two thousand years, must unavoidably occasion the same difficulties and obscurities as occur in works of far less antiquity, and in languages more generally studied and better understood; notwithstanding this, I say, a diligent and attentive observer will always find enough to recompense his trouble; and, if he has any taste, cannot avoid being struck with the exquisite beauty and regularity of the plan.

“V. The most judicious commentators have remarked on this book, that we have here a conspicuous example of that form of disputing, which was so justly admired in the soundest of the pagan philosophers; particularly in Socrates, who, whilst others were taken up with abstruse speculations about the nature of things, and investigating the number, motions, distance, and magnitude of the stars, brought down philosophy from the upper regions, and fixed its abode on earth; that is, by teaching such precepts as served for the regulation of life and manners, by far the most useful of all sciences, as being most conducive to the welfare of society, and the general benefit of mankind. Of this we have a noble specimen in the memoirs of that ancient moralist, collected by Xenophon. It is, I think, beyond all contradiction, that no one ever made deeper researches into nature, or had made so great a progress in every branch of science, both speculative and experimental. But what, after all, was the result of his inquiries? A thorough conviction of the inutility of such studies, and how little they conduce towards the obtaining that peace and tranquillity of mind wherein true happiness consists. He applied himself, therefore, to that study which might produce a real and lasting advantage, namely, to render men wise to some purpose; that is, truly virtuous. The manner of his treating this important subject bears some resemblance to that of the celebrated Greek moralist. He does not give us a long roll of dry formal precepts, with which the mind is soon tired: but, to confirm the truth of every thing he says, appeals, not only to his own experience, but to the general sense of unbiassed reason. At the same time he sets before us, in the liveliest colours, the sad effects of vice and folly; and makes use of every incentive to engage the heart to be enamoured with virtue, and pursue its own interest. Whatever he intends to inculcate is first barely proposed, and then more accurately explained and illustrated, though by gentle and almost imperceptible transitions; with this peculiarity, that there is always much more implied than expressed; insomuch that the reader, from a slight hint given him, is left to draw such inferences as his own reflection must naturally suggest. Every thing, in short, is drawn, in this admirable composition, with equal simplicity and elegance; and hath as distinguished a superiority to whatever the best pagan philosophers have given us on the same subject, as the borrowed light of the moon is surpassed by that of the sun in his full meridian lustre; or, to use a still stronger comparison, as Solomon's knowledge of the one true God excelled the idle notion of their fictitious deities.”

Some have supposed that the Book of Ecclesiastes is a poem. That some poetic lines may be found in it, there is no doubt; but it has nothing in common with poetic books, nor does it exist in the hemistich form in any printed edition or MS. yet discovered. It is plain prose, and is not susceptible of that form in which the Hebrew poetic books appear.

The author already quoted thinks that the Book of *Ecclesiastes* is *metrical*. I cannot see this: but it has what is essential to poetry, a truly dignified style; there are no mean, creeping words in it, whether pure Hebrew, or borrowed from any of its dialects. They are all well chosen, nervous, and highly expressive. They are, in short, such as become the subject, and are worthy of that inspiration by which the author was guided.

# ECCLESIASTES;

OR,

## THE PREACHER.

Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3027.—Year from the Flood of Noah, according to the common Hebrew text, 1371.—Year before the birth of Christ, 973.—Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 977.—N. B. The time when this book was written is very uncertain: the above chronology is agreeable to that contained in the present authorized Version.

### CHAPTER I.

*The prophet shows that all human courses are vain, 1—4. The creatures are continually changing, 5—8. There is nothing new under the sun, 9—11. Who the prophet was, his estate and his studies, 12—18.*

A. M. cir. 3027.  
B. C. cir. 977.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 201.  
Ante U.C. c. 224.

**T**HE words <sup>a</sup> of the Preacher, the son of David, king of Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> <sup>b</sup> Vanity of vanities, saith

the Preacher, vanity of vanities; <sup>c</sup> all *is* vanity.

<sup>3</sup> <sup>d</sup> What profit hath a man of all his labour

which he taketh under the sun?

<sup>4</sup> *One* generation passeth away, and *another* generation cometh: <sup>e</sup> but the earth abideth for ever.

<sup>5</sup> <sup>f</sup> The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth

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<sup>a</sup> Ver. 2, 12. Ch. vii. 27. xii. 8, 9, 10.—<sup>b</sup> Ps. xxxix. 5, 6. lxxii. 9. cxliv. 4. Ch. ii. 1, 15, 19, 21, 23. iii. 19. iv. 8, 16. v. 10. vi. 2, 4, 9, 11. vii. 6, 15. viii. 10, 14. ix. 9. xi. 10. xii. 8.

Isai. xxx. 28. xl. 17, 23. xli. 29. xlv. 9. lvii. 13. lviii. 9. lix. 4.—<sup>c</sup> Rom. viii. 20.—<sup>d</sup> Ch. ii. 22. iii. 9.—<sup>e</sup> Ps. civ. 5. cxix. 90.—<sup>f</sup> Ps. xix. 5, 6.

#### NOTES ON CHAP. I.

Verse 1. *The words of the Preacher*] Literally, "The words of Choheleth, son of David, king of Jerusalem." But the *Targum* explains it thus: "The words of the prophecy, which Choheleth prophesied; the same is Solomon, son of David the king, who was in Jerusalem. For when Solomon, king of Israel, saw by the spirit of prophecy that the kingdom of Rehoboam his son was about to be divided with Jeroboam, the son of Nebat; and the house of the sanctuary was about to be destroyed, and the people of Israel sent into captivity; he said in his word—*Vanity of vanities* is all that I have laboured, and David my father; they are *altogether* vanity."

The word קהלת *Koheleth* is a feminine noun, from the root קהל *kahal*, to collect, gather together, assemble; and means, *she who assembles* or *collects a congregation*; translated by the *Septuagint*, Εκκλησιαστος, a *public speaker*, a *speaker in an assembly*; and hence translated by us a *preacher*. In my old MS. Bible it is explained thus: a talker to the peple; or together cleping.

Verse 2. *Vanity of vanities*] As the words are an exclamation, it would be better to translate, *O vanity of vanities!* Emptiness of emptinesses. True, substantial good is not to be found in any thing liable to change and corruption.

The author referred to in the introduction begins his paraphrase thus:—

"O vain deluding world! whose largest gifts  
Thine emptiness betray, like painted clouds,  
Or watery bubbles: as the vapour flies,  
Dispersed by lightest blast, so fleet thy joys,  
And leave no trace behind. This serious truth  
The royal preacher loud proclaims, convinced  
By sad experience; with a sigh repeats  
The mournful theme, that nothing here below  
Can solid comfort yield: 'tis all a scene  
Of vanity, beyond the power of words  
To express, or thought conceive. Let every man  
Survey himself, then ask, what fruit remains  
Of all his fond pursuits? What has he gained,  
By toiling thus for more than nature's wants  
Require? Why thus with endless projects racked  
His heated brain, and to the labouring mind  
Repose denied? Why such expense of time,  
That steals away so fast, and ne'er looks back?

Could man his wish obtain, how short the space  
For its enjoyment! No less transient here  
The time of his duration, than the things  
Thus anxiously pursued. For, as the mind,  
In search of bliss, fixed on no solid point,  
For ever fluctuates; so our little frames,  
In which we glory, haste to their decline,

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down, and <sup>a</sup> hasteth to his place where he arose.

6 <sup>b</sup> The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

7 <sup>c</sup> All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea *is* not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they <sup>d</sup> return again.

8 All things *are* full of labour; man cannot

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *panteth*.—<sup>b</sup> John iii. 8.—<sup>c</sup> Job xxxviii. 10. Ps. civ. 8, 9.

Nor permanence can find. The human race Drop like autumnal leaves, by spring revived: One generation from the stage of life Withdrawn, another comes, and thus makes room For that which follows. Mightiest realms decay, Sink by degrees; and lo! new formed estates Rise from their ruins. Even the earth itself, Sole object of our hopes and fears, Shall have its period, though to man unknown."

Verse 3. *What profit hath a man*] What is the sum of the real good he has gained by all his toils in life? They, in themselves, have neither made him *contented nor happy*.

Verse 4. *One generation passeth away*] Men succeed each other in unceasing generations: but the earth is still the same; it undergoes no change that leads to melioration, or greater perfection. And it will continue the same לעולם *leolam*, during the whole course of time; till the end of all things arrives.

Verses 5 and 6. These verses are confused by being falsely divided. The first clause of the *sixth* should be joined to the *fifth* verse.

"The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he ariseth; going to the south, and circulating to the north."

Verse 6. "The wind is continually whirling about, and the wind returneth upon its whirlings."

It is plain, from the clause which I have restored to the *fifth* verse, that the author refers to the approximations of the sun to the *northern* and *southern tropics*, viz., of *Cancer* and *Capricorn*.

All the *Versions* agree in applying the first clause of the *sixth* verse to the *sun*, and not to the *wind*. Our *Version* alone has mistaken the meaning. My old MS. Bible is quite correct:

The sunne riseth up, and goth down, and to his place turneth again; and there again rising, goth about to the south, and then again to the north.

The author points out two things here: 1. *Day and night*, marked by the appearance of the sun above the horizon; proceeding *apparently* from *east to west*; where he sinks under the horizon, and appears to be lost during the night. 2. His *annual course* through the twelve signs of the zodiac, when, from the equinoctial, he proceeds southward to the tropic of Capricorn; and thence turneth about to-

utter it: <sup>e</sup> the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

9 <sup>f</sup> The thing that hath been, *it is that* which shall be; and that which is done *is* that which shall be done: and *there is* no new *thing* under the sun.

10 Is there *any* thing whereof it may be said, See, this *is* new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

11 *There is* no remembrance of former

<sup>d</sup> Heb. *return to go*.—<sup>e</sup> Prov. xxvii. 20.—<sup>f</sup> Ch. iii. 15.

wards the north, till he reaches the tropic of Cancer: and so on.

Verse 7. *All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full*] The reason is, nothing goes into it either by the *rivers* or by *rain*, that does not come from it: and *to the place whence the rivers come*, whether from the *sea* originally by evaporation, or immediately by *rain*, thither they return again; for the water exhaled from the sea by evaporation is collected in the *clouds*, and in *rain*, &c. falls upon the tops of the mountains; and, filtered through their fissures, produce *streams*, several of which uniting, make *rivers*, which flow into the sea. The water is again *evaporated by the sun*; the vapours collected are precipitated; and, being filtered through the earth, become *streams*, &c., as before.

Verse 8. *All things are full of labour*] It is impossible to calculate how much anxiety, pain, labour, and fatigue are necessary in order to carry on the *common operations of life*. But an *endless desire of gain*, and an *endless curiosity to witness* a variety of results, cause men to labour on. The *eye* sees much; but wishes to see more. The *ear* hears of many things; but is curious to have the actual knowledge of them. So *desire* and *curiosity* carry men, under the divine providence, through all the labours and pains of life.

Verse 9. *The thing that hath been*] Every thing in the whole economy of nature has its *revolutions*; summer and winter, heat and cold, rain and drought, seed time and autumn, with the whole system of *corruption and generation*, alternately succeed each other, so that *whatever has been shall be again*. There is really, physically, and philosophically nothing absolutely new under the sun, in the course of *sublunary* things. The same is the case in all the *revolutions of the heavens*.

Verse 10. *Is there any thing, &c.*] The original is beautiful. "Is there any thing which will say, See this! it is new?" Men may say this of their *discoveries*, &c.; but universal nature says, It is not new. *It has been, and it will be*.

Verse 11. *There is no remembrance*] I believe the general meaning to be this: Multitudes of *ancient transactions* have been lost, because they were *not recorded*; and of many that have been recorded, the *records are lost*. And this will be the case with many others which are yet to occur. How many

A. M. cir. 3027. B. C. cir. 977. Ante I. Ol. cir. 201. Ante U.C. c. 224. *things*; neither shall there be any remembrance of *things* that are to come with *those* that shall come after.

12 \*I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.

13 And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all *things* that are done under heaven: <sup>b</sup> this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man <sup>c</sup> to be exercised therewith.

14 I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

15 <sup>d</sup> *That which is crooked cannot be made*

straight: and \*that which is wanting cannot be numbered.

16 I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten 'more wisdom than all *they* that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart <sup>e</sup> had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.

17 <sup>b</sup> And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.

18 For <sup>i</sup> in much wisdom *is* much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

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\* Ver. 1. — <sup>b</sup> Gen. iii. 19. Ch. iii. 10. — <sup>c</sup> Or, to afflict them. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. vii. 13. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. defect. — <sup>f</sup> 1 Kings iii. 12,

13. iv. 30. x. 7, 23. Ch. ii. 9. — <sup>s</sup> Heb. had seen much. <sup>b</sup> Ch. ii. 3, 12. vii. 23, 25. 1 Thess. v. 21. — <sup>1</sup> Ch. xii. 12.

persons, not much acquainted with books, have supposed that certain things were their own discoveries, which have been *written or printed* even long before they were born! *Dutens*, in his *Origin of the Discoveries attributed to the Moderns*, has made a very clear case.

Verse 12. *I the Preacher was king*] This is a strange verse, and does not admit of an easy solution. It is literally, "I, Choheleth, have been king over Israel, in Jerusalem." This book, as we have already seen, has been conjectured by some to have been written about the time that *Ptolemy Philadelphus* formed his great library at Alexandria, about two hundred and eighty-five years before our Lord; and from the multitude of Jews that dwelt there, and resorted to that city for the sake of commerce, it was said there was an *Israel in Alexandria*. See the introduction.

It has also been conjectured from this, that if the book were written by *Solomon*, it was intended to be a *posthumous publication*. "I that *was* king, still continue to preach and instruct you." Those who suppose the book to have been written *after Solomon's fall*, think that he speaks thus through *humility*. "I was once worthy of the name of king: but I fell into all evil; and, though recovered, I am no longer worthy of the name." I am afraid this is not *solid*.

Verse 13. *And I gave my heart to seek and search*] While *Solomon* was faithful to his God, he diligently cultivated his mind. His giving himself to the study of natural history, philosophy, poetry, &c., are sufficient proofs of it. He had not intuitive knowledge from God; but he had a *capacity* to obtain every kind of knowledge useful to man.

*This sore travail*] This is the way in which knowledge is to be acquired; and in order to investigate the operations of nature, the most *laborious discussions* and *perplexing experiments* must be instituted, and conducted to their proper *results*. It is God's determination that knowledge shall be acquired in no other way.

Verse 14. *Behold all is vanity.*] After all these

discussions and experiments, when even the results have been the most successful, I have found only *rational satisfaction*; but not that *supreme good* by which alone the soul can be made happy.

O curas hominum! O quantum est in rebus inane!

"How anxious are our cares, and yet how vain The bent of our desires!" PERS. sat. I., v. 1.

Verse 15. *That which is crooked cannot be made straight*] There are many apparent irregularities and anomalies in nature for which we cannot account; and there are many *defects* that cannot be *supplied*. This is the impression from a *general view* of nature; but the more we study and investigate its operations, the more we shall be convinced that all is a *consecutive* and well-ordered whole; and that in the *chain of nature* not one *link* is broken, deficient, or lost.

Verse 16. *I communed with mine own heart*] Literally, "I spoke, I, with my heart, saying." When successful in my researches, but not happy in my soul, though easy in my circumstances, I entered into my own heart, and there inquired the *cause* of my discontent. He found that, though—1. He had gotten wisdom beyond all men; 2. Wealth and honours more than any other; 3. Practical wisdom more than all his predecessors; 4. Had tried *pleasure* and animal gratification, even to their extremes; yet after all this he had nothing but *vexation of spirit*. None of these four things, nor the *whole* of them *conjoined*, could afford him such a *happiness* as satisfies the soul. Why was all this? Because the soul was made for God, and in the possession of him alone can it find happiness.

Verse 17. *To know madness and folly*] חוללות ושבלות hol hoth vesichluth. Παραβολας και επιστημην, "Parables and science."—*Septuagint*. So the *Syriac*, nearly so the *Arabic*. "What were error and foolishness."—*Coverdale*. Perhaps *gaiety* and *sobriety* may be the better meaning for these two difficult words. I can scarcely think they are taken in that *bad sense* in which our translation exhibits them. "I

tried pleasure in all its forms; and sobriety and self-abnegation to their utmost extent." Choheleth paraphrases, "Even fools and madmen taught me rules."

Verse 18. *For in much wisdom is much grief*] The more we know of ourselves the less satisfied shall we be with our own hearts; and the more we know of mankind the less willing shall we be to trust them, and the less shall we admire them.

*He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.*] And why so? Because, independently of God, the principal objects of knowledge are natural and moral evils.

The Targum gives a curious paraphrase here: "The man who multiplies wisdom, when he sins and is not converted to repentance, multiplies the indignation of God against himself; and the man who adds science, and yet dies in his childhood, adds grief of heart to his relatives." A man in science; a foolish child in conduct. How pained must they be who had the expense of his education! But there are many men-children of this sort in every age and country.

## CHAPTER II.

*The vanity of human courses in the works of pleasure, planting, building, equipage, amassing wealth, &c., 1—11. Wisdom preferable to folly, 12—14; yet little difference between the wise and the foolish in the events of life, 15—17. The vanity of amassing wealth for heirs, when whether they will be foolish or wise cannot be ascertained, 18—21. There is much sorrow in the labour of man, 22, 23. We should enjoy what the providence of God gives, 25, 26.*

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**I SAID** in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, <sup>b</sup> this

also is vanity.

<sup>2</sup> I said of laughter, *It is mad*: and of mirth, What doeth it?

<sup>3</sup> I sought in mine heart <sup>a</sup> to give myself unto wine, (yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom,) and to lay hold on folly, till I

<sup>a</sup> Luke xii. 19.—<sup>b</sup> Isai. l. 11.—<sup>c</sup> Prov. xiv. 13. Ch. vii. 6.  
<sup>d</sup> Ch. i. 17.

## NOTES ON CHAP. II.

Verse 1. *I will prove thee with mirth*] This is well expressed by the author so often referred to. Having tried speculative knowledge in vain, passion and appetite whisper,—

"From the rugged thorny road  
Of wisdom, which so ill repays thy toil,  
Turn back, and enter pleasure's flowery paths.  
Go, take thy fill of joy; to passion give  
The reins; nor let one serious thought restrain  
What youth and affluence prompt."

Verse 2. *I said of laughter, It is mad*] Literally, "To laughter I said, O mad one! and to mirth, What is this one doing?"

Solomon does not speak here of a sober enjoyment of the things of this world, but of *intemperate pleasure*, whose two attendants, *laughter* and *mirth*, are introduced by a beautiful *prosopopœia* as two persons; and the contemptuous manner wherewith he treats them has something remarkably striking. He tells the *former* to her face that *she is mad*; but as to the *latter*, he thinks her so much beneath his notice, that he only points at her, and instantly turns his back.

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might see what *was* that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven <sup>f</sup> all the days of their life.

<sup>4</sup> I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards:

<sup>5</sup> I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all *kind* of fruits:

<sup>6</sup> I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:

<sup>e</sup> Heb. to draw my flesh with wine. — <sup>f</sup> Heb. the number of the days of their life.

Verse 3. *To give myself unto wine, (yet acquainting [noheg, "guiding"] mine heart with wisdom,)*] I did not run into *extremes*, as when I gave up myself to *mirth* and *pleasure*. *There*, I threw off all restraint; *here*, I took the middle course, to see whether a moderate enjoyment of the things of the world might not produce that happiness which I supposed *man* was created to enjoy here below.

Verse 4. *I builded me houses*] Palace after palace: the house of the forest of Lebanon, 1 Kings vii. 1, &c.; a house for the queen; the temple, &c., 2 Chron. viii. 1, &c.; 1 Kings ix. 10, &c., besides many other buildings of various kinds.

Verse 5. *I made me gardens and orchards*] פֶּרְדֵּסִים *pardestim*, "paradises." I doubt much whether this be an original Hebrew word. *ferdoos*, is found in the *Persian* and *Arabic*; and signifies a *pleasant garden*, a *vineyard*. Hence our word *paradise*, a place full of delights. How well Solomon was qualified to form *gardens*, *orchards*, *vineyards*, *conservatories*, &c., may be at once conceived when we recollect his knowledge of *natural history*; and that he wrote treatises on vegetables and their properties, from the cedar to the *hyssop*.

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7 I got me servants and maidens, and had <sup>a</sup> servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me:

8 <sup>b</sup> I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as <sup>c</sup> musical instruments, and that of all sorts.

9 So <sup>d</sup> I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me.

10 And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and <sup>e</sup> this was my portion of all my labour.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *sons of my house*.—<sup>b</sup> 1 Kings ix. 28. x. 10, 14, 21, &c.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *musical instrument and instruments*.—<sup>d</sup> Ch. i. 16.—<sup>e</sup> Ch. iii. 22. v. 18. ix. 9.—<sup>f</sup> Ch. i. 3, 14.—<sup>g</sup> Ch. i. 17. vii. 25.—<sup>h</sup> Or, *in those things which have been*

Verse 6. *Pools of water*] Tanks and reservoirs.

*To water therewith the wood*] Aqueducts to lead the water from the tanks to different parts.

Verse 7. *Servants and maidens*] For my works, fields, folds, and various domestic labours.

*Servants born in my house*] Besides those hired from without, he had married couples in the precincts of his grounds, palaces, &c., who, when their children grew up, got them employment with themselves.

*Great and small cattle*] Oxen, neat, horses, asses, mules, camels, and such like; with sheep and goats. And multitudes of most of these he needed, when we are told that his household consumed daily ten stall-fed oxen, with twenty from the pasture, with a hundred sheep; besides harts, roe-bucks, fallow deer, fatted fowls, and other kinds of provision. Probably, such another court for splendour and expense was not in the universe.

Verse 8. *The peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces*] 1. The taxes levied off his subjects. 2. The tribute given by the neighbouring potentates. Both these make the "peculiar treasure of kings;" taxes and tribute.

*Men singers and women singers*] This includes all instrumental and vocal performers. These may be called the delights of the sons of men.

*Musical instruments, and that of all sorts.*] For these seven words, there are only two in the original, שִׁיר וְשִׁירָה *shiddah veshiddoth*. These words are acknowledged on all hands to be utterly unknown, if not utterly inexplicable. Some render them male and female captives; others, cups and flagons; others, cooks and confectioners; others, a species of musical compositions derived from a celebrated Phœnician woman named Sido, to whom Sanchoniatho attributes the invention of music. Others, with more probability,

11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was <sup>f</sup> vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.

12 And I turned myself to behold wisdom, <sup>g</sup> and madness, and folly: for what can the man do that cometh after the king? <sup>h</sup> even that which hath been already done.

13 Then I saw <sup>i</sup> that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.

14 <sup>k</sup> The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that <sup>l</sup> one event happeneth to them all.

15 Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it <sup>m</sup> happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said

*already done*.—<sup>i</sup> Heb. *that there is an excellency in wisdom more than in folly*, &c.—<sup>k</sup> Prov. xvii. 24. Ch. viii. 1. <sup>l</sup> Ps. xlix. 10. Ch. ix. 2, 3, 11.—<sup>m</sup> Heb. *happeneth to me, even to me*.

wives and concubines; of the former of whom Solomon had three hundred, and of the latter, seven hundred; and if these be not spoken of here, they are not mentioned at all; whereas music, and every thing connected with that, was referred to before. The author of *Chohemoth* paraphrases thus:

"To complete

This scene of earthly bliss, how large a span  
Of that which most delights the sons of men  
Fell to my portion! What a lovely train  
Of blooming beauties, by connubial ties,  
By purchase, or the gifts of neighbouring kings,  
Or spoils of war, made mine."

If, after all this, I may add one conjecture, it shall be this; שָׂדֵה *sadeh*, in Hebrew, is a field, and occurs in various parts of the Bible. שֹׂדוֹת *sadoth* is fields, 1 Sam. xxii. 7, the points in such a case are of no consideration. May not Solomon be speaking here of farms upon farms, or estates upon estates, which he had added by purchase to the common regal portion? We know that a king of Israel (Ahab) once desired to have a vineyard (Naboth's) which he could not obtain: now, Solomon having spoken before of gardens, orchards, and vineyards, why may he not here speak of supernumerary estates? Perhaps every man who critically examines the place will be dissatisfied, and have a conjecture of his own.

Verse 10. *I withheld not my heart from any joy*] He had every means of gratification; he could desire nothing that was not within his reach; and whatever he wished, he took care to possess.

Verse 11. *And, behold, all was vanity*] Emptiness and insufficiency in itself.

*And vexation of spirit*] Because it promised the good I wished for, but did not, could not, perform



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in my heart, that this also is vanity.

16 For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the *wise man*? as the fool.

17 Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

18 Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.

19 And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule

\* Job v. 13. Ps. xciv. 8. Ch. ii. 15. vi. 8. vii. 16. Isai. xlv. 25.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. laboured.

the promise; and left my soul discontented and chagrined.

Verse 12. For what can the man do that cometh after the king? I have examined every thing proposed by science, by maddening pleasure, and by more refined and regulated mirth. I seized on the whole, and used them to the uttermost; and so far, that none ever shall be able to exceed me; as none can, in the course of things, ever have such powers and means of gratification.

Verse 13. Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly] Though in none of these pursuits I found the supreme good, the happiness my soul longed after; yet I could easily perceive that wisdom excelled the others, as far as light excels darkness. And he immediately subjoins the reasons.

Verse 14. The wise men's eyes, &c.] Well expressed by Choeleth:—

“The wise are circumspect, maturely weigh  
The consequence of what they undertake,  
Good ends propose, and fittest means apply  
To accomplish their designs.”

But the fool walketh in darkness]

“But fools, deprived  
Of reason's guidance, or in darkness grope,  
Or, unreflecting like a frantic man,  
Who on the brink of some steep precipice  
Attempts to run a race with heedless steps,  
Rush to their own perdition.”

One event happeneth to them all.]

“Though wide the difference, what has human pride  
To boast? Even I myself too plainly saw,  
That one event to both alike befalls;  
To various accidents of life exposed,  
Without distinction: nor can wisdom screen  
From dangers, disappointments, grief, and pain.”

Verse 15. As it happeneth to the fool] Literally, According as the event is to the fool, it happens to

over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity.

20 Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun.

21 For there is a man whose labour is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein shall he leave it for his portion. This also is vanity and a great evil.

22 For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun?

23 For all his days are sorrows, and his

\* Ps. xlix. 10.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. give.—<sup>e</sup> Ch. i. 3. iii. 9.—<sup>f</sup> Job v. 7. xiv. 1.

me, even me.” There is a peculiar beauty and emphasis in the repetition of *me*. Having pointed out the advantages that wisdom has over folly, he takes this opportunity of reminding us of the danger of trusting too much to it, by showing that it is equally subject to the common accidents of life; and, therefore, incapable of making us completely happy. Having given his sentiments on this point in general terms, he proceeds to those particular instances wherein human prudence chiefly exerts itself; and shows how egregiously it is mistaken in every one of them.—C.

Verse 16. There is no remembrance] The wise and the fool are equally subject to death; and, in most instances, they are equally forgotten. Time sweeps away all remembrances, except the very few out of millions which are preserved for a while in the page of history.

Verse 17. Therefore I hated life] *לחיי חכמים* *ha-chaiyim*, the lives, both of the wise, the madman, and the fool. Also all the stages of life, the child, the man, and the sage. There was nothing in it worth pursuing, no period worth re-living, and no hope that if this were possible I could again be more successful.

Verse 18. I hated all my labour] Because, 1. It has not answered the end for which it was instituted. 2. I can enjoy the fruits of it but a short time. 3. I must leave it to others, and know not whether a wise man, a knave, or a fool will possess it.

Verse 19. A wise man or a fool? Alas! Solomon, the wisest of all men, made the worst use of his wisdom, had three hundred wives and seven hundred concubines, and yet left but one son behind him, to possess his estates and his throne, and that one was the silliest of fools!

Verse 20. I went about to cause my heart to despair] What makes all worse, there is no remedy. It is impossible in the present state of things to prevent these evils.

Verse 21. For there is a man] Does he not allude

A. M. cir. 3027. travail grief; yea, his heart  
B. C. cir. 977. taketh not rest in the night.  
Ante I. Ol. This is also vanity.  
cir. 201.  
Ante U.C.c. 224.

24 \* *There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that he <sup>b</sup> should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God.*

25 For who can eat, or who else can

\* Ch. iii. 12, 13, 22. v. 18. viii. 15. — <sup>b</sup> Or, *delight his senses.*

to himself? As if he had said, "I have laboured to cultivate my mind in wisdom and in science, in knowledge of men and things, and have endeavoured to establish equity and dispense justice. And now I find I shall leave all the fruits of my labour to a man that hath not laboured therein, and consequently cannot prize what I have wrought." Does he not refer to his son Rehoboam?

Verse 22. *For what hath man of all his labour] Labour of body, disappointment of hope, and vexation of heart,* have been all my portion.

Verse 23. *His days are sorrows]* What a picture of human life where the heart is not filled with the peace and love of God! All his days are sorrows; all his labours griefs; all his nights restless; for he has no portion but merely what earth can give; and that is embittered by the labour of acquisition, and the disappointment in the using.

*This is also vanity.]* Emptiness of good and substantial misery.

Verse 24. *There is nothing better for a man]* The sense of this passage is well expressed in the following lines:—

"For these disorders wouldst thou find a cure,  
Such cure as human frailty would admit?  
Drive from thee anxious cares; let reason curb  
Thy passions; and with cheerful heart enjoy  
That little which the world affords; for here,  
Though vain the hopes of perfect happiness,  
Yet still the road of life, rugged at best,  
Is not without its comforts.—  
Wouldst thou their sweetness taste, look up to  
heaven,  
And praise the all-bounteous Donor, who bestows  
The power to use aright."

hasten *hereunto*, more than I? A. M. cir. 3027.  
26 For God giveth to a man B. C. cir. 977.  
that is good <sup>c</sup> in his sight wis- Ante I. Ol.  
dom, and knowledge, and joy: cir. 201.  
but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather Ante U.C.c. 224.  
and to heap up, that <sup>d</sup> he may give to him that  
is good before God. This also is vanity and  
vexation of spirit.

<sup>c</sup> Heb. *before him.* Gen. vii. 1. Luke i. 6. — <sup>d</sup> Job xxvii. 16, 17. Prov. xxviii. 8.

Verse 25. *For who can eat—more than I?] But instead of חַיִּים חַיִּים chuts mimmenni, more than I; חַיִּים חַיִּים chuts mimmennu, without HIM, is the reading of eight of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MS., as also of the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic.*

"For who maye eat, drynke, or bring anythinge to pass without him?"—COVERDALE.

I believe this to be the true reading. No one can have a true relish of the comforts of life without the divine blessing. This reading connects all the sentences: "This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God;—for who can eat, and who can relish without HIM? For God giveth to man that is good." It is through his liberality that we have any thing to eat or drink; and it is only through his blessing that we can derive good from the use of what we possess.

Verse 26. *Giveth—wisdom, and knowledge, and joy]*  
1. God gives wisdom—the knowledge of himself, light to direct in the way of salvation. 2. Knowledge—understanding to discern the operation of his hand; *experimental acquaintance* with himself, in the dispensing of his grace and the gifts of his Spirit. 3. Joy; a hundred days of ease for one day of pain; one thousand enjoyments for one privation, and to them that believe, *peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

*But to the sinner he giveth travail]* He has a life of labour, disappointment, and distress; for because he is an enemy to God, he travails in pain all his days; and, as the wise man says elsewhere, *the wealth of the wicked is laid up for the just.* So he loseth earthly good, because he would not take a heavenly portion with it.

CHAPTER III.

*Every thing has its time and season, 1—8. Men are exercised with labour, 9, 10. Every thing is beautiful in its season, 11. Men should enjoy thankfully the gifts of God, 12, 13. What God does is for ever, 14. There is nothing new, 15. The corruption of judgment; but the judgments of God are right, 16, 17. Man is brutish, and men and brutes die in like manner, 18—21. Man may enjoy the fruit of his own labours, 22.*

A. M. cir. 3027.  
B. C. cir. 977.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 201.  
Ante U.C.c. 224.

TO every thing there is a season, and a \*time to every purpose under the heaven.

2 A time <sup>b</sup> to be born, and a <sup>c</sup> time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up *that which is* planted;

3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

\* Ver. 17. Ch. viii. 6.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. to bear.—<sup>c</sup> Hebr. ix. 27.  
<sup>d</sup> Joel ii. 16. I Cor. vii. 5.

NOTES ON CHAP. III.

Verse 1. *To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose*] Two general remarks may be made on the first eight verses of this chapter. 1. God by his providence governs the world, and has determined particular things and operations to particular times. In those times such things may be done with propriety and success; but if we neglect the appointed seasons, we sin against this providence, and become the authors of our own distresses. 2. God has given to man that portion of duration called TIME; the space in which all the operations of nature, of animals, and intellectual beings, are carried on; but while nature is steady in its course, and animals faithful to their instincts, man devotes it to a great variety of purposes; but very frequently to that for which God never made time, space, or opportunity. And all we can say, when an evil deed is done, is, there was a time in which it was done, though God never made it for that purpose.

To say any farther on this subject is needless, as the words themselves give in general their own meaning. The Jews, it is true, see in these times and seasons all the events of their own nation, from the birth of Abraham to the present times; and as to Fathers and their followers, they see all the events and states of the Christian church in them!

It is worthy of remark, that in all this list there are but two things which may be said to be done generally by the disposal of God, and in which men can have but little influence; the time of birth and the time of death. But all the others are left to the option of man, though God continues to overrule them by his providence. The following paraphrase will explain all that is necessary to be generally understood:—

Verse 2. *A time to be born, and a time to die—plant*]

“As in its mother’s womb the embryo lies  
A space determined; to full growth arrived,  
From its dark prison bursts, and sees the light;  
So is the period fixed when man shall drop  
Into the grave.—A time there is to plant,  
And sow; another time to pluck and reap.  
Even nations have their destined rise and fall:  
A while they thrive; and for destruction ripe,  
When grown, are rooted up like withered plants.”

Verse 3. *A time to kill,—heal,—break down,—build up*]

5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and <sup>d</sup> a time <sup>e</sup> to refrain from embracing;

6 A time to <sup>f</sup> get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; <sup>a</sup> a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

8 A time to love, and a time to <sup>h</sup> hate; <sup>a</sup>

A. M. cir. 3027.  
B. C. cir. 977.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 201.  
Ante U.C.c. 224.

<sup>e</sup> Heb. to be far from.—<sup>f</sup> Or, seek.—<sup>g</sup> Amos v. 13.  
<sup>h</sup> Luke xiv. 26.

“The healing art, when out of season used,  
Pernicious proves, and serves to hasten death.  
But timely medicines drooping nature raise,  
And health restore.—Now, Justice wields her sword  
With wholesome rigour, nor the offender spares:  
But Mercy now is more expedient found.  
On crazy fabrics ill-timed cost bestowed  
No purpose answers, when discretion bids  
To pull them down, and wait a season fit  
To build anew.”

Verse 4. *A time to weep,—laugh,—mourn,—dance*]

“When private griefs affect  
The heart, our tears with decent sorrow flow;  
Nor less becoming, when the public mourns,  
To vent the deepest sighs. But all around  
When things a smiling aspect bear, our souls  
May well exult; ’tis then a time for joy.”

Verse 5. *A time to cast away stones,—to gather stones,—to embrace,—to refrain*]

“One while domestic cares abortive prove,  
And then successful. Nature now invites  
Connubial pleasures: but, when languid grown,  
No less rejects.”

Verse 6. *A time to get,—to loose,—to keep,—to cast away*]

“Commerce produces wealth,  
Whilst time of gaining lasts; from every point  
Blow prosperous gales. Now heaven begins to lower.  
And all our hopes are blasted. Prudence bids,  
One while, our treasure to reserve, and then  
With liberal hand to scatter wide. How oft,  
In raging storms, the owner wisely casts  
Into the deep his precious merchandise,  
To save the foundering bark!”

Verse 7. *A time to rend,—sew,—keep silence,—speak*]

“Intestine broils  
And factions rend a state: at length the breach  
Is healed, and rest ensues. Wisdom restrains  
The tongue, when words are vain: but now,  
’Tis time to speak, and silence would be criminal.”

Verse 8. *A time to love,—hate,—of war,—of peace*]

“Love turns to hatred; interest or caprice  
Dissolves the firmest knot by friendship tied.  
O’er rival nations, with revenge inflamed.  
Or lust of power, fell Discord shakes awhile  
Her baleful torch: now, smiling Peace returns.

A. M. cir. 3027. time of war, and a time of  
B. C. cir. 977. peace.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 201.  
Ante U.C. c. 224. 9 \* What profit hath he that  
worketh in that wherein he

laboureth ?

10 <sup>b</sup> I have seen the travail, which God hath  
given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.

11 He hath made every *thing* beautiful in  
his time : also he hath set the world in their  
heart, so that <sup>c</sup> no man can find out the work  
that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. i. 3. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. i. 13. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. cxlv. 3. Isai. xl. 13. Ch.  
viii. 17. Rom. xi. 33.

The above paraphrase on the verses cited contains  
a general view of the *principal occurrences of time*, in  
reference to the human being, from his cradle to his  
grave, through all the operations of life.

Verse 9. *What profit hath he*] What real good,  
what solid pleasure, is derived from all the labours  
of man? *Necessity* drives him to the principal part  
of his *cares and toils* : he *labours* that he may *eat and  
drink* ; and he *eats and drinks* that he may be pre-  
served *alive*, and kept from *sickness and pain*. Love  
of *money*, the basest of all passions, and *restless am-  
bition*, drive men to many labours and expedients,  
which perplex, and often destroy them. He, then,  
who lives without God, travails in pain all his days.

Verse 10. *I have seen the travail*] Man is a sin-  
ner ; and, because he is such, he suffers.

Verse 11. *Beautiful in his time*] God's works are  
well done : there are order, harmony, and beauty in  
them all. Even the *caterpillar* is a finished beauty  
in all the *changes* through which it passes, when its  
structure is properly examined, and the *end* kept in  
view in which each change is to issue. Nothing of  
this kind can be said of the works of man. The most  
finished works of art are bungling jobs, when com-  
pared with the meanest operation of nature.

*He hath set the world in their heart*] *העולם  
הסוד* *haolam*, that *hidden time*—the *period beyond* the present,—  
ETERNITY. The proper translation of this clause is  
the following : “ Also that eternity hath he placed in  
their heart, without which man could not find out  
the work which God hath made from the commence-  
ment to the end.” God has deeply rooted the idea  
of *eternity* in every human heart ; and every con-  
siderate man sees, that all the operations of God refer  
to that endless duration. See ver. 14. And it is  
only in eternity that man will be able to discover  
what God has designed by the various works he has  
formed.

Verse 12. *I know that there is no good in them, but,  
&c.*] Since God has so disposed the affairs of this  
world, that the great events of providence cannot be  
accelerated or retarded by human cares and anxieties,  
submit to God ; make a proper use of what he has  
given : do thyself *no harm*, and endeavour as much  
as possible to do others *good*.

Enjoy, and bless thyself ; let others share  
The transient blessing : 'tis the gift of God.

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12 <sup>d</sup> I know that *there is no*  
good in them, but for a *man*  
to rejoice, and to do good in  
his life.

13 And also <sup>e</sup> that every man should eat and  
drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it  
*is* the gift of God.

14 I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it  
shall be for ever : <sup>f</sup> nothing can be put to it,  
nor any thing taken from it : and God doeth  
*it*, that *men* should fear before him.

<sup>d</sup> Ver. 22. — <sup>e</sup> Ch. ii. 24. — <sup>f</sup> James i. 17.

Verse 14. *I know that whatsoever God doeth, it  
shall be for ever*] *לעולם לעולם* *leolam*, for *eternity* ; in refer-  
ence to that grand consummation of men and things  
intimated in ver. 11. God has produced no being that  
he intends ultimately to destroy. He made every  
thing in reference to eternity ; and, however matter  
may be changed and refined, animal and intellectual  
beings shall not be deprived of their *existence*. The  
brute creation shall be restored, and all human spirits  
shall live for ever ; the *pure* in a state of supreme and  
endless blessedness, the *impure* in a state of inde-  
structible misery.

*Nothing can be put to it*] No new order of beings,  
whether animate or inanimate, can be produced.  
God *will not* create more ; man *cannot* add.

*Nor any thing taken from it*] Nothing can be  
*annihilated* ; no power but that which can *create*,  
can *destroy*. And whatever he has done, he intended  
to be a means of impressing a just sense of his being,  
providence, mercy, and judgments, upon the souls of  
men. A proper consideration of God's works has a  
tendency to make man a *religious creature* ; that is,  
to impress his mind with a sense of the *existence* of  
the *Supreme Being*, and the *reverence* that is due to  
him. In this sense the *fear of God* is frequently taken  
in Scripture. The Hebrew of this clause is strongly  
emphatic : *עשה שיראו כלפניו* *vahaelohim asah  
sheiyireu millephanav*, “ And the gods he hath done,  
that they might fear from before his faces.” Even  
the doctrine of the eternal *Trinity in Unity* may be  
collected from numberless appearances in *nature*. A  
consideration of the herb *trefoil* is said to have been  
the means of fully convincing the learned Erasmus of  
the truth of the assertion, *These Three are One* ; and  
yet *three distinct*. He saw the *same root*, the *same  
fibres*, the *same pulpy substance*, the *same mem-  
braneous covering*, the *same colour*, the *same taste*, the  
*same smell*, in every part ; and yet the *three leaves*  
distinct : but *each and all* a continuation of the *stem*,  
and proceeding from the *same root*. Such a fact as  
this may at least illustrate the doctrine. An intelli-  
gent shepherd, whom he met upon the mountains, is  
said to have exhibited the herb, and the illustration,  
while discoursing on certain difficulties in the Chris-  
tian faith. When a child, I heard a learned man  
relate this fact.

Verse 15. *That which hath been is now*] God

A. M. cir. 3027.  
B. C. cir. 977.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 201.  
Ante U.C. c. 224.

15 <sup>a</sup> That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth <sup>b</sup> that which is past.

16 And moreover <sup>c</sup> I saw under the sun the place of judgment, *that wickedness was there*; and the place of righteousness, *that iniquity was there*.

17 I said in mine heart, <sup>d</sup> God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for *there is* <sup>e</sup> a time there for every purpose and for every work.

18 I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, <sup>f</sup> that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.

19 <sup>g</sup> For that which befalleth the sons of

men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all <sup>h</sup> is vanity.

20 All go unto one place; <sup>i</sup> all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

21 <sup>j</sup> Who knoweth the spirit <sup>k</sup> of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?

22 <sup>l</sup> Wherefore I perceive that *there is* nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for <sup>m</sup> that *is* his portion: <sup>n</sup> for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?

A. M. cir. 3027.  
B. C. cir. 977.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 201.  
Ante U.C. c. 224.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. i. 9.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. *that which is driven away*.—<sup>c</sup> Ch. v. 8.—<sup>d</sup> Rom. ii. 6, 7, 8. 2 Cor. v. 10. 2 Thess. i. 6, 7. <sup>e</sup> Ver. 1.—<sup>f</sup> Or. *that they might clear God, and see, &c.* <sup>g</sup> Ps. xlix. 12, 20. lxxiii. 22. Ch. ii. 16.—<sup>h</sup> Gen. iii. 19.

<sup>i</sup> Ch. xii. 7.—<sup>j</sup> Heb. *of the sons of man*.—<sup>k</sup> Heb. *is ascending*.—<sup>l</sup> Ch. ii. 24. v. 18. xi. 9.—<sup>m</sup> Ch. ii. 10. <sup>n</sup> Ch. vi. 12. viii. 7. x. 14.

governs the world *now*, as he *has governed* it from the beginning; and the revolutions and operations of nature are the *same now*, that they have been from the beginning. What we see *now*, is the *same* as has been seen by those before us.

And God requireth that which is past.] i. e., That it may return again in its proper order. The heavens themselves, taking in their great revolutions, show the same phenomena. Even comets are supposed to have their revolutions, though some of them are hundreds of years in going round their orbits.

But in the economy of grace, does not God require that which is past? Whatever blessing or influence God gives to the soul of man, he intends shall remain and increase; and it will, if man be faithful. Reader, canst thou produce all the secret inspirations of his Spirit, all the drawings of his love, his pardoning mercy, his sanctifying grace, the heavenly-mindedness produced in thee, thy holy zeal, thy spirit of prayer, thy tender conscience, the witness of the Spirit, which thou didst once receive and enjoy? Where are they? God requireth that which is past.

Verse 16. *The place of judgment, that wickedness was there*] The abuse of power, and the perversion of judgment, have been justly complained of in every age of the world. The following paraphrase is good:—

“But what enjoyment can our labours yield,  
When even the remedy prescribed by heaven  
To cure disorders proves our deadliest bane?  
When God’s viceregents, destined to protect  
The weak from insolence of power, to guard  
Their lives and fortunes, impious robbers turn?  
And, or by force or fraud, deprive of both?—  
To what asylum shall the injured fly  
From her tribunal, where perverted law  
Acquits the guilty, th’ innocent condemns?”—C.

Verse 17. *For there is a time there for every pur-*  
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pose] Man has his time here below, and God shall have his time above. At his throne the judge shall be rejudged, and iniquity for ever close her mouth.

Verse 18. *That they might see that they themselves are beasts.*] The author of *Chokeleth* has given a correct view of this difficult verse, by a proper translation: “I said in my heart, reflecting on the state of the sons of men, O that God would enlighten them, and make them see that even they themselves are like beasts.” These words are to be referred to those in authority who abused their power; particularly to the corrupt magistrates mentioned above.

Verse 19. *For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts*] From the present comparison of great men to beasts, the author takes occasion to enforce the subject by mentioning the state of mankind in general, with respect to the mortality of their bodies; and then, by an easy transition, touches in the next verse on the point which is of such infinite consequence to religion.

*As the one dieth, so dieth the other*] Animal life is the same both in the man and in the beast.

*They have all one breath*] They respire in the same way; and when they cease to respire, animal life becomes extinct.

*Befalleth beasts*—This is wanting in six of Kennicott’s and De Rossi’s MSS.

Verse 20. *All go unto one place*] “Man was born

To die, nor aught exceeds in this respect  
The vilest brute. Both transient, frail, and vain,  
Draw the same breath; alike grow old, decay,  
And then expire: both to one grave descend;  
There blended lie, to native dust return’d.”—C.

Verse 21. *Who knoweth the spirit of man*] I think the meaning of this important verse is well taken by the above able writer:—

The nobler part of *man*, 'tis true, survives  
The frail corporeal frame : but who regards  
The difference ? Those who live like beasts, as such  
Would die, and be no more if their own fate  
Depended on themselves. Who once reflects,  
Amidst his revels, that the *human soul*,  
Of origin celestial, *mounts aloft*,  
While that of *brutes* to earth shall *downward go* ?”

The word רוח *ruach*, which is used in this and the nineteenth verse, has two significations, *breath* and *spirit*. It signifies *spirit*, or an *incorporeal* substance, as distinguished from *flesh*, or a *corporeal* one, 1 Kings xxii. 21, 22, and Isai. xxxi. 3. And it signifies the *spirit* or *soul* of *man*, Ps. xxxi. 6, Isai. lvii. 16, and in this book, chap. xii. 7, and in many other places. In this book it is used also to signify the *breath*, *spirit*, or *soul* of a *beast*. While it was said in ver. 19, *they have all one breath*, i. e., the *man* and the *beast* live the same kind of animal life ; in this verse, a proper distinction is made between the רוח *ruach*, soul of *man* ; and the רוח *ruach*, or *soul* of the *beast* : the one *goeth upwards*, the other *goeth downwards*. The literal translation of these important words is this : “Who considereth the (רוח *ruach*) immortal spirit of the sons of Adam, which ascendeth ; it is from above (רוח למעלה *hi lemalah*) ; and the spirit or breath of the cattle, which descendeth ; it is downwards unto the earth,” i. e., it tends to the earth only. This place gives no countenance to the materiality of the soul ;

and yet it is the strongest hold to which the cold and fruitless materialist can resort.

Solomon most evidently makes an *essential difference* between the human soul and that of brutes. Both have *souls*, but of different natures : the soul of *man* was made for *God*, and to *God* it shall return : *God is its portion* ; and when a holy soul leaves the body, it goes to *paradise*. The soul of the *beast* was made to *derive its happiness* from this *lower world*. Brutes shall have a resurrection, and have an endless enjoyment in a *new earth*. The *body of man* shall *arise*, and join his *soul* that is already above ; and both enjoy final blessedness in the fruition of *God*. That Solomon did not believe they had the *same kind of spirit*, and the same *final lot*, as some materialists and infidels say, is evident from chap. xii. 7 : “The spirit shall return unto *God*, who gave it.”

Verse 22. *A man should rejoice in his own works* ] Do not turn *God's* blessings into sin by perverseness and complaining ; make the best of life. *God* will sweeten its bitters to you, if you be faithful. Remember this is the *state to prepare for glory* ; and the evils of life may be so sanctified to you as to work for your good. Though even wretched *without*, you may be happy *within* ; for *God* can make all grace to abound towards you. You may be happy if you please ; cry to *God*, who never rejects the prayer of the humble, and gives his Holy Spirit to all them that ask him.

CHAPTER IV.

The vanity of life is increased by oppression, 1—3 ; by envy, 4 ; by idleness, 5. The misery of a solitary life, and the advantages of society, 6—12. A poor and wise child better than an old and foolish king, 13. The uncertainty of popular favour, 14—16.

A. M. cir. 3027.  
B. C. cir. 977.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 201.  
Ante U.C. c. 224.

SO I returned, and considered all the \*oppressions that are done under the sun : and behold the tears of such as were

oppressed, and they had no comforter ; and on the <sup>b</sup> side of their oppressors there was power ; but they had no comforter.

2 <sup>c</sup> Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive.

\* Ch. iii. 16. v. 8. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. *hand*. — <sup>c</sup> Job iii. 17, &c. <sup>d</sup> Job iii. 11, 16, 21. Ch. vi. 3. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. *all the rightness of*

3 <sup>d</sup> Yea, better is he than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.

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4 Again, I considered all travail, and <sup>e</sup> every right work, that <sup>f</sup> for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This is also vanity and vexation of spirit.

5 The fool <sup>g</sup> foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.

work. — <sup>f</sup> Heb. *this is the envy of a man from his neighbour*. <sup>g</sup> Prov. vi. 10. xxiv. 33.

NOTES ON CHAP. IV.

Verse 1. *Considered all the oppressions* ] אשוקים *ashukim* signifies any kind of *injury* which a man can receive in his *person*, his *property*, or his *good fame*.

*On the side of their oppressors there was power* ] And, therefore, neither protection nor comfort for the oppressed.

Verse 2. *Wherefore I praised the dead* ] I considered those happy who had escaped from the pil-

grimage of life to the place where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.

Verse 3. *Which hath not yet been* ] Better never to have been born into the world, than to have *seen* and *suffered* so many miseries.

Verse 4. *For this a man is envied* ] It is not by injustice and wrong only that men suffer, but through *envy* also. For if a man act uprightly and properly in the world, he soon becomes the object of his neighbours' *envy* and *calumny* too. Therefore the encour-

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Ante U.C. c. 224.

6 <sup>a</sup> Better is an handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit.

7 Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun.

8 There is one *alone*, and *there is* not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet *is there* no end of all his labour; neither is his <sup>b</sup>eye satisfied with riches; <sup>c</sup>neither *saith he*, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This *is* also vanity, yea, it *is* a sore travail.

9 Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.

10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him *that is* alone when he falleth; for *he hath* not another to help him up.

11 Again, if two lie together, then they have

<sup>a</sup> Prov. xv. 16, 17. xvi. 18.—<sup>b</sup> Prov. xxvii. 20. 1 John ii. 16.  
<sup>c</sup> Ps. xxxix. 6.

agement to do good, to act an upright part, is very little. This constitutes a part of the *vain* and *empty* system of human life.

Verse 5. *The fool foldeth his hands*] After all, without *labour* and *industry* no man can get any comfort in life; and he who gives way to idleness is the veriest of fools.

Verse 6. *Better is an handful with quietness*] These may be the words of the *slothful* man, and spoken in vindication of his idleness; as if he had said, "Every man who labours and amasses property is the object of *envy*, and is marked by the oppressor as a subject for spoil; better, therefore, to act as I do; gain little and have little, and enjoy my handful with quietness." Or the words may contain Solomon's *reflection* on the subject.

Verse 8. *There is one alone, and there is not a second*] Here *covetousness* and *avarice* are characterized. The man who is the centre of his own existence; has neither wife, child, nor legal heir; and yet is as intent on getting money as if he had the largest family to provide for; nor does he only labour with intense application, but he even refuses himself the comforts of life out of his own gains! This is not only *vanity*, the excess of foolishness, but it is also *sore travail*.

Verse 9. *Two are better than one*] Married life is infinitely to be preferred to this kind of life, for the very reasons alleged below, and which require no explanation.

Verse 13. *Better is a poor and a wise child*] The *Targum* applies this to *Abraham*. "Abraham was a *poor child* of only *three years* of age; but he had the spirit of prophecy, and he refused to worship the idols which the *old foolish king*—Nimrod, had set up;

heat: but how can one be warm *alone*?

12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

13 Better *is* a poor and a wise child, than an old and foolish king, <sup>d</sup>who will no more be admonished.

14 For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also *he that is* born in his kingdom becometh poor.

15 I considered all the living which walk under the sun, with the <sup>e</sup>second child that shall stand up in his stead.

16 *There is* no end of all the people, *even* of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also *is* <sup>f</sup>vanity and vexation of spirit.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. *who knoweth not to be admonished*.—<sup>e</sup> 1 Kings i. 43.  
<sup>f</sup> Ch. i. 2, 14.

therefore Nimrod cast him into a furnace of fire. But the Lord worked a miracle, and delivered him. Yet there was no knowledge in Nimrod, and he would not be *admonished*." The *Targum* proceeds:

Verse 14. *For out of prison he cometh to reign*] "Then Abraham left the country of the idolaters, where he had been *imprisoned*, and came and *reigned* over the land of Canaan; and Nimrod became *poor* in this world." This is the *fact* to which the ancient rabbins supposed Solomon to allude.

Verse 15. *With the second child that shall stand up*] The *Targum* applies this to the case of *Jeroboam* and *Rehoboam*. History affords many instances of mean persons raised to sovereign authority, and of kings being reduced to the meanest offices, and to a morsel of bread. Agrippa himself ascended the throne of Israel after having been long in prison. See Josephus, Ant. lib. xviii. c. 8. This the heathens attributed to *Fortune*.

Si fortuna volet, fies de rhetore consul;

Si volet hæc eadem, fies de consule rhetor.

Juv. Sat. vii., ver. 157.

Though I have given what the Jews suppose to be the allusion in these verses, yet the reader may doubt whether the reference be correct. There is a case implied, whether from *fact* or *assumption* I cannot say; but it seems to be this:

A king who had abused the authority vested in him by oppressing the people, had a son whose prudent conduct promised much comfort to the nation, when he should come to the throne. The father, seeing the popular wish, and becoming jealous of his son, *shut him up in prison*. In the interim the old king either *dies* or is *deposed*, and the son is

brought out of prison, and placed on the throne. Then (ver. 16, 16) multitudes of the people flock to him, and begin to walk under the sun; i. e., the prosperous state to which the nation is raised by its redemption from the former tyranny. However, the wise man insinuates that this sunshine will not last long. The young king, feeling the reins in his own hands, and being surrounded by those whose interest it was to flatter in order to obtain and continue in court favour, he also becomes corrupted, so that those who come after shall have no cause of rejoicing in him. This appears to be the case; and similar cases have frequently occurred, not only in Asiatic, but also in European history, I have, in another place, referred to the case of *Rushn Achter*, who was brought out of prison, and set upon the throne of Hindoostan. This is expressed in the following elegant Persian couplet, where his fortune is represented as similar to that of the patriarch Joseph:—

روشن اختر بود اکنون ماه شد  
یوسف از زندن بر آمد شاه شد

“The bright star is now become a moon :  
*Joseph* is taken out of prison, and become a king.”

*Rushn Achter* signifies a bright or splendid star.

Verse 16. There is no end of all the people] This is supposed to refer to the multitudes of people who hail the advent and accession of a new sovereign; for, as *Suetonius* remarks, *A plerisque adorari solem orientem*, “Most people adore the rising sun.” But when the new king becomes old, very few regard him; and perhaps he lives long enough to be as much despised by the very persons who before were ready to worship him. This is also a miserable vanity. Thus the blooming heir—

“Shall feel the sad reverse : honoured awhile ;  
Then, like his sire, contemned, abhorred, forgot.” C.

CHAPTER V.

The reverence to be observed in attending divine worship, 1—3. We should be faithful to our engagements, 4—7. The oppression of the innocent, 8. The king dependant on the produce of the soil, 9. Against covetousness, 10, 11. The peace of the honest labourer, 12. The evil effect of riches, 13, 14. Man cannot carry his property to the grave, 15—17. We should thankfully enjoy the blessings of God, 18—20.

A. M. cir. 3027.  
B. C. cir. 977.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 201.  
Ante U.C. c. 224.

KEEP thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools : for they consider not that they do evil.

2 Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God : for God is in heaven, and thou

upon earth : therefore let thy words be few.

3 For a dream cometh through the multitude of business ; and

a fool's voice is known by multitude of words.

4 When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it ; for he hath no pleasure in fools : pay that which thou hast vowed.

5 Better is it that thou shouldst not vow,

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cir. 201.  
Ante U.C. c. 224.

\* See Exod. iii. 5. Isai. i. 12, &c.—<sup>b</sup> 1 Sam. xv. 22. Ps. l. 8. Prov. xv. 8. xxi. 27. Hos. vi. 6.—<sup>c</sup> Or, word.  
<sup>d</sup> Prov. x. 19. Matt. vi. 7.—<sup>e</sup> Prov. x. 19.—<sup>f</sup> Numb.

xxx. 2. Deut. xxiii. 21, 22, 23. Ps. l. 14. lxxvi. 11. f Ps. lxxvi. 13, 14.—<sup>b</sup> Prov. xx. 25. Acts v. 4.

NOTES ON CHAP. V.

Verse 1. *Keep thy foot*] This verse the *Hebrew* and all the *Versions* join to the preceding chapter.

Solomon, having before intimated, though very briefly, that the only cure against human vanity is a due sense of religion, now enters more largely on this important subject, and gives some excellent directions with regard to the right performance of divine service, the nature of vocal and mental prayer, the danger of rash vows, &c.—C.

The whole verse might be more literally translated thus :

“Guard thy steps as thou art going to the house of God ; and approach to hearken, and not to give the sacrifice of fools, for none of them have knowledge about doing evil.” “They offer gifts for their sins, and do not turn from their evil works ; for they know not (they distinguish not) between good and evil.” See the *Chaldee*.

Verse 2. *Be not rash with thy mouth*] Do not hasten with thy mouth ; weigh thy words, feel deeply, think much, speak little.

“When ye approach his altar, on your lips Set strictest guard ; and let your thoughts be pure, Fervent, and recollected. Thus prepared, Send up the silent breathings of your souls, Submissive to his will.” C.

Verse 3. *For a dream cometh*] That is, as *dreams* are generally the effect of the business in which we have been engaged during the day ; so a multitude of words evidence the feeble workings of the foolish heart.

Verse 4. *When thou vowest a vow*] When in distress and difficulty, men are apt to promise much to God if he will relieve them ; but generally forget the vow when the distress or trouble is gone by.

Verse 5. *Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, &c.*]



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than that thou shouldest vow  
 and not pay.

6 Suffer not thy mouth to  
 cause thy flesh to sin ; \* neither  
 say thou before the angel, that it *was* an error :  
 wherefore should God be angry at thy voice,  
 and destroy the work of thine hands ?

7 For in the multitude of dreams and many  
 words *there are also divers vanities* : but <sup>b</sup> fear  
 thou God.

8 If thou <sup>c</sup> seest the oppression of the poor,  
 and violent perverting of judgment and justice  
 in a province, marvel not <sup>d</sup> at the matter : for  
 \* *he that is* higher than the highest regardeth ;  
 and *there be* higher than they.

9 Moreover the profit of the earth is for all ;

\* 1 Cor. xi. 10. —<sup>b</sup> Ch. xii. 13. —<sup>c</sup> Ch. iii. 16. —<sup>d</sup> Heb.  
 at the will or purpose.

the king *himself* is served by  
 the field.

10 He that loveth silver shall  
 not be satisfied with silver ; nor  
 he that loveth abundance with increase : this  
 is also vanity.

11 When goods increase, they are increased  
 that eat them : and what good *is there* to the  
 owners thereof, saving the beholding of *them*  
 with their eyes.

12 The sleep of a labouring man *is* sweet,  
 whether he eat little or much : but the abun-  
 dance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

13 <sup>e</sup> There is a sore evil *which* I have seen  
 under the sun, *namely*, riches kept for the  
 owners thereof to their hurt.

<sup>e</sup> Ps. xii. 5. lviii. 11. lviii. 11. lxx xii. 1. —<sup>f</sup> Ch. vi. 1.

We are under *constant obligations* to live to God ;  
 no *vow* can make it more so. Yet, there may be  
 cases in which we should bind ourselves to take up  
 some particular cross, to perform some particular  
 duty, to forego some particular attachment that does  
 not tend to bring our souls nearer to God. Then, if  
 fully determined, and strong in faith relative to the  
 point, *bind and hold fast* ; but if not fully, rationally,  
 and conscientiously determined, “do not suffer thy  
 mouth to cause thy soul to sin.”

Verse 6. *Neither say thou before the angel, that it  
 was an error*] Nor think of saying “before the cruel  
 angel, who shall exercise authority over thee in the  
 judgment of the great day, that thou didst it through  
 ignorance.”—*Chaldee*. I believe by the *angel* nothing  
 else is intended than the *priest*, whose business it was  
 to take cognizance of *vows* and *offerings*. See  
 Lev. v. 4, 5. In Mal. ii. 7, the priest is called the  
 “angel of the Lord of hosts.”

Verse 7. *In—dreams—are—divers vanities ; but  
 fear thou God.*] If, by the disturbed state of thy  
 mind during the day, or by Satanic influence, thou  
 dream of evil, do not give way to any unreasonable  
 fears, or gloomy forebodings, of any coming mischief :  
 —*FEAR GOD*. Fear neither the *dream* nor its *inter-  
 pretation* ; God will take care of and protect thee.  
 Most certainly, he that fears God need fear nothing  
 else. Well may an upright soul say to *Satan* him-  
 self, I fear God ; and because I fear *him*, I do not  
 fear *thee*.

Verse 8. *If thou seest the oppression of the poor*]  
 For this was a frequent case under all governments ;  
 and especially in the *provinces* or *colonies* which,  
 being far from the *seat* of government, were generally  
 oppressed by the sovereign’s deputies.

*Marvel not at the matter*] *חֶפְזֵי חַטָּאת* *hachephets*, the  
*will*, i. e., of God ; which permits such evils to take  
 place ; for all things shall work together for good to  
 them that love him.

“Marvel not,

Ye righteous, if his dispensations here  
 Unequal seem. What, though disorders reign?  
 He still presides, and with unerring hand  
 Directs the vast machine. His wisdom can  
 From discord harmony produce ; and make  
 Even vice itself subservient to his ends.”

Verse 9. *The profit of the earth is for all*] The  
 earth, if properly cultivated, is capable of producing  
 food for every living creature ; and without cultiva-  
 tion none has a right to expect bread.

*The king himself is served by the field.*] Without  
 the field he cannot have supplies for his own house ;  
 and, unless *agriculture* flourish, the necessary expenses  
 of the state cannot be defrayed. Thus, God joins the  
*head and feet* together ; for while the peasant is pro-  
 tected by the king as executor of the laws, the king  
 himself is dependant on the peasant ; as the wealth  
 of the nation is the fruit of the labourers’ toil.

Verse 10. *He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied  
 with silver*] The more he gets, the more he would  
 get ; for the saying is true,—

Crescit amor nummi, quantum ipsa pecunia crescit.

“The love of money increases, in proportion as  
 money itself increases.”

Verse 11. *When goods increase*] An increase of  
 property always brings an increase of expense, by a  
 multitude of servants ; and the owner really possesses  
 no more, and probably *enjoys* much less, than he did,  
 when every day provided its own bread, and could  
 lay up no store for the next. But if he have more  
*enjoyment*, his cares are multiplied ; and he has no  
 kind of profit. “This also is vanity.”

Verse 12. *The sleep of a labouring man is sweet*]  
 His labour is healthy exercise. He is without pos-  
 sessions, and without cares ; his sleep, being undis-  
 turbed, is sound and refreshing.

Verse 13. *Riches kept for the owners thereof to their  
 hurt.*] This may be the case through various causes :

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14 But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand.

15 \* As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.

16 And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go: and <sup>b</sup> what profit hath he <sup>c</sup> that hath laboured for the wind?

17 All his days also <sup>d</sup> he eateth in darkness, and he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.

18 Behold that which I have seen: <sup>e</sup> it <sup>f</sup> is

good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun <sup>g</sup> all the days of his life, which God giveth him: <sup>h</sup> for it is his portion.

19 <sup>i</sup> Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God.

20 <sup>k</sup> For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.

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B. C. cir. 977.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 201.  
Ante U.C. c. 224.

\* Job i. 21. Ps. xlix. 17. 1 Tim. vi. 7. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. i. 3. <sup>c</sup> Prov. xi. 29. — <sup>d</sup> Ps. cxxvii. 2. — <sup>e</sup> Ch. ii. 24. iii. 12, 13, 22. ix. 7. xi. 9. 1 Tim. vi. 17. — <sup>f</sup> Heb. there is a good

which is comely, &c. — <sup>g</sup> Heb. the number of the days. <sup>h</sup> Ch. ii. 10. iii. 22. — <sup>i</sup> Ch. ii. 24. iii. 13. vi. 2. — <sup>k</sup> Or, Though he give not much, yet he remembereth, &c.

1. He may make an improper use of them, and lose his health by them. 2. He may join in an unfortunate partnership, and lose all. 3. His riches may excite the desire of the robber; and he may spoil him of his goods, and even take away his life. 4. Or, he may leave them to his son, who turns profligate, spends the whole, and ruins both his body and soul. I have seen this again and again.

Verse 14. *And he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand.*] He has been stripped of his property by unfortunate trade or by plunderers; and he has nothing to leave to his children.

Verse 15. *As he came forth*] However it may be, he himself shall carry nothing with him into the eternal world. If he die worth millions, those millions are dead to him for ever; so he has had no real profit from all his labours, cares, anxieties, and vast property!

Verse 17. *All his days also he eateth in darkness*] Even his enjoyments are embittered by uncertainty. He fears for his goods; the possibility of being deprived of them fills his heart with anguish. But instead of *אכל yochel*, "he shall eat," *יֵלֵךְ yelech*, "he shall walk," is the reading of several MSS. *He walks* in darkness—he has no evidence of salvation. There is no ray of light from God to penetrate the gloom; and all beyond life is darkness impenetrable!

*And wrath with his sickness.*] His last hours are awful; for,

"Counting on long years of pleasure here,  
He's quite unfurnished for the world to come."

BLAIR.

He is full of anguish at the thought of death; but the fear of it is horrible. But if he have a sense of God's wrath in his guilty conscience, what horror can be compared with his horror!

Verse 18. *Behold that which I have seen*] This is the result of my observations and experience. God gives every man, in the course of his providence, the necessaries of life; and it is his will that he should thankfully use them.

*For it is his portion.*] What is requisite for him in the lower world; without them his life cannot subsist; and earthly blessings are as truly the portion of his body and animal life, as the salvation of God is the portion of his soul.

Verse 20. *For he shall not much remember*] The person who acts in this way, extracts all the good requisite from life. He passes through things temporal so as not to lose those that are eternal.

"Calm and serene, the road of life to him,  
Or long or short, rugged or smooth, with thorns  
O'erspread, or gay with flowers, is but a road.  
Such fare as offers grateful he accepts,  
And smiling to his native home proceeds." C.

CHAPTER VI.

The vanity of riches without use, 1, 2. Of children and of old age without riches and enjoyment, 3—7. Man does not know what is good for himself, 8—12.

A. M. cir. 3027.  
B. C. cir. 977.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 201.  
Ante U.C.c. 224.

THERE <sup>a</sup> is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it <sup>is</sup> common among men;

2 A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, <sup>b</sup> so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, <sup>c</sup> yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this <sup>is</sup> vanity, and it <sup>is</sup> an evil disease.

3 If a man beget an hundred children, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and <sup>d</sup> also that he have no burial; I say, that <sup>e</sup> an untimely birth <sup>is</sup> better than he.

4 For he cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness.

5 Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known *any thing*: this hath more rest than the other.

6 Yea, though he live a thousand years

<sup>a</sup> Ch. v. 13.—<sup>b</sup> Job xxi. 10, &c. Ps. xvii. 14. lxxiii. 7. <sup>c</sup> Luke xii. 20.—<sup>d</sup> 2 Kings ix. 35. Isai. xiv. 19, 20. Jer. xxii. 19.—<sup>e</sup> Job iii. 16. Ps. lviii. 8. Ch. iv. 3.—<sup>f</sup> Prov. xvi. 26.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. soul.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. than the walking of the

twice told, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?

7 <sup>f</sup> All the labour of man <sup>is</sup> for his mouth, and yet the <sup>g</sup> appetite is not filled.

8 For what hath the wise more than the fool? what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living?

9 Better <sup>is</sup> the sight of the eyes <sup>h</sup> than the wandering of the desire: this <sup>is</sup> also vanity and vexation of spirit.

10 That which hath been is named already, and it is known that it <sup>is</sup> man: <sup>i</sup> neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he.

11 Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what <sup>is</sup> man the better?

12 For who knoweth what <sup>is</sup> good for man in *this* life, <sup>k</sup> all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as <sup>l</sup> a shadow? for <sup>m</sup> who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?

A. M. cir. 3027.  
B. C. cir. 977.  
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soul.—<sup>1</sup> Job ix. 32. Isai. xlv. 9. Jer. xlix. 19.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. the number of the days of the life of his vanity.—<sup>3</sup> Pa. ci. 11. cix. 23. cxliv. 4. James iv. 14.—<sup>4</sup> Pa. xxxix. 6. Ch. viii. 7.

NOTES ON CHAP. VI.

Verse 2. *A man to whom God hath given riches*] A man may possess much earthly goods, and yet enjoy nothing of them. Possession and fruition are not necessarily joined together; and this is also among the *vanities* of life. It is worthy of remark, that it belongs to God as much to give the power to enjoy as it does to give the earthly blessings. A wise heathen saw this:—

Di tibi divitias dederant, artemque fruendi.

Hor. Ep. lib. i., ep. 4, ver. 7.

“The gods had given thee riches, and the art to enjoy them.”

Verse 3. *If a man beget an hundred children*] If he have the most numerous family and the largest possessions, and is so much attached to his riches that he grudges himself a monument; an *abortion* in the eye of reason is to be preferred to such a man; *himself* is contemptible, and his *life* worthless. The *abortion comes in with vanity*—balks expectation, *departs in darkness*—never opened its eyes upon the light, and *its name is covered with darkness*—it has no place in the family register, or in the chronicles of Israel. This, that hath neither *seen the sun*, nor *known any thing*, is preferable to the *miser* who has his coffers and granaries well furnished, should he have *lived a thousand years*, and had an *hundred children*. He has *seen*—possessed, no good; and *he and the abortion go to one place*, equally unknown, and wholly forgotten.

Verse 7. *All the labour of man*] This is the grand primary object of all human labour; merely to provide for the support of life by procuring things ne-

cessary. And life only exists for the sake of the soul; because man puts these things in place of *spiritual* good, the *appetite*—the intense desire after the *supreme good*, is not satisfied. When man learns to provide as distinctly for his *soul* as he does for his *body*, then he will begin to be happy, and may soon attain his end.

Verse 8. *For what hath the wise more than the fool?*] They must both labour for the same end. Both depend upon the labour of themselves or others for the necessaries of life. Both must eat and drink in order to live; and the rich man can no more eat two meals at a time, than he can comfortably wear two changes of raiment. The necessaries of life are the same to both, and their *condition* in life is nearly similar; liable to the same diseases, dissolution, and death.

Verse 9. *Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire*] This is translated by the *Vulgate*, as a sort of adage: *Melius est videre quod cupias, quam desiderare quod nescias*; “It is better to see what one desires than to covet what one knows not.” It is better to enjoy the present than to feed one’s self with vain desires of the *future*. What we translate *the wandering of desire*, *משאלה נפש* *mehalok nepshesh*, is the *travelling of the soul*. What is this? Does it simply mean *desire*? Or is there any reference here to the state of *separate spirits*? It however shows the soul to be in a *restless state*, and consequently to be *unhappy*. If Christ dwell in the heart by faith, the soul is then at *rest*, and this is properly the *rest of the people of God*.

Verse 10. *That which hath been is named already*] The *Hebrew* of this verse might be translated, “Who

is he who is? His name has been already called. And it is known that he is Adam; and that he cannot contend in judgment with him who is stronger than he."

"What is more excellent than man; yet can he not, in the lawe, get the victory of him that is mightier than he."—COVERDALE.

ADAM is his name; and it at once points out, 1. His *dignity*; he was made in the image of God. 2. His *fall*; he sinned against his Maker, and was cast out of Paradise. And 3. His *recovery* by Christ; the *second man (Adam) was the Lord from heaven, and a quickening Spirit.*

Verse 12. *For who knoweth what is good for man in this life*] Those things which we deem *good* are often *evil*. And those which we think *evil* are often *good*. So ignorant are we, that we run the greatest hazard in making a *choice*. It is better to leave ourselves and our concerns in the hands of the Lord, than to keep them in our own.

*For who can tell a man what shall be after him*] Futurity is with God. While he lives, man wishes to know what is before him. When he is about to die, he wishes to know what will be after him. All this is vanity; God, because he is merciful, will reveal neither.

CHAPTER VII.

*The value of a good name, 1. Advantages of sorrow and correction, 2—5. The emptiness of a fool's joy, 6. Of oppression, 7. The end better than the beginning, 8. Against hastiness of spirit, 9. Comparison of former and present times, 10. Excellency of wisdom, 11, 12. Of the dispensations of Providence, 13—15. Against extremes, 16—18. The strength of wisdom, 19. Man is ever liable to sin and mistake, 20. We should guard our words, 21, 22. Difficulty of obtaining wisdom, 23—25. A bad woman dangerous, 26. There are few who are really upright, 27—29.*

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cir. 201.  
Ante U.C. c. 224.

A <sup>a</sup> GOOD name is better than <sup>b</sup> precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.

2 *It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.*

3 <sup>c</sup> Sorrow is better than laughter: <sup>d</sup> for by

<sup>a</sup> Prov. xv. 30. xxii. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Matt. xxvi. 7. Mark xiv. 3. Luke vii. 37.—<sup>c</sup> Or, Anger.—<sup>d</sup> 2 Cor. vii. 10.—<sup>e</sup> See

the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

5 <sup>e</sup> It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.

6 <sup>f</sup> For as the <sup>g</sup> crackling of thorns under a

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Ps. cxli. 5. Prov. xiii. 18. xv. 31, 32.—<sup>f</sup> Ps. cxviii. 12. Ch. ii. 2.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. sound.

NOTES ON CHAP. VII.

Verse 1. *A good name*] Unsatisfactory as all sub-lunary things are, yet still there are some which are of great consequence, and among them a good name. The place is well paraphrased in the following verses:—

"A spotless name,

By virtuous deeds acquired, is sweeter far Than fragrant balms, whose odours round diffused Regale the invited guests. Well may such men Rejoice at death's approach, and bless the hours That end their toilsome pilgrimage; assured That till the race of life is finished none Can be completely blest."

Verse 2. *It is better to go to the house of mourning*] Birth-days were generally kept with great festivity, and to these the wise man most probably refers; but according to his maxim, the miseries of life were so many and so oppressive that the day of a man's death was to be preferred to the day of his birth. But, independently of the allusion, it is much more profitable to visit the house of mourning for the dead

than the house of festivity. In the *former* we find occasion for serious and deeply edifying thoughts and reflections; from the *latter* we seldom return with one profitable thought or one solid impression.

Verse 3. *Sorrow is better than laughter*] The reason is immediately given; for *by the sorrow of the countenance—the grief* of heart that shows itself in the countenance,

*The heart is made better.*] In such cases, most men try themselves at the tribunal of their own consciences, and resolve on amendment of life.

Verse 4. *The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning*] A wise man loves those occasions from which he can derive spiritual advantage; and therefore prefers *visiting the sick, and sympathizing* with those who have *suffered privations* by death. But the *fool*—the gay, thoughtless, and giddy, prefers places and times of diversion and amusement. Here he is prevented from seriously considering either himself or his latter end. The grand fault and misfortune of youth.

Verse 6. *For as the crackling of thorns*] They make a great noise, a great blaze; and are extin-

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B. C. cir. 977.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 901.  
Ante U. C. c. 224.

pot, so *is* the laughter of the fool: this also *is* vanity.

7 Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; \*and a gift

destroyeth the heart.

8 Better *is* the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and <sup>b</sup> the patient in spirit *is* better than the <sup>c</sup> proud in spirit.

9 <sup>d</sup> Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

10 Say not thou, What *is the cause* that the former days were better than these? for thou

<sup>a</sup> Exod. xxiii. 8. Dent. xvi. 19. — <sup>b</sup> Prov. xiv. 29. <sup>c</sup> Prov. xxi. 4. xxviii. 25. — <sup>d</sup> Prov. xiv. 17. xvi. 32. James i. 19. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. *out of wisdom.* — <sup>f</sup> Or, *as good as an in-*

heritance, *yea, better too.* — <sup>g</sup> Ch. xi. 7. — <sup>h</sup> Heb. *shades.* <sup>i</sup> See Job xii. 14. Ch. i. 15. Isai. xiv. 27. — <sup>k</sup> Ch. iii. 4. Dent. xxviii. 47.

guished in a few moments. Such, indeed, comparatively, are the joys of life: they are noisy, flashy, and transitory.

Verse 7. *Oppression maketh a wise man mad*] This has been translated with good show of reason, "Surely oppression shall give lustre to a wise man: but a gift corrupteth the heart." The chief difference here is in the word יהולל *yeholel*, which, from the root הלל *halal*, signifies to *glister, irradiate*, as well as to *move briskly, to be mad, furious, in a rage*; and certainly the former meaning suits this place best. We cannot think that the wise man—he that is truly religious (for this is its meaning in the language of Solomon), can be made *mad* by any kind of oppression; but as he trusts in God, so in patience he possesses his soul.

Verse 8. *Better is the end*] We can then judge of the whole, and especially if the matter relate to the conduct of Divine Providence. At the beginning we are often apt to make very rash conjectures, and often suppose that such and such things are against us; and that every thing is going wrong. Dr. *Byrom* gives good advice on such a subject:—

"With patient mind thy course of duty run:  
God nothing does, nor suffers to be done,  
But thou wouldst do thyself, couldst thou but see  
The end of all events, as well as HE."

I may add, in the words of our paraphrast,  
"Wait the result, nor ask with frantic rage  
Why God permits such things. His ways, though now  
Involved in clouds and darkness, will appear  
All right, when from thine eyes the mist is cleared.  
Till then, to learn submission to his will  
More wisdom shows, than vainly thus t' attempt  
Exploring what thou canst not comprehend,  
And God for wisest ends thinks fit to hide."—C.

Verse 9. *Anger resteth in the bosom of fools.*] A wise man, off his guard, may feel it for a moment: but in him it cannot *rest*: it is a *fire* which he immediately casts out of his breast. But the *fool*—the man who is under the dominion of his own tempers, harbours and fosters it, till it takes the form of malice, and then excites him to seek full revenge on those whom he deems enemies. Hence that class of *dangerous and empty fools* called *duellists*.

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dost not inquire \*wisely concerning this.

11 Wisdom *'is* good with an inheritance: and *by it there is* profit <sup>a</sup>to them that see the sun.

12 For wisdom *is* a <sup>b</sup> defence, and money *is* a defence: but the excellency of knowledge *is, that* wisdom giveth life to them that have it.

13 Consider the work of God: for <sup>i</sup> who can make *that* straight, which he hath made crooked?

14 <sup>k</sup> In the day of prosperity be joyful, but

<sup>a</sup> Exod. xxiii. 8. Dent. xvi. 19. — <sup>b</sup> Prov. xiv. 29. <sup>c</sup> Prov. xxi. 4. xxviii. 25. — <sup>d</sup> Prov. xiv. 17. xvi. 32. James i. 19. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. *out of wisdom.* — <sup>f</sup> Or, *as good as an in-*

heritance, *yea, better too.* — <sup>g</sup> Ch. xi. 7. — <sup>h</sup> Heb. *shades.* <sup>i</sup> See Job xii. 14. Ch. i. 15. Isai. xiv. 27. — <sup>k</sup> Ch. iii. 4. Dent. xxviii. 47.

Verse 10. *The former days were better than these?*] This is a *common saying*; and it is as *foolish* as it is common. There is no weight nor truth in it; but men use it to excuse their crimes, and the folly of their conduct. "In former times, say they, men might be more religious, use more self-denial, be more exemplary." This is *all false*. In former days men were wicked as they are now, and religion was unfashionable: God also is the same *now*, as he was *then*; as just, as merciful, as ready to help: and there is no depravity in the age that will excuse your crimes, your follies, and your carelessness.

Among the oriental proverbs I find the following:  
"Many say, *This is a corrupt age*. This mode of speaking is not just; it is not the age that is corrupt, but the men of the age."

Verse 11. *Wisdom is good with an inheritance*] In this chapter, Solomon introduces many observations which appear to be made by objectors against his doctrine; and as he was satisfied of their futility, he proposes them in their own full strength, and then combats and destroys them. It is quite necessary to attend to this; else we shall take the *objector's words* for those of *Solomon*; and think, as some have done, that the wise man contradicts and refutes himself. Observations, reflections, and objections of friends and adversaries are frequently introduced in the works of ancient authors, without mentioning them as such. This is frequent, more particularly in *ethic* writers; and we have many specimens in *Horace*; and without this distinction, it would be impossible to make sense of some of his writings. Here, an *objector*, who had listened to the wise man declaiming in favour of wisdom, suddenly interrupts him, and says in effect, "I grant the truth of what you have said. Wisdom is very good in its place; but what is it without property? A man who has a good inheritance may be profited by wisdom, because it will show him how to manage it to the best advantage."

Verse 12. *Wisdom is a defence*] To whom Solomon answers: All true *wisdom* is most undoubtedly a great advantage to men in all circumstances; and *money* is also of great use: but it cannot be compared to wisdom. *Knowledge* of divine and human things is a great blessing. *Money* is the means of

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in the day of adversity consider : God also hath <sup>a</sup> set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find

17 Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish : ' why shouldst thou die <sup>a</sup> before thy time ?

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nothing after him.

15 All things have I seen in the days of my vanity : <sup>b</sup> there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that longeth *his* life in his wickedness.

18 It is good that thou shouldst take hold of this ; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand : for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.

19 <sup>b</sup> Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city.

16 <sup>c</sup> Be not righteous over much : <sup>d</sup> neither make thyself over wise : why shouldst thou <sup>e</sup> destroy thyself ?

20 For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. made. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. viii. 14. — <sup>c</sup> Prov. xxv. 16.  
<sup>d</sup> Eccles. iii. 21. 22. Rom. xii. 3. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. be desolate.  
<sup>f</sup> Job xv. 32. Ps. lv. 23. Prov. x. 27. — <sup>g</sup> Heb. not in thy

time. — <sup>h</sup> Prov. xxi. 22. xxiv. 5. Ch. ix. 16, 18. — <sup>i</sup> 1 Kings viii. 46. 2 Chron. vi. 36. Prov. xx. 9. Rom. iii. 23. 1 John i. 8.

supporting our animal life : but *wisdom*—the religion of the true God, gives *life* to them that have it. Money cannot procure the favour of God, nor give *life* to the soul.

no need of all this watching, fasting, praying, self-denial, &c., you carry things to *extremes*. Why should you wish to be reputed singular and precise? To this the man of God answers :

Verse 13. Consider the work of God] Such is the nature of his providence, that it puts money into the hands of few : but wisdom is within the reach of all. The first is not necessary to happiness ; therefore, it is not offered to men : the latter is ; and therefore God, in his goodness, offers it to the whole human race. The former can rarely be acquired, for God puts it out of the reach of most men, and you cannot make that straight which he has made crooked : the latter may be easily attained by every person who carefully and seriously seeks it from God.

Verse 17. Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish : why shouldst thou die before thy time ?] *אל תרשע הרבה* *al tirsha harbeh*. Do not multiply wickedness ; do not add direct opposition to godliness to the rest of your crimes. Why should you provoke God to destroy you before your time ? Perdition will come soon enough. If you will not turn from your sins, and avoid it finally, yet keep out of it as long as you can.

Verse 14. In the day of prosperity be joyful] When ye receive these temporal gifts from God, enjoy them, and be thankful to the Giver : but remember, this sunshine will not *always* last. God has balanced prosperity and adversity against each other ; and were it not so, how many would put the former in the place of God himself !

It cannot be supposed, except by those who are totally unacquainted with the nature of true religion, that a man may have *too much holiness, too much of the life of God* in his soul ! And yet a learned Doctor, in three sermons on this text, has endeavoured to show, out-doing Solomon's infidel, "the *sin, folly, and danger* of being righteous over much." O rare darkness !

Verse 15. There is a just man that perisheth] This is another objection ; as if he had said, "I also have had considerable experience ; and I have not discovered any marked approbation of the conduct of the righteous, or disapprobation of that of the wicked. On the contrary, I have seen a righteous man perish, while employed in the work of righteousness ; and a wicked man prosperous, and even exalted, while living wickedly. The former is indeed a victim to his righteousness, while the life and prosperity of the latter were preserved : hence I conclude, it is not prudent, whatever good there may be in religion, and whatever excellence in wisdom, that men should be over much righteous, or over wise : for why should they by austerity and hard study destroy themselves ?" So far the objector.

Verse 18. It is good that thou shouldst take hold of this] Do not let such an observation slip : take hold of this ; do not forget that. Get what you can in an honest way ; but do not forget to get true religion ; for he that fears God will be saved from all evil.

Verse 16. Why shouldst thou destroy thyself ?] *תִּשְׁחַמְּךָ* *tishshomem*, make thyself desolate, so that thou shalt be obliged to stand alone ; neither make thyself over wise, *תִּתְחַצְּמֶךָ* *tithchaccam*, do not pretend to abundance of wisdom. Why shouldst thou be so singular ? In other words, and in modern language, "There is

Verse 19. Wisdom strengtheneth the wise] One wise, thoroughly learned, and scientific man may be of more use in fortifying and defending a city, than ten princes. Witness the case of *Syracuse*, when attacked by the Romans both by sea and land. *Archimedes* by his engines burnt and dashed their fleet to pieces, and destroyed all that came near the walls. And had not the city been betrayed, and he killed, all their force and skill could not have taken it.

Verse 20. There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not.] *לֹא יֵשֶׁתָּא* *lo yechta*, that may not sin. There is not a man upon earth, howsoever just he may be, and habituated to do good, but is *peccable*—liable to commit sin ; and therefore should continually watch and pray, and depend upon the Lord. But the text does not say, the *just man does commit sin*, but simply that he *may sin* ; and so our translators have rendered it in 1 Sam. ii. 25, twice

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21 Also <sup>a</sup> take no heed unto  
all words that are spoken; lest  
thou hear thy servant curse  
thee :

22 For oftentimes also thine own heart know-  
eth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed  
others.

23 All this have I proved by wisdom ; <sup>b</sup> I  
said, I will be wise ; but it *was* far from me.

24 <sup>c</sup> That which is far off, and <sup>d</sup> exceeding  
deep, who can find it out?

25 <sup>e</sup> I <sup>f</sup> applied mine heart to know, and to  
search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason  
of things, and to know the wickedness of folly,  
even of foolishness *and* madness.

26 <sup>g</sup> And I find more bitter than death the

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *give not thine heart.*—<sup>b</sup> Rom. i. 22.—<sup>c</sup> Job  
xxviii. 12, 20. 1 Tim. vi. 16.—<sup>d</sup> Rom. xi. 33.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. *I  
and my heart compassed.*—<sup>f</sup> Ch. i. 17. ii. 12.—<sup>g</sup> Prov. v.  
3, 4. xxii. 14.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. *he that is good before God.*—<sup>i</sup> Ch.

in 1 Kings viii. 31, 46, and 2 Chron. vi. 36 ; and the  
reader is requested to consult the note on 1 Kings  
viii. 46, where the proper construction of this word  
may be found, and the doctrine in question is fully  
considered.

Verse 21. *Also take no heed unto all words that are  
spoken*] This is good advice, and much for every  
man's peace through life.

*Thy servant curse thee*] מְקַלְלֶךָ *mekallelecha*, make  
light of thee, speak evil of thee.

Verse 22. *Thou thyself—hast cursed others.*] קָלַלְתָּ  
*kalalta*, thou hast spoken evil ; hast vilified others.  
Oh, who is free from evil speaking ; from uncharitable  
speaking ; from detailing their neighbour's faults,  
from whispering, tale-bearing, and backbiting? Do  
not wonder if God, in his justice, permit *thee* to be  
calumniated, seeing thou hast so frequently calum-  
niated others. See my discourse on Ps. xv. 1—5.

Verse 23. *All this have I proved by wisdom*] These  
rules I have laid down for my own conduct, and  
sought after more wisdom ; but have fallen far short  
of what I wished to be.

Verse 24. *That which is far off*] Though the wis-  
dom that is essential to our salvation may be soon  
learned, through the teaching of the Spirit of wisdom,  
yet in wisdom itself there are *extents* and *depths*  
which none can reach or fathom.

Verse 25. *I applied mine heart*] I cast about, סָבַרְתִּי  
*sabbothi*, I made a circuit ; I circumscribed the ground  
I was to traverse ; and all within my circle I was  
determined to *know*, and to *investigate*, and to *seek  
out wisdom*, and the *reason of things*. Has man *reason  
and understanding*? If so, then this is his work.  
God as much calls him to use these powers in this  
way, as to believe on the Lord Jesus that he may be  
saved ; and he that does not, according to the means  
in his power, is a slothful servant, from whom God  
may justly take away the misemployed or not used

woman, whose heart *is* snares  
and nets, *and* her hands as  
bands : <sup>h</sup> whoso pleaseth God  
shall escape from her ; but the  
sinner shall be taken by her.

27 Behold, this have I found, saith <sup>i</sup> the  
preacher, <sup>k</sup> counting one by one, to find out  
the account :

28 Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find  
not : <sup>l</sup> one man among a thousand have I  
found ; but a woman among all those have I  
not found.

29 Lo, this only have I found, <sup>m</sup> that God  
hath made man upright ; but <sup>n</sup> they have  
sought out many <sup>o</sup> inventions.

i. 1, 2.—<sup>k</sup> Or, *weighing one thing after another, to find out  
the reason.*—<sup>l</sup> Job xxxiii. 23. Ps. xii. 1.—<sup>m</sup> Gen. i. 27.  
<sup>n</sup> Gen. iii. 6, 7.—<sup>o</sup> Ps. xcix. 8. cvi. 29, 39. Prov. viii. 12.

talent, and punish him for his neglect. Every doc-  
trine of God is a subject both for reason and faith to  
work on.

*To know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness  
and madness.*]

“ And my own heart, with scrutiny severe,  
By far the harder task surveyed ; intent  
To trace that wisdom which from heaven descends,  
Fountain of living waters, and t' explore  
The source of human folly, whose foul streams  
Intoxicate and kill.”—C.

Verse 26. *And I find more bitter than death the  
woman*] After all his investigation of the *wickedness  
of folly*, and the *foolishness of madness*, he found  
nothing equally dangerous and ruinous with the *blan-  
dishments of cunning women*. When once the affec-  
tions are entangled, escape, without ruin, is almost  
impossible.

*Whoso pleaseth God*] The man who walks with  
God, and he alone, shall escape this sore evil : and  
even he that fears God, if he get with an artful  
woman, may be soon robbed of his strength, and  
become like other men. A bad or artful woman is  
represented as a *company of hunters, with nets, gin,  
&c.*, to catch their prey.

Verse 27. *Counting one by one*] I have gone over  
every particular. I have compared one thing with  
another ; man with woman, his wisdom with her  
wiles ; his strength with her blandishments ; his in-  
fluence with her ascendancy ; his powers of reason,  
with her arts and cunning : and in a *thousand men*,  
I have found *one* thoroughly upright man ; but among  
*one thousand* women I have not found *one* such.  
This is a lamentable account of the *state of morals* in  
Judea, in the days of the wise king Solomon. Thank  
God ! it would not be difficult to get a *tithe* of *such*  
in the same number in the present day.

The *Targum* gives this a curious turn :—“ There

is another thing which my soul has sought, but could not find: a man perfect and innocent, and without corruption, from the days of Adam until Abraham the just was born; who was found faithful and upright among the thousand kings who came together to construct the tower of Babel: but a woman like to Sarah among the wives of all those kings I have not found."

Verse 29. Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright] Whatever evil may be now found among men and women, it is not of God; for God made them all upright. This is a singular verse, and has been most variously translated: אשח האלויים את האדם ישר הדמה בקשו השבנות רבים asah haelohim eth haadam yashar vehemhah bikkeshu chishbonoth rabbim.

"Elohim has made mankind upright, and they have sought many computations."

"He hath meddled with endless questions."—VULGATE.

"Many reasonings."—SEPTUAGINT, SYRIAC, and ARABIC.

"They seek dyverse sotylties."—COVERDALE.

And he himself mengide with questions without end.—Old MS. Bible.

The Targum considers the text as speaking of Adam and Eve.

"This have I found out, that the Lord made the first man upright before him, and innocent: but the serpent and Eve seduced him to eat of the fruit of the tree, which gave the power to those who ate of it to discern between good and evil; and was the cause that death came upon him, and all the inhabitants of the earth; and they sought that they might find out many stratagems to bring this evil upon all the inhabitants of the world."

I doubt much whether the word חשבנות chishbonoth should be taken in a bad sense. It may signify the whole of human devices, imaginations, inventions, artifice, with all their products; arts, sciences, schemes, plans, and all that they have found out for the destruction or melioration of life. God has given man wondrous faculties; and of them he has made strange uses, and sovereign abuses: and they have been, in consequence, at one time his help, and at another his bane. This is the fair way of understanding this question.

CHAPTER VIII.

A man's wisdom makes his face shine, 1. Kings are to be greatly respected, 2—4. Of him who keeps the commandment; of the misery of man; of the certainty of death, 5—8. Of him that rules another to his own hurt, 9. The end of the wicked, 10. God's long-suffering, 11, 12. It shall be ill with wicked men, 13. Strange events in the course of providence, 14, 15. God's works cannot be found out, 16, 17.

A. M. cir. 3027. B. C. cir. 977. Ante I. Ol. cir. 201. Ante U. C. c. 224.

WHO is as the wise man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? \* a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and <sup>b</sup> the <sup>c</sup> boldness of his face shall be changed.

\* Prov. iv. 8, 9. xvii. 24. See Acts vi. 15.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. the strength.

2 I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, <sup>d</sup> and that in regard of the oath of God.

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3 \* Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.

<sup>c</sup> Deut. xxviii. 50.—<sup>d</sup> 1 Chron. xxix. 24. Ezek. xvii. 18. Rom. xiii. 5.—\* Ch. x. 4.

NOTES ON CHAP. VIII.

Verse 1. Who knoweth the interpretation] פשר peshet, a pure Chaldee word, found nowhere else in the Bible but in the Chaldee parts of Daniel. "A man's wisdom maketh his face to shine." Every state of the heart shines through the countenance; but there is such an evidence of the contented, happy, pure, benevolent state of the soul in the face of a truly pious man, that it must be observed, and cannot be mistaken. In the Hebrew the former clause of this verse ends the preceding chapter. Who has ever been deceived in the appearance of the face that belonged to a savage heart. Those who represent, by painting or otherwise, a wise man, with a gravely sour face, striking awe and forbidding approach, have either mistaken the man, or are unacquainted with some essential principles of their art.

The boldness of his face shall be changed.] Instead

of ישח yeshunne, which signifies shall be hated, many of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS. have ישחנה yeshunneh, shall be changed or doubled. Hence the verse might be read, "The wisdom of a man shall illuminate his face; and the strength of his countenance shall be doubled." He shall speak with full confidence and conviction on a subject which he perfectly understands, and all will feel the weight of his observations.

Verse 2. To keep the king's commandment] This sentence would be better translated, I keep the mouth of the king; I take good heed not to meddle with state secrets; and if I know, to hide them. Or I am obedient to the commands of the laws; I feel myself bound by whatever the king has decreed.

In regard of the oath of God.] You have sworn obedience to him; keep your oath, for the engagement was made in the presence of God. It appears that the Jewish princes and chiefs took an oath of



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4 Where the word of a king is, there is power: and <sup>a</sup>who may say unto him, What doest thou?

5 Whoso keepeth the commandment <sup>b</sup>shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.

6 Because <sup>c</sup>to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man is great upon him.

7 <sup>d</sup>For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him <sup>e</sup>when it shall be?

8 <sup>f</sup>There is no man that hath power <sup>g</sup>over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he

<sup>a</sup> Job xxxiv. 18. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. shall know. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. iii. 1. <sup>d</sup> Prov. xxiv. 22. Ch. vi. 12. ix. 12. x. 14. — <sup>e</sup> Or, how it

fidelity to their kings. This appears to have been done to David, 2 Sam. v. 1—3; to Joash, 2 Kings xi. 17; and to Solomon, 1 Chron. xxix. 24.

Verse 3. *Be not hasty*] I consider the first five verses here as directions to courtiers, and the more immediate servants of kings.

Be steadily faithful to your sovereign. *Do not stand in an evil thing.* If you have done wrong, do not endeavour to vindicate yourself before him; it is of no use; his power is absolute, and he will do what he pleases. He will take his own view of the subject, and he will retain it. The language of a despotic sovereign was ever this, Sic volo, sic jubeo, stat pro ratione voluntas; "I will this. I command that. No hesitation! My will is law!" Therefore it is added here, *Where the word of a king is, there is power*—influence, authority, and the sword. And *who may say unto him, whether he acts right or wrong, What doest thou?* ver. 4. No wonder in such governments there are so many revolutions; but they are revolutions without amendment, as it is one tyrant rising up to destroy another, who, when seated in authority, acts in the way of his predecessor; till another, like himself, do to him as he has done to the former. In our country, after a long trial, we find that a mixed monarchy is the safest, best, and most useful form of government; we have had, it is true, unprincipled ministers, who wished to turn our limited into an absolute monarchy; and they were always ready to state that an absolute monarchy was best. Granted; provided the monarch be as wise, as holy, and as powerful as God!

Verse 5. *Both time and judgment.*] It is a matter of great importance to be able to discern WHEN and HOW both to speak and act; but when time and manner are both determined, the matter comes next. *What shall I speak? What shall I do? When, how, and what, answer to time, manner, and matter.* To discern all these, and act suitably, is a lesson for a philosopher, and a study for a Christian.

Verse 6. *To every purpose there is time*] *יָסֵר* *chaphets*, every volition, every thing that depends on the

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power in the day of death: and there is no <sup>b</sup>discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.

9 All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun: there is a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.

10 And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this is also vanity.

11 <sup>i</sup>Because sentence against an evil work

shall be. — <sup>f</sup> Ps. xlix. 6, 7. — <sup>g</sup> Job xiv. 5. — <sup>h</sup> Or, casting off weapons. — <sup>i</sup> Ps. x. 6. l. 21. Isai. xxvi. 10.

will of man. He has generally the opportunity to do whatever he purposes; and as his purposes are frequently evil, his acts are so too; and in consequence his misery is great.

Verse 8. There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit] The Chaldee has, "There is no man who can rule over the spirit of the breath, so as to prevent the animal life from leaving the body of man." Others translate to this sense: "No man hath power over the wind to restrain the wind; and none has power over death to restrain him; and when a man engages as a soldier, he cannot be discharged from the war till it is ended; and by wickedness no man shall be delivered from any evil." Taking it in this way, these are maxims which contain self-evident truths. Others suppose the verse to refer to the king who tyrannizes over and oppresses his people. He shall also account to God for his actions; he shall die, and he cannot prevent it; and when he is judged, his wickedness cannot deliver him.

Verse 9. *One man ruleth over another to his own hurt.*] This may be spoken of rulers generally, who, instead of feeding, fleece the flock; tyrants and oppressors, who come to an untimely end by their mismanagement of the offices of the state. All these things relate to Asiatic despots, and have ever been more applicable to them than to any other sovereigns in the world. They were despotic; they still are so.

Verse 10. *Who had come and gone from the place of the holy*] The place of the holy is the sacred office which they held, anointed either as kings or priests to God; and, not having fulfilled the holy office in a holy way, have been carried to their graves without lamentation, and lie among the dead without remembrance.

Verse 11. *Because sentence*] *פִּיטְגָם* *pithgam*, a divine decree or declaration. This is no Hebrew, but a mere Chaldee word, and occurs only in the later books of the Bible—*Esther, Ezra, and Daniel*, and nowhere else but in this place. Because God does not immediately punish every delinquency, men think he dis-

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is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

12 \*Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his *days* be prolonged, yet surely I know that <sup>b</sup>it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him :

13 But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong *his* days, *which are* as a shadow ; because he feareth not before God.

14 There is a vanity which is done upon the earth ; that there be just *men*, unto whom it <sup>c</sup>happeneth according to the work of the wicked ; again, there be wicked *men*, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous : I said that this also *is* vanity.

<sup>a</sup> Isai. lxxv. 20. Rom. ii. 5. — <sup>b</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 11, 18, 19. Prov. i. 32, 33. Isai. iii. 10, 11. Matt. 25. 34, 41. — <sup>c</sup> Ps. lxxiii. 14. Ch. ii. 14. vii. 15. ix. 1, 2. — <sup>d</sup> Ch. ii. 24. iii. 12.

regards evil acts ; and therefore they are emboldened to sin on. So this long-suffering of God, which *leadeth to repentance*, is abused so as to *lead to farther crimes* ! When men sin against the remedy of their salvation, how can they escape perdition ?

Verse 12. *Though a sinner do evil an hundred times*] If God bear so long with a transgressor, waiting in his long-suffering for him to repent and turn to him, surely he will be peculiarly kind to them that *fear him*, and endeavour to walk uprightly before him.

Verse 13. *But it shall not be well with the wicked*] Let not the long-spared sinner presume that, because sentence is not speedily executed on his evil works, and he is suffered to go on to his *hundredth transgression*, God has forgotten to punish. No ; *he feareth not before God* ; and therefore he shall not ultimately escape.

Verse 14. *There be just men*] See on chap. vii. ver. 16.

Verse 15. *Then I commended mirth*] These are some more of the cavils of the infidel objector : "Since *virtue* is frequently under oppression, and *vice* triumphs in health, and rolls in wealth, I see plainly that we should not trouble ourselves about future things ; and therefore should be governed by the maxim, EDE, BIBE, LUDE. *Post mortem nulla voluptas.*"

*Eat, drink, and play,*  
While here you may ;

15 \*Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry ; for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.

16 When I applied mine heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth (for also *there is that* neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes) :

17 Then I beheld all the work of God, that <sup>e</sup>a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun : because though a man labour to seek *it* out, yet he shall not find *it* ; yea farther ; though a wise *man* think to know *it*, <sup>f</sup>yet shall he not be able to find *it*.

22. v. 18. ix. 7. — <sup>e</sup> Job v. 9. Ch. iii. 11. Rom. xi. 33. <sup>f</sup> Ps. lxxiii. 16.

For soon as death  
Has stopped your breath,  
Ye ne'er shall see a cheerful day.

Verse 16. *When I applied mine heart to know wisdom*] This is the reply of the wise man : "I have also considered these seeming contradictions. God governs the world ; but we cannot see the reasons of his conduct, nor know why he does this, omits that, or permits a third thing. We may *study night and day*, and deprive ourselves of *rest and sleep*, but we shall never fathom the depths that are in the divine government ; but all is right and just. *This* is the state of *probation* ; and in it neither can the wicked be punished, nor the righteous rewarded. But eternity is at hand ; and then shall every man receive according to his works. He that spends his life in the *eat, drink, and play*, will find, in that day, that he has lost the *time* in *which* he could have prepared for *eternity*.

Verse 17. *Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun*] I saw it to be of such a nature—1. That *a man cannot find it out*. 2. That if he *labour to find it out*, he shall not succeed. 3. That though he be *wise*—the *most instructed* among men, and *think to find it out*, he shall find *he is not able*. It is beyond the wisdom and power of man. How vain then are all your *cavils* about providence. You do not understand it ; you cannot comprehend it. Fear God !

## CHAPTER IX.

*No man knows, by any present sign, what is before him, 1. All things happen alike to all, 2, 3. Comparison of the state of the dead and the living, 4—6. Enjoy God's mercies, and live to his glory, 7—10. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, 11. Man is ignorant of futurity, 12, 13. The account of the little city, and the poor wise man, 14—18.*

A. M. cir. 3027.  
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Ante U.C. c. 224.

**F**OR all this <sup>a</sup> I considered in my heart even to declare all this, <sup>b</sup> that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them.

2 <sup>c</sup> All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath.

3 This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their

heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.

4 For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

5 For the living know that they shall die: but <sup>d</sup> the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for <sup>e</sup> the memory of them is forgotten.

6 Also their love and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.

7 Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.

8 Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.

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<sup>a</sup> Heb. I gave or set to my heart. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. viii. 14. — <sup>c</sup> Job xxi. 7, &c. Ps. lxxiii. 3, 12, 13. Mal. iii. 15.

<sup>d</sup> Job xiv. 21. Isai. lxiii. 16. — <sup>e</sup> Job vii. 8, 9, 10. Isai. xxvi. 14. — <sup>f</sup> Ch. viii. 15.

## NOTES ON CHAP. IX.

Verse 1. *The righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God*] This is a continuation of the preceding subject; and here the wise man draws a conclusion from what he had seen, and from the well-known character of God, that the righteous, the wise, and their conduct, were all in the hand of God, protected by his power, and safe in his approbation; but we cannot judge from the occurrences which take place in life who are the objects of God's love or displeasure.

Verse 2. *All things come alike to all*] This is very generally true; but God often makes a difference; and his faithful followers witness many interventions of Divine Providence in their behalf. But there are general blessings, and general natural evils, that equally affect the just and the unjust. But in this all is right; the evils that are in nature are the effects of the FALL of man; and God will not suspend general laws, or alter them, to favour individual cases. Nor does he design that his approbation or disapprobation shall be shown by any of these occurrences. Every holy man has a testimony of God's approbation in his own heart; and this makes him truly happy, let outward things be as they may. And, in general, what the wicked suffer is the fruit of their own doings. But the general state of nature as to what are called natural evils, is just as it ought to be. There is evil enough to show that man has fallen from God, and good enough to show that God deals with him in mercy. I cannot see that there is any rational cause for me to stumble at the dispensations of Divine Providence on these accounts.

Verse 3. *The heart of the sons of men is full of evil*] No wonder then that the curse of God should be frequent in the earth.

Verse 4. *For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope*] While a man lives he hopes to amend,

and he hopes to have a better lot; and thus life is spent, hoping to grow better, and hoping to get more. The Vulgate has, "There is none that shall live always, nor has any hope of such a thing." Perhaps the best translation is the following: "What, therefore, is to be chosen? In him that is living there is hope." Then choose that eternal life which thou hopest to possess.

*A living dog is better than a dead lion.*] I suppose this was a proverb. The smallest measure of animal existence is better than the largest of dead matter. The poorest living peasant is infinitely above Alexander the Great.

Verse 5. *The living know that they shall die*] This is so self-evident that none can doubt it; and therefore all that have this conviction should prepare for death and eternal blessedness.

*But the dead know not any thing*] Cut off from life, they know nothing of what passes under the sun. Their day of probation is ended, and therefore they can have no farther reward in living a holy life; nor can they be liable to any further punishment for crimes in a state of probation, that being ended.

Verse 6. *Also their love, and their hatred*] It is evident that he speaks here of the ignorance, want of power, &c., of the dead, in reference only to this life. And though they have no more a portion under the sun, yet he does not intimate that they have none anywhere else. A man threatens to conquer kingdoms, &c. He dies; what are his threats?

Verse 7. *Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy*] Do not vex and perplex yourselves with the dispensations and mysteries of Providence; enjoy the blessings which God has given you, and live to his glory; and then God will accept your works.

Verse 8. *Let thy garments be always white*] The Jews wore white garments on festal occasions, as emblems of joy and innocence. Be always pure, and

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9 <sup>a</sup> Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the

sun, all the days of thy vanity: <sup>b</sup> for that *is* thy portion in *this* life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

11 I returned, <sup>c</sup> and saw under the sun, that the race *is* not to the swift, nor the battle to the

<sup>a</sup> Heb. See or enjoy life.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. ii. 10, 24. iii. 13, 22. v. 18. <sup>c</sup> Amos ii. 14, 15. Jer ix. 23.—<sup>d</sup> Ch. viii. 7.

always happy. The inhabitants of India are all dressed in clean *white cotton*, and to this is the allusion in the text.

The *Targum* says: "At all times let thy garments be washed and pure from the stain of sin. Acquire a good name, which is likened to the oil of anointing, that blessings may be called down upon thy head, and goodness not forsake thee."

Verse 9. *Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest*] Marry prudently, keep faithfully attached to the wife thou hast chosen, and rejoice in the labour of thy hands.

Some understand this as the words of the libertine objector: "Live joyfully with the woman whom thou lovest best." But this does not comport so well with the scope of the place.

Verse 10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do*] Examine here the *WHAT*, the *HOW*, and the *WHY*.

I. *What* is necessary to be done in this life, in reference to another? 1. Turn from sin. 2. Repent. 3. Frequent the ordinances of God, and associate with the upright. 4. Read the Scriptures. 5. Pray for pardon. 6. Believe on the Lord Jesus, that thou mayest obtain it. 7. Look for the gift of the Holy Spirit. 8. Bring forth in their seasons the fruits of it—(1) Repentance; (2) Faith; and (3) The Holy Spirit. 9. Live to get good. 10. And to do good. 11. And refer every purpose and act to the eternal world.

II. *How* should these be done? *With thy might*. 1. Be fully convinced of the necessity of these things. 2. Be determined to act according to this conviction. 3. Then act with all thy strength; put forth all thy power in avoiding evil, repenting of sin, &c., &c.

III. *Why* should this be done? 1. Because thou art a dying man. 2. Thou art going into the grave. 3. When thou leavest this life, thy state of probation, with all its advantages, is eternally ended. 4. If thou die in sin, where God is thou shalt never come. For, 1. There is no *work* by which thou mayest profit; 2. No *device* by which thou mayest escape punishment; 3. No *knowledge* of any means of help; and, 4. No *wisdom*—restoration of the soul to the

strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

12 For <sup>d</sup> man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so *are* the sons of men <sup>e</sup> snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.

13 This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it *seemed* great unto me:

14 <sup>f</sup> *There was* a little city, and few men

<sup>a</sup> Prov. xxix. 6. Luke xii. 20, 39. xvii. 26, &c. 1 Thess. v. 3. <sup>f</sup> See 2 Sam. xx. 16—22.

favour and image of God, *in that grave whither thou goest*. Therefore, work while it is called *to-day*.

My old MS. Bible translates this nervously: *Whateuer thinge may thin hond don, basily wirch: for nouthur werc, ne resoun, ne wisdom, ne keennynng schula be a nentis hell, whither thou gost*. Properly speaking, every sinner is *going to hell*, and the wisdom of God calls upon him to turn and live.

Verse 11. *The race is not to the swift*] It is not by swiftness, nor by strength and valour, that races are gained and battles won. God causes the *lame* often to take the *prey*, the prize; and so works, that the *weak* overthrow the *strong*; therefore, no man should confide in himself. All things are under the government, and at the disposal, of God.

*But time and chance*] *rw eth*, time or opportunity, and *y33 pega*, incident or occurrence,—

*Happeneth to them all*.] Every man has what may be called *time* and *space* to act in, and *opportunity* to do a particular work. But in this *TIME* and *OPPORTUNITY* there is *INCIDENT*, what *may fall in*; and *OCCURRENCE*, what *may meet* and frustrate an attempt. These things should be wisely weighed, and seriously balanced; for those *four things* belong to every human *action*. While you have *TIME*, seek an *OPPORTUNITY* to do what is right; but calculate on *hindrances* and *oppositions*, because *time* and *opportunity* have their *INCIDENT* and *OCCURRENCE*. *Coverdale* translates this verse well: "I sawe that in runnyng, it helpeth not to be swift; in batayll, it helpeth not to be stronge; to fedyng, it helpeth not to be wyse; to riches, it helpeth not to be sutyll; to be had in favoure, it helpeth not to be connyng; but that all lyeth in time and fortune."

Verse 12. *As the birds that are caught*] Man acts so heedlessly, notwithstanding all his wisdom, and all his warnings, that he is often taken, as a *fish* is, by the baited hook; and the *bird* by the baited snare. And thus, an *evil time*, like the snare, gin, trap, hook, falleth suddenly upon them; and they are taken in a moment, and have no means of escaping. How frequently do we see these comparisons illustrated!

Verse 14. *There was a little city, and few men with in it*] Here is another proof of the vanity of sub-

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within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it :

15 Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.

16 <sup>a</sup> Then said I, Wisdom *is* better than

<sup>a</sup> Prov. xxi. 22. xxiv. 5. Ch. vii. 19. Ver. 18.

lunary things; the *ingratitude of men*, and the *little compensation* that *genuine merit* receives. The little history mentioned here may have either been a *fact*, or intended as an instructive fable. A *little city*, with *few to defend* it, being besieged by a *great king* and a powerful army, was delivered by the *cunning and address of a poor wise man*; and afterwards his *townsmen* forgot their obligation to him.

Those who *spiritualize* this passage, making the *little city* the CHURCH, the *few men* the APOSTLES, the *great king* the DEVIL, and the *poor wise man* JESUS CHRIST, abuse the text.

But the *Targum* is not less whimsical: "The *little city* is the human body; *few men in it*, *few good affections* to work righteousness; the *great king*, evil concupiscence, which, like a strong and powerful king, enters into the body to oppress it, and besieges the heart so as to cause it to err; *built great bulwarks against it*—evil concupiscence builds his throne in it wheresoever he wills, and causes it to decline from the ways that are right before God; that it may be taken in the greatest nets of hell, that he may burn it seven times, because of its sins. But there is *found in it a poor wise man*—a good, wise, and holy affection, which prevails over the evil principle, and snatches the body from the judgment of hell, by the strength of its wisdom. Yet, after this deliverance, the man did not remember what the good principle had done for him; but said in his heart, I am innocent," &c.

What a wonderful text has this been in the hands of many a modern *Targumist*; and with what force have the *Keachonians* preached Christ crucified from it!

Such a passage as this receives a fine illustration from the case of *Archimedes* saving the city of *Syracuse* from all the Roman forces besieging it by sea and land. He destroyed their ships by his *burning glasses*, lifted up their galleys out of the water by his machines, dashing some to pieces, and sinking others. One man's wisdom here prevailed for a long time against the most powerful exertions of a mighty nation. In this case, wisdom far exceeded strength. But was not Syracuse taken, notwithstanding the exertions of this poor wise man? No. But it was *betrayed* by the baseness of *Mericus*, a Spaniard, one of the *Syracusan* generals. He delivered the whole district he commanded into the hands of *Marcellus*, the Roman consul, *Archimedes* having defeated every attempt made by the Romans, either by sea or land: yet he commanded no company of men, made no sorties, but confounded and destroyed them by his machines.

strength: nevertheless <sup>b</sup> the poor man's wisdom *is* despised, and his words are not heard.

17 The words of wise men *are* heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.

18 <sup>c</sup> Wisdom *is* better than weapons of war: but <sup>d</sup> one sinner destroyeth much good.

<sup>b</sup> Mark vi. 2, 3.—<sup>c</sup> Ver. 16.—<sup>d</sup> Josh. vii. 1, 11, 12.

This happened about 208 years before Christ, and nearly about the time in which those who do not consider Solomon as the author suppose this book to have been written. This wise man was *not remembered*; he was slain by a Roman soldier, while deeply engaged in demonstrating a new problem, in order to his farther operations against the enemies of his country. See *Plutarch*, and the historians of this *Syracusan* war.

When *Alexander* the Great was about to destroy the city *Lampsacus*, his old master *Anaximenes* came out to meet him. *Alexander*, suspecting his design, that he would intercede for the city, being determined to destroy it, swore that he would *not* grant him any thing he should ask. Then said *Anaximenes*, "I desire that you *will* destroy this city." *Alexander* respected his oath, and the city was spared. Thus says *Valerius Maximus*, the narrator (lib. vii. c. iii., No. 4. Extern.), by this sudden turn of sagacity, this ancient and noble city was preserved from the destruction by which it was threatened. "Hæc velocitas sagacitatis oppidum vetusta nobilitate inclytum exitio, cui destinatum erat, subtraxit."

A stratagem of *Jaddua*, the *high-priest*, was the means of preserving *Jerusalem* from being destroyed by *Alexander*, who, incensed because they had assisted the inhabitants of Gaza when he besieged it, as soon as he had reduced it, marched against *Jerusalem*, with the determination to raise it to the ground; but *Jaddua* and his priests in their sacerdotal robes meeting him on the way, he was so struck with their appearance, that he not only prostrated himself before the *high-priest*, and spared the city, but also granted it some remarkable privileges. But the case of *Archimedes* and *Syracuse* is the most striking and appropriate in all its parts. That of *Anaximenes* and *Lampsacus* is also highly illustrative of the maxim of the wise man: "Wisdom is better than strength."

Verse 16. *The poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.*] I cannot help pursuing this illustration a little farther. The soldier who found *Archimedes* busily employed in drawing figures upon the sand, put to him some impertinent question, withal rudely obtruding himself on his operations. To whom this wonderful mathematician replied, "Stand off, soldier, and do not spoil my diagram;" on which the bloody savage struck him dead!

Verse 17. *The words of wise men are heard in quiet*] In the tumult of war the words of *Archimedes* were not heard; and his life was lost.

Verse 18. *Wisdom is better than weapons of war*] So proved in the case of *Archimedes*.

*But one sinner*] Such as the Roman butcher above mentioned.

*Destroyeth much good.*] Such as were the life and

skill of the Syracusan mathematician. One sinner has often injured the work of God; one stumbling-block has sometimes destroyed a revival of religion. Sin acts like a ferment; whatever comes in contact with it, it assimilates to itself.

CHAPTER X.

*Observations on wisdom and folly, 1—3. Concerning right conduct towards rulers, 4. Merit depressed, and worthlessness exalted, 5—7. Of him who digs a pit, and removes a landmark, 8, 9. The use of wisdom and experience, 10. Of the babblers and the fool, 11—15. The infant king, 16. The well-regulated court, 17. Of slothfulness, 18. Of feasting, 19. Speak not evil of the king, 20.*

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**D**EAD <sup>a</sup> flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: *so doth* a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom *and* honour.

2 A wise man's heart *is* at his right hand; but a fool's heart at his left.

3 Yea also, when he that is a fool walketh by the way, <sup>b</sup> his wisdom faileth *him*, <sup>c</sup> and he saith to every one *that he is* a fool.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *Flies of death*.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. *his heart*.—<sup>c</sup> Prov. xiii. 16. xviii. 2.—<sup>d</sup> Ch. viii. 3.—<sup>e</sup> 1 Sam. xxv. 24, &c. Prov.

NOTES ON CHAP. X.

Verse 1. *Dead flies*] Any putrefaction spoils perfume; and so a foolish act ruins the character of him who has the reputation of being wise and good. Alas! alas! in an unguarded moment how many have tarnished the reputation which they were many years in acquiring! Hence, no man can be said to be safe, till he is taken to the paradise of God.

Verse 2. *A wise man's heart is at his right hand*] As the *right hand* is ordinarily the best exercised, strongest, and most ready, and the *left* the contrary, they show, 1. The command which the wise man has over his own mind, feelings, passions, &c., and the prudence with which he acts. And, 2. The want of prudence and management in the fool, who has no restraint on his passions, and no rule or guard upon his tongue. The *right hand* and the *left* are used in Scripture to express *good* and *evil*. The wise man is always employed in doing *good*; the fool, in nonsense or evil.

Verse 3. *When—a fool walketh by the way*] In every act of life, and in every company he frequents, the irreligious man shows what he is. Vanity, nonsense, and wickedness are his themes: so that in effect *he saith to every one that he is a fool*.

Verse 4. *If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee*] If the king get incensed against thee.

*Leave not thy place*] Humble thyself before him, that is *thy place* and duty; for yielding to him, and not standing stoutly in thy defence, pacifieth *great offences*: and then, when his anger is appeased, he will hear any thing in thy justification, if thou have

4 If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, <sup>d</sup> leave not thy place; for <sup>e</sup> yielding pacifieth great offences.

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5 There is an evil *which* I have seen under the sun, as an error *which* proceedeth <sup>f</sup> from the ruler:

6 <sup>g</sup> Folly is set <sup>h</sup> in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place.

7 I have seen servants <sup>i</sup> upon horses, and

xxv. 15.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. *from before*.—<sup>g</sup> Esth. iii. 1.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. *in great heights*.—<sup>i</sup> Prov. xix. 10. xxx. 22.

any thing to offer. This is good advice to a *child* in reference to his *parents*, and to an *inferior* of any kind in reference to his *superiors*.

Several of the Fathers understood this differently. *If the spirit of the ruler*—the influence of Satan, *hath risen up against* and prevailed over thee, to bring thee into some sin; *leave not thy place*—do not despair of God's mercy; humble thyself before him, and seek pardon through the Son of his love; and this will be *מרפא marpe*, a *remedy* or *cure* even for *חטאים גדולים chataim gedolim*, great errors or sins. All this is true in itself, whether found in this text or not.

Verse 5. *An error which proceedeth from the ruler*] What this error in the ruler is, the two following verses point out: it is simply this—an injudicious distribution of offices, and raising people to places of trust and confidence, who are destitute of *merit*, are neither of *name* nor *famly* to excite public confidence, and are without *property*; so that they have no *stake in the country*, and their only solicitude must naturally be to enrich themselves, and provide for their poor relatives. This is frequent in the governments of the world; and *favouritism* has often brought prosperous nations to the brink of ruin. *Folly* was set in *dignity*; the man of property, sense, and name, in a *low place*. *Servants*—menial men, *rode upon horses*—carried every thing with a high and proud hand; and *princes*—the nobles of the people, were obliged to *walk by their sides*, and often from the state of things to become in effect *their servants*. This was often the case in this country, during the reign of *Thomas à Becket*, and *Cardinal Wolsey*.

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princes walking as servants upon the earth.

8 \* He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whose breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.

9 Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby.

10 If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct.

11 Surely the serpent will bite <sup>b</sup> without enchantment; and a <sup>c</sup> babbler is no better.

12 <sup>d</sup> The words of a wise man's mouth are <sup>e</sup> gracious; but <sup>f</sup> the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. vii. 16. Prov. xxvi. 27.—<sup>b</sup> Ps. lviii. 4, 5. Jer. viii. 17.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *the master of the tongue*.—<sup>d</sup> Prov. x. 32. xii. 13.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. *grace*.—<sup>f</sup> Prov. x. 14. xviii. 7.—<sup>g</sup> Heb.

These insolent men lorded it over the whole nation; and the people and their gentry were raised or depressed according as their pride and caprice willed. And, through this kind of errors, not only a few sovereigns have had most uncomfortable and troublesome reigns, but some have even lost their lives.

Verse 8. *Whoso breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him.*] While spoiling his neighbour's property, he himself may come to greater mischief: while pulling out the sticks, he may be bit by a serpent, who has his nest there. Some have supposed that נחש *nachash* here means a *thorn*; perhaps from the similarity of its *prick* to the serpent's *sting*. He who forces his way through a hedge will be pricked by the thorns.

Verse 9. *Whoso removeth stones*] This verse teaches care and caution. Whoever pulls down an old building is likely to be hurt by the stones; and in *cleaving wood* many accidents occur for want of sufficient caution.

Verse 10. *If the iron be blunt*] If the axe have lost its edge, and the owner do not sharpen it, he must apply the more strength to make it cut: but the *wisdom that is profitable to direct* will teach him, that he should *whet his axe*, and *spare his strength*. Thus, without wisdom and understanding we cannot go profitably through the meanest concerns in life.

Verse 11. *The serpent will bite without enchantment*] בלע ללא רעש *belo lachash*, without *hissing*. As a snake may bite before it hiss, so also will the babbler, talkative person, or calumniator. Without directly speaking evil, he insinuates, by innuendoes, things injurious to the reputation of his neighbour. עִיף הַשֵּׁרֶשֶׁת בִּיטֵּה בְּשֵׁיטֵּת בְּלִיטֵּת.—Old MS. Bible. "A babbler of his tongue is no better than a serpent that styngeth without hyssynge."—COVERDALE. The moral of this saying is simply this: A calumniator is as dangerous as a poisonous serpent; and from the envenomed tongue of slander and detraction no man is safe. The comparing the serpent, נחש *nachash*, to a *babbler*,

13 The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness: and the end of <sup>e</sup> his talk is mischievous madness.

14 <sup>h</sup> A fool also <sup>i</sup> is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and <sup>k</sup> what shall be after him, who can tell him?

15 The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city.

16 <sup>l</sup> Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning!

17 Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and <sup>m</sup> thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!

*his mouth*.—<sup>h</sup> Prov. xv. 2.—<sup>i</sup> Heb. *multiplied words*.  
<sup>k</sup> Ch. iii. 22. vi. 12. viii. 7.—<sup>l</sup> Isai. iii. 4, 5, 12. v. 11.  
<sup>m</sup> Prov. xxxi. 4.

has something singular in it. I have already supposed that the creature mentioned, Gen. iii. 1, was of the genus *simia*. This has been ridiculed, but not disproved.

Verse 12. *The words of a wise man's mouth*] Every thing that proceeds from him is decent and orderly; creditable to himself, and acceptable to those who hear him. But the *lips of the fool* which speak every thing at random, and have no understanding to guide them, are not only not pleasant to others, but often destructive to himself.

Verse 14. *A man cannot tell what shall be*] A foolish babbling man will talk on every subject, though he can say as little on the *past*, as he can on the *future*.

Verse 15. *He knoweth not how to go to the city.*] I suppose this to be a proverb: "He knows nothing; he does not know his way to the next village." He may labour; but for want of *judgment*, he wears himself to no purpose.

Verse 16. *Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child*] *Minorities* are, in general, very prejudicial to a state. Regents either disagree, and foment civil wars; or oppress the people. Various discordant interests are raised up in a state during a minority; and the young king, having been under the tutelage of interested men, acts *partially* and *injuriously* to the interests of the people when he comes to the throne; and this produces popular discontent, and a troubled reign.

*Thy princes eat in the morning!*] They do nothing in order; turn night into day, and day into night; sleep when they should wake, and wake when they should sleep; attending more to chamberings and banquetings, than to the concerns of the state.

Verse 17. *When thy king is the son of nobles*] *Υεος ελευθερων*, the son of free men; persons well acquainted with the principles of civil liberty, and who rule according to them. *Septuagint*. Such a one as comes to the throne in a legitimate way, from

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18 By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.

19 A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things.

<sup>a</sup> Pa. civ. 15. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. *maketh glad the life*. — <sup>c</sup> Exod. xxii. 28. Acts xxiii. 5.

an ancient regal family, whose right to the throne is incontestable. It requires such a long time to establish a regal right, that the state is in continual danger from *pretenders* and *usurpers*, where the king is not the son of nobles.

*And thy princes eat in due season*] All persons in places of trust for the public weal, from the king to the lowest public functionary, should know, that the public are exceedingly scandalized at repeated accounts of entertainments, where irregularity prevails, much money is expended, and no good done. These things are drawn into precedent, and quoted to countenance debauch in the inferior classes. The natural division of the day for necessary *repasts* is, *BREAKFAST, eight, or half after; DINNER, one, or half after; SUPPER, eight, or half after.* And these, or even *earlier* hours, were formerly observed in these countries. Then we had scarcely any such thing as *gout*, and no *nervous disorders*.

In ancient nations the custom was to eat but *once*; and then about mid-day.

Verse 18. *By much slothfulness*] This is remarkably the case in some countries. Houses are not repaired till they almost fall about the ears of the inhabitants. We have an adage that applies to all such cases: "A stitch in time saves nine."

Verse 19. *A feast is made for laughter*] The object of it is to produce merriment, to banish care and concern of every kind. But who are they who make and frequent such places? Epicures and drunkards, generally; such as those of whom *Horace* speaks:

*Nos numerus sumus, et fruges consumere nati.*  
*Epist. lib. i., ep. 2, ver. 27.*

"Those whose names stand as indications of *men*, the *useless many*; and who appear to be born only to consume the produce of the soil."

20 <sup>a</sup> Curse not the king, no, not in thy <sup>d</sup> thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.

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<sup>d</sup> Or, *conscience*, figure like, Luke xix. 40.

*But money answereth all*] This saying has prevailed every where.

*Scilicet uxorem cum dote, fidemque, et amicos,  
Et genus, et formam REGINA PECUNIA donat;  
Ac bene nummatum decorat Suadela, Venusque.*

HOR. Ep. lib. i., ep. 6, ver. 36.

"For gold, the sovereign QUEEN of all below,  
*Friends, honour, birth, and beauty*, can bestow.  
The goddess of *persuasion* forms his train;  
And *Venus* decks the well-bemonied swain."

FRANCIS.

Verse 20. *Curse not the king*] Do not permit thyself even to think evil of the king; lest thy tongue at some time give vent to thy thoughts, and so thou be chargeable with treason.

*For a bird of the air shall carry the voice*] Does he refer here to such fowls as the *carrier pigeon*, which were often used to carry letters under their wings to a great distance, and bring back answers? The *Targum* turns it curiously: "Do not speak evil of the king in thy conscience, nor in the secret of thy heart, nor in the most hidden place in thy house, curse not a wise man; for *Raziel* calls daily from heaven upon Mount Horeb, and his voice goes through the whole world; and *Elijah*, the great priest, goes flying through the air like a winged eagle, and publishes the words which are spoken in secret by all the inhabitants of the earth."

Civil government is so peculiarly of God, that he will have it supported for the benefit of mankind; and those who attempt to disturb it are generally marked by his *strong disapprobation*. And though there have been multitudes of reasons hatched in the deepest secrecy; yet, through the providence of God, they have been discovered in the most singular manner. This shows God's care for government.

## CHAPTER XI.

*Give alms to all, 1—4. The works of God unknown to man, 5. Diligence necessary, 6. Prosperity frequently succeeded by adversity, 7, 8. There will be a day of judgment, 9, 10.*



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CAST thy bread <sup>a</sup> upon <sup>b</sup> the waters : <sup>c</sup> for thou shalt find it after many days.

2 <sup>d</sup> Give a portion <sup>e</sup> to seven, and also to eight ; <sup>f</sup> for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.

3 If the clouds be full of rain, they empty *themselves* upon the earth : and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.

4 He that observeth the wind shall not sow ; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

<sup>a</sup> See Isai. xxxii. 20. — <sup>b</sup> Heb. *upon the face of the waters.*  
<sup>c</sup> Deut. xv. 10. Prov. xix. 17. Matt. x. 42. 2 Cor. ix. 8. Gal. vi. 9, 10. Hebr. vi. 10. — <sup>d</sup> Pa. cxii. 9. Luke vi. 30.

## NOTES ON CHAP. XI.

Verse 1. *Cast thy bread upon the waters*] An allusion to the sowing of rice ; which was sown upon muddy ground, or ground covered with water, and trodden in by the feet of cattle : it thus took root, and grew, and was found after many days in a plentiful harvest. Give alms to the poor, and it will be as seed sown in good ground. God will cause thee afterwards to receive it with abundant increase. The *Targum* understands it of giving bread to poor sailors. The *Vulgate* and my *old Bible* have the same idea. *Send thy bread upon men passing waters.*

Verse 2. *Give a portion to seven*] Never cease giving while thou seest a person in distress, and hast wherewithal to relieve him.

*Thou knowest not what evil*] Such may be the change of times, that thou mayest yet stand in need of similar help thyself. *Do as thou wouldst be done by.*

Verse 3. *If the clouds be full of rain*] Act as the clouds ; when they are full, they pour out their water indifferently on the field and on the desert. By giving charity indiscriminately, it may be that thou wilt often give it to the unworthy ; but thou shouldst ever consider that he is an object of thy charity, who appears to be in real want ; and better relieve or give to a hundred worthless persons, than pass by one who is in real distress.

*Where the tree falleth, there it shall be.*] Death is at no great distance ; thou hast but a short time to do good. Acquire a heavenly disposition while here ; for there will be no change after this life. If thou die in the love of God, and in the love of man, in that state wilt thou be found in the day of judgment. If a tree about to fall lean to the north, to the north it will fall ; if to the south, it will fall to that quarter. In whatever disposition or state of soul thou diest, in that thou wilt be found in the eternal world. *Death refines nothing, purifies nothing, kills no sin, helps to no glory.* Let thy continual bent and inclination be to God, to holiness, to charity, to mercy, and to heaven : then, fall when thou mayest, thou wilt fall well.

Verse 4. *He that observeth the wind shall not sow*]

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5 As <sup>e</sup> thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, <sup>h</sup> nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child : even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.

6 In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand : for thou knowest not whether <sup>i</sup> shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.

7 Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes <sup>k</sup> to behold the sun :

1 Tim. vi. 18, 19. — <sup>c</sup> Mic. v. 5. — <sup>f</sup> Eph. v. 16. — <sup>g</sup> Job iii. 8. — <sup>h</sup> Ps. cxxxix. 14, 15. — <sup>i</sup> Heb. *shall be right.* <sup>k</sup> Ch. vii. 11.

The man that is too scrupulous is never likely to succeed in any thing. If a man neither plough nor sow till the weather is entirely to his mind, the season will in all probability pass before he will have done any thing : so, if thou be too nice in endeavouring to find out who are the impostors among those who profess to be in want, the real object may perish, whom otherwise thou mightest have relieved, and whose life might have been thereby saved. Those very punctilious and scrupulous people, who will sift every thing to the bottom in every case, and, before they will act, must be fully satisfied on all points, seldom do any good, and are themselves generally good for nothing. While they are observing the clouds and the rain, others have joined hands with God, and made a poor man live.

Verse 5. *As thou knowest not—the way of the spirit*] Why God should have permitted such and such persons to fall into want, and how they came into all their distresses, thou canst not tell, no more than thou canst how their soul is united to their body, how it came to inform that body, or how the child was formed in the womb of its mother. Nor canst thou discern the end which God has in view in these things. *He maketh all*, every thing is open to him : and take heed lest, while pretending motives of scrupulosity and prudence, in not relieving the distresses of those thou pretendest to suspect to be unworthy, he does not see that a love of money is the motive of thy conduct, and a want of the bowels of mercy the cause why thou drivest this suspected beggar from thy door.

Verse 6. *In the morning sow thy seed*] Be ready at all times to show mercy ; begin in the morning, continue till the evening. Thou knowest not the most worthy object ; it is enough that God knoweth ; and if thy motive be good, he will applaud and reward thee ; not according to the worthiness or unworthiness of the object of thy charity, but according to the motive which induced thee to relieve him.

Verse 7. *Truly the light is sweet*] Life is dear to every man as the light of the sun is to the eye. A man would give all that he has for his life ; and it is

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8 But if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness: for they shall be

many. All that cometh is vanity.

9 Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart,

\* Numb. xv. 39.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. xii. 14. Rom. ii. 6—11.—<sup>c</sup> Or,

particularly dear to him when he is in ease and affluence: but let each remember that,

Verse 8. *If a man live many years*] And even have prosperity through the whole; yet the days of darkness—times of affliction, weakness, and perhaps old age, will be many. If he die not a violent death, which no man can wish, he will die a lingering death; and this is ordinarily attended with many pains, and many sorrows; therefore let him prepare to meet his God; and to carry this thought through life, that all must terminate in death. The writer of Ecclesiasticus, chap. vii. 36, has a good saying, similar to this: "Whatsoever thou takest in hand, remember thy end; and thou shalt never do amiss;" οὐκ ἀμαρτυροῦς, thou wilt not sin.

Verse 9. *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth*] Youth is devoid of cares; and, consequently, of many perplexities and distresses. Were it not so, we

and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things <sup>b</sup> God will bring thee into judgment.

10 Therefore remove <sup>c</sup> sorrow from thy heart, and <sup>d</sup> put away evil from thy flesh: <sup>e</sup> for childhood and youth are vanity.

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anger.—<sup>d</sup> 2 Cor. vii. 1. 2 Tim. ii. 22.—<sup>e</sup> Ps. xxxix. 5.

should have no old men; nay, perhaps not one even of middle age. It is in the order of a most gracious God, that the young should rejoice in their youth; but they should make such a moderate use of all their enjoyments, that they may not be confounded in the day of judgment. But, O young man, if thou wilt follow the propensities of thy own heart, the noisy mirth of the fool, and the dissipation of the profligate,—go on; take thy full swing; but take this with thee, that "for all these things, God will judge thee;" and if the righteous are scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

Verse 10. *Therefore remove sorrow*] כעס caas, anger; every kind of violent passion, all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. "Childhood and youth are vanity;" they pass away and come to nothing. Eternity alone is permanent; live for eternity.

CHAPTER XII.

Youth should remember their Creator, 1. A description of old age and its infirmities, with the causes of death and dissolution, 2—9. How the preacher taught the people knowledge, 9—11. General directions, and conclusion of the work, 12—14.

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REMEMBER <sup>a</sup> now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come

not, nor the years draw nigh, <sup>b</sup> when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.

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\* Prov. xxii. 6. Lam. iii. 27.

<sup>b</sup> See 2 Sam. xix. 35.

NOTES ON CHAP. XII.

Verse 1. *Remember thy Creator*] בוראך Boreeycha, thy CREATORS. The word is most certainly in the plural number in all our common Hebrew Bibles; but it is in the singular number, בוראך Borecha, in one hundred and seventy-six of Dr. Kennicott's MSS., and ninety-six of De Rossi's; in many ancient editions; and in all the ancient Versions. There is no dependence on the plural form in most of the modern editions; though there are some editions of great worth which exhibit the word in this form, and among them the Complutensian, Antwerp, Paris, and London polyglots.

The evidence, therefore, that this text is supposed to give to the doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity is but precarious, and on it little stress can be laid; and no man who loves truth would wish to support it by

dubious witnesses. Injudicious men, by laying stress on texts dubious in themselves, and which may be interpreted a different way, greatly injure the true faith. Though such in their hearts may be friends to the orthodox faith, they are in fact its worst friends, and their assistance is such as helps their adversaries.

But what does the text say? It addresses the youth of both sexes, throughout the creation; and says in effect,—

I. You are not your own, you have no right to yourselves. God made you; he is your Creator: he made you that you might be happy; but you can be happy only in him. And as he created you, so he preserves you; he feeds, clothes, upholds you. He has made you capable of knowing, loving, and serving him in this world, and of enjoying him in his own glory for ever. And when you had undone yourselves by sin,

A. M. cir. 3027.  
B. C. cir. 977.  
Ante I. OI.  
cir. 201.  
Ante U. C. c. 224.

2 While the sun, or the light,  
or the moon, or the stars, be  
not darkened, nor the clouds  
return after the rain;

3 In the day when the keepers of the house  
shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow

\* Or, the grinders fail, because they grind little.

he sent his Son to *redeem* you by his blood; and he sends his *Spirit* to *enlighten*, *convince*, and *draw you* away from childishness, from vain and trifling, as well as from sinful, pursuits.

II. Remember him; consider that he is your *Creator*, your *loving* and affectionate *Father*. In youth *memory* is strong and tenacious; but, through the *perversion of the heart* by *sin*, young people can *remember any thing* better than God. If you get a kindness from a friend, you can *remember* that, and *feel gratitude* for it; and the *person* is therefore *endeared* to you. Have any ever given you such *benefits* as your *Creator*? Your *body* and *soul* came from him; he gave you your *eyes*, *ears*, *tongue*, *hands*, *feet*, &c. What blessings are these! how *excellent*! how *useful*! how *necessary*! and will you *forget* HIM?

III. Remember him in thy *youth*, in order that you may have a *long* and *blessed life*, that you may be saved from the corruption and misery into which young people in general run; and the evils they entail upon themselves by giving way to the sinful propensities of their own hearts. As in youth all the powers are more active and vigorous, so they are capable of superior enjoyments. *Faith*, *hope*, and *love* will be in their best *tenor*, their greatest *vigour*, and in their *least encumbered state*. And it will be *easier* for you to *believe*, *hope*, *pray*, *love*, *obey*, and *bear your cross*, than it can be in old age and decrepitude.

IV. Remember him now, in *this part of your youth*—you have no certainty of life; *now* is yours, *tomorrow* may not be. You *are* young; but you may *never* be old. *Now* he waits to be gracious; *tomorrow* may be too late. God *now* calls; his *Spirit* now strives; his *ministers* now exhort. You have now *health*; *sin* has not now *so much dominion over you* as it will have, increasing by every future moment, if you do not give up your hearts to your Maker.

V. There is another consideration which should weigh with you: should you live to *old age*, it is a very disadvantageous time to begin to serve the Lord in. *Infirmities* press down both body and mind, and the oppressed nature has enough to do to bear its own infirmities; and as there is *little time*, so there is generally *less inclination*, to call upon the Lord. *Evil habits* are strengthened by long continuance; and every desire and appetite in the soul is a strong-hold for Satan. There is little time for repentance, little for faith, *none* for obedience. The *evil days* are come, and the *years* in which you will feelingly be obliged to say, *Alas!* “we have no pleasure in them;” and, what is worse, the heart is hardened through the *deceitfulness of sin*.

Verse 2. *While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or*  
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themselves, and \* the grinders  
cease because they are few, and  
those that look out of the win-  
dows be darkened,

4 And the <sup>b</sup> doors shall be shut in the streets,  
when the sound of the grinding is low, and

<sup>b</sup> Ps. cxli. 3.

the stars, be not darkened] i. e., in the *spring*, *prime*, and *prosperity* of life.

*Nor the clouds return*] The infirmities of old age, of which *winter* is a proper emblem, as *spring* is of youth, in the former clause of this verse.

Verse 3. *In the day when the keepers of the house*] The *body of man* is here compared to a *house*:—mark the metaphors and their propriety.

1. *The keepers shall tremble*—the *hands* become paralytic, as is constantly the case, less or more, in old age.

2. *The strong men shall bow*] The *legs* become feeble, and unable to support the weight of the body.

3. *The grinders cease because they are few*] The *teeth* decayed and mostly lost; the *few* that remain being incapable of properly masticating hard substances or animal food. And so they *cease*; for soft or pulpy substances, which are requisite then, require little or no mastication; and these aliments become their ordinary food.

4. *Those that look out of the windows*] The *optic nerves*, which receive impressions, through the medium of the different *humours* of the eye, from surrounding objects,—they *are darkened*; the humours becoming *thick*, *flat*, and *turbid*, they are no longer capable of transmitting those images in that clear distinct manner as formerly. There may be an allusion here to the *pupil* of the eye. Look into it, and you will see *your own image* in extreme miniature *looking out* upon you; and hence it has its name *pupillus*, a *little child*, from *pupus*, a *baby*, a *doll*; because the image in the eye resembles such. The *optic nerve* being seated at the *bottom of the eye*, has the images of surrounding objects painted upon it; it *looks out through the different humours*. The different membranes and humours which compose the eye, and serve for vision, are, the *tunica conjunctiva*, the *tunica sclerotica*, the *cornea*, the *iris*, the *pupil*, the *choroides*, and the *retina*. The *iris* is perforated to admit the rays of light, and is called the *pupil*; the *retina* is a diffusion of the *optic nerve* in the bottom of the eye, on which the images are painted or impressed that give us the *sensation* we term *sight* or *vision*. All these *membranes*, *humours*, and *nerves* are more or less *impaired*, thickened, or rendered *opaque*, by *old age*; expressed by the metaphor, “Those that look out of the windows are darkened.”

Verse 4. *And the doors shall be shut in the streets*]

5. The *doors*—the *lips*, which are the *doors* by which the *mouth* is closed. †

6. *Be shut in the streets*] The *cavities* of the *cheek* and *jaws*, through which the food may be said to *travel* before it is fitted by *mastication* or *chewing* to

A. M. cir. 3027.  
B. C. cir. 977.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 201.  
Ante U. C. c. 224.

he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all <sup>a</sup> the daughters of musick shall be brought low ;

5 Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the

<sup>a</sup> 2 Sam. xix. 35.—<sup>b</sup> Job xvii. 13.

go down the *œsophagus* into the stomach. The doors or lips are shut to hinder the food in chewing from dropping out ; as the teeth, which prevented that before, are now lost.

7. The sound of the grinding is low] <sup>a</sup> Little noise is now made in eating, because the teeth are either lost, or become so infirm as not to suffer their being pressed close together ; and the mouth being kept shut to hinder the food from dropping out, the sound in eating is scarcely heard. The teeth are divided into three kinds :—1. The *dentes incisores*, or cutting teeth, in the front of the jaw. 2. The *dentes canini*, or dog teeth, those in the sides of the jaws, for gnawing, or tearing and separating hard or tough substances. And, 3. *Dentes molares*, or grinding teeth, the posterior or double teeth in both jaws, generally termed the grinders ; because their office is to grind down the substances that have been cut by the fore teeth, separated into their parts or fibres by the dog teeth, and thus prepare it for digestion in the stomach.

8. He shall rise up at the voice of the bird] His sleep is not sound as it used to be ; he stumbles rather than sleeps ; and the crowing of the cock awakes him. And so much difficulty does he find to rise while in bed, that he is glad of the dawn to rise up and get some relief. The chirping of the sparrow is sufficient to awake him.

9. All the daughters of musick shall be brought low] The voice, that wonderful instrument, almost endless in the strength and variety of its tones, becomes feeble and squeaking, and merriment and pleasure are no more. The tones emitted are all of the querulous or mournful kind.

Verse 5. When they shall be afraid of that which is high]

10. Being so feeble, they are afraid to trust themselves to ascend steps, stairs, &c., without help. And when they look upwards, their heads turn giddy, and they are ready to fall.

11. Fears shall be in the way] They dare not walk out, lest they should meet some danger, which they have not strength to repel, nor agility to escape. A second childishness has taken place,—apprehensions, fears, terrors, and weakness.

12. The almond tree shall flourish] *אֶרֶב יִצְעָק*, not flourish, but fall off. The hair begins to change, first grey, then white ; it having no longer that supply of nutritive juices which it once had, this animal vegetable withers and falls off. The almond tree, having white flowers, is a fit emblem of a hoary head ; or as *Hasselquist* says, who observed the tree in full

grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail : because man goeth to <sup>b</sup> his long home, and <sup>c</sup> the mourners go about the streets :

A. M. cir. 3027  
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cir. 201.  
Ante U. C. c. 224.

6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be

<sup>c</sup> Jer. ix. 17.

flower in Judea, “like an old man with his white locks.”

13. The grasshopper shall be a burden] Even such an inconsiderable thing as a locust, or a very small insect, shall be deemed burdensome, their strength is so exceedingly diminished. In cases of the gout, especially in old men, the shadow of a person passing by puts them to acute pain ! How much less can they bear the smallest pressure ! But probably the words refer to the man himself who, bent at the loins, and his arms hanging down, exhibits some caricature of the animal in question. The poor grasshopper is become a burden to himself. Another interpretation has been given of the grasshopper ; but I pass it by as impertinent and contemptible ; such commentators appear as if they wished to render the text ridiculous.

14. Desire shall fail] Both relish and appetite for food, even the most delicate, that to which they were formerly so much attached, now fails. The teeth are no longer able to masticate the food, or have all dropped out ; the stomach no longer able to digest any thing ; and, as the body is no longer capable of receiving nourishment, appetite and relish necessarily fail.

15. Because man goeth to his long home] *אֵל בֵּית עֹלָמוֹ*, *el beith olamo*, “to the house of his age ;” the place destined to receive him, when the whole race or course of life shall be finished ; for *עֹלָם olam* takes in the whole course or duration of a thing ; if applied to a dispensation, such as the law, it takes in its whole duration ; to the life of man, it takes in the whole life ; to time, it includes its whole compass ; to eternity, it expresses its infinite duration. So old age terminates the *olam*, the complete duration of human life ; and when life is no longer desired, and nutrition ceases, the *olam* of man is terminated. My old MS. Bible translates it, *The house of his everlastingness*.

16. He is just departing into the invisible world ; and this is known by the mourners going about the streets, the long hollow groans and throat-rattlings which proceed from him ; the sure prognostications of the extreme debility and speedy cessation of those essential animal functions next mentioned.

Verse 6. Or ever the silver cord be loosed] We have already had all the external evidences of old age, with all its attendant infirmities ; next follow what takes place in the body, in order to produce what is called death, or the separation of body and soul.

1. The silver cord.—The *medulla oblongata* or spinal marrow, from which all the nerves proceed, as itself

A. M. cir. 3027.  
B. C. cir. 977.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 201.  
Ante U.C.c. 224.

broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

7 \* Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: <sup>b</sup> and the spirit shall return unto God <sup>c</sup> who gave it.

8 <sup>d</sup> Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, all is vanity.

9 And <sup>e</sup> moreover, because the preacher was

<sup>a</sup> Gen. iii. 19. Job xxxiv. 15. Ps. xc. 3. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. iii. 21. <sup>c</sup> Numb. xvi. 22. xxvii. 16. Job xxxiv. 14. Isai. lvii. 16. Zech. xii. 1. — <sup>d</sup> Ps. lxii. 9. Ch. i. 2. — <sup>e</sup> Or, the more

does from the brain. This is termed a *cord*, from its exact similitude to one; and a *silver cord*, from its colour, as it strikingly exhibits the *silver grey*; and from its *preciousness*. This is said to be *loosed*; as the *nervous system* became a little before, and at the article of death, wholly debilitated. The last *loosing* being the *fall of the under jaw*, the invariable and never-failing evidence of *immediate death*; a few struggles more, and the soul is dismissed from its clay tenement.

2. *The golden bowl be broken*] The brain contained in the cranium, or skull, and enveloped with the membranes called the *dura* and *pia mater*; here called a *bowl*, from its resemblance to such a vessel, the *container* being put for the *contained*; and *golden*, because of its *colour*, and because of its exceeding *preciousness*, as has been noticed in the former case. *Broken*—be rendered *unfit to perform its functions*, neither supplying nor distributing any *nervous energy*.

3. *Or the pitcher be broken at the fountain*] The *vena cava*, which brings back the blood to the *right ventricle* of the heart, here called the *fountain*, חמבתו *hammabbua*, the *spring* whence the water gushes up; properly applied here to the heart, which by its *systole* and *diastole* (*contraction* and *expansion*) sends out, and afterwards receives back, the blood; for all the blood flows from, and returns back to, the heart.

4. *The wheel broken at the cistern*] The *great aorta*, which receives the blood from the *cistern*, the *left ventricle* of the heart, and distributes it to the different parts of the system. These may be said, as in the case of the *brain* above, to be *broken*, i. e., rendered useless; when, through the *loosening of the silver cord*, the total relaxation of the *nervous system*, the *heart* becomes incapable of *dilatation* and *contraction*, so that the blood, on its return to the *right ventricle* of the heart, is not *received*, nor that already contained in the *ventricles* propelled into the *great aorta*. The *wheel* is used in allusion to the Asiatic *wheels*, by which they raise water from their wells and tanks, and deep cisterns, for domestic purposes, or to irrigate the grounds. Thus, then, the blood becomes *stagnate*; the lungs cease to respire; the blood is no longer *oxidized*; all motion, voluntary and involuntary, ceases; the body, the house of the immortal spirit, is no longer tenantable, and the soul takes its flight into the eternal world. The man D—I—E—S! This is expressed in the following verse:—

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wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and <sup>f</sup> set in order many proverbs.

10 The preacher sought to find out <sup>g</sup> acceptable words: and *that which was written was upright, even words of truth.*

11 The words of the wise are as goads, and

*wise the preacher was, &c.*—<sup>f</sup> 1 Kings iv. 32.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. words of delight.

Verse 7. *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God*]

5. Putrefaction and solution take place; the whole mass becomes decomposed, and in process of time is reduced to dust, from which it was originally made; while the spirit, רוּחַ *haruach*, that spirit, which God at first breathed into the nostrils of man, when he in consequence became a *LIVING SOUL*, an intelligent, rational, discoursing animal, returns to God who gave it. Here the wise man makes a most evident distinction between the body and the soul: they are not the same; they are not both matter. The body, which is matter, returns to dust, its original; but the spirit, which is *immaterial*, returns to God. It is impossible that two natures can be more distinct, or more emphatically distinguished. The author of this book was not a materialist.

Thus ends this affecting, yet elegant and finished picture of OLD AGE and DEATH. See a description of old age similar, but much inferior, to this, in the Agamemnon of Æschylus, v. 76—82.

It has been often remarked that the *circulation of the blood*, which has been deemed a modern discovery by our countryman Dr. Harvey, in 1616, was known to Solomon, or whoever was the author of this book: the *fountains*, *cisterns*, *pitcher*, and *wheel* giving sufficient countenance to the conclusion.

Verse 8. This affecting and minute description of *old age* and *death* is concluded by the author with the same exclamation by which he began his book: *O vanity of vanities, saith Koboeth, all is vanity.* Now that man, the masterpiece of God's creation, the delegated sovereign of this lower world, is *turned to dust*, what is there *stable* or worthy of contemplation besides? ALL—ALL IS VANITY!

Verse 9. *Because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge*] And in order to do this he took *good heed*—considered, what would be most useful. *He set in order*—collected and arranged, many parables, probably alluding to the book over which we have already passed.

Verse 10. *He sought to find out acceptable words*] דִּבְרֵי דִּבְרֵי *dibrey chephets*, words of desire, words of will; the best, the most suitable words; those which the people could best understand. But these words were not such as might merely please the people: they were *words of truth*; such as came from God, and might lead them to him.

Verse 11. *The words of the wise*] Doctrines of faith

A. M. cir. 3027.  
B. C. cir. 977.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 201.  
Ante U.C. c. 224.

as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.

12 And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books

\* Ch. i. 18. — b Or, reading. — c Or, The end of the matter,

illustrated by suitable language, are as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, בעלי אספון baaley asuph, the masters of collections, those who had made the best collections of this kind, the matter of which was of the most excellent nature; every saying sinking as deeply into the mind, by the force of the truth contained in it, as a nail well pointed does into a board, when impelled by the hammer's force. These masters of collections have been supposed to be public persons appointed by the prince himself, the sole shepherd, to see that nothing was put into the people's hands but what would be profitable for them to read; and that, when any wise man gave public instructions, a good scribe sat by to take down the words; and then the master examined what he had written, to see that it was upright, and that the words were doctrines of truth. These were something like our licensers of the press; but the existence of such is little more than conjecture.

After all, masters of assemblies may mean public teachers; that which was written, the oracles of God, out of which they instructed the people; the one Shepherd, God ALMIGHTY, from whom they received their authority and unction to preach the truth; and by the energy of whose Spirit the heavenly teaching was fastened in their hearts, as a well driven nail in a sound piece of wood.

Verse 12. And further, by these, my son, be admonished] Hear such teachers, and receive their admonitions; and do not receive the grace of God in vain.

Of making many books there is no end] Two thousand years have elapsed since this was written; and since that time some millions of treatises have been added, on all kinds of subjects, to those which have gone before. The press is still groaning under and teeming with books, books innumerable; and no subject is yet exhausted, notwithstanding all that has been written on it. And we who live in these latter times are no nearer an end, in the investigation of NATURE and its properties; of God, his attributes, his providence, his justice, and his mercy; of MAN, his animal life, his mode of nutrition and existence, and his soul and its powers; of JESUS, and the redemption by him; of ETERNITY, and what it implies exhibiting to us the pains of the cursed, and the joys of the blessed. Of several of these we know more than they who have lived five thousand years before us; nor do we know any thing certainly of the endless books that have been published, except that which bears the seal of the God of heaven, as published in that word which was declared by his Spirit. And much study is a weariness of the flesh.] O how true is this! Let the trembling knees, the palsied hands, the darkened eyes, the aching heart, and

there is no end; and a much study is a weariness of the flesh.

13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and even all that hath been heard, is. — d Deut. vi. 2 x. 12.

the puzzled mind of every real student declare! And should none more worthy of the name of student be within reach to consult, the writer of this work is a proof in point.

Verse 13. After all, the sum of the great business of human life is comprised in this short sentence, on which some millions of books have been already written!

FEAR GOD, AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS.

1. Know that HE IS, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. 2. Reverence him; pay him adoration. 3. Love him, that you may be happy.

Keep his commandments] They are contained in two words: 1. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;" 2. "And thy neighbour as thyself." Blessed be God, much reading and much study are not necessary to accomplish this, which is called כל האדם col haadam, the whole of Adam; the whole that God required of the first man and of all his posterity. But the gospel of Jesus Christ must be understood to comprehend the full force of this short saying.

The word duty, added here by our translators, spoils, if not PERVERTS, the sense.

The whole passage is rendered with great simplicity by Coverdale:—

"The same preacher was not wyse alone: but taught the people knowledge also. He gave good hede, sought out the grounde, and set forth many parables. His diligence was to fynde out acceptable wordes, right scripture, and the wordes of trueth. For the wordes of the wyse are like prickes and nales that go thorow, wherewith men are kepte together: for they are geven of one Shepherd onely. Therefore be warre (my sonne) that above these thou make thee not many and innumerable bookes, nor take dyverse doctrynes in hande, to weery thy body withall.

"Let us heare the conclusion of all thinges: Fcare God, and kepe his comaundementes, for that toucheth all men; for God shall judge all workes and secreto thinges, whether they be good or evell."

I shall give the same from my old MS. Bible:—

And wan Ecclesiastes was most tolis he taght the peple, and told out what he had don, and enserchinge maade many parablis. He sought profittable wordis, and wrote most rgt sermons, and ful of trewth. The wordis of wisemen as prickis and as nallis into herte pigt: that bi the counseyle of maisteris ben geven of oon sheperd. More thann thes sone myn, ne seche thou; of making many bokes is noon end, and oft bethinking is tormenting of the flesche. End of spekinge alle togdyr here mee. Brede God, and his heatis kepe; that is eclye man. Alle thingis that ben maad he schal bringen into dome, for eclye erth thinge, wthitir good or evyl it be.

A. M. cir. 3027. keep his commandments : for  
 B. C. cir. 977. this is the whole duty of man.  
 Ante I. Ol. 14 For God shall bring every  
 cir. 201.  
 Ante U.C. c. 224.

work into judgment, with every  
 secret thing, whether it be good,  
 or whether it be evil.

A. M. cir. 3027.  
 B. C. cir. 977.  
 Ante I. Ol.  
 cir. 201.  
 Ante U.C. c. 224.

\* Ch. xi. 9. Matt. xii. 36. Acts xvii. 30, 31. Rom.

ii. 16. xiv. 10, 12. 1 Cor. iv. 5. 2 Cor. v. 10.

Verse 14. For God shall bring every work into judgment] This is the reason why we should "fear God and keep his commandments." 1. Because there will be a day of judgment. 2. Every soul of man shall stand at that bar. 3. God, the infinitely wise, the heart-searching God, will be judge. 4. He will bring to light every secret thing—all that has been done since the creation, by all men; whether forgotten or registered; whether done in secret or in public. 5. All the works of the godly, as well as all the works of the wicked, shall be judged in that day; the good which the godly strove to conceal, as well as the evil which the wicked endeavoured to hide. This, then, will be the conclusion of the whole mortal story. And although in this world all is vanity; yet there, "vanities will be vain no more." Every thing, whether good or evil, will have its own proper, stable,

eternal result. O God! prepare the reader to give up his accounts with joy in that day! Amen.

MASORETIC NOTES.

Number of verses, 222.  
 Middle verse, chap. vi. 10.  
 Sections, 4.

The ARABIC subjoins this colophon:—"Praise be to God for ever and ever!"

"By the assistance of the Most High God this Book of Ecclesiastes, which is vanity of vanities, written by Solomon the son of David, who reigned over the children of Israel, is completed."

The SYRIAC has, "The end of the Book of Koheleth."

There are others, but they are of no importance.

## INTRODUCTION

TO THE

# CANTICLES, OR SONG OF SOLOMON.

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THE Book before us is called in the Hebrew שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים SHIR HASHSHIRIM, "The Song of Songs;" or, "An Ode of the Odes:" which might be understood, "An Ode taken or selected from others of a similar kind;" or, "An Ode the most excellent of all others;" this being an idiom common to the Hebrew language: *e. g.*, the *God of gods* is the supreme God; the *Lord of lords*, the supreme Lord; the *King of kings*, the supreme King; the *heaven of heavens*, the supreme or highest heaven. It may therefore be designed to express "a song of the utmost perfection; one of the best that existed, or had ever been penned." Perhaps the title may have a reference to the other poetical compositions of Solomon which were no less than *one thousand and five*; and this was considered the most excellent of the whole, and the *only one* that remains, unless we suppose Solomon, with some of the Jews, to be the author of Psalms lxxii. and cxxvii.: but this cannot be proved.

There have been some doubts concerning the author of this Book. Some of the rabbins supposed it to be the work of the prophet Isaiah; but this sentiment never gained much credit. Most have, without hesitation, attributed it to Solomon, whose name it bears: and if the Book of Ecclesiastes be his, this will follow in course, as the *style* is exactly the same, allowing for the difference of the subject. Both books seem to have been written about the same time, and to have had the same author.

This book, if written by Solomon, could not have been written in his *old age*, as some have supposed the Book of Ecclesiastes to have been, which sentiment is, I think, sufficiently disproved; for we find that long before Solomon's old age he had *three hundred wives*, and *seven hundred concubines*; but at the time this Song was written, Solomon had only *sixty wives* and *eighty concubines*. And the Song most certainly celebrates a *marriage*; whether between Solomon and the *daughter of Pharaoh*, or between him and some *Jewish princess*, has not been fully agreed on among critics and commentators. It is most likely to have been a *juvenile* or *comparatively juvenile* production; and indeed the high and glowing colouring, and the strength of the images, are full proofs of this. Though *Anacreon* made amatory odes when he was *bald-headed*, yet neither he nor *any one else*, humanly speaking, could have made such odes as the Canticles when stricken in years.

But to what denomination of writing do the Canticles belong? Are they mere *Odes*, or *Idyls*, or *Pastorals*; or are they an *Epithalamium*? Let us define these terms, and examine the Song of Solomon by them. 1. The ODE is generally understood to be a species of poetry containing sublime and important matter, always *sung*, or accompanied by the *harp*, or some proper *musical instrument*. 2. The IDYL implies a *short poem* containing some *adventure*. 3. The PASTORAL contains what belongs to *shepherds*, and their *occupations*. 4. The EPITHALAMIUM is the congratulatory song, sung to a new married pair, wishing them abundant blessings, a numerous and happy offspring, &c. Strictly speaking, the Book of Canticles falls under neither of these descriptions: it is rather a composition *sui generis*, and seems to partake more of the nature of what we call a MASK, than any thing else; an entertainment for the guests who attended the marriage ceremony, with a *dramatic cast* throughout the whole, though the *persons* who speak and act are not formally introduced. There are so many touches in the form and manner of this song like those in the *Comus* of Milton, that it leads me to doubt whether the *English poet* has not taken the idea of his *mask* from the *Jewish*.



As to the *persons* chiefly concerned, it is generally believed that *Solomon* and *Pharaoh's daughter* are the *bridegroom* and *bride*; with their proper *attendants*, viz., companions of the bridegroom, and companions of the bride, with certain *mutes*, who only appear, or are mentioned by others, without taking any particular part in the transactions.

But it is much more easy to be satisfied on the *species* of composition to which this book belongs, than on the *meaning* of the book itself. Is it to be understood in the *obvious manner* in which it presents itself? And are Solomon and his bride, their friends and companions, to be considered as mere *dramatis personæ*? Or are they *typical* or *representative* persons? Does this *marriage* represent a *celestial union*? Do the *speeches* of each contain divine doctrines? Are the *metaphors*, taken from *earthly* things, to be understood of *spiritual* matters? In a word, does *Solomon* here represent *Jesus Christ*? Is the *daughter of Pharaoh* the *Christian church*, or, according to some Roman Catholics, the *Virgin Mary*? Are *watchmen*, *vineyard-keepers*, *shepherds*, &c., the *ministers* of the *Gospel*? *Wine* and *various fruits*, the *influences* and *graces* of the Divine Spirit? &c., &c. How multitudinous and *positive* are the *affirmative* answers to these questions! And yet, though the many agree in the general principle, how various their expositions of the different parts of the piece! And where, all this time, is the *proof* that the *principle* is not misunderstood? As to *conjectures*, they are as *uncertain* as they are endless; and what one pious or learned man may *think* to be the meaning, is no proof to any other that he should make up his mind in the *same way*.

Let us for a moment consider the different opinions held on this book, without entering into the discussion of their propriety or impropriety. They are the following:—

I. It is a plain *epithalamium* on the marriage of Solomon with the *daughter of Pharaoh*, king of Egypt; and is to be understood in no other way.

II. It is an *allegory* relative to the conduct of God towards the Hebrews, in bringing them out of Egypt through the wilderness to the Promised Land.

III. It is intended to represent the *incarnation* of Jesus Christ, or his marriage with human nature, in reference to its redemption.

IV. It represents Christ's love to the church or elected souls, and their love to him.

V. It is an *allegorical poem* on the glories of *Jesus Christ* and the *Virgin Mary*.

VI. It is a collection of sacred idyls; the spiritual meaning of which is not agreed on.

Now each of these opinions has its powerful supporters, and each of these has reasons to offer for the support of the opinion which is espoused; and nothing but a direct revelation from God can show us which of these opinions is the correct one, or whether any of them are correct.

The *antiquity* of an opinion, if that be not founded on a *revelation from God*, is no evidence of its truth; for there are many ungodly opinions which are more than a *thousand* years old. And as to *great men* and *great names*, we find them enrolled and arranged on each side of all controversies. It may be asked, What do Christ and his apostles say of it?

1. If Jesus Christ or any of his apostles had referred to it as an *allegory*, and told us the *subject* which it pointed out, the matter would have been *plain*: we should then have had *data*, and had only to proceed in the way of *elucidation*. But we find nothing of this in the New Testament.

2. If they had referred to it as an *allegory*, without intimating the *meaning*, then we should be justified in searching every where for that meaning; and *conjecture* itself would have been legal, till we had arrived at some *self-testifying issue*.

3. If they had referred to it at all, in connexion with *spiritual* subjects, then we should have at once seen that it was to be *spiritually understood*; and, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, we must have humbly sought for its spiritual interpretation.

4. Had the *Supreme Being* been introduced, or referred to in any of his *essential attributes*, or by any of the names which he has been pleased to assume in his revelations to men, we should have then seen that the writer was a *spiritual man*, and wrote probably in reference to a *spiritual end*; and, that we should pass by or through his *letter*, in order to get to the *spirit* concealed under it. But none of these things appear in this book: the *name of God* is not found in it; nor is it *quoted* in the *New Testament*. As to certain *references* which its allegorical expositors suppose are made to it, either in the *Gospels*, *Epistles*, or *Apocalypse*, they are not *express*, and do not, by any thing *in* or *connected with* them, appear *unequivocally* to point out this book. And after all that has been said, I am fully of opinion it is not once referred to in the New Testament. But this is no proof of its not being

*canonical*, as there are other books, on which there is no doubt, that are in the same predicament. But still, if it refer so distinctly to Christ and his church, as some suppose, it certainly would not have been passed over by both evangelists and apostles without pointed and especial notice; and particularly if it points out the *love of Christ to his church*, and the whole *economy* of God's working in reference to the salvation of the souls of men.

From all this it will appear to the intelligent reader, that the *spiritual meaning* of this book cannot easily be made out: 1. Because we do not know that it is an *allegory*. 2. If one, the *principles* on which such allegory is to be explained do nowhere appear.

Whom then are we to follow in the interpretation of this very singular book? The *Targumist*, who applies it to God and the *Hebrews*, in their journeyings from Egypt to the promised land? *Origen*, who made it a Christian allegory? *Apponius*, who spiritualized it? *Gregory the Great*, who in the main copied them? The *good man* who in 1717, at Paris, so illustrated it as "to induce men to devote themselves to Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary?" Mr. *Durham*, Mr. *Robotham*, Mr. *Ainsworth*, Mr. *Romaine*, and Dr. *Gill*, who endeavoured to prove that it concerns *Christ and the elect*? Or Mr. *Harmer* and others, who acknowledge it to be an inimitable composition, and to be understood only of Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter? Or, finally, Dr. *Mason Good*, who considers it a collection of sacred idyls, the spiritual interpretation of which is not agreed on?

I had for a long time hesitated whether I should say any thing on this book; not because I did not think I understood its chief design and general meaning, for of this I really have no doubt, but because I did not understand it as a *spiritual allegory*, representing the *loves of Christ and his church*. I must own I see no indubitable ground for this opinion. And is it of no moment whether the *doctrines* drawn from it, by those who allegorize and spiritualize it, be indubitably founded on it or not? The doctrines may be true in themselves (which is indeed more than can be said of those of most of its interpreters), but is it not a very *solemn*, and indeed *awful* thing to say, *This is the voice of Christ to his church, This is the voice of the church to Christ, &c., &c.*, when there is *no proof* from God, nor from any other portion of his word, that these things are so?

It is much better therefore, if explained or illustrated at all, to take it in its *literal* meaning, and explain it in its *general* sense. I say *general* sense, because there are many passages in it which should not be explained, if taken literally, the references being too delicate; and eastern phraseology on such subjects is too vivid for European imaginations. Let any sensible and pious medical man read over this book, and, if at all acquainted with Asiatic phraseology, say whether it would be proper, even in medical language, to explain all the descriptions and allusions in this poem.

After what I have said on the difficulty of interpreting this book in a *spiritual* way, it would not be fair to withhold from the reader the general *arguments* on which the *theory* of its allegorical meaning is founded. The principal part of the commentators on this book, especially those who have made it their *separate* study, have in general taken it for granted that their mode of interpretation is incontrovertible; and have proceeded to spiritualize every *figure* and every *verse* as if they had a divine warrant for all they have said. Their conduct is dangerous; and the result of their well-intentioned labours has been of very little service to the cause of *Christianity* in general, or to the interests of true *morality* in particular. By their mode of interpretation an undignified, not to say mean and carnal, language has been propagated among many well-meaning religious people, that has associated itself too much with *selfish* and *animal affections*, and created feelings that accorded little with the dignified spirituality of the religion of the Lord Jesus. I speak not from report; I speak from observation and experience, and observation not hastily made. The conviction on my mind, and the conclusion to which I have conscientiously arrived, are the result of frequent examination, careful reading, and close thinking, at intervals, for nearly *fifty* years; and however I may be *blamed* by some, and *pitied* by others, I must say, and I say it as fearlessly as I do conscientiously, that in this inimitably fine elegant Hebrew ode I see nothing of *Christ and his church*, and nothing that appears to have been *intended* to be *thus* understood; and nothing, if applied in this way, that, *per se*, can promote the interests of vital godliness, or cause the simple and sincere not to "know Christ after the flesh." Here I conscientiously stand. May God help me!

The most rational view of the subject that I have seen is that taken by Mr. *Harmer*, who has indeed detailed and strengthened the arguments of his predecessors who have declared for the *spiritual* meaning. In his "Outlines of a Comment upon Solomon's Song,"

he supposes that the song refers to *Solomon's marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh*; and that he had a *Jewish queen*, who is frequently referred to in the work; and that, unless this be allowed, there are several important passages in the book that cannot be understood; and indeed it is on this principle that he finds his chief ground for a *spiritual and allegorical* interpretation.

"Whatever was the intention of God," says he, "in bringing about this marriage, and in causing it to be celebrated in such an *extraordinary* manner, by songs that were directed to be placed among the *sacred writings*, it is certain there never was any resemblance more striking between the circumstances and transactions of any of the remarkable personages of the Old Testament and those of Messiah, than the *likeness* we may observe between *Solomon marrying a Gentile princess*, and making her equal in honour and privileges with his former *Jewish queen*, and in her being frequently mentioned afterwards in history, while the other is passed over in *total silence*, and the conduct of the *Messiah towards the Gentile and Jewish churches*.

"The two remarkable things in the conduct of the Messiah towards the two churches are the making the Gentiles *fellow-heirs* of the same body and partakers of the promises, *without any difference*; and the *giving up to neglect* the Jewish church, while that of the Gentiles has long flourished in great honour, and been the subject of many a history. St. Paul takes notice of both these circumstances with particular solemnity; of the first, in the *third* chapter of *Ephesians*, and elsewhere; of the other, in the *eleventh* chapter of *Romans*. They are points, then, that deserve great attention.

"They are both called *mysteries* (Rom. xi. 25, Eph. iii. 3), that is, things that had been concealed aforesaid; but it by no means follows that there were no shadowy representations of these events in the preceding ages, only that they were not *clearly and expressly* revealed.

"*Kingdoms and cities* are frequently spoken of in holy writ as *women*. *Sacred* as well as secular bodies of men are represented under that image. *The universal church* is spoken of under the notion of a *bride*, and the *Messiah* as her *husband*, Eph. v. The two churches of Jews and Gentiles, or the church under the Mosaic dispensation and the church freed from those ceremonies, are represented as *two women*,—the one formerly treated as the *principal wife*; and the second, as having been for a long time neglected, but afterwards producing a much more numerous issue than the first,—by the prophet Isaiah in his *fifty-fourth* chapter, according to the explanation St. Paul has given of that passage in Gal. iv. *Particular churches* are mentioned after the same manner. So, concerning the church at Corinth, St. Paul says, "I have espoused you to one husband, *that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ*;" 2 Cor. xi. 2.

"Since then it is common for the Scriptures to represent the church of God under the notion of a *woman*, and the Messiah under that of a *Husband*; since the two bodies of men,—that which worshipped God according to the *Mosaic* rites, and that which observed them *not*,—are compared to *two women*; and since the circumstances of these two churches are such as I have given an account of from St. Paul, it must be acknowledged that there is a lively resemblance between Solomon's espousing the Egyptian princess and the Messiah's admitting the Gentiles to equal privileges with the Jews, whether it was or was not *designed* by God as an emblem and type of it; celebrated by his prophets for this cause, in holy songs; and those songs preserved with care to this day among writings of the *most sacred* kind on that account."

This is the whole of Mr. Harmer's argument; see his *Outlines*, pages 74—77. And what is proved by it? Nothing, in reference to this book. We know that the *Jewish people*, not the *church* exclusively, are represented under the notion of a *woman afflicted*, and a *wife unfaithful, divorced, and forsaken*, &c.; and that the *Corinthians* were represented under the notion of a *chaste virgin espoused to Christ*. And we know that all this was done to show, that as the *marriage union* was the *closest, strictest, and most sacred* among men, the union of the soul to God, and its connexion with him, might be most fitly represented by that union, and unfaithfulness to him by infidelity in the other case. But what has this to do with the *Canticles*? Where is the *intimation* that *Solomon* represents *Christ*; *Pharaoh's daughter*, the *church of the Gentiles*; and the *Jewish queen*, the *church of the Israelites*? Nowhere. Why then *assume* the thing that should be *proved*; and then build doctrines on it, and draw inferences from it, as if the *assumption* had been *demonstrated*?

Were this mode of interpretation to be applied to the Scriptures in general (and why not, if legitimate here?), in what a state would religion soon be! Who could see any thing

certain, determinate, and fixed in the meaning of the divine oracles, when *fancy* and *imagination* must be the standard interpreters? God has *not* left his word to man's will in this way.

Every attempt, however well intentioned, to revive this thriftless, not to say dangerous, *Origenian* method of seducing the Scriptures to particular creeds and purposes, should be regarded with jealousy; and nothing received as the *doctrine* of the Lord but what may be derived from those *plain words* of the Most High which lie most on a level with the capacities of mankind. Allegory, metaphor, and figures in general, where the design is clearly indicated, which is the case with all those employed by the sacred writers, may come in to *illustrate* and more forcibly to *apply* divine truth; but to extort celestial meanings from a *whole book*, where no such *indication* is given, is most certainly not the way to arrive at the knowledge of the true God, and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent.

As the Jewish marriages were celebrated for *seven days*, it has been often observed that this song divides itself into *seven periods*, and describes the *transactions* of each.

I. The *FIRST chapter* represents the *bridegroom* and *bride* as a *shepherd* and *shepherdess*. The bride asks her spouse where he takes his flocks at noon, to preserve them from the excessive heat, lest she, in seeking him, should go astray into some strange pastures. After this day, the *first night* succeeds, which is pointed out chap. ii. 4, 5, 6. The bridegroom rises early in the morning, leaves the bride asleep, and goes hastily to the fields to his necessary occupations, ver. 7.

II. The *SECOND night* is pointed out chap. ii. 8, 9, &c. The bridegroom comes to the window of his spouse. She opens it, and he enters; and on the morrow, he returns to the fields to his flocks, ver. 17.

III. The *THIRD night*, the bridegroom having delayed his coming, the bride, being uneasy, arises from her bed, and goes out and inquires of the guards of the city, whether they had seen her beloved? She had not gone far from them till she met with him; she conducts him to her apartment, chap. iii. 1—4. Very early in the morning, he retires to the country, leaving the bride asleep, ver. 5. Afterwards she arises, and goes also to the fields, ver. 6.

The *FOURTH chapter* is an eulogium on the bride's beauty; and seems to be a conversation between the parties in the country. She invites the bridegroom to visit her, chap. v. 1. He leaves his friends, with whom he was feasting, and comes to the door of his spouse, ver. 2. She hesitating to let him in, he withdraws, and goes to his garden. The bride follows; but, not knowing whither he had retired, asks the guards of the city, by whom she is maltreated; thence goes to the daughters of Jerusalem, and inquires of them, ver. 3, &c. At last she meets with him, chap. vi. 1, &c., and having spent some time with him, returns.

IV. Chap. vi. 9, points out the *FOURTH night* of the marriage.

V. The *FIFTH night* is pointed out, chap. vii. 1, &c. The bridegroom gives his bride nearly the same praise and commendations which he had received from her in the preceding chapters; and early in the morning they go out together to the fields, ver. 11—13.

VI. The *SIXTH night* they pass at a village in the country, at the house of a person who is termed the *bride's mother*, chap. vii. 13, viii. 1—3. She invites her spouse thither, and promises to regale him with excellent fruits and choice wine; and early in the morning the bridegroom arises, leaves the bride asleep as formerly, and retires to the country, chap. viii. 4.

VII. The *SEVENTH night* is passed in the gardens. From chap. viii. 5, we have a series of dialogues between the bride and bridegroom. In the morning the bridegroom, having perceived that they were overheard, begs the bride to permit him to retire. She assents ver. 13, 14, and exhorts him "to make haste, and be like a roe or a young hart on the mountains of spices."

This is the division, which is in the main most followed, especially by the best critics. But, besides this, several others have been proposed; and the reader, who wishes to enter more particularly into the subject, may consult Bishop *Bossuet*, *Calmet*, and Bishop *Lowth*. For my own part I doubt the propriety of this technical arrangement, and do not think that any thing of the kind was intended by the author. The division is not *obvious*; and therefore, in my apprehension, not *natural*. Of Dr. *Good's* division I shall speak below.

The *dramatis personæ* have been marked by some of the ancient interpreters, and the different portions of the whole song appointed to several persons who are specified; and this division served for the *basis* of a *commentary*. The most regular division of this kind with which I have met is in a MS. of my own; the Bible which I have often quoted in my *comment*.

This, attributed by some to Wiclif, and by others to an older translator, I have carefully transcribed, with all the distinction of *parts* and *specches*. The translation is very simple; and in many cases is much more faithful to the meaning of the *Hebrew* text, though in the main taken from the *Vulgate*, than our own Version. It is a great curiosity, and certainly was never before printed; and is a fine specimen of our mother tongue as spoken in these countries in M.CCCLX., which may be about the date of this translation. On the common mode of interpretation I venture to assert that my readers will understand this song ten times better from this translation and its *rubrics*, than they have ever done from all the forms in which it has been presented to them, to the present time. For this addition, I anticipate the thanks of every intelligent reader. The indications of the speakers printed here in black letter are all *rubrick*, in the beautiful original. I have added a short glossary on some of the more difficult or obsolete words, which will assist the less experienced reader, under whose notice such remote specimens of his own tongue seldom fall.

Between *twenty* and *thirty* years ago I received from India a *part* of the *Gitagovinda*, or *Songs of Jayadeva*. This poet, the finest lyric poet of India, flourished before the Christian era; and the poem above, which makes the tenth book of the *Bhagavet*, was written professedly to celebrate the *loves* of *Chrishna* and *Radha*, or the *reciprocal attraction between the divine goodness and the human soul*. The author leaves us in no doubt concerning the *design* of this little *pastoral drama*; for in the conclusion he thus speaks: "Whatever is delightful in the modes of music, *whatever is* DIVINE in MEDITATIONS ON VISHNU, whatever is exquisite in the sweet art of love, whatever is graceful in the fine strains of poetry; all that, let the happy and wise learn from the Songs of Jayadeva, whose soul is united with the foot of *Narayan*." *Vishnu* and *Narayan* are epithets of *Chrishna*, or the supreme incarnated god of the Hindoos. I found the general phraseology of this work, and its imagery as well as its *subject*, to correspond so much with those of the *Canticles*, that in the short notes which I wrote on this book in 1798, I proposed the illustration of many of its passages from the *Gitagovinda*; and was pleased to find, several years after, that my view of the subject had been confirmed by that encyclopædia of learning and science, Dr. *Mason Good*, who in his translation of the *Song of Songs*, with *critical notes*, published 1803, 8vo., has illustrated many passages from the *Gitagovinda*.

After having made a selection from this ancient poet for the illustration of the *Canticles*, I changed in some measure my purpose, and determined to give the whole work, and leave it to my readers to apply those passages which they might think best calculated to throw light upon a book which professedly has the *wisest of men* for its *author*, and according to the opinion of many, the most *important doctrines* of the Christian religion for its *subject*. I have not followed the *metrical version* which I received from India, but rather the *prose translation* of Sir William Jones; dividing it into *parts* and *verses*, after the model of the metrical version above mentioned; and adding verbal interpretations of the principal proper names and difficult terms which are contained in the work.

Having been long convinced that the *Chaldee Targum* is at once the oldest and most valuable *comment* upon this book, I have also added this. And here I might say that I have not only followed my own judgment, but that also of a very learned divine, Dr. *John Gill*, who, having preached *one hundred and twenty-two* sermons on the Song of Solomon, to the Baptist Congregation at *Horsleydown*, near London, embodied them all in what he calls "An *Exposition*" of this book, to which he added a *translation of the Targum*, with short *explanatory notes*, folio, 1728. This was, however, suppressed in all the later editions of this exposition; but why, I cannot tell. This piece I give to my readers, and for the same reasons alleged by this very learned and excellent man himself:—

"At the end of this exposition I have given," says he, "a version of the *Targum* or *Chaldee paraphrase* upon the whole book, with some notes thereon, induced hereunto by the following reasons:

"*First*, to gratify the curiosity of some who, observing frequent mention and use made of it in my exposition, might be desirous of perusing the whole.

"*Secondly*, for the profitableness thereof. Our learned countryman Mr. *Broughton* says, this paraphrase is worth our study both for delight and profit. It expounds several passages of Scripture, and some in the *New Testament*, which I have directed to in my notes upon it; and I am persuaded that the writings of the Jews, the ancient Jews especially, would give us much light into the phraseology and sense of abundance of texts in the *New Testament*."

It is certain that this paraphrase does very often direct us, or at least confirm us, as to the

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persons speaking in this song, to know which is of very great use in the explication of it. I shall add another reason: I believe the Book of Canticles refers more to the *Jewish* than to the *Christian church*, and I think the *Targumist* has made a more rational use of it than any of his successors.

I have thus placed within the reach of all my readers **THREE especial helps** towards a good understanding of this book: 1. The ancient English translation, with its curious *dramatis personæ*: 2. The *Gitagovinda*, a most curious poem of the spiritual and allegorical kind. 3. The *Chaldee Targum*, the oldest comment on this song. And I add my prayer, May God guide the reader into all truth, through Christ Jesus! Amen.

On this part of the subject it would be almost criminal not to mention, still more particularly, Dr. *Mason Good's translation and notes* on the *Song of Songs*. He has done much to elucidate its phraseology, and his notes are a treasury of critical learning. He considers the book to be a collection of *Sacred Idyls*, twelve in number; and his division is as follows:

IDYL I.		IDYL VII.	
Royal Bride,	Chap. I. Verses 2, 3, 4.	Royal Bride,	Chap. V. Verses 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.
Attendant Virgins,	— Part of the fourth verse, beginning, "We will exult."	Virgins,	— 9.
		Royal Bride,	— 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.
Royal Bride,	— Verses 5, 6, 7.	Virgins,	— VI. — 1.
Attendant Virgins,	— 8.	Royal Bride,	— 2, 3.
		King Solomon,	— 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.
IDYL II.		IDYL VIII.	
King Solomon,	Chap. I. Verses 9, 10, 11.	Royal Bride,	Chap. VI. Verses 11, 12.
Royal Bride,	— 12, 13, 14.	Virgins,	— 13.
King Solomon,	— 15.	Royal Bride,	— Part of the thirteenth verse, beginning, "What do you expect?"
Royal Bride,	— 16, 17. Chap. II. Ver. 1.	Virgins,	— Latter part of the thirteenth verse, beginning, "Fortitude."
King Solomon,	— II. — 2.		
Royal Bride,	— 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.		
IDYL III.		IDYL IX.	
Royal Bride,	Chap. II. Verses 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.	Virgins,	Chap. VII. Verses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
		King Solomon,	— 6, 7, 8, 9.
IDYL IV.		IDYL X.	
Royal bride,	Chap. III. Verses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.	Royal Bride,	Chap. VII. Verses 10, 11, 12, 13.
			— VIII. — 1, 2, 3, 4.
IDYL V.		IDYL XI.	
<i>Scene, a Chiosk or Pavilion.</i>		Virgins,	Chap. VIII. Verse 5.
Attendant Virgins,	Chap. III. Verse 6.	King Solomon,	— Part of the fifth verse, beginning, "I excited thee."
Other Virgins,	— 7, 8, 9, 10.		— Verse 6.
Royal Bride,	— 11.	King Solomon,	— 7.
King Solomon,	— IV. — 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.		
IDYL VI.		IDYL XII.	
King Solomon,	Chap. IV. Verses 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.	Royal Bride,	Chap. VIII. Verse 8.
Royal Bride,	— 16.	King Solomon,	— 9.
King Solomon,	— V. — 1.	Royal Bride,	— 10, 11, 12.
Royal Bride,	— Part of the first verse, beginning, "Eat, O my friend."	King Solomon,	— 13.
		Royal Bride,	— 14.

There have been various opinions on this division; and many will still think that much remains yet to be done. Dr. *Good* considers it a *spiritual allegory*; but he does not attempt a spiritual application of any part of it. This perhaps is no mean proof of his good sense and judgment. I have acted in the same way, though not so convinced of its spirituality as

Dr. *Goode* appears to be. If I took it up in this way, I should explain it *according to my own creed*, as others have done according to *theirs*; and could I lay it down as a maxim, that it is to be spiritually interpreted in reference to the Christian Revelation, I might soon show my reader that it points out the infinite love of God to every human soul, in the incarnation of Christ; the means he uses to bring all mankind to an acquaintance with himself; the redemption of true believers from all unrighteousness, through the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit; their consequent holy life, and godly conversation; the calling of the Gentiles; the restoration of the Jews; and the final judgment! And my comment on this plan would have just as *solid a foundation* as those of my predecessors, from *Origen* to the present day.

To conclude: I advise all young ministers to avoid preaching on Solomon's Song. If they take a text out of it, to proclaim salvation to lost sinners, they must borrow their doctrines from other portions of scripture, where all is *plain* and *pointed*. And why then leave such, and go out of their way to find allegorical meanings, taking a whole book by storm, and leaving the word of God to serve tables?

It is curious to see the manner in which many preachers and commentators attempt to expound this book. They first assume that the book refers to Christ and his Church; his union with human nature; his adoption of the Gentiles; and his everlasting love to elect souls, gathered out of both people; then take the words bride, bridegroom, spouse, love, watchmen, shepherds, tents, door, lock, &c., &c., and, finding some words either *similar* or *parallel*, in other parts of the sacred writings, which have *there* an allegorical meaning, contend that those *here* are to be similarly understood; and what is spoken of *those* apply to *these*; and thus, in fact, are explaining other passages of Scripture in their own way, while professing to explain the *Canticles*! What eminent talents, precious time, great pains, and industry, have been wasted in this way! One eminent scholar preaches to his congregation *one hundred and twenty-two* sermons upon the Song of Solomon, while all this time the evangelists and apostles have been comparatively forgotten; except only as they are referred to in illustration of the particular creed which such writers and preachers found on this book. How can they account to God for so much time spent on a tract which requires all their ingenuity and skill to make edifying, even on their own plan; a text of which they are not permitted to allege, in controversy, to prove the truth of any disputed doctrine? This, however, is not the fault of any particular *class* of ministers *exclusively*; several of all classes, though of some more than of others, have been found, less or more, labouring at this thriftless craft. Some, having preached on it during the whole of their ministry, have carried it, in a certain way, beyond the grave. An aged minister once told me, in a very solemn manner, that as God had been exceedingly merciful to him in saving his soul, and putting him into the ministry, thus accounting him faithful, he hoped that when called to the Church above, if any *funeral sermon* were preached for him, it should be from *Canticles*, chap. i. 8: "Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents." That he could have applied these words to his own state, and the use which should be made of his life and death, I have no doubt; but who, from this text, would have chosen to pronounce the funeral oration?

I repeat it, and I wish to be heard by young ministers in particular, take the plainest texts when you attempt to convince men of sin, and build up believers on their most holy faith; and thus show rather your love for their souls than your dexterity in finding out spiritual meanings for obscure passages, on the true signification of which few, either among the learned or pious, are agreed.

I now, according to my promise, lay before my readers a transcript from my own MS. Bible, which is most probably the first translation of this *Song* that was ever made into the English language. I have *added*, for the sake of reference, the *figures* for the present division into verses, in the *margin*: these are not in the MS. The *dramatis personæ*, here in *black* letter, are in *red* in the MS. The *orthography* is scrupulously followed.

THE  
BOOK OF CANTICLES.

[Carefully transcribed from a MS. of the fourteenth century in the Editor's possession.]

Here begynnyth the Boke that is clepid Songis of  
Songis, of the Bridulis of Crist and of the Chirche.

CAP. I.

The Chirche of the comynge of Crist, spekith  
seyngs,

2. Kysse he me with the cosse of his mouth.

The voice of the *Fadir*.

For better ben thi tetis thann wyn, smelling with  
best oynmentis.

The voice of the Chirche.

3. Oyle held oute thi name: ther fore the yunge  
waxinge wymmen loviden thee ful myche.

The voice of the Chirche to Crist.

4. Drawe me after thee: we schul rennen in the  
smell of thin oynmentis.

The Chirche seyth of Crist.

Brogte me in the king into his celers. We schul  
ful out joyen and gladen in thee, myndful of thi  
tetis upon wyn, rigtmen loven thee.

The Chirche, of hir tribulacouns.

5. O zee dogtris of Jerusalem, blac I am bot  
schappli, as the tabernaculis of cedar, as the  
6. skynnes of Salomon. Willith not beholden that  
I be broun; for discolorde me hath the sunne.  
The sones of my modir fogten agein me: thei  
setiden me keper in vynes: my vyne gerde I  
kepte not.

The voice of the Chirche to Crist.

7. Schewe thou to me whom lovith my soule,  
where thou gevest leswe, where thou ligge in  
myd day: lest to gou vagraunt I begynne afir  
the flockis of thi felawes.

The voice of Crist to the Chirche.

8. Gif thou knowest not thee, O thou fair most  
among wymmen; go oute, and go awei after  
the steppis of thi flockis and feed thi goot beside  
9. the tabernaculis of schepperdis. To my ryding  
in charis of Pharao, I licned thee, O my leef!  
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10. Fair ben thy cheekis as of a turture; thi necke  
11. as brochis. Golden ribanes we schul maken to  
thee maad furrede with sylvir.

The voice of the Chirche, of Crist.

12. Whan the king was in his lying place, my maad  
13. encense gave his smell. A bundlet of mirre my  
lemman is to me: betwene my tetis he schal  
14. dwellen. The clustre of cypre tree my lemman  
to me: in the vynes of Engaddy.

The voice of Crist to the Chirche.

15. Loo thou art fair my leef, loo thou fair: thin  
eegen of culveris.

The voice of the Chirche to Crist.

16. Loo thou art fair my lemman, and seemli; our  
17. bed is schynynge. The trees of oure hous as  
cedre; oure couplis cypresse.

CAP. II.

The voice of Crist, of him and of the Chirche.

- 1,2. I the floure of the feeld, and the lillie of al  
valey, as a lillie among thornes, so my leef  
among dogtris.

The voice of the Chirche, of Crist.

3. As an apple-tree among the trees of wodis; so  
my lemman among sones. Undir the schadewe  
of him whom I hadde desirede, I satte: and his  
4. fruyte sweet to my throote. The king ladde  
me into his wyne celere, he ordeynede in me  
5. charite. Undir leye gee me with floures, settith  
me about applis; for I languych for love.

The voice of the Chirche, of Crist.

6. The left hond of him undir myn heued; and  
his rigt hond schal clippen me.

The voice of Crist, of the Chirche.

7. I adjure gou, gee dogtris of Jerusalem, by the  
capretis and the hertis of feeldis, ne rere gee,  
ne makith my leef to waken, to the time that  
sche will.



## CANTICLES.

### The voice of the Chirche, of Crist.

8. The voice of my lemman : Loo, this comthit lepinge in mounteynes, and over lepinge hilles.
9. Liic is my lemman to an capret and to an hert, calf of hertis. Loo, he stant behinden our wall beholding by the wyndowis a fer loking thurg the latises. Loo my lemman spekith to me : Riis go thou my leef, my culver my schappli and cum. Now forsothe wynter passide, wedir geed fro, and is gon awei. Floures appeereden in our lond—tyme of cutting is cummen ; the
13. voice of the turtur is herd in oure londe. The fige tree brogt forth his first figs : The vynes flouryng geven their smell.

### The voice of Crist to the Chirche.

14. Riis, go my leef, my schaply and cum thou my culver, in the hoolis of the stoon wal. Schewe thou to me thi face, and soun thi voice in my eris ; thi voice forsoth is sweet, and thi face seemli.

### The voice of Crist to the Chirche agein herptikis.

15. Take gee to us litil foxis that distruyen vynes : for oure vyne flourede.

### The voice of the Chirche, of Crist.

16. My loved to me, and I to him, that is fed among lilies, to the tyme that the day springe, and
17. schadewis ben bowed in. Turne agein ; liic be thou O my lemman to a capret, and to the hert, calf of hertis, upon the mounteynes of Bether.

## CAP. III.

### The voice of the Chirche gedred toggyder of Gentilis.

1. In my litil bed bi nigthis, I sougt whom lovede
2. my soule : I sogte him, and I founde not. I schal riisen and gon about the cytee, by tounes and streetis : I schal sechen whom loveth my soule. I sogt him and found not. There founden me the wacheris that kepen the cytee.

### The Chirche seith of Crist, to the Apostlis.

4. Wheyther whom loveth my soule, gee seegen ? A litil whann I hadde passid hem, I foond whom lovith my soule ; I heeld him and I schal not leven to the tyme that I bringe him into the hous of my moder : and into the bed of hir that gat me.

### The voice of Crist, of the Chirche.

5. I adjure gou ge dogtris of Jerusalem, by capretis and hertis of feeldis, ne reire gee, ne make gee my leef to waken to the tyme that sche wille.

### The Synagoge, of the Chirche.

6. What is sche this that stiegith up by desert, as a litil gerde of smoko of the swote spyces of mirre and of cense, and of al pymentarie poudre ?

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### The voice of the Chirche, of Crist.

7. Loo the litil bed of Salomon ; sixti stronge men compassen, of the most strong men of Israel ;
8. the whiche alle ben holdinge swerdis ; and to bataile best tagt. Of eche oon the swerd upon his hip, for the nigtdredis.

### Of Crist, and of the Chirche chosen of Gentilis.

9. A chailer king Salomon maad to him of the trees
10. of Liban. His pileers, he maade sylveren ; the lenyng place, golden ; the steiging up, purple ; the myddis he enourneade with charite, for the dogteris of Jerusalem.

### The voice of the Chirche, of Crist.

11. Goth out and seeth gee dogtris of Syon, Kyng Salomon, in the dyademe in the whiche crowned him his modir, in the dai of spousing of him ; and in the dai of gladnesse of his herte.

## CAP. IV.

### The voice of Crist to the Chirche.

1. Hou fair art thou my leef, hou fair ert thou ! Thyn eegen of culveris, with out it that with ine forth is hid. Thin heris as the flockis of Got, that steigiden up fro the hill of Galaad.
2. Thi teeth as the flockis of clippid scheep that steigeden up fro the wasching place. Alle with double lombis in the wombe ; and bareyn is not
3. there among hem. Als a furrede sylken fylet, thi lippis, and thi fair speche swote. Als the brekyng of a powngarnet, so thi checkis ;
4. without it, that withine forth litt hid. Als the tour of David thi neck that is bild out with pynaculis. A thousand scheeldis hangen of it al
5. the armour of strong men. Thi two tetis as two yunge capretis twynglingis of the capret, that
6. ben fed in lilies : to the tyme that the day brette out, and the schadewis ben in bowid. I schal gou to the mount of mirre, and to the hill of
7. cens. Al fair thou art my leef, and wemm is
8. not in thee. Cumm thou fro Libane my spouse, cumm fro Liban ; cum thou schalt ben crowned fro the heued of Aman ; fro the front of Sannir, and of Ermon : fro the couchis lions,
9. and the hill of Paradise. Thou hast woundid myn herte myn suster, my spouse, thou hast woundide myn herte in oon of thin eegen : and
10. in oon here of thi neck. Hou fair ben thi tetis my suster, my spouse, fairer ben thi tetis than wyne : and the smell of thin oymentis, over alle spices. A dropping honycobm thi lippis, spouse : honey and mayle undir thi tunge ; and the smell of thi clothing is, as the smell of cens.
12. A closid garden my suster, spouse ; a closid
13. gardyn, a welle selid. Thyn out sendingis is paradis of paumgarnetis : with thi fraytis of applis. Of cypre tree with narde ; and narde with safrun, and fystula and canel, with alle the trees of Liban, mirre and aloes, with alle the first
15. oymentis. The welle of gardynes, the pit of

## CANTICLES.

lyvng wateris that flowen with burre fro Liban. Riis North, and cum South, blow thurg my gardyn, and thei schul flowen swote spyces of it.

### CAP. V.

#### *The Chirche seith of Crist.*

1. Cum my leef into his gardyn; and ete he the fruyt of his applis.

#### *Crist seith to the Chirche.*

1. Cum into my gardyn, my sister, my spouse; I have gadered my mirre with my swote spices; I cete myn hony comb with myn hony. I dranke my wyne with my mylc.

#### *Crist to the Apostolis seith.*

2. Etith gee freendis and drinkith: and gee most derworth beth inwardli maad drunken. I sleep and myn herte wakith.

#### *The voice of the Chirche, of Crist.*

- The voice of my Lemman knockyng, open thou to me my sustir, my leef, my culver, my unwemmynd, for my heud is ful of dewe, and
3. my temple heris of the droopis of nigthis. I spoylide me my coote; hou schal I be clothid it? I waschide my feet, hou schal I befoulen
  4. hem? My lemman putte his hond bi the hool; my wombe inwardly trembled at the touching of
  5. him. I rose that I scholde openen to my lemman. My hondis droppiden mirre; and my
  6. fingris ful of best proved mirre. The lacche of my dore, I opened to my lemman; and he hadde bowid asyde and passide. My soule is moltyn as my lemman spac. I sogte and founde not him. I clepid and he answerd not to me.
  7. There founden me keperis that gon about the cytee. Thei smyten me, and woundiden me;
  8. takin my mantill the keperis of the wallis. I adjure gou ye dogtris of Jerusalem, gif gee schul fynden my lemman that gee telle to him, for I languisch for love.

#### *The voice of freendis seith to the Chirche.*

9. Whiche is thi lemman of the loved, O thou most fair of wymmen? Whiche is thi lemman of the loved? Forsoth thou hast adjured us.

#### *The voice of the Chirche of Christ seith to the freendis.*

10. My lemman whiit and roodi chosen of thousandis. His heued, best gold; his her as bunchis
12. of palmys, thick leved blac as a crowe. His eegen as culveris upon litil ryvers. Of wateris that ben waschid with mylk; and sitte by the
13. most full flowing of wateris. The cheekis of litil flouris of swote spices plaunted of pimentaries. His lippis dropping the first myrre; the hondis of him able to turnen about, golden and full of jacynotis. His wombe is yvren depertid
15. by saphiris. His lippis marbil pileeris, that ben foundid upon golden feet. His fairneas as of
16. Lyban, and chosen as of cedre. The throat of

him most swote; and he al desirable. Sicke is my loved, and this is my lemman, gee dogtris of Jerusalem.

### CAP. VI.

#### *The voice of holl soules of the Chirche.*

1. Whider grede awei thi lemman? O thou most fair of wymmen? Whither bowiden doun thi leef, and we schul sechen him with thee?

#### *The voice of the Chirche, of Crist.*

2. My leef went doun into his gardyne to the floore of swote spices: that there he fed in the gar-
3. dynes, and lilies he gadiere. I to my leef, and my self, and my leef to me, that is fed among lilies.

#### *The voice of Crist to the Chirche.*

4. Fair thou art my leef; swote and fair as Jerusalem; ferful as the scheltrun of tentis ordeyned.
5. Turne awei thin eegen fro me; for thei maden me to fleen awei. Thin heris as the flockis of sche got, that apeereden fro Galaad. Thi teeth as a floc of skeep that steigeden up fro the wasching place; al with double fruyt of wombe
7. and bareyn there is not in hem. As the rynde of powmgarnet; so thi cheekis without thin hid
8. thingis. Sixty ben queenes, and eighty ben secundane wiives; and of yunge waxe wymmen
9. there is no noubre. Oon is my culver, my perfitte: oon is to her modir, chosen of hir modir, chosen of hir that gat hir. There seegen hir the dogtris of Syon, and most blisful preisiden hir: the queenes and secundarie wiives preisiden hir.
10. What is sche this that goth forth as the morewtide, riising fair as the mone, chosen as the sunne; ferful as of tentis scheltrun ordeyned.

#### *The voice of the Chirche, of the Synagoge.*

11. I wente doun into my gardyne that I schulde seen the applis of valeys; and beholden gif the vynes hadden flouride, and the poumgarnetis
12. hadden burrioued, I wiste not, my soule distourbid me, for the foure horsid cartis of Amynadab.

#### *The voice of the Chirche to the faith of the Natypte.*

13. Turne agein, turne agein Sunamytis; turn agein, turne agein that we beholden thee.

#### *The voice of Crist to the Chirche, of the Synagoge.*

What schalt thou seen in the Sunamyte, but queeris of tentis?

### CAP. VII.

#### *The voice of Crist to the Chirche.*

1. Hou fair ben thi goingis in schoon, thou dogtir of the prince? the joyntures of thin hippis as broochis that ben forgid with hond of the craftisman. Thin navel a turned cuppe, never need-ing drinkis. Thi wombe as an hepe of whete,
3. of whete sett abouten with lilies. Thi two tetis

## CANTICLES.

- as two yunge capretis, gemelwis of the sche
4. capret. Thi necke as an yvren tour; thin egen as the cysternys in Esebon; that ben in the gate of the dogtir of the multitude. Thi noose as the tour of Liban that beholdith ageins damask.
  5. Thyn heued as carmele, thin heris of thin heued as the purple of the kyng joynd to watir pipis.
  6. Hou faire thou art, and hou seemli thou most
  7. derworthe in delicis? Thi stature is lickened to a palme tree; and thi tetis to clusteris.

### Crist, of the holi crosse seth.

8. I scide I schal steigen into a palme tree; and and I schal taken the fruytis of it.

### The voice of Crist to the Chirche.

And thi tetis schul ben as the clusteris of a vyne, and the smel of thi mouth as the smel of applis; and thi throat as best wyne.

### The Chirche seth of Crist.

9. Worthi to my leef to drinken: to the lippis, and
10. to the teeth of him to chewen. I to my leef and to me the turnyng of him.

### The voice of the Chirche to Crist.

11. Cum my leef, go we out into the feeld, dwelle
12. we togydir in townes: erli riise we to the vyne: see we gif the vyne flouride; gif the floures, fruytis bringen forth; gif the poumgarnetis flouris?
13. The mandraggis yeven their smel in oure yeatis. Alle appls newe and olde my leef, I kepte to thee.

## CAP. VIII.

### The voice of Patriarkis, of Crist.

1. Who to me gevith thee my brother, souking the tetis of my modir, that I fynde thee aloon without forth and kysse thee, and now, me, no man dispises. I schal taken thee and leiden into the hous of my modir, and into the bed place of hir that gat me. There thou schalt tecken me, and and I schal geven to thee drinken of spycid wyne, and of the must of my poumgarnetis.
3. The left hond of him undir my heued, and the rigt hond of him schal clippen me.

### The voice of Crist, of the Chirche.

4. I adjure you, gee dogtris of Jerusalem, ne rere

gee, ne makith to wake my leef, to the tyme that sche will.

### The voice of the Synagoge, of the Chirche.

5. What is sche this that steigith up fro desert, flowing delicis, fast clevyng upon hir leef?

### The voice of Crist to the Synagoge, of the holi Crosse.

- Undir an apple tree I rered thee; there schent is thi modir: there defould is sche that gat thee.
6. Putte me as a brooche upon thi herte; putte me as a brooche upon thin arme; for strong as deth, love: hard as helle, gelousnesse: the lampis of
  7. it, the lampis of fir: and of flammes. Many wateris schal not mown quenchen oute charitee: ne floodis schal not throwen it down. Gif a man gif al the substaunce of his hous for love, as nogt he dispisith it.

### The voice of Crist, to the Ignage of holi Chirche.

8. Our sustir a litil child; and tetis sche hath not. What schal we done to oure sustir, in the day
9. whann sche is to be spoken to? Gif a wal she is, bidden we upon it sylveren pynnaclis. Gif a dore sche is, joynd we it with cedre tables.

### The voice of the Chirche answertinge.

10. I, a wal; and my tetis as a tour; sythen I am maad be fore thee as pese receyvynge.

### The Synagoge of the Chirche seth.

11. Vyne sche was to pesyble, in hir that hath peplis; sche toke it to the keperis: a man takith awei from the fruyte of it, a thousand sylveren platis.

### Crist to the Chirche seth.

2. My vyne before me is; a thousand thi pesiblis; and two hundrith to hem that kepen the fruytis
3. of it. The whiche dwellest in gardynes freendis herkenen thee: make me to heeren thi voice.

### The voice of the Chirche to Crist.

4. Flee thou my leef, be thou lickened to a capret, and to an hert, calf of bertis, upon the mounteynes of swote spices.

### Explicit Canticum.

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The above is taken, literatim, from an ancient MS. once the property of *Thomas à Woodstock*, youngest son of *Edward III.*, and brother to *Edward the Black Prince*.

*Millbrook, Feb. 1, 1823.*

EXPLANATION OF THE MOST DIFFICULT WORDS IN THE PRECEDING  
ANCIENT VERSION OF SOLOMON'S SONG.

CHAP. I.

Ver.	
2 Cosse	kisses.
6 Fogten	fought.
7 Leswe	leisure or rest.
8 Goot	plural of <i>goat</i> .
9 Charis	chairs or chariots.
10 Leef	<i>love</i> , fem. as <i>lemman</i> , mas.
— Turture	turtle dove.
11 Furrede	bordered.
13 Lemman	lover. See Leef.

CHAP. II.

4 Throote	throat.
5 Gee	ye.
6 Heued	head.
— Clippen	embrace.
7 Capretis	young goats, kids.
-- Rere	rear or raise.

CHAP. III.

3 Sogt	sought, searched for.
4 Seegen	saw.
6 Stiegeth	ascendeth.
— Gerde	rod or staff.
— Swote	sweet.
— Cense	incense.
— Pymmentarie	odoriferous.
8 Tagt	taught.
10 enournede	strewed.

CHAP. IV.

1 Eegen	eyes.
2 Clipped	shorne.
3 Swote	sweet.
6 Inbowid	declined.
— Cens	incense.
7 Wemm	defect, wart, mole.

Ver.

8 Couchis	lair or dens.
15 Burre	a rippling noise like waters.

CHAP. V.

1 Derworth	most beloved.
2 Culver	dove.
6 Moltyn	melted.
13 Pimentaries	perfumers, confectioners.
14 Yvren	ivory.

CHAP. VI.

4 Scheltrun	covering.
8 Secundane wiives	secondary wives, concubines.
9 Secundarie	<i>idem</i> .
10 Morewtide	to-morrow.
11 Burrouned	put forth buds.
13 Queeris	choirs.

CHAP. VII.

3 Gemelwis	twins.
4 Yate	gate.
5 Heris	hairs.
— Purpure	purple.
8 Tetis	teats, breasts.
12 Gif	if.
13 Yeven	give.

CHAP. VIII.

2 Must	new wine.
3 Clippen	embrace.
5 Clevyng	holding on, leaning.
— Schent	corrupted.
6 Gelousnesse	jealousy.
9 Pynnaclis	turrets, towers.
11 Pesyble	the peaceful man, i. e., Solomon.
13 Pesiblis	<i>idem</i> .

N. B.—There are many other words which, though they appear difficult, a little labour will make out, as they differ more in the *spelling* than in the *sense*.

## SONG OF SOLOMON.

Year from the Creation of the World, according to Archbishop Usher, 2990.—Year from the Flood of Noah, according to the common Hebrew text, 1334.—Year before the birth of Christ, 1010.—Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 1014.

## CHAPTER I.

*The bride's love to her spouse, 1—5. She confesses her unworthiness; desires to be directed to the flock, 6, 7; and she is directed to the shepherds' tents, 8. The bridegroom describes his bride, and shows how he will provide for her, and how comfortably they are accommodated, 9—17.*

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

**T**HE <sup>a</sup> song of songs, which  
is Solomon's.

2 Let him kiss me with the  
kisses of his mouth: <sup>b</sup> for <sup>c</sup> thy  
love is better than wine.

3 Because of the savour of thy good <sup>d</sup> ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.

4 Draw me, <sup>e</sup> we will run after thee: the

<sup>a</sup> 1 Kings iv. 32. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. iv. 10. — <sup>c</sup> Heb. *thy loves*.  
<sup>d</sup> Hos. xi. 4. John vi. 44.

## NOTES ON CHAP. I.

Verse 1. *The song of songs*] A song of peculiar excellence. See the *Introduction*. The rabbins consider this superior to all songs. TEN *songs*, says the *Targum*, have been sung; but this excels them all. 1. The first was sung by Adam when his sin was pardoned. 2. The second was sung by Moses and the Israelites at the Red Sea. 3. The third was sung by the Israelites when they drank of the rock in the wilderness. 4. The fourth was sung by Moses when summoned to depart from this world. 5. The fifth was sung by Joshua when the sun and moon stood still. 6. The sixth was sung by Deborah and Barak after the defeat of Sisera. 7. The seventh was sung by Hannah when the Lord promised her a son. 8. The eighth was sung by David for all the mercies given him by God. 9. The ninth is the present, sung in the spirit of prophecy by Solomon. 10. The tenth is that which shall be sung by the children of Israel when restored from their captivities. See the *Targum*.

Verse 2. *Let him kiss me, &c.*] She speaks of the bridegroom in the third person, to testify her own modesty, and to show him the greater respect.

*Thy love is better than wine.*] The *Versions* in general translate דודי *dodeyca*, thy breasts; and they

king <sup>f</sup> hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: <sup>g</sup> the upright love thee.

5 I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

6 Look not upon me, because I am black,

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

<sup>e</sup> Phil. iii. 12, 13, 14. — <sup>f</sup> Ps. xlv. 14, 15. John xiv. 2.  
Eph. ii. 6. — <sup>g</sup> Or, *they love thee uprightly*.

are said to represent, spiritually, the *Old and New Testaments*.

Verse 3. *Thy name is as ointment poured forth*] Ointments and perfumes were, and still are, in great request among the Asiatics. They occur constantly in their entertainments. Thy name is as refreshing to my heart, as the best perfumes diffused through a chamber are to the senses of the guests.

*Therefore do the virgins love thee.*] She means herself; but uses this *periphrasis* through modesty.

Verse 4. *Draw me*] Let me have the full assurance of thy affection.

*We will run after thee*] Speaking in the plural through modesty, while still herself is meant.

*The king hath brought me*] My spouse is a *potentate*, a mighty king, no ordinary person.

*Into his chambers*] He has favoured me with his utmost confidence.

*The upright love thee.*] The most perfect and accomplished find thee worthy of their highest esteem.

Verse 5. *I am black, but comely*] This is literally true of many of the Asiatic women; though black or brown, they are exquisitely beautiful. Many of the Egyptian women are still fine; but their complexion is much inferior to that of the Palestine females.

A. M. cir. 2990. because the sun hath looked  
B. C. cir. 1014. upon me : my mother's children  
Ante I. Ol. were angry with me ; they made  
cir. 238. me keeper of the vineyards ;  
Ante U.C. c. 261. but mine own vineyard have I not kept.

7 Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest *thy flock* to rest at noon : for why should I be as <sup>a</sup> one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions ?

8 If thou know not, <sup>b</sup> O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.

9 I have compared thee, <sup>c</sup> O my love, <sup>d</sup> to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots.

10 <sup>e</sup> Thy cheeks are comely with rows of *jewels*, thy neck with chains of *gold*.

<sup>a</sup> Or, as one that is veiled.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. v. 9. vi. 1.—<sup>c</sup> Ch. ii. 2, 10, 13. iv. 1, 7. v. 2. vi. 4. John xv. 14, 15.—<sup>d</sup> 2 Chron. i. 16, 17.—<sup>e</sup> Ezek. xvi. 11, 12, 13.—<sup>f</sup> Or, cypress. Ch. iv.

Though black or swarthy in my complexion, yet am I comely—well proportioned in every part.

As the tents of Kedar] I am tawny, like the tents of the Arabians, and like the pavilions of Solomon probably covered by a kind of tanned cloth. The daughters of Jerusalem are said to represent the synagogue ; the bride, the church of Christ. It is easy to find spiritual meanings: every creed will furnish them.

Verse 6. Because the sun hath looked upon me] The bride gives here certain reasons why she was dark complexioned. "The sun hath looked upon me." I am sun-burnt, tanned by the sun ; being obliged, perhaps, through some domestic jealousy or uneasiness, to keep much without : "My mother's children were angry ; they made me keeper of the vineyards." Here the brown complexion of the Egyptians is attributed to the influence of the sun or climate.

My mother's children were angry with me] Acted severely. The bringing of a foreigner to the throne would no doubt excite jealousy among the Jewish females ; who, from their own superior complexion, national and religious advantages, might well suppose that Solomon should not have gone to Egypt for a wife and queen, while Judea could have furnished him with every kind of superior excellence.

Verse 7. Tell me—where thou feedest] This is spoken as if the parties were shepherds, or employed in the pastoral life. But how this would apply either to Solomon, or the princess of Egypt, is not easy to ascertain. Probably in the marriage festival there was something like our masks, in which persons of quality assumed rural characters and their employments. See that fine one composed by Milton, called COMUS.

To rest at noon] In hot countries the shepherds and their flocks are obliged to retire to shelter during the burning heats of the noon-day sun. This is common in all countries, in the summer heats, where shelter can be had.

11 We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.

12 While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.

13 A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me ; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.

14 My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi.

15 <sup>s</sup> Behold, thou art fair, <sup>h</sup> my love ; behold, thou art fair ; thou hast doves' eyes.

16 Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant : also our bed is green.

17 The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir.

13.—<sup>g</sup> Ch. iv. 1. v. 12.—<sup>h</sup> Or, my companion.—<sup>i</sup> Or, galleries.

One that turneth aside] As a wanderer ; one who, not knowing where to find her companions, wanders fruitlessly in seeking them. It was customary for shepherds to drive their flocks together for the purpose of conversing, playing on the pipe, or having trials of skill in poetry or music. So VIRGIL :

Forte sub arguta conederat ilice Daphnis  
Compuerantque greges Corydon et Thyrsis in unum :  
Thyrsis oves, Corydon distentas laete capellas ;  
Ambo florentes estatibus, Arcades ambo,  
Et cantare pares, et respondere parati.—ECL. vii. v. 1.

"Beneath a holm repaired two jolly swains :  
Their sheep and goats together grazed the plains ;  
Both young Arcadians, both alike inspired  
To sing and answer as the song required."—DRYDEN.

This does not express the sense of the original : from the different pastures in which they had been accustomed to feed their flocks, they drove their sheep and goats together for the purpose mentioned in the pastoral ; and, in course, returned to their respective pasturages, when their business was over.

Verse 8. If thou know not] This appears to be the reply of the virgins. They know not exactly ; and therefore direct the bride to the shepherds, who would give information.

Verse 9. I have compared thee—to a company of horses] This may be translated, more literally, "I have compared thee *רוץ* *lesusathi*, to my mare, in the chariots or courses of Pharaoh ;" and so the Versions understood it. Mares, in preference to horses, were used both for riding and for chariots in the East. They are much swifter, endure more hardship, and will go longer without food, than either the stallion or the gelding. There is perhaps no brute creature in the world so beautiful as a fine well-bred horse or mare ; and the finest woman in the universe, Helen, has been compared to a horse in a Thessalian chariot, by Theocritus. Idyl. xviii. ver. 28 :—

‘Ὀδε και ἡ χρυσα Ἐλενα διαφαινει’ εν ἡμιν,  
Πιυφη, μεγαλη, ἀτ’ ανεδραμεν ογμος αρουρα,  
Η καψ κυπαρισσος, η ἀρματι Θεσσαλος ἱππος.

“The golden Helen, tall and graceful, appears as distinguished among us as the furrow in the field, the cypress in the garden, or the Thessalian horse in the chariot.”

This passage amply justifies the Hebrew bard, in the simile before us. See Jer. vi. 2.

Verse 10. *Thy cheeks are comely*] *D’Arvieux* has remarked that “the Arabian ladies wear a great many pearls about their necks and caps. They have gold chains about their necks which hang down upon their bosoms with strings of coloured gauze; the gauze itself bordered with zechins and other pieces of gold coin, which hang upon their foreheads and both cheeks. The ordinary women wear small silver coins, with which they cover their forehead-piece like fish scales, as this is one of the principal ornaments of their faces.” I have seen their essence bottles ornamented with festoons of aspers, and small pieces of silver pearls, beads, &c. One of these is now before me.

Verse 11. *Borders of gold*] I have observed several of the handkerchiefs, shawls, and head attire of the eastern women, curiously and expensively worked in the borders with gold and silver, and variously coloured silk, which has a splendid effect.

Verse 12. *While the king sitteth at his table*] במסבו *bimsibbo*, in his circle, probably meaning the circle of his friends at the marriage festivals, or a round table.

Verse 13. *He shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.*] Mr. Harmer contends that it is the bundle of myrrh which the bride says shall lie all night betwixt her breasts, to which she compares the bridegroom, his name being as pleasing and refreshing to her mind, as the myrrh or stacte was to her senses, by its continual fragrance.

Verse 14. *A cluster of camphire*] Mr. Hasselquist supposes this to mean a bunch of the Cyprus grape; but this is supposed to mean a shrub so called, not any production of the isle of Cyprus; the best kinds of which were found at *En-gedi*. This place belonged to the tribe of Judah.

Perhaps the poet alludes to the dark colour of the hair, which by the Greeks was not unfrequently compared to the bunches of grapes; by no means an unfit similitude for thick black clustering curls. The following lines represent the same idea:—

ونفرع بيزين اظتن اسود فاحم  
اثبت كفن اللخلة اظتعتكل

“The dark black locks that ornament her neck Hang thick and clustering like the branchy palm.”

Verse 15. *Thou hast doves’ eyes*] The large and beautiful dove of Syria is supposed to be here referred to, the eyes of which are remarkably fine.

Verse 16. *Also our bed is green.*] עפר *eres*, from its use in several places of the Hebrew Bible, generally signifies a mattress; and here probably a green bank is meant, on which they sat down, being now on a walk in the country. Or it may mean a bower in a garden, or the nuptial bed.

Verse 17. *The beams of our house are cedar*] Perhaps it was under a cedar tree, whose vast limbs were interwoven with the ברוח *beroth*, a tree of the cypress kind, where they now sat. And this natural bower recommended itself to the poet’s attention by its strength, loftiness, and its affording them a shady cover and cool retreat. How natural to break out into the praise of a bower, by whose branches and foliage we are shielded from the intense heat of the sun! Even the shelter of a great rock in a weary land is celebrated by the pen of the first of prophets and greatest of poets, Isai. xxxii. 2.

With this chapter the first day of the marriage ceremonies is supposed to end.

## CHAPTER II.

*A description of the bridegroom, and his love to the bride, 1—9. A fine description of spring, 10—13. The mutual love of both, 14—17.*

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U. C. c. 261.

I AM the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.

2 As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

3 As the apple tree among the trees of the

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *I delighted and sat down*, &c.—<sup>b</sup> Rev. xxii. 1, 2.

### NOTES ON CHAP. II.

Verse 1. *I am the rose of Sharon*] *Sharon* was a very fruitful place, where David’s cattle were fed, 1 Chron. xxvii. 29. It is mentioned as a place of excellence, Isai. xxxv. 2, and as a place of flocks, Isai. lxxv. 10. Perhaps it would be better, with almost all

wood, so is my beloved among the sons. <sup>a</sup> I sat down under his shadow with great delight,

<sup>b</sup> and his fruit was sweet to my

<sup>c</sup> taste.

4 He brought me to the <sup>d</sup> banqueting house,

<sup>c</sup> Heb. *palate*.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. *house of wine*.

the *Versions*, to translate, “I am the rose of the field.” The bridegroom had just before called her *fair*; she, with a becoming modesty, represents her beauty as nothing extraordinary, and compares herself to a common flower of the field. This, in the warmth of his affection, he denies, insisting that she as much

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U. C. c. 261.

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

and his banner over me was love.

5 Stay me with flagons, <sup>a</sup> comfort me with apples : for I am sick of love.

6 <sup>b</sup> His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.

7 <sup>c</sup> I <sup>d</sup> charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.

8 The voice of my beloved ! behold, he

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *straw me with apples.*—<sup>b</sup> Ch. viii. 3.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. I adjure you.

cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.

9 <sup>e</sup> My beloved is like a roe, or a young hart : behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, ' shewing himself through the lattice.

10 My beloved spake, and said unto me, <sup>f</sup> Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

11 For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone ;

<sup>d</sup> Ch. iii. 5. viii. 4.—<sup>e</sup> Ver. 17.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. *flourishing.*  
<sup>g</sup> Ver. 13.

surpasses all other maidens as the flower of the lily loes the bramble, ver. 2.

Verse 3. *As the apple tree*] The bride returns the compliment, and says, *As the apple or citron tree is among the trees of the wood, so is the bridegroom among all other men.*

*I sat down under his shadow*] I am become his pouse, and my union with him makes me indelicably happy.

Verse 4. *He brought me to the banqueting house*] literally, *the house of wine.* The ancients preserved their wine, not in barrels or dark cellars under ground, as we do, but in large *pitchers*, ranged against the wall in some upper apartment in the house, the place where they kept their most precious effects. We have a proof of this in HOMER:—

Ὡς φαν' ὁ δ' ὑψοροφον θαλαμον κατιβησατο πατρος  
Ευρυ, ὅθι νητος χρυσος και χαλκος εκειτο,  
Εσθης τ' εν χηλοισιν, ἄλις τ' ευωδες ελαιον.  
Εν δε πιθοι οινου παλαιου ἡδυποτοιο  
Εστασαν, ακρητον θιον ποτον εντος εχοντες,  
Ἐξειης ποτε τοιχων αρηροτες' ειποτ' Οδυσσειν  
Οικαδε νοστησει, και αλγεια πολλα μογησας.  
Κληισται δ' επισαν σανιδες πεκινωσ αραρυιαι,  
Δικλιδεις' εν δε γυνη ταμιη νυκτας τε και ημαρ  
Εσχ', κ. τ. λ. Od. lib. ii., ver. 337.

Meantime the lofty rooms the prince surveys,  
Where lay the treasures of th' Ithacian race.  
Here, ruddy brass and gold refulgent blazed ;  
There, polished chests embroidered vestures graced.  
Here, pots of oil breathed forth a rich perfume ;  
There, jars of wine in rows adorned the dome.  
(Pure flavoured wine, by gods in bounty given,  
And worthy to exalt the feasts of heaven.)  
Untouched they stood, till, his long labours o'er,  
The great Ulysses reached his native shore.  
A double strength of bars secured the gates ;  
Fast by the door wise Euryclea waits, &c.

POPE.

Verse 5. *Stay me with flagons*] I believe the original words mean some kind of *cordials* with which we are unacquainted. The *Versions* in general understand some kind of *ointment* or *perfumes* by the first term. I suppose the good man was perfectly

sincere who took this for his *text*, and, after having repeated, *Stay with me flagons, comfort me with apples for I am sick of love*, sat down, perfectly overwhelmed with his own feelings, and was not able to proceed ! But while we admit such a person's sincerity, who can help questioning his judgment ?

Verse 7. *I charge you—by the roes*] This was probably some rustic mode of adjuration. The verses themselves require little comment.

With this verse the *first night of the first day* is supposed to end.

Verse 8. *Behold, he cometh leaping*] This appears to be highly characteristic of the gambols of the shepherds, and points out the ecstasy with which those who were enamoured ran to their mates. It is supposed that the *second day's eclogue* begins at this verse. The author of what was then called *A New Translation of Solomon's Song* observes, 1. The bride relates how the bridegroom, attended by his companions, had come under her window, and called upon her to come forth and enjoy the beauties of the spring, ver. 9, 10, 11, &c. 2. She then returns to her narration, chap. iii. 1. The bridegroom did not come according to her wishes. Night came on ; she did not find him in her bed ; she went out to seek him ; found him, and brought him to her mother's pavilion, ver. 4 ; and then, as before, conjures the virgins not to disturb his repose, ver. 5.

Verse 9. *He standeth behind our wall*] This may refer to the wall by which the house was surrounded, the space between which and the house constituted the court. He was seen first behind the wall, and then in the court ; and lastly came to the window of his bride's chamber.

Verse 11. *The winter is past*] Mr. Harmer has made some good collections on this part, from Drs. Shaw and Russel, which I shall transcribe. One part of the winter is distinguished from the rest of it by the people of the East, on account of the severity of the cold. At Aleppo it lasts about forty days, and is called by the natives *maurbanie*. I would propose it to the consideration of the learned, whether the word here used, and translated *winter*, may not be understood to mean what the *Aleppines* express by the term *maurbanie*. It occurs nowhere else in the



A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

12 The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our

land;

13 The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. <sup>a</sup> Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

14 O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, <sup>b</sup> let me hear thy voice;

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 10.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. viii. 13.—<sup>c</sup> Ps. lxxx. 13. Ezek. xiii. 4. Luke xiii. 32.

Old Testament; and another word is used for the rainy part of the year in general. If this thought be admitted, it will greatly illustrate the words of the bridegroom: *Lo, the winter is past; the rain is over, and gone.* For then the last clause will not be explanatory of the first, and signify that the moist part of the year was entirely past; with which, Dr. Russel assures us, all pleasantness withdraws at Aleppo; but the words will import: "The *maurbanie* is past and over; the weather is become agreeably warm; the rain too is just ceased, and consequently hath left us the prospect of several days of serenity and undisturbed pleasantness."

The weather of Judea was in this respect, I presume, like that at Algiers; where, after two or three days of rain, there is usually, according to Dr. Shaw, "a week, a fortnight, or more, of fair and good weather. Of such a sort of cessation of rain alone, the bridegroom, methinks, is here to be understood; not of the absolute termination of the rainy season, and the summer droughts being come on. And if so, what can the time that is *past* mean but the *maurbanie*? Indeed, Dr. Russel, in giving us an account of the excursions of the English merchants at Aleppo, had undesignedly furnished us with a good comment on this and the two following verses. These gentlemen, it seems, dine abroad under a tent, in spring and autumn on Saturdays, and often on Wednesdays. They do the same during the good weather in winter; but they live at the gardens in April, and part of May. In the heat of the summer they dine at the gardens, as once or twice a week they dine under a tent in autumn and spring." The cold weather is not supposed by Solomon to have been long over, since it is distinctly mentioned; and the Aleppines make these incursions very early; the *narcissus* flowers during the whole of the *maurbanie*; the *hyacinths* and *violets* at least before it is quite over. The appearing of flowers, then, doth not mean the appearing of the first and earliest flowers, but must rather be understood of the earth's being covered with them; which at Aleppo is not till after the middle of February, a small crane's bill appearing on the banks of the river there about the middle of February, quickly after which comes a profusion of flowers. The

for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.

15 Take us <sup>c</sup> the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.

16 <sup>d</sup> My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies.

17 <sup>e</sup> Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bethel.

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

<sup>d</sup> Ch. vi. 3. vii. 10.—<sup>e</sup> Ch. iv. 6.—<sup>f</sup> Ver. 9. Ch. viii. 14. <sup>g</sup> Or, of division.

*nightingales*, too, which are there in abundance, not only afford much pleasure by their songs in the gardens, but are also kept tame in the houses, and let out at a small rate to divert such as choose it in the city; so that no entertainments are made in the spring without a concert of these birds. No wonder, then, that Solomon makes the bridegroom speak of the singing of birds; and it teaches us what these birds are, which are expressly distinguished from turtle doves.

Verse 13. *The fig tree putteth forth her green figs*] The fig-tree in Judea bears double crops; the first of which is ripe in spring. But the tree, as I have elsewhere observed, bears figs all the year through, in the climes congenial to it. That is, the fig-tree has always ripe or unripe fruit on it. I never saw a healthy tree naked. But in the beginning of spring they grow fast, and become turgid.

*The vines with the tender grape*] The Versions understand this of the flowers of the vine. These were formerly put into the new wine (2lbs. to every cask) to give it a fine flavour.

Verse 14. *My dove—in the clefts of the rock*] He compares his bride hiding herself in her secret chambers and closets to a dove in the clefts of the rock.

Verse 15. *Take us the foxes*] That these were ruinous to vines all authors allow. They love the vine, and they are eaten in autumn in some countries, according to Galen, when they are very fat with eating the grapes. They abounded in Judea; and did most damage when the clusters were young and tender. It is likely that these are the words of the bridegroom to his companions, just as he was entering the apartment of his spouse. "Take care of the vineyard: set the traps for the foxes, which are spoiling the vines; and destroy their young as far as possible."

Verse 16. *My beloved is mine*] The words of the bride on his entering: "I am thy own; thou art wholly mine."

*He feedeth among the lilies.*] The odour with which he is surrounded is as fine as if he passed the night among the sweetest scented flowers.

Verse 17. *Until the day break*] Literally, until the

day breaths; until the first dawn, which is usually accompanied with the most refreshing breezes.

The shadows flee away] Referring to the evening or setting of the sun, at which all shadows vanish.

The mountains of Bether.] Translated also mountains of division, supposed to mean the mountains of Beth-horon.

There was a place called *Bithron*, 2 Sam. ii. 29, on the other side of Jordan; and as the name signifies PARTITION, it might have had its name from the circumstance of its being divided or separated from Judea by the river Jordan.

With this chapter the *second night* is supposed to end.

CHAPTER III.

The bride mentions the absence of her spouse, her search after him, and her ultimate success, 1—5. A description of the bridegroom, his bed, chariot, &c., 6—11.

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

BY a night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

2 I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

3 b The watchmen that go about the city found me: to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?

4 It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.

5 c I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.

6 d Who is this that cometh out of the wil-

a Isai. xxvi. 9. — b Ch. v. 7.

NOTES ON CHAP. III.

Verse 1. *By night on my bed I sought him*] It appears that the bridegroom only saw the bride *by night*: that on the night referred to here he did not come as usual. The bride, troubled on the account, rose and sought him; inquired of the city guards, and continued to seek till at last she found him, and brought him to her apartment, ver. 2—4.

Verse 4. *Into my mother's house*] The women in the East have all *separate apartments*, into which no person ever attempts to enter except the *husband*. We find *Isaac* bringing *Rebecca* into his *mother's tent*, when he made her his wife, Gen. xxiv. 67. What is here related appears to refer to the third night of the nuptials.

Verse 5. *I charge you*] The same adjuration as before, chap. ii. 7.

Verse 6. *Who is this that cometh out of the wilder-*  
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derness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 268.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

7 Behold his bed, which is Solomon's; threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel.

8 They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night.

9 King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.

10 He made the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple, the midst thereof being paved with love, for the daughters of Jerusalem.

11 Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown where-with his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.

c Ch. ii. 7. viii. 4. — d Ch. viii. 5. — e Or, a bed.

ness] Going to Egypt was called *descending* or *going down*, coming from it was termed *coming up*. The bride, having risen, goes after her spouse to the country, and the clouds of incense arising from her *palanquin* seemed like *pillars of smoke*; and the appearance was altogether so splendid as to attract the admiration of her own women, who converse about her splendour, excellence, &c., and then take occasion to describe Solomon's nuptial bed and chariot. Some think that it is the *bridegroom* who is spoken of here.

With this verse the *third night* is supposed to end.

Verse 7. *Threescore valiant men*] These were the *guards* about the pavilion of the bridegroom, who were placed there *because of fear in the night*. The *security* and *state* of the prince required such a guard as this, and the passage is to be *literally* understood.

Verse 8. *They all hold swords*] They are swords-

men. Every man has a sword, and is well instructed how to use it.

Verse 9. *Of the wood of Lebanon.*] Of the cedar that grew on that mount. It is very likely that a nuptial bed, not a chariot, is intended by the original word מִצָּרְתִּי *appiryon*. *Montanus* properly translates it *sponsarium thalamum*, a nuptial bed. It may, however, mean a palanquin.

Verse 10. *The pillars—of silver*] The bedposts were made of silver, or cased with wrought silver plates, like the king's chairs brought from Hanover, now in one of the state rooms in *Windsor Castle*.

*The bottom thereof of gold*] This may refer to cords made of gold thread, or to the mattress, which was made of cloth ornamented with gold.

*The covering—of purple*] Most probably the canopy.

*The midst—paved with love*] The counterpane, a superb piece of embroidery, wrought by some of the noble maids of Jerusalem, and, as a proof of their affection, respect, and love, presented to the bride and bridegroom on their nuptial day. This is most likely to be the sense of the passage, though some suppose it to refer to the whole court.

A Turkish couch is made of wooden lattices painted and gilded; the inside is painted with baskets of flowers and nosegays, intermixed with little mottoes, according to the fancy of the artist. Solomon's

couch may have been of the same kind, and decorated in the same way; and the *paving with love* may refer to the amatory verses worked either on the counterpane, hangings, or embroidered carpet. And as this was done by the daughters of Jerusalem, they might have expressed the most striking parts of such a chaste history of love as Halaly's *Leely* and *Mejnoon* on the different parts. I see that Dr. Good is of this opinion. It is sufficiently probable.

Verse 11. *Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion*] This is the exhortation of the companions of the bride to the females of the city to examine the superb appearance of the bridegroom, and especially the nuptial crown, which appears to have been made by *Bathsheba*, who it is supposed might have lived till the time of Solomon's marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh. It is conjectured that the prophet refers to a nuptial crown, *Isai* lxi. 10. But a crown, both on the bride and bridegroom, was common among most people on such occasions. The nuptial crown among the Greeks and Romans was only a chaplet or wreath of flowers.

*In the day of the gladness of his heart.*] The day in which all his wishes were crowned, by being united to that female whom beyond all others he loved.

Here the third day is supposed to end.

## CHAPTER IV.

*The bridegroom's description of his bride, her person, her accomplishments, her chastity, and her general excellence, 1—16.*

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

**B**EHOOLD, "thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks: thy hair is

as a <sup>b</sup> flock of goats, <sup>c</sup> that appear from Mount Gilead.

2 <sup>d</sup> Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn,

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. i. 15. v. 12.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. vi. 5.

<sup>c</sup> Or. *that eat of*, &c.—<sup>d</sup> Ch. vi. 6.

## NOTES ON CHAP. IV.

Verse 1. *Thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks*] Perhaps this refers rather to a sort of veil worn by many of the eastern women, but especially in Egypt. It is a species of black cloth made of the hair of some animal, probably the black goat; is suspended from the head by silken cords, one of which comes from the crown of the head, down the forehead, to the upper part of the nose, just under the eyes, at which place the veil begins; for the forehead and the eyes are uncovered, except the cord above-mentioned, which is ornamented with gold, silver, and precious stones, according to the circumstances of the wearer. This partial veil not only covers all the face, the eyes and forehead excepted, but the neck also, and hangs loosely down over the bosom. One of them, lately brought from Egypt, now lies before me. But the clause, *within thy locks*, מִבְּעֵי לְצַמָּר *mibbaad letsamma-thech*, is not well translated, either by ourselves or by the *Versions*. *Jerome's* translation is an indication of the meaning: *Abque eo quod intrinsecus latet; with-*

out that, or independently of that, which lies hidden within. The *Septuagint*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic* have, besides thy silence. *Calmet* contends that none of these gives the true meaning, and that the word צִמָּר *tsamath* has not the meaning of hair or locks where it occurs, and has quite a different meaning in *Isai* xlvi. 2. *St. Jerome* on this place expresses himself thus: *Nolentibus qui interpretati sunt transferrè nomen quod in Sancta Scriptura sonat turpitudinem.*—Ergo צִמָּר *tsamma-thech*, quod *Aquila* posuit, verenda mulieris appellatur cujus etymologia apud eos sonat sitiens tuus. *Calmet* translates: *Vous êtes toute belle, mon amie; vous êtes toute belle: vos yeux sont des yeux de colombe; sans ce que la pudeur et la modestie tiennent caché.* I leave the translations of these to the learned reader. See another description under ver. 7.

*As a flock of goats*] Because it was black and sleek, as the hair of the goats of Arabia and Palestine is known to be; which, with its fine undulation, is supposed to bear some resemblance to the curls of

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none *is* barren among them.

3 Thy lips *are* like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech *is* comely: "thy temples *are* like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.

4 <sup>b</sup> Thy neck *is* like the tower of David builded <sup>c</sup> for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. vi. 7. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. vii. 4. — <sup>c</sup> Neh. iii. 19. — <sup>d</sup> See Prov. v. 19. Ch. vii. 3.

plaits of a woman's tresses. The mountains of Gilead were beyond Jordan, on the frontiers of Arabia Deserta.

Verse 2. *Thy teeth are like a flock*] This comparison appears to be founded on the evenness, neatness, and whiteness of the newly shorn and newly washed sheep.

Verse 3. *Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet*] Both lips and cheeks were ruddy; sicut fragmen mali punici.—VULGATE. Like the section of a pomegranate, that side cut off on which is the finest blush. This is a good and apt metaphor. But the inside may be referred to, as it is finely streaked with red and white melting into each other. She had beautiful hair, beautiful eyes, beautiful cheeks and lips, and a most pleasing and dulcet voice.

*Within thy locks.*] See on ver. 1, and on ver. 7.

Verse 4. *Thy neck is like the tower of David*] It is certain that bucklers were frequently hung about towers, both for their ornaments, and to have them at hand when their use was required; see Ezek. xvii. 10. But the allusion here may be to those pillars which are often seen in armouries on which weapons of various kinds are hung, formed into a great variety of shapes, and very splendid. Whoever has seen the armoury in the tower of London, or such-like places, has most probably seen something very similar to that of which the poet speaks.

Verse 5. *Thy two breasts are like two young roes*] I have met with many attempts to support this similitude, or rather to show that there is a similitude; but I judge them unworthy of citation. The poet speaks the language of nature; and in a case of this kind, where the impassioned lover attempts to describe the different perfections of his bride, language often fails him, and his comparisons and similitudes are often without strict correctness. In love songs we have heard ladies' necks compared to that of the swan, not only for its whiteness, but also for its length! The description here shows more of nature than of art, which I consider a high recommendation.

*Feed among the lilies.*] It may be the nipples especially, which the poet compares to the two young roes; and the lilies may refer to the whiteness of the breasts themselves.

5 <sup>d</sup> Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.

6 <sup>e</sup> Until the day <sup>f</sup> break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.

7 <sup>g</sup> Thou art all fair, my love; *there is* no spot in thee.

8 Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of

<sup>a</sup> Ch. ii. 17. — <sup>f</sup> Heb. breathe. — <sup>g</sup> Eph. v. 27.

Verse 6. *Until the day-break*] Until the morning breeze. See chap. ii. 17.

*The shadows flee away*] Till the sun sets.

*Mountains of myrrh*] Probably the same as the mountains of Bether, chap. ii. 17. Mountains where the trees grew from which myrrh and incense were extracted.

Verse 7. *Thou art all fair*—there is no spot in thee.] "My beloved, every part of thee is beautiful; thou hast not a single defect."

The description given of the beauties of Daphne, by OVID, Metam. lib. i. ver. 497, has some similarity to the above verses:—

*Spectat inornatos collo pendere capillos.*

*Et, quid si comantur? ait. Videt igne micantes Sideribus similes oculos; videt oscula, quæ non Est vidiisse satis. Laudat digitosque, manusque, Brachiaque, et nudos media plus parte lacertos. Si qua latent meliora putat.*

Her well-turned neck he viewed (her neck was bare),  
And on her shoulders her dishevelled hair.  
Oh, were it combed, said he, with what a grace  
Would every waving curl become her face!  
He viewed her eyes, like heavenly lamps that shone.  
He viewed her lips, too sweet to view alone;  
Her taper fingers, and her panting breast.  
He praises all he sees; and, for the rest,  
Believes the beauties yet unseen the best. DRYDEN.

Jayadeva describes the beauty of Radha in nearly the same imagery: "Thy lips, O thou most beautiful among women, are a bandhujiva flower; the lustre of the madhuca beams upon thy cheek; thine eye outshines the blue lotos; thy nose is a bud of the tika; the cunda blossom yields to thy teeth. Surely thou descendedst from heaven, O slender damsel! attended by a company of youthful goddesses; and all their beauties are collected in thee." See these poems, and the short notes at the end.

The same poet has a parallel thought to that in ver. 5, "Thy two breasts," &c. The companions of Radha thus address her: "Ask those two round hillocks which receive pure dew drops from the garland playing on thy neck, and the buds on whose tops start aloft with the thought of thy beloved."

Verse 8. *My spouse*] The כלה callah, which we

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

Amana, from the top of Shenir  
and Hermon, from the lions'  
dens, from the mountains of  
the leopards.

9 Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister,  
my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with  
one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.

10 How fair is thy love, my sister, my  
spouse! how much better is thy love than  
wine! and the smell of thine ointments than  
all spices!

11 Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honey-  
comb: honey and milk are under thy tongue;  
and the smell of thy garments is like the  
smell of Lebanon.

\* Deut. iii. 9.—<sup>b</sup> Or, taken away my heart.—<sup>c</sup> Ch. i. 2.  
<sup>d</sup> Prov. xxiv. 13, 14. Ch. v. 1.—<sup>e</sup> Gen. xxvii. 27. Hos.

translate spouse, seems to have a peculiar meaning. Mr. Harmer thinks the Jewish princess is intended by it; and this seems to receive confirmation from the bridegroom calling her sister, ver. 9, that is, one of the same stock and country; and thus different from the Egyptian bride.

Mr. Harmer's opinion is very probable, that two queens are mentioned in this song: one Pharaoh's daughter, the other a Jewess. See his outlines. But I contend for no system relative to this song.

Look from the top of Amana, &c.] Solomon, says Calmet, by an admirable poetic fiction, represents his beloved as a mountain nymph, wholly occupied in hunting the lion and the leopard on the mountains of Lebanon, Amana, Shenir, and Hermon. As a bold and undisciplined virgin, who is unwilling to leave her wild and rural retreats, he invites her to come from those hills; and promises to deck her with a crown, and to make her his bride. Thus the poets represent their goddess Diana, and even Venus herself:—

Per juga, per sylvas, dumosaque saxa vagatur  
Nuda genu, vestem ritu succincta Dianæ;  
Hortaturque canes; tutæque animalia prædæ,  
Aut pronos lepores, aut celsum in cornua cervum,  
Aut agitat damas: at fortibus abstinet apris.

MET. lib. x., ver. 535.

Now buskined like the virgin huntress goes  
Through woods, and pathless wilds, and mountain  
snows.

With her own tuneful voice she joys to cheer  
The panting hounds that chase the flying deer.  
She runs the labyrinth of the fearful hares,  
But fearless beasts and dangerous prey forbears.

Mount Libanus separates Phœnicia from Syria. Amanus is between Syria and Cilicia. Shenir and Hermon are beyond Jordan, to the south of Damascus and Mount Libanus, and northward of the mountains of Gilead. Hermon and Shenir are but different parts of the same chain of mountains which separates

12 A garden 'inclosed is my  
sister, my spouse; a spring  
shut up, a fountain sealed.

13 Thy plants are an orchard  
of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; cam-  
phire, with spikenard.

14 Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cin-  
namon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh  
and aloes, with all the chief spices:

15 A fountain of gardens, a well of living  
waters, and streams from Lebanon.

16 Awake, O north wind; and come, thou  
south; blow upon my garden, that the spices  
thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come  
into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.

xiv. 6, 7.—'Heb. barred.—<sup>†</sup> Or cress. Ch. i. 14.  
<sup>‡</sup> John iv. 10. vii. 38.—<sup>§</sup> Ch. v. 1.

Trachonitis, or the country of Manasses, from Arabia Deserta. For these places, see 2 Kings v. 12 and Deut. iii. 9, where they are probably meant.

Verse 9. Thou hast ravished my heart] לִבְבִּי libbabtini, "Thou hast hearted me," i. e., taken away my heart; as we say, "He has barked the tree," i. e., he has stripped it of its bark; "He has fleeced the flock," i. e., deprived them of their wool.

With one of thine eyes] בְּעֵינַיךְ beachad me-eynayich. This has been thought a harsh expression, and various emendations have been sought. The Masoretes have put בְּאֶחָד beachath, "at once," in the margin; and this is confirmed by twenty of Kenicott's MSS.; but De Rossi does not notice it. It is scarcely necessary; the sense to me is clear and good without it. "Even one of thine eyes, or one glance of thine eyes, has been sufficient to deprive me of all power; it has completely overcome me;" for glance may be understood, and such forms of speech are common in all languages, when speaking on such subjects. If even taken literally, the sense is good; for the poet may refer to a side glance, shot in passing by or turning away, where only one eye could be seen. I think this a better sense than that which is obtained from the Masoretic emendation.

With one chain of thy neck] Probably referring to the play of the cervical muscles, rather than to necklaces or ringlets of hair.

Verse 10. How much better is thy love] דַּיִךְ dayich; Hebrew. Μαροῖ σου Septuagint. Ubertua; Vulgate. "Thy breasts." And so all the Versions, except the Chaldee.

Smell of thine ointments] Perfumes.

Verse 11. Thy lips—drop as the honeycomb] Thy words are as delicious to my heart as the first droppings of the honeycomb are to the palate.

Honey and milk are under thy tongue] Eloquence and persuasive speech were compared among the ancients to honey and milk.

Thus Homer, Iliad. lib. i., ver. 247:—

Τουσι δε Νεστωρ

Ἐμπεικῆς ἀνορουσι, λιγυς Πυλῶν ἀγορητῆς,  
Του καὶ ἀπο γλωσσης μελιτος γλυκιῶν ῥέεν ἀνδρῆ.

Experienced Nestor, in persuasion skilled,  
Words sweet as honey from his lips distilled.

But the figure is common to all writers and languages. A similar expression will be seen in the *Gitagovinda*.

Verse 12. *A garden inclosed—a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.*] Different expressions to point out the fidelity of the bride, or of the Jewish queen. See the outlines. She is *unsullied*, a chaste, pure virgin. None has ever entered into this garden; none has yet tasted of this spring; the seal of this fountain has never been broken. Among the Athenians, the interior part of the house, called the women's apartment, was not only locked but sealed; so Aristophan. *Thes-noph.* ver. 422:

Εἶτα δια τούτου ταις γυναικωνιτισιν  
Σφραγίδας ἐμβαλλουσιν ἤδη καὶ μοχλοῦς.

And on this account to the women's apartment  
They place seals as well as bolts.

And seal, as applicable to chaste conduct, is a phrase well known to the Greeks. Æschylus, in the *Agamemnon*, praises a woman, *σημαντηριον οὐδεν διαφθεισασαν*, who had not violated her seal of conjugal faith. But Nonnus, lib. ii., uses the form of speech exactly as Solomon does with reference to a pure virgin; he says, *Ἀφαστον ἔης σφρηγίδα κορυφῆς* "She had preserved the seal of her virginity untouched." All this is plain; but how many will make metaphors out of metaphors!

Verse 13. *Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates*] This seems to refer to the fecundity of the bride or Jewish queen; to the former, it would be a prediction; to the latter, a statement of what had already taken place. The word *pardes*, which we translate an orchard, is the same which has given birth to our *paradise*, a garden of pleasure. The other expressions, in this and the following verse, seem to refer wholly to matters of a connubial nature.

Verse 15. *A fountain of gardens*] Perhaps *גַּנְנִים* *gan-nim*, "gardens," was originally *חַיִּים* *chayyim*, "lives," a living fountain, a continual spring. See *Houbigant*. But this is expressed afterwards; though there would be nothing improper in saying "a living fountain, a well of living waters, and streams from Mount Lebanon." A fountain of gardens may mean one so abundant as to be sufficient to supply many gardens, to water many plots of ground; an exuberant fountain. This is the allusion; the reference is plain enough.

Verse 16. *Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south*] It is granted that the south wind in Palestine, in the summer, is extremely hot and troublesome; therefore, another interpretation of this passage has been proposed by Mr. Harmer; who thinks *בָּאֵי* *bai*, which we render come, signifies enter into thy repositories; and, therefore, supposes the true interpretation of the words to be as follows: "Arise, thou north wind, (and retire, thou south,) blow upon my garden; let the spices thereof flow forth, that my beloved may come into his garden, invited by the coolness and fragrantcy of the air, and may eat his pleasant fruits; for, if the south wind blow, the excessive heat will forbid his taking the air, and oblige him to shut close the doors and windows of his apartments." Others think that he wishes the winds from all directions to carry throughout the land the fume of his spices, virtue, and perfections.

*Let my beloved come into his garden*] This is the invitation of the bride: and if we look not for far-fetched meanings, the sense is sufficiently evident. But commentators on this song sometimes take a literal sense where the metaphor is evident; at other times they build an allegory upon a metaphor. The *Gitagovinda* has an elegant passage similar to this. See the place, Part VII. beginning with *Enter, sweet Radha*.

The whole of this chapter is considered to be unconnected with any particular time of the marriage ceremonies.

CHAPTER V.

The bridegroom calls on his spouse to admit him, 1—3. She hesitates; but arising finds him gone, seeks him, and is treated unworthily by the city watch, 4—7. Inquires of the daughters of Jerusalem, who question her concerning her beloved, 8, 9. This gives her occasion to enter into a fine description of his person and accomplishments, 10—16.

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante 1. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

I \* AM come into my garden,  
my sister, my spouse: I have  
gathered my myrrh with my  
spice; <sup>b</sup> I have eaten my honey-

comb with my honey; I have  
drunk my wine with my milk:  
eat, O <sup>c</sup> friends; drink, <sup>d</sup> yea,  
drink abundantly, O beloved.

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante 1. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C.c. 261.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. iv. 16.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. iv. 11.—<sup>c</sup> Luke xv. 7, 10. John iii.

29. xv. 14.—<sup>d</sup> Or, and be drunken with loves.

NOTES ON CHAP. V.

Verse 1. *I am come into my garden*] *בָּאֵי* *bathi*, I came, or have come; this should be translated in the past tense, as the other *preterite* verbs in this clause.

I think the latter clause of the preceding verse should come in here: "Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits. I have come into my garden, my sister, callah, or spouse; I have

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

2 I sleep, but my heart waketh: *it is* the voice of my beloved <sup>a</sup> that knocketh, *saying*, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.

3 I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?

4 My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved <sup>b</sup> for him.

5 I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with <sup>c</sup> sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.

<sup>a</sup> Rev. iii. 20. — <sup>b</sup> Or (as some read), in me. — <sup>c</sup> Heb. *passing or running about.*

gathered my myrrh," &c. I have taken thee for my spouse, and am perfectly satisfied that thou art pure and immaculate.

*Eat, O friends—drink abundantly*] These are generally supposed to be the words of the bridegroom, after he returned from the nuptial chamber, and exhibited those signs of his wife's purity which the customs of those times required. This being a cause of universal joy, the entertainment is served up; and he invites his companions, and the friends of both parties, to eat and drink abundantly, as there was such a universal cause of rejoicing. Others think that these are the words of the bride to her spouse: but the original will not bear this meaning; the verbs are all plural.

Verse 2. *I sleep, but my heart waketh*] This is a new part; and some suppose that the fifth day's solemnity begins here. *Though I sleep; yet so impressed is my heart with the excellencies of my beloved, that my imagination presents him to me in the most pleasing dreams throughout the night.* I doubt whether the whole, from this verse to the end of the seventh, be not a dream: several parts of it bear this resemblance; and I confess there are some parts of it, such as her hesitating to rise, his sudden disappearance, &c., which would be of easier solution on this supposition. Or part of the transactions mentioned might be the effects of the dream she had, as rising up suddenly, and going out into the street, meeting with the watchmen, &c., before she was well awake. And her being in so much disorder and dishabille might have induced them to treat her as a suspicious person, or one of questionable character. But it is most likely the whole was a dream.

*For my head is filled with dew.*] She supposed he had come in the night, and was standing without, wet, and exposed to the inclemency of the weather.

Verse 3. *I have put off my coat*] The bride must have been in a dream, or in much disorder of mind,

6 I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: <sup>d</sup> I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.

7 <sup>e</sup> The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.

8 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love.

9 What is thy beloved more than another beloved, <sup>f</sup> O thou fairest among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?

<sup>d</sup> 1 Sam. x. 21. Ch. iii. 1. Luke ii. 44, 45. — <sup>e</sup> Ch. iii. 3. <sup>f</sup> Heb. *what.* — <sup>g</sup> Ch. i. 8.

to have made the frivolous excuses here mentioned. The words relate to the case of a person who had gone to take rest on his bed. As they wore nothing but sandals, they were obliged to wash their feet previously to their lying down. I have washed my feet, taken off my clothes, and am gone to bed: I cannot therefore be disturbed. A Hindoo always washes his feet before he goes to bed. If called from his bed, he often makes this excuse, *I shall daub my feet*; and the excuse is reasonable, as the floors are of earth; and they do not wear shoes in the house.—WARD.

Verse 4. *My beloved put in his hand*] If it were a real scene, which is mentioned in this and the two following verses, it must refer, from the well known use of the metaphors, to matrimonial endearments. Or, it may refer to his attempts to open the door, when she hesitated to arise, on the grounds mentioned ver. 3. But this also bears every evidence of a dream.

Verse 5. *My hands dropped with myrrh*] It was a custom among the Romans, as *Brissonius, Isidore*, and others relate, to conduct the bride to the house of the bridegroom with lighted torches; and those who brought her anointed the door-posts with fragrant oils, whence the name *uxor*, or as it was formerly written *unxor*, for a wife or married woman, because of the anointing which took place on the occasion; for sometimes the bride herself anointed the door-posts, and sometimes those who brought her; probably both at the same time. The same custom might have existed among the Jews. See *Fossius Etymologicon*.

Verse 7. *Took away my veil*] They tore it off rudely, to discover who she was. See on ver. 2. To tear the veil signifies, in eastern phrase, to deflower or dishonour a woman.

Verse 8. *I am sick of love.*] "I am exceedingly concerned for his absence; and am distressed on account of my thoughtless carriage towards him." Th

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

10 My beloved is white and ruddy, \* the chiefest among ten thousand.

11 His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are <sup>b</sup> bushy, and black as a raven.

12 <sup>c</sup> His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and <sup>d</sup> fitly set.

13 His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as <sup>e</sup> sweet flowers: his lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.

\* Heb. a standard-bearer.—<sup>b</sup> Or, curled.—<sup>c</sup> Ch. i. 15. iv. 1.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. sitting in fulness, that is, fitly placed, and set

latter clause may be well translated, "What should ye tell him?" Why, "that I am sick of love." This ends the transactions of the *third day and night*.

Verse 9. *What is thy beloved more than another beloved*] This question gives the bride an opportunity to break out into a highly wrought description of the beauty and perfections of her spouse.

Verse 10. *My beloved is white and ruddy*] *Red* and *white*, properly mixed, are essential to a *fine complexion*; and this is what is intimated: he has the *finest complexion among ten thousand persons*; not one in that number is equal to *him*. Literally, "He bears the standard among ten thousand men;" or, "He is one before whom a standard is borne," i. e., he is *captain* or *chief* of the whole.

Verse 11. *His head is as the most fine gold*] He has the most beautiful head, fine and majestic. Gold is here used to express *excellence*.

*His locks are bushy*] *Crisped* or *curled*. This may refer to his mustachios.

*Black as a raven.*] His hair is black and glossy.

Verse 12. *His eyes are as the eyes of doves*] See on chap. iv. ver. 1.

*Washed with milk*] The *white* of the eye, *exceedingly white*. By the use of *stibium*, in the East, the eye is rendered very *beautiful*; and receives such a *lustre* from the use of this article, that, to borrow the expression of a late traveller, "their eyes appear to be swimming in bliss." I believe this expression to be the meaning of the text.

*Fitly set.*] Or, as the margin, very properly, *sitting in fulness*; not sunk, not contracted.

Verse 13. *His cheeks are as a bed of spices*] Possibly meaning a *bed in the garden*, where odoriferous herbs grew. But it has been supposed to refer to his *beard*, which in a *young well-made man* is exceedingly beautiful. I have seen young Turks, who had taken much care of their beards, mustachios, &c., look majestic. Scarcely any thing serves to set off the human face to greater advantage than the *beard*, when kept in proper order. Females admire it in their *suitors* and *husbands*. I have known cases,

14 His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl: his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.

15 His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

16 <sup>f</sup> His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether <sup>g</sup> lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

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as a precious stone in the foil of a ring.—<sup>e</sup> Or, towers of perfumes.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. His palate.—<sup>g</sup> 2 Sam. i. 23.

where they not only *despised* but *execrated* Europeans, whose faces were close shaved. The men perfume their beards often; and this may be what is intended by *spices* and *sweet-smelling myrrh*.

*His lips like lilies*] The שושנים *shoshannim* may mean any flower of the *lily* kind, such as the *rubens lilium*, mentioned by *Pliny*, or something of the *tulip* kind. There are tints in such flowers that bear a very near resemblance to a fine *ruby lip*.

Verse 14. *His hands—gold rings set with the beryl*] This really seems to refer to *gold rings* set with precious stones on the fingers, and perhaps to circlets or bracelets about the wrists. Some suppose it to refer to the roundness and exquisite symmetry of the hand and fingers. טרשיש *tarshish*, which we translate *beryl*, a gem of a sea-green tint, had better be translated *chrysolite*, which is of a *gold* colour.

*His belly—bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.*] This must refer to some *garment* set with *precious stones* which went round his waist, and was peculiarly remarkable. If we take it *literally*, the sense is plain enough. His belly was beautifully white, and the blue veins appearing under the skin resembled the sapphire stone. But one can hardly think that this was intended.

Verse 15. *His legs are as pillars of marble*] Exquisitely turned and well-shaped; *the sockets of gold* may refer to his *slippers*. On these a profusion of gold and ornaments are still lavished in Asiatic countries.

*His countenance is as Lebanon*] As Lebanon exalts its head beyond all the other mountains near Jerusalem, so my beloved is tall and majestic, and surpasses in stature and majesty all other men. He is also as *straight* and as *firm* as the *cedars*.

Verse 16. *His mouth is most sweet*] His eloquence is great, and his voice is charming. Every word he speaks is sweetness, mildness, and benevolence itself. Then, her powers of description failing, and metaphor exhausted, she cries out, "The whole of him is loveliness. This is my beloved, and this is my companion, O ye daughters of Jerusalem."



CHAPTER VI.

The companions of the bride inquire after the bridegroom, 1—3. A description of the bride, 4—13.

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

**W**HITHER is thy beloved gone, ° O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee.

2 My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

3 <sup>b</sup> I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.

4 Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, ° terrible as an army with banners.

5 Turn away thine eyes from me, for <sup>d</sup> they have overcome me: thy hair is ° as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.

° Ch. i. 8.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. ii. 16. vii. 10.—<sup>c</sup> Ver. 10.—<sup>d</sup> Or, they have puffed me up.

NOTES ON CHAP. VI.

Verse 1. *Whither is thy beloved gone*] These words are supposed to be addressed to the *bride* by her own *companions*, and are joined to the preceding chapter by the *Hebrew* and all the *Versions*.

Verse 2. *My beloved is gone down into his garden*] The answer of the *bride* to her *companions*.

Verse 4. *Beautiful—as Tirzah*] This is supposed to be the address of Solomon to the *bride*. Tirzah was a city in the tribe of Ephraim (Josh. xii. 24), and the capital of that district. It appears to have been beautiful in itself, and beautifully situated, for Jeroboam made it his residence before Samaria was built; and it seems to have been the ordinary residence of the kings of Israel, 1 Kings xiv. 17, xv. 53. Its name signifies beautiful or delightful.

Comely as Jerusalem] This was called the perfection of beauty, Ps. xlviii. 2, 3, l. 2. And thus the poet compares the *bride's* beauty to the two finest places in the land of Palestine, and the capitals of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

Terrible as an army with banners.] This has been supposed to carry an allusion to the caravans in the East, and the manner in which they are conducted in their travels by night. The caravans are divided into companies, called cottors, according to Thevenot; and each company is distinguished by the form of the brazier in which they carry their lights. After night, these braziers are placed on the ends of long poles, and carried by a person who walks at the head of the company. Some have ten or twelve lights, and are of different forms; some triangular, or like an N, some like an M, by which each pilgrim readily knows his own company, both by night and day. A whole caravan, composed of many thousands of

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
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6 Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them.

7 As a piece of a pomegranate are thy temples within thy locks.

8 There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.

9 My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.

10 Who is she that looketh forth as the

° Ch. iv. 1.—<sup>f</sup> Ch. iv. 2.—<sup>g</sup> Ch. iv. 3.

hadgees or pilgrims, divided into various cottors or companies, each having its own distinguishing brazier or light, must necessarily produce a very splendid, if not a terrible, appearance.

Verse 5. *Turn away thine eyes*] As the sight of so many fires after night was extremely dazzling, and the eye could not bear the sight, so the look of the *bride* was such as pierced the heart, and quite overwhelmed the person who met it. Hence the bridegroom naturally cries out, "Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me."

Thy hair is as a flock of goats] See on chap. iv. l.

Verse 6. *Thy teeth*] See on chap. iv. 2.

Verse 7. *As a piece of a pomegranate*] See on chap. iv. 3.

Verse 8. *There are threescore queens*] Though there be sixty queens, and eighty concubines, or secondary wives, and virgins innumerable, in my harem, yet thou, my dove, my undefiled, art rarer than all, the only one, she in whom I delight beyond all.

Verse 9. *The daughters saw her, and blessed her*] Not only the Jewish women in general spoke well of her on her arrival, but the queens and concubines praised her as the most accomplished of her sex.

With this verse the fourth night of the marriage week is supposed to end.

Verse 10. *Looketh forth as the morning*] The *bride* is as lovely as the dawn of day, the Aurora, or perhaps the morning star, VENUS. She is even more resplendent, she is as beautiful as the Moon. She even surpasses her, for she is as clear and bright as the SUN; and dangerous withal to look on, for she is as formidable as the vast collection of lights that burn by night at the head of every company in a numerous caravan. See the note on ver. 4. The comparison of a fine woman to the splendour of an un-

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, \*and terrible as an army with banners?

11 I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, and <sup>b</sup> to see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded.

\* Ver. 4.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. vii. 12.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. I knew not.

clouded full moon is continually recurring in the writings of the Asiatic poets.

Verse 11. *I went down into the garden of nuts*] I believe this and the following verse refer at least to the preparations for a farther consummation of the marriage, or examination of the advancement of the bride's pregnancy. But many circumstances of this kind are so interwoven, and often anticipated and also postponed, that it is exceedingly difficult to arrange the whole so as to ascertain the several parts, and who are the actors and speakers. But other writers find no difficulty here, because they have their system; and that explains all things.

It is probably not the hazel but the almond nut, that is referred to here.

Verse 12. *The chariots of Amminadib.*] Probably for their great speed these chariots became proverbial. The passage marks a strong agitation of mind, and something like what we term palpitation of the heart. As I am not aware of any spiritual meaning here, I must be excused from commenting on that which is literal. *Amminadib* signifies *my noble* or *princely*

12 \*Or ever I was aware, my soul <sup>d</sup>made me like the chariots of Amminadib.

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

13 Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company \* of two armies.

<sup>d</sup> Or, set me on the chariots of my willing people. — \* Or, of Mahanaim. Gen. xxxii. 2.

people; but it may here be a proper name, and Amminadib might be celebrated for his skill and rapidity in driving, as Jehu was.

Verse 13. *Return, O Shulamite*] This appears to be addressed to the bride, as now the confirmed, acknowledged wife of Solomon; for שולמית *shulamith*, appears to be a feminine formed from שלמה *shelomoh*, or שלמן *shelomon*, as we form *Charlotte* from *Charles*; *Henrietta*, from *Henry*; *Janette*, from *John*, &c.

*The company of two armies.*] Or the musicians of the camps. She is as terrible as hosts of armed men, on the ground of what is said on verses 4, 5. The two armies may refer to the choirs of the bride's virgins, and the bridegroom's companions; but the similitude is not very perceptible. The Targum explains it of "the camps of Israel and Judah:" as if the bridegroom should say, "My beloved possesses all the perfections both of the Israelitish and Jewish women." But how little satisfaction do the best conjectures afford!

With this chapter the fifth night is supposed to end.

CHAPTER VII.

A farther description of the bride, 1—9. Her invitation to the bridegroom, 10—13.

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Olymp.  
cir. 238.  
A.U.C. cir. 261.

HOW beautiful are thy feet with shoes, \*O prince's daughter? the joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work

of the hands of a cunning workman.

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

2 Thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not

\* Pa. xlv. 13.

NOTES ON CHAP. VII.

Verse 1. *How beautiful are thy feet with shoes*] "How graceful is thy walking." In the sixth chapter the bridegroom praises the Shulamite, as we might express it, from head to foot. Here he begins a new description, taking her from foot to head.

The shoes, sandals, or slippers of the eastern ladies are most beautifully formed, and richly embroidered. The majestic walk of a beautiful woman in such shoes is peculiarly grand. And to show that such a walk is intended, he calls her a prince's daughter.

The joints of thy thighs] Must refer to the ornaments on the beautiful drawers, which are in general use among ladies of quality in most parts of the East.

Verse 2. *Thy navel is like a round goblet*] This

may also refer to some ornamental dress about the loins. These suppositions are rendered very probable from hundreds of the best finished and highly decorated drawings of Asiatic ladies in my own collection, where every thing appears in the drawings, as in nature.

An heap of wheat set about with lilies.] This is another instance of the same kind. The richly embroidered dresses in the above drawings may amply illustrate this also. Ainsworth supposes the metaphor is taken from a pregnant woman; the child in the womb being nourished by means of the umbilical cord or navel string, till it is brought into the world. After which it is fed by means of the mother's breasts, which are immediately mentioned. Possibly the whole may allude to the bride's pregnancy

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

<sup>a</sup> liquor: thy belly *is like* an heap of wheat set about with lilies.

3 <sup>b</sup> Thy two breasts *are like* two young roes *that are* twins.

4 <sup>c</sup> Thy neck *is* as a tower of ivory; thine eyes *like* the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim: thy nose *is* as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.

5 Thine head upon thee *is like* <sup>d</sup> Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king *is* <sup>e</sup> held in the galleries.

6 How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!

7 This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes.

8 I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *mixture*. — <sup>b</sup> Ch. iv. 5. — <sup>c</sup> Ch. iv. 4. — <sup>d</sup> Or, *crimson*. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. *bound*. — <sup>f</sup> Heb. *straightly*. — <sup>g</sup> Or, *of*

Verse 3. *Thy two breasts*] Where the hair and breasts are fine, they are the highest ornaments of the person of a female.

Verse 4. *Thy neck—as a tower of ivory*] High, white, and ornamented with jewellery, *as the tower of David* was with bucklers. See on chap. iv. 4.

*The fishpools in Heshbon*] Clear, bright, and serene. These must have been very beautiful to have been introduced here in comparison. These two fountains appear to have been situated at the *gate* that led from *Heshbon to Rabba*, or *Rabboth Ammon*. There is a propriety in this metaphor, because *fountains* are considered to be the *eyes of the earth*.

*Thy nose—as the tower of Lebanon*] There was doubtless a propriety in this similitude also which cannot now be discerned. If we are to understand the similitude as taken from the *projecting* form of the *nose*, even here I see nothing striking in the metaphor; for surely the tower of Lebanon did not *project* from the *mountain* as the human *nose* does from the *face*. It is better to acknowledge that there was undoubtedly some fit resemblances; but in what *circumstance* we know not. But some commentators are always extolling the correctness of the imagery in those very difficult places, where no soul sees the similitude but themselves.

Verse 5. *Thine head—like Carmel*] Rising majestically upon thy neck, and above thy shoulders, as Mount Carmel does in its district. Carmel was the name of the mountain where Elijah had his contest with the prophets of Baal. See 1 Kings xviii. 19, &c.

*The hair of thine head like purple*] Ornamented with ribbons and jewellery of this tint.

*The king is held in the galleries*.] Or is detained in the antechamber. His heart is captivated by thy person and conduct. Some understand the ringlets of the bride's hair.

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smell of thy nose like apples;

9 And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth *down* <sup>f</sup> sweetly, causing the lips <sup>g</sup> of those that are asleep to speak.

10 <sup>b</sup> I *am* my beloved's, and <sup>i</sup> his desire *is* toward me.

11 Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.

12 Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us <sup>h</sup> see if the vine flourish, *whether* the tender grape <sup>i</sup> appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.

13 The <sup>m</sup> mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates <sup>n</sup> are all manner of pleasant *fruits*, new and old, *which* I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.

<sup>the ancient</sup>. — <sup>h</sup> Ch. ii. 16. vi. 3. — <sup>i</sup> Ps. xlv. 11. — <sup>j</sup> Ch. vi. 11. — <sup>k</sup> Heb. *open*. — <sup>m</sup> Gen. xxx. 14. — <sup>n</sup> Matt. xiii. 52.

Verse 6. *How fair and how pleasant*] Thou art every way beautiful, and in every respect calculated to inspire pleasure and delight.

Verse 7. *Like to a palm tree*] Which is remarkably *straight, taper, and elegant*.

*And thy breasts to clusters of grapes*.] Dates are the fruit of the palm-tree; they grow in clusters; and it is these, not *grapes*, which are intended.

Verse 8. *I will go up to the palm tree*] I will take hold on the boughs of this tree, and climb up by them, in order to gather the clusters of dates at the top. The rubric here in the old MS. interprets this of the *cross of Christ*.

Verse 9. *The roof of thy mouth like the best wine*] The *voice or conversation* of the spouse is most probably what is meant.

*Causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak*.] As *good wine* has a tendency to cause the most backward to *speak fluently* when taken in moderation; so a sight of thee, and hearing the charms of thy conversation, is sufficient to excite the most taciturn to speak, and even to become eloquent in thy praises.

Verse 10. *I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me*.] It is worthy of remark that the word which we translate *his desire* is the very same used Gen. iii. 16: *Thy desire*, thy ruling appetite, רָצוֹן תֶּשֶׁה־קֶטֶת, shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. This was a part of the woman's curse. Now here it seems to be *reversed*; for the bride says, *I am my beloved's, and his desire or ruling appetite and affection*, רָצוֹן תֶּשֶׁה־קֶטֶת, is *thy* *ali*, upon me. The old MS. translates this with considerable force:—*He to my left, and to me the turnpage of him*.

Verse 11. *Let us go forth into the field*] It has been conjectured that the bridegroom arose early every morning, and left the bride's apartment, and withdrew to the country; often leaving her asleep,

and commanding her companions not to disturb her till she should awake of herself. Here the bride wishes to accompany her spouse to the country, and spend a night at his country house.

Verse 12. *Let us get up early to the vineyards*] When in the country, we shall have the better opportunity to contemplate the progress of the spring vegetation; and there she promises to be peculiarly affectionate to him.

Verse 13. *The mandrakes give a smell*] See the

note on Gen. xxx. 14, where the *mandrake* is particularly described; from which this passage will receive considerable light. The reader is requested to consult it.

*All manner of pleasant fruits*] Fruits new and old; flowers and herbs of every kind which the season could yield. The literal sense, allowing for the concealing metaphors, is, I believe, of a widely different nature from what is generally given. But this must be left to the reader's sagacity and prudence.

CHAPTER VIII.

*The love of the bride to her spouse, and the nature of that love, 1—7. The younger sister, 8—10. Solomon's vineyard, 11, 12. The confidence of the bride and bridegroom in each other, 13, 14.*

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

O THAT thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! when I should find thee without, I would kiss thee; yea, I should not be despised.

2 I would lead thee, and bring thee into my mother's house, who would instruct me: I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate.

3 His left hand should be under my head, and his right hand should embrace me.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. they should not despise me.—<sup>b</sup> Prov. ix. 2.—<sup>c</sup> Ch. ii. 6.—<sup>d</sup> Ch. ii. 7. iii. 5.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. why should ye stir up, or

4 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, until he please.

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1014.  
Ante. I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C. c. 261.

5 Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth; there she brought thee forth that bare thee.

6 Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the

why, &c.—<sup>f</sup> Ch. iii. 6.—<sup>g</sup> Isai. xlix. 16. Jer. xxii. 24. Hag. ii. 23.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. hard.

NOTES ON CHAP. VIII.

Verse 1. *O that thou wert as my brother*] The bride, fearing that her fondness for her spouse might be construed into too great a familiarity, wishes that he were her little brother; and then she might treat him in the most affectionate manner, and kiss him even in the streets without suspicion, and without giving offence to any one.

Verse 2. *Would—bring thee into my mother's house, who would instruct me*] She would teach me how to conduct myself towards thee, as she would how to nurse a young child.

*To drink of spiced wine*] Wine rendered peculiarly strong and invigorating. The bride and bridegroom on the wedding-day both drank out of the same cup, to show that they were to enjoy and equally bear together the comforts and adversities of life.

Verse 3. *His left hand*] See on chap. ii. 6.

With the fourth verse the sixth night of the marriage week is supposed to end.

Verse 5. *That cometh up from the wilderness*] Perhaps the words of the daughters of Jerusalem, who, seeing the bride returning from the country, leaning on the arm of her beloved, are filled with admiration at her excellent carriage and beauty.

*I raised thee up under the apple tree*] The original of this clause is obscure, and has given birth to

various translations. The following is nearly literal: "Under the apple-tree I excited thee (to espouse me): there, thy mother contracted thee;—there, she that brought thee forth contracted thee (to me). Or it may be understood of the following circumstance: The bridegroom found her once asleep under an apple-tree, and awoke her; and this happened to be the very place where her mother, taken in untimely labour, had brought her into the world." And here the bridegroom, in his fondness and familiarity, recalls these little adventures to her memory.

The Vulgate gives this an abominable meaning.

Sub arbore malo suscitavi te: ibi corrupta est mater tua; ibi violata est genetrix tua. "I raised thee up under the apple-tree: it was there that thy mother was corrupted; it was there that she who brought thee forth was violated." Spiritually, all this is applied to Eve losing her purity by sin; and Jesus as the promised seed raising her up by the promise of mercy, through the blood of his cross. But the text says nothing of this.

Verse 6. *Set me as a seal upon thine heart*] It was customary in the Levant and other places to make impressions of various kinds upon the arms, the breast, and other parts. I have seen these often: some slight punctures are made, and the place rubbed over with a sort of blue powder that, getting between the cuticle and cutis, is never discharged; it con-

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1914.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C.c. 261.

coals thereof *are* coals of fire,  
*which hath* a most vehement  
flame.

7 Many waters cannot quench  
love, neither can the floods drown it: \*if a  
man would give all the substance of his house  
for love, it would utterly be contemned.

8 <sup>b</sup> We have a little sister, and she hath no  
breasts: what shall we do for our sister in  
the day when she shall be spoken for?

9 If she *be* a wall, we will build upon her a  
palace of silver: and if she *be* a door, we will  
inclose her with boards of cedar.

10 I *am* a wall, and my breasts like towers:  
then was I in his eyes as one that found  
<sup>c</sup> favour.

\* Prov. vi. 35.—<sup>b</sup> Ezek. xxiii. 33.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *peace*.  
<sup>d</sup> Matt. xxi. 33.

tinues in all its distinctness throughout life. The  
figures of *young women* are frequently thus impressed  
on the *arms* and on the *breasts*. If the bride alludes  
to any thing of this kind, which is very probable, the  
interpretation is easy. Let me be thus depicted  
upon thine *arm*, which being constantly before thy  
eyes, thou wilt never forget me; and let me be thus  
depicted upon thy *breast*, the emblem of the share I  
have in thy *heart* and affections. Do this as a proof  
of the love I bear to thee, which is such as nothing  
but death can destroy; and do it to prevent any  
*jealousy* I might feel, which is as *cruel as the grave*,  
and as deadly as *fiery arrows* or poisoned darts shot  
into the body.

A most vehement flame.] שִׁלְהֶבֶת שָׁלֹהֶבֶת יָהּ *shalhebethyah*,  
“the flame of God;” for the word is divided שִׁלְהֶבֶת  
יָהּ *shalhebeth Yah*, “the flame of Jehovah,” by *one  
hundred and sixteen* of Dr. Kennicott’s MSS., and by  
*one hundred and fourteen* of those of *De Rossi*. It  
may mean the *lightning*; or, as our text understands  
it, a most *vehement* or *intense fire*.

Verse 7. *Many waters*] Neither common nor un-  
common *adversities*, even of the most *ruinous* nature,  
can destroy love when it is *pure*; and *pure love* is  
such that nothing can *procure* it. If it be not ex-  
cited naturally, no money can purchase it, no pro-  
perty can procure it, no arts can persuade it. How  
vain is the thought of *old rich men* hoping to procure  
the affections of *young women* by loading them with  
*presents and wealth!* No woman can command her  
affections; they are not in her power. Where they  
do not rise spontaneously, they can never exist. “If  
a man would give all the substance of his house for  
love, it would be utterly contemned.” Let the *old*,  
as well as the *gay* and the *giddy*, think of this.

Verse 8. *We have a little sister*] This young girl  
belonged most probably to the *bride*.

*She hath no breasts*] She is not yet marriageable.

*What shall we do for our sister*] How shall we  
secure her comfort and welfare?

11 Solomon had a vineyard  
at Baal-hamon; <sup>a</sup> he let out the  
vineyard unto keepers; every  
one for the fruit thereof was  
to bring a thousand *pieces* of silver.

12 My vineyard, which *is* mine, *is* before  
me: thou, O Solomon, *must have* a thousand,  
and those that keep the fruit thereof two  
hundred.

13 Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the  
companions hearken to thy voice: <sup>a</sup> cause me  
to hear it.

14 <sup>f</sup> Make <sup>g</sup> haste, my beloved, and <sup>h</sup> be thou  
like to a roe or to a young hart upon the  
mountains of spices.

A. M. cir. 2990.  
B. C. cir. 1914.  
Ante I. Ol.  
cir. 238.  
Ante U.C.c. 261.

\* Ch. ii. 14.—<sup>f</sup> See Rev. xxii. 17, 20.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. *Flee away*.  
<sup>h</sup> Ch. ii. 17.

*In the day when she shall be spoken for?*] When  
any person shall demand her in marriage.

Verse 9. *If she be a wall.*] All these expressions,  
says *Calmet*, show that it was necessary to provide a  
husband for this young sister. For a *woman* without  
a *husband* is like a *wall* without *towers*, and without  
defence; is like a *gate* or *door* without *bar* or *lock*;  
and like a *city* without *walls*. They must therefore  
provide for their sister a *rich, powerful, and illus-  
trious man*; qualities here figured by *towers* or  
*palaces of silver*, and *doors of cedar*. As it is cus-  
tomary to build *towers* upon a *wall*, and to put *bars*  
and *bars* upon a *door* in order to secure it, so the ex-  
pressions may point out the *defence, protection, and  
guardianship* which they imagined this young woman  
to require.

Verse 10. *I am a wall, and my breasts like towers*] I  
am become marriageable, and I stood in need of  
the *defence* I have now in my beloved; and as soon  
as I was so, and became pleasing in the eyes of my  
beloved, I was given to him in marriage, and have  
ever since *found favour in his sight*. As soon then as  
my sister is in my state, let a proper match be sought  
out for her. These expressions show the solicitude  
which the bride felt for her sister, and in her favour  
she wishes to interest her spouse.

Verse 11. *Solomon had a vineyard*] *Calmet* trans-  
lates and paraphrases the *Hebrew* of these two verses  
thus: “Ver. 11. *Solomon has a vineyard at Baal-  
hamon: he has let it out to keepers, each of whom for  
the fruit of it was to bring a thousand pieces of silver*.  
Ver. 12. *As for me, my vineyard is before me; that  
is, it is my own; I am its proprietor. Keep thyself,  
O Solomon, thy thousand pieces of silver, and let those  
who dress (thy vineyard) have two hundred for their  
trouble. I neither envy thee thy vineyard, nor them  
their profits. I am satisfied with my own. My be-  
loved is my vineyard—my heritage; I would not  
change him for all the riches of the universe.*”

Some suppose that there is a reference here to

some property which Pharaoh had given to Solomon with his daughter. See *Harmer's Outlines*, where this subject is considered at large.

Verse 13. *Thou that dwellest in the gardens*] This is supposed to refer to the bridegroom asking permission of his spouse early in the morning to retire, as was his usual custom. He intimates the *companions* were waiting to *hear*, and he wished to *hear it* in the way of *permission* to depart.

Verse 14. *Make haste, my beloved*] These appear to be the words of the bride giving permission, but entreating him to speed his *return*. What these *mountains of spices* were, we cannot particularly tell; but they must have been thus named from their producing the *trees* on which the *spices* grew. They might have been the same as the *mountains of Bethel*, chap. ii. 17, or the *mountains of myrrh*, chap. iv. 6; where see the notes.

Here ends the *seventh night* of the marriage week.

Thus ends this most singular book; the oldest *pastoral* in the world, if it may be ranked among this species of writing. To whatever species of composition

it belongs, it is, beyond all controversy, the *finest*, the most *sublime* for *imagery* and *colouring*, that ever came from the pen of man.

In the preceding notes I have carefully avoided all attempts to *spiritualize* this song. My reasons I have already given in the *introduction*; and in the course of writing these short notes I have seen no cause to alter my opinion. Any man may *allegorize* it; that is an easy matter; for when he once considers it to be an *allegory*, his own *creed* will furnish him with enough to *say*, *write*, or *preach*, upon the *spiritual* meanings of every part, which will be an exhibition of his own *confession of faith*! But when he has finished his work, the question will recur, By what authority do you give it *these meanings*? And till the day of judgment none shall be able to say, "I have the authority of God for my exposition."

#### MASORETIC NOTES.

Number of verses in Canticles, 117. Middle verse, chap. iv. 14.

TARGUM,<sup>(a)</sup> OR CHALDEE PARAPHRASE,

ON THE

## SONG OF SONGS.

## CHAPTER I.

Versc 1. *The song of songs, &c.*] The songs and hymns which Solomon the prophet, king of Israel, delivered by the (b) spirit of prophecy, before Jehovah, the Lord of the whole world. Ten songs are sung in this world; but this is the most excellent of them all. The *first* song Adam sang, at the time when his sins were forgiven him; and when the sabbath-day came, he put a covering upon his lips, and sang (c) a psalm or song for the sabbath-day. The *second* song sang Moses with the children of Israel, at the time when the Lord of the world divided the Red Sea for them; then they all of them opened their mouths, and sang as one song, as it is written (d), "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel." The *third* song the children of Israel sang at the time that the well of water was given to them, as it is written (e), "Then sang Israel." The *fourth* song Moses the prophet sang, when his time was come to (f) depart out of the world, and in which he reproved the people of the house of Israel, as it is written (g), "Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak." The *fifth* song Joshua the son of Nun sang, when he fought in *Gibeon*, and the sun and moon stood still for him (h) *thirty* and *six* hours: when they ceased from singing, he himself

opened his mouth, and sang this song, as it is written (i), "Then sang Joshua before the Lord." The *sixth* song Barak and Deborah sang, in the day that the Lord delivered Sisera and his army into the hands of the children of Israel, as it is written (k), "Then sang Deborah and Barak, the son of Abinoam." The *seventh* song Hannah sang, at the time when a son was given her by the Lord, as it is written (l), "And Hannah prayed by the spirit of prophecy, and said." The *eighth* song David the king of Israel sang, on the account of all the wonders which the Lord did for him. He opened his mouth, and sang this song, as it is written (m), "And David sang by the spirit of prophecy before the Lord." The *ninth* song Solomon the king of Israel sang by the Holy Spirit before Jehovah, the Lord of the whole world. And the *tenth* song the children of the captivity shall sing at the time when they shall come out of captivity; as it is written and explained by Isaiah the prophet (n), This song shall be unto you for joy in the night, that the feast of the passover is kept holy, and gladness of heart; as when the people go to appear before the Lord, three times in the year, with all kinds of music, and sound of the pipe, when they go up to the mountain of the

(a) The word תרגום signifies an exposition, or interpretation, or a translation of one language into another; and here of the Hebrew text into the Chaldee language with an explanation. The first use of these translations was after the return of the Jews from Babylon, where they had almost lost the Hebrew language; and, therefore, were necessary for the understanding the law and the prophets. The translation of the five books of Moses was done by Onkelos, and that of the prophets by Jonathan Ben Uzziel, the former of whom lived a little after Christ, and the latter a little before him: but the translation of the Hagiographa, among which is this book of Canticles, is generally thought to be done by R. Joseph Cæcus. The paraphrase on this book could not have been written till after the finishing of the Talmud, seeing express mention is made of it there.

(b) Which is the Holy Spirit, as it is afterwards explained. What the Targum says of this book is the mind of Jewish writers in general. Vide Mishna, Tract. Yadaim, c. 3. s. 5. Shirhashirim Rabba, in ver. 1. Midrash Koheleth, in ver. 1. Zohar, in Exod. fol. 59. 3. Jarchi and Aben Ezra, in Prefat. in Cant. Kimchi in 1 Reg. 11. 41.

(c) Ps. xcii., which psalm many Jewish writers think was made by the first man Adam; so Targum in Ps. xcii. Zohar in Gen. fol. 43. 2. Vajikra Rabba, Parash. 10. But in Shemoth

Rabba, Parash. 23, it is said that Adam never composed any song; and that the song which Moses and the children of Israel sang at the Red Sea, was the first that ever was sung in the world; and, indeed, it is the first that is mentioned in Scripture.

(d) Exod. xv. 1.

(e) Numb. xxi. 17.

(f) A phrase expressive of death. See Phil. i. 23.

(g) Deut. xxxii. 1.

(h) In Josh. x. 13, it is said, that "the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down ימים תמים," about a whole day," or a complete day, which, if we understand of an artificial day, was but twelve hours; and if of a natural day, twenty-four hours. Kimchi, on Josh. x. 13, says that this miracle was wrought in the summer solstice, and on the longest day in the year, which in the land of Canaan consists but of fourteen hours; whereas the Targum here says, the sun stood still thirty-six hours, which makes three artificial days, or one natural day and a half. Vide Eccius. xli. 5.

(i) So the Targum on Josh. x. 12.

(k) Judg. v. 1.

(l) So the Targum on 1 Sam. ii. 1.

(m) So the Targum on 2 Sam. xxii. 1.

(n) Much to the same purpose is the Targum on Isai. lxx. 23.

Lord, to worship before the Lord, the mighty one of Israel.

Verse 2. *Let him kiss me, &c.*] Solomon the prophet said, "Blessed be the name of the Lord," who hath given us the law by the hands of Moses, (o) the great scribe, written upon two tables of stone, and the six parts of the (p) *Mishna* and *Talmud* (q) to study in; and he was speaking to us face to face, as a man kisseth his friend, because of the greatness of the love with which he loved us more than (r) the seventy nations.

Verse 3. *Because of the savour, &c.*] At the report of thy wonders and of thy power, which thou wroughtest for thy people the house of Israel. All the nations trembled who heard of the fame of thy greatness, and of thy favours; and thy holy name was heard in all the earth, which is more excellent than the anointing oil that was poured upon the heads of the kings and priests; and, therefore, the righteous love to walk in thy good way, that they may possess (s) this world, and the world to come.

Verse 4. *Draw me, &c.*] When the people of the house of Israel came out of Egypt, the *shechinah* of the Lord of the world went before them (t) in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night. The righteous of that generation said, Lord of all the world, draw us after thee, and we will run in thy good way; and bring us to the foot of Mount Sinai, and give us the law out of thy treasure house, the firmament; and we will rejoice and be glad, in the (u) *twenty-two* letters with which it is written; and we will remember them, and love thy deity; and will withdraw ourselves from the idols of the nations; and all the righteous which do what is right before thee shall fear thee, and love thy commandments.

Verse 5. *I am black, &c.*] When the house of Israel made the calf, their faces became black, like the sons of Cush (v), which dwell in the tents of Kedar: but when they returned by repentance, and were forgiven, the brightness of the glory of their faces was increased, like the angels', because they made curtains for the

tabernacle; therefore the *shechinah* of the Lord dwelt among them: and Moses, their master, went up into the (w) firmament, and made peace between them and their King.

Verse 6. *Look not upon me, &c.*] The congregation of Israel said before the nations, Do not despise me, because I am blacker than you, for I have done according to your works, and have (x) worshipped the sun and moon; for false prophets have been the cause that the fierce anger of the Lord hath come down upon me; and they taught me to worship your idols, and to walk in your laws: but the Lord of the world, who is my God, I have not served, nor walked in his commandments, nor have I kept his statutes and his law.

Verse 7. *Tell me, O thou, &c.*] When the time of Moses the prophet was come, to (y) depart out of the world, he said before the Lord, It is revealed unto me that this people will sin, and go into captivity; now show me how they shall be governed and dwell among the nations, whose decrees are grievous as the heat, and as the scorplings of the sun at noon, in the (z) summer solstice; and wherefore it is that they shall wander among the flocks of the sons of Esau and Ishmael, who join to thee their idols, for companions.

Verse 8. *If thou know not, &c.*] The holy blessed God said to Moses the prophet, It is their desire to smite the captivity of the congregation of Israel, which is like to a fair damsel: but my soul loveth her, therefore let her walk in the ways of the righteous, and let her order her prayer according to the direction of her governors, and let her lead her posterity, and teach her children, which are like to the kids of the goats, to go to the synagogue, and the school; and by that righteousness they shall be governed in the captivity, until the time that I send the king Messiah, and he shall lead them quietly to their habitations; yea, he shall bring them to the house of the sanctuary, which David and Solomon, the shepherds of Israel, built for them.

(o) So Ezra is called a "scribe of the law of the God of heaven," Ezra vii. 11, 12.

(p) The *Mishna*, which consists of six parts, is a collection of the traditions of the Jews, or their oral law, compiled by R. Judah about the year of Christ 150.

(q) Or the *Gemara*, as it is read in Targum Triplex, printed with the Pentateuch. Of this *Gemara*, or Talmud, there are two sorts; the one is called the Jerusalem Talmud, which R. Johanan collected together, about the year of Christ 230; the other is called the Babylonian Talmud, which was begun by R. Ase, in the year 367, who was succeeded in it by Maremar, in the year 427, and at last was finished by Avina, in the year 500. The former was written for the use of the Jerusalem Jews; the latter, for those in Babylon and other parts, and is most esteemed. It contains the disputations and decisions of the Jewish doctors upon the *Mishna*. Vide Buxtorf. Biblioth. Rab. p. 425.

(r) It is a generally received opinion among the Jews that seventy angels descended and confounded the language at Babel, from which time the earth was divided into seventy different nations, speaking seventy different languages. Vide Targum Jon. in Gen. xi. 7, 9.

(s) A like phrase see in Eph. i. 21. Matt. xii. 32.

(t) Vide Exod. xiii. 21, 22.

(u) The number of Hebrew letters in the alphabet. R. Isaac, in Shirhashirim Rabba in loc., gives the same sense of the words, which he collects from the word  $\text{בכ}$  *bach*, in thee,  $\text{כ}$  *beth* standing numerically for two, and  $\text{כפ}$  *caph*, for twenty.

(v) The Ethiopians. Shirhashirim Rabba in loc. explains the words by Amos ix. 7: "Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto me," &c.

(w) It is a received opinion among the Jews that Moses went up into the firmament of heaven; though the Scriptures only signify that he went up into Mount Sinai, and was in the midst of the cloud with God there. So the Targum on ver. 11, 12, 14; and on Pa. lxxviii. 18.

(x) So it is explained in Shirhashirim Rabba in loc. See Deut. xvii. 3. Job xxxi. 26, 27. 2 Kings xxiii. 5, 11. Ezek. viii. 16

(y) See note on ver. 1.

(z) The Jews, as here and elsewhere, call it  $\text{תקופת תמוז}$  *tekuphath Tammuz*, "the revolution of Tammuz." The sun is so called Ezek. viii. 14, which was worshipped under this name; it answers in part to our June, when the sun enters into the tropic of Cancer, and is what is meant by this revolution, Maimon. Hilch. Kiddush Hachodeah, c. 9, s. 2. Vide Targum, Jon. in Gen. viii. 22.



The Targum, or Chaldee paraphrase, on the Song of Songs.

Verse 9. *To a company of horses, &c.*] When Israel went out of Egypt, Pharaoh and his host pursued after them with chariots and horsemen; and their way was shut up on the four sides of them; on the right hand and on the left were wildernesses full of fiery serpents, and behind them was wicked Pharaoh and his army, and before them was the Red Sea. What did the holy blessed God do? He was manifested in the power of his might upon the Red Sea, and dried the sea up; but the mud he did not dry up. The wicked and the mixed multitude, and the strangers which were among them, said, The waters of the sea he is able to dry up; but the mud he is not able to dry up. In that very hour the fierce anger of the Lord came upon them; and he sought to drown them in the waters of the sea, as Pharaoh and his army, his chariots, and his horsemen, and his horses, were drowned; had it not been for Moses, the prophet, who spread his hands in prayer before the Lord, and turned away the anger of the Lord from them. Then he and the righteous of that generation opened their mouths, and sang a song, and passed through the Red Sea on dry land, because of the righteousness of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the beloved of the Lord.

Verse 10. *Thy cheeks are comely, &c.*] When they went out into the wilderness, the Lord said to Moses, How fair is this people; that the words of the law should be given unto them; and they shall be as bridles in their jaws, that they may not depart out of the good way, as a horse turneth not aside that has a bridle in his jaw; and how fair is their neck to bear (a) the yoke of my commandments; and it shall be upon them as a yoke upon the neck of a bullock, which plougheth in the field, and feeds both itself and its master!

Verse 11. *We will make thee borders of gold, &c.*] Then was it said to Moses, Go up into the firmament, and I will give thee the two tables of stone, hewed out of the (b) sapphire of the throne of my glory, shining as the best gold, disposed in rows, written with my finger, in which are engraven the (c) ten words, purer than silver that is purified seven times seven, which is the number of the things explained

in them (d), forty-nine ways; and they shall be given by thine hand unto the people of the house of Israel.

Verse 12. *While the king sitteth, &c.*] Whilst Moses their master was in the firmament, to receive the two tables of stone, and the law, and the commandments, the wicked of that generation, and the mixed multitude that was among them, rose up and made a golden calf, and caused their works to stink; and there went out an evil report of them in the world, for before this time a fragrant odour of them was diffused in the world: but afterwards they stank like (e) nard, whose smell is very bad; and the plague of leprosy came down upon their flesh.

Verse 13. *A bundle of myrrh, &c.*] At that time the Lord said unto Moses, Go down, for the people have corrupted themselves; desist from speaking to me, and I will destroy them. Then Moses returned and asked mercy of the Lord; and the Lord remembered for them the (f) binding of Isaac, whom his father bound on (g) Mount Moriah, upon the altar; and the Lord turned from his fierce anger, and caused his shechinah to dwell among them as before.

Verse 14. *A cluster of camphire, &c.*] Lo, then went Moses down with the two tables of stone in his hands; and because of the sins of Israel his hands grew heavy, and they fell and were broken. Then went Moses, and ground (h) the calf to powder, and scattered the dust of it upon the river, and made the children of Israel drink it, and slew all that deserved to die, and went up a second time into the firmament, and prayed before the Lord, and made atonement for the children of Israel; then was he commanded to make a tabernacle and an ark. Immediately Moses hastened, and made the tabernacle, and all its furniture, and the ark; and he put in the ark the two other tables, and appointed the sons of Aaron the priests to offer the offerings upon the altar, and to pour the wine upon the offerings: but from whence had they wine to pour? For in the wilderness they had no proper place for sowing, neither had they fig-trees, nor vines, nor pomegranates; but they went to the vineyards of En-gedi, and took clusters of grapes from thence, and pressed wine out of them,

(a) It is very common in Jewish writings to compare the law to a yoke; so Targum, in Lam. iii. 27. Mishna, Tract. Berac. c. 2, s. 2. Pirk. Aboth. c. 3, s. 5. Midrash Echa Rabbati, fol. 56, 3. Bereshith Rabba, Parash. 98. Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 13. See Matt. xi. 29, and Acts xv. 10.

(b) So Targ. Jon. in Exod. xxxi. 18. Zohar in Exod., fol. 35, l. Jarchi in Exod. xxxiv. 1. See Exod. xxiv. 10, and Ezek. i. 26.

(c) The decalogue or ten commandments.

(d) In Ps. xii. 6, the place here referred to, the "words of the Lord" are said to be "as silver purified seven times;" where by שִׁבְתַּיִם *shibathayim* some of the Jewish rabbins, agreeably to the Targum here, understand *seven times seven*, which makes forty-nine; and so many ways they say the law is capable of being interpreted, and that he is a wise man who is acquainted with them. Midrash Agada in Jarchi, in Ps. xii. 6. Midrash Kobolet, in c. 8, v. 1. Vajikra Rabba, Parash. 26, and Yade Mose, in ib. Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 19.

(e) In Buxtorf's Bible it is read כְּקִיָּדָה *keqiyda*, "like worm-wood," which, indeed, well agrees with what is said of it; 2596

though Matthiolus says of *nard*, that when it has lost its sweet smell it stinks exceedingly. His words are these: *Pernique accidit dum per Indicum et Arabicum mare in Alexandria defertur, et unde Venetias, ut ascito sibi maris humore [id] namque facile sit quod nardus sit siccissima] vel situm contrahat, vel supputrescat: unde postea amissa suaveolentia, graviter olet.*—Matthiolus in Dioscor. l. 1, c. 6.

(f) The Jews suppose the binding of Isaac to be very meritorious, and that by virtue of it their sins are expiated, and many blessings procured for them; and therefore in the beginning of the year they pray to God, that in mercy to Israel he would remember the binding of Isaac. Seder Terhillot, fol. 282, 1, 2. Edit. Basil. 1578. See Targum and Jarchi on Mic. vii. 20. Shirhashirim Rabba in c. J, 14. Jarchi in Exod. xxxii. 13. Shemoth Rabba, Parash. 44.

(g) The Jews say, that in this same place Adam, Cain, Abel, and Noah built altars, and sacrificed. Maimon. Hilk. Beh. Habbecchira, c. 2, s. 2. Targum Jon. in Gen. viii. 20, and xxii. 9. Here Solomon afterwards built the temple, 2 Chron. iii. 1.

(h) Exod. xxxii. 20.

and poured it upon the altar, the fourth part of an hin to one lamb.

Verse 15. *Behold, thou art fair, &c.*] When the children of Israel performed the will of their King, he (i) himself praised them, in the (k) family of the holy angels, and said, How fair are thy works, my daughter, my beloved, O congregation of Israel, in the time that thou doest my will, and studiest in the words of my law; and how well ordered are thy works and thy affairs, as young doves that are fit to be offered up upon the altar!

Verse 16. *Behold, thou art fair, &c.*] The congregation of Israel answered before the Lord of the world, and thus she said, How fair is the shechinah

of thy holiness, when thou dwellest among us, and receivest our prayers with acceptance, and when thou dwellest in our beloved bed, and our children are multiplied in the world, and we increase and multiply like a tree that is planted by a fountain of water, whose leaf is fair, and whose fruit is plenteous!

Verse 17. *The beams of our house, &c.*] Solomon the prophet said, How beautiful is the house of the sanctuary of the Lord, which is built by my hands of wood of (l) Gulmish: but far more beautiful will be the house of the sanctuary, which shall be built (m) in the days of the king Messiah, whose beams will be of the cedars of the garden of Eden, and whose rafters will be of brutine, fir, and box.

(i) Ch. בְּיַדְהֶם *bemeynregh*, "by his word."

(k) The Latin word *familia* is here used by the paraphrast; compare with this Eph. iii. 15, Luke xii. 8.

(l) A kind of cedar, see Eliæ Levitæ Methurgeman in voce. Targum Jon. in Numb. xii. 6, and Ketoreth Hassammim, in ib.

(m) The Jews expect a third temple to be built in the days of the Messiah. See R. Abendan. not. in Miclol Yophi, and Abarbinel in Hagg. ii. 9. R. Isaac Chizuk Emun. par. 1, c. 34. Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 14.

## CHAPTER II.

Verse 1. *I am the rose of Sharon, &c.*] The congregation of Israel said, When the Lord of the world causes his (a) shechinah to dwell in the midst of me, I am like the green daffodil of the garden of Eden, and my works are fair as the rose which is in the plain of the garden of Eden.

Verse 2. *As the lily among thorns, &c.*] But when I turn aside out of the way that is right before me, and he removes the shechinah of his holiness from me, I am like to a rose which flourishes among thorns, by which its leaves are pricked through and torn: even so am I pricked through and torn with wicked edicts, in the captivity among the (b) kings of the nations.

Verse 3. *As the apple-tree among the trees, &c.*] As the pomecitron-tree is beautiful, and to be praised among the unfruitful trees, and all the world knows it; so the Lord of the world was praised among the angels, when he was revealed on Mount Sinai, and gave the law unto his people; in that very hour I desired to sit under the shadow of his shechinah, and the words of his law were (c) fixed upon the roof of my mouth, and the reward of his commands is reserved for me in the world to come.

Verse 4. *He brought me, &c.*] The congregation of Israel said, The Lord brought me to the school which is in (d) Sinai, to learn the law from the

mouth of Moses the great scribe; and the banner of his commandments I took upon me in love, and said, All that the Lord commandeth I will do, and will obey.

Verse 5. *Stay me with flagons, &c.*] But when I heard his voice, which spake out of the midst of the flame of fire, I trembled, and went backwards because of fear. Then I drew near to Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, Receive ye the voice of the words of the Lord, out of the midst of the fire, and bring me to the school, and sustain me with the words of the law on which the world is founded, and put veils upon my neck; for the interpretation of the holy words, which are sweet to my palate, are as the apples of the garden of Eden, and I will study in them: perhaps I may be healed by them, for I am sick of love.

Verse 6. *His left hand is under my head, &c.*] When the people of the house of Israel were travelling in the wilderness, they had (e) four clouds of glory at the four winds of the world round about them, that the (f) evil eye might not rule over them. There was one above them, that the heat and sun, as also the rain and hail, might not have power over them; and one below them, which carried them as a nurse carrieth her sucking child in her bosom; and another ran before them, at the distance of three days' journey, (g) to level the mountains, and to

(a) The word shechinah comes from שָׁכַן *shachan*, which signifies to dwell, and Elias Levita, in his Methurgeman, says that their wise men called the Holy Spirit so, because it dwelt upon the prophets; though perhaps, he says, there may be another sense of it among the Cabalistic doctors, of which he declares himself ignorant. It seems to intend the glorious majesty and presence of God with his church and people, and is the same with St. John's σκηνη του Θεου, *tabernacle or habitation of God*, which is said to be with men, Rev. xxi. 3; and may very well be applied to the Messiah, Jesus, who was made flesh, και σκηνοωσεν, *and dwelt among us*, John i. 14.

(b) In Buxtorf's Bible it is read פְּלִיטֵי *plitey*, "the provinces of the nations."

(c) In Buxtorf's Bible it is read בְּטִיבֵי "were sweet to my palate, or taste."

(d) The same sense is given of those words in Shirhashirim Rabba in loc, and in Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 2.

(e) The Jews are divided about the number of those clouds which they say attended the Israelites in their travels. R. Josiah says there were five of them, four at the four winds, and one went before them. R. Hoshea thinks there were seven, four at the four winds, one above, one below, and another that went before them; Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 1.

(f) That is, envy or malice.

(g) The same is ascribed to this cloud in Bemidbar Rabba, *ubi supra*, and in Jarchi in Cant. iii. 6.

elevate the plains; and it slew all the fiery serpents and scorpions which were in the wilderness; and it spied out a convenient place for them to lodge in, that they might study in the doctrine of the law, which was given them by the right hand of the Lord.

Verse 7. *I charge you, O ye daughters, &c.*] After that it was commanded Moses, by the spirit of prophecy from the Lord, to send spies to spy the land, and when they returned from spying it, they brought an evil report upon the land of Israel, wherefore they tarried forty years in the wilderness. Moses opened his mouth, and thus he said, I adjure you, O congregation of Israel, by the Lord of hosts, and by the fortresses of the land of Israel, that ye presume not to go up to the land of Canaan until it is the will of the Lord; lest the whole generation of warlike men perish from the camp, even as your brethren, the children of Ephraim (*h*), who went out thirty years from Egypt, before the time came, and they fell into the hand of the Philistines, which dwell in Gath, and they slew them: but tarry ye unto the end of forty years, and your children shall go up and inherit it.

Verse 8. *The voice of my beloved, &c.*] Solomon the king said, When the people of the house of Israel dwelt in Egypt, their cry went up to the highest heavens. Lo! then was the glory of the Lord revealed to Moses on Mount Horeb; and he sent him into Egypt to deliver them, and to bring them out of the oppression of the tyranny of Egypt; and he leaped over the appointed season through the righteousness of their fathers, who are like to mountains; and he skipped over the time of an hundred and ninety years' (*t*) servitude, through the righteousness of their mothers, who are like to hills.

Verse 9. *My beloved is like a roe, &c.*] The congregation of Israel said, When the glory of the Lord was revealed in Egypt, in the night of the passover, and slew all the first-born, he rode upon a swift

cloud, and ran like a roe or a young hart, and protected the houses in which we were, and stood behind our wall, and looked out of the windows, and beheld through the lattices, and saw the blood of the sacrifice of the passover, and the blood of circumcision which was fixed upon our gates; and he hastened from the highest heavens, and saw his people, who eat of the sacrifice of the feast which was roasted with fire, with (*k*) Tamca and Ulshin, and unleavened bread; and he spared us, and did not give power to the destroying angel to destroy us.

Verse 10. *My beloved spake, and said unto me, &c.*] And in the morning my beloved answered, and said unto me, Arise, O congregation of Israel, my love, who wast so of old, and who art fair in good works; go, get thee out from the bondage of the Egyptians.

Verse 11. *For lo, the winter is past, &c.*] For behold, the time of bondage, which is like to winter, is ceased; and the years (*l*) which I spake of to Abraham between the pieces are at an end; and the tyranny of the Egyptians, which is like to a violent rain, is over and gone; neither shall ye see them any more for ever.

Verse 12. *The flowers appear on the earth, &c.*] And Moses and Aaron, (*m*) who are like to branches of palm-trees, appeared to do wonders in the land of Egypt; and the time of cutting the first-fruits is come, and the voice of the Holy Spirit of redemption, which I spake of to Abraham your father. Now ye hear what I said unto him; yea, the people whom ye shall serve I will judge, and after that ye shall come forth with great substance; and now it is my pleasure to do what I swear to him by my word.

Verse 13. *The fig-tree putteth forth, &c.*] The congregation of Israel, which is like to the first-fruits of figs, opened her mouth, and sang a song at the Red Sea; yea, the babes and sucklings praised the Lord of the world with their tongues. Immediately the Lord of the world said unto them, Arise, O congregation of Israel, my love, and my fair one, and go

(*h*) The same story is reported in Targum Jon. in Exod. xiii. 7, where it is said that the number of the slain in this expedition was two hundred thousand mighty men, and that these are the dry bones Ezekiel saw in the valley, which upon his prophesying lived, and became an exceeding great army, Ezek. xxxvii. Something of this story is also hinted at in Shirhashirim Rabba, and Aben Ezra in loc. Vide 1 Chron. vii. 21, 22, and Kimchi, in *ibid*.

(*i*) The Jews unanimously agree, that from the time of Jacob's going down to Egypt to the coming up of the Israelites from thence were just two hundred and ten years; Targum Jon. in Exod. xii. 40. Shirhashirim Rabba, in c. 2, ver. 11, 17. She-moth Rabba, Parash. 18. Jarchi in Gen. xv. 13, and in Exod. xii. 40; which some of them collect from the word *רדו* *redu*, "get you down," used by Jacob, Gen. xlii. 2, when he ordered his sons to go down to Egypt, and buy corn, the letters of which word numerically make up 210. Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 13. Jarchi in Gen. xlii. 2. R. Abendana not. in Miclol Yophi in Exod. xii. 40; to which two hundred and ten years if we add the one hundred and ninety, which the Targumist here says were skipped over in order to hasten the deliverance of the Israelites from their bondage, there will be just the four hundred years God spake of to Abraham, Gen. xv. 13, and mentioned by Stephen, Acts vii. 6, in which his seed should be a stranger, seive, be afflicted and evilly intreated; which four hundred

years may be reckoned after this manner: From the birth of Isaac to the birth of Jacob sixty years, Gen. xlv. 26; from thence to the coming of Jacob into Egypt one hundred and thirty years, Gen. xlvii. 9; and from thence to the coming of the children of Israel out of Egypt two hundred and ten years; which completes the number. And if we begin the date from Abraham's going out from Ur of the Chaldees, and allow five years for his dwelling in Haran, as the Jews do, see Aben Ezra in Exod. xii. 40; from whose departure from thence to the birth of Isaac were twenty-five years, Gen. xii. 4, and xiii. 5; which thirty years, being added to the above-said four hundred, make up the number given by Moses, Exod. xii. 40, and by the apostle Paul, Gal. iii. 17.

(*k*) The names of the bitter herbs with which the paschal lamb was eaten, Exod. xii. 8. The same are mentioned in Targum Jon. in Exod. xii. 8; and in some of their writings three other herbs are mentioned, the names of which are Cuzareth, Charcabina, and Meror, by which they intend horrhound, endive, wild lettuce, cichory, and such like herbs: for they themselves do not seem very well to understand them. See Miana Tract. Pesach. c. 2, s. 6. Jarchi *ib*, and Miana Tract. Chametz. Umetza, c. 7, s. 13.

(*l*) So it is explained in Shirhashirim Rabba, and by Jarchi in loc.

(*m*) So Shirhashirim Rabba, and Jarchi in loc.

from hence into the land which I have sworn unto thy fathers.

Verse 14. *O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, &c.*] And when wicked Pharaoh (*n*) pursued after the children of Israel, the congregation of Israel was like to a dove that is shut up in the clefts of the rock, whom the serpent afflicts within, and the hawk oppresses without; even so the congregation of Israel was shut up on the four sides of the world, for before them was the sea, and behind them enmity (*o*) pursued; and on the two sides of them were the wildernesses, which were full of fiery serpents, which bite and kill the sons of men with their poison. And immediately she opened her mouth in prayer before the Lord, and Bath Kol (*p*) went out from the highest heavens, and thus it said, O thou congregation of Israel, who art like to a clean dove, and which is hid in the closure of the clefts of the rock, and in the secret places of the stairs, show me thy countenance, and thy works, which are right; cause me to hear thy voice, for thy voice is sweet in prayer in the house of the little sanctuary, and thy countenance is fair in good works.

Verse 15. *Take us the foxes, &c.*] After that they had passed through the sea, they murmured for water; then came wicked Amalek against them, who hated them on the account of the birthright and blessing which Jacob our father took away from Esau; and he came to make war with Israel, for they had made void the words of the law; and wicked Amalek (*q*) stole from under the wings of

the clouds of glory several persons from the tribe of Dan, and slew them, because the idol of Micah was in their hand. In that very hour the house of Israel, which is like to a vineyard, was condemned to be destroyed, except the righteous of that generation, who were like to the best spice.

Verse 16. *My beloved is mine, &c.*] In that very hour they returned by repentance: then stood Moses the prophet, and prayed before the Lord; and Joshua his minister girded himself, and went out from under the (*r*) wings of the clouds of the glory of the Lord, and with him mighty men that were righteous, who in their works are like to the rose; and they made war with Amalek, and they broke Amalek and his people with the anathema of the Lord, and with slaughter, and with breach, and with the edge of the sword.

Verse 17. *Until the day break, &c.*] But in a very few days the children of Israel made the golden calf, and the clouds of glory which covered them removed; and they were left open, and were spoiled of the apparatus of their armour, on which was engraven the Great Name, (*s*) that is explained by seventy names. And the Lord sought to destroy them out of the world; but that he remembered before him the oath which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, who were swift in their service, as a roe or a young hart, and the offering which Abraham offered up, even Isaac, his own son, on Mount Moriah, and where, before then, he had offered his offering, and divided them equally.

(n) After the same manner Shirhashirim Rabba, and Jarchi in loc. Shemoth Rabba, Parash. 21.

(o) That is, the enemy; compare with this Rom. viii. 7.

(p) Frequent mention is made of this in the writings of the Jews. It was a voice from heaven which revealed secrets, foretold future events, decided controversies, and directed in difficult matters; it was used in the second temple in the room of prophecy, which the Jews say then ceased, Talmud Sota, fol. 48, col. 2, and Sanhedrin, fol. 2, col. 4. R. Saadiah Gaon in Dan. ix. 24. Shirhashirim Rabba in c. 8, 9. It is thought by R. Levi Ben. Gerson, in 2 Sam. i., s. 27, to be a more excellent and complete kind of divination; and indeed I am inclined to think that most of those voices which go under this name were the mere illusions of Satan, designed to deceive the people, and lessen the credit of those voices which were heard

from heaven in the times of Christ. See Matt. iii. 17, and xvii. 5. John xiii. 28.

(q) In Targ. Jon. in. Exod. xvii. 8, where the same story is mentioned, it is said that those men of the tribe of Dan whom Amalek took and slew, were such whom the cloud did not receive and protect because of their idolatry.

(r) So Targum Jon. and Jarchi in Exod. xvii. 9, and Shemoth Rabba, Parash. 26.

(s) This is the name Jehovah, which the Jews think it unlawful to pronounce; and therefore explain it by other names, usually by Adonai or Elohim. Here it is said to be explained by seventy names, sometimes by seventy-two; of which see Galatinus de Arcanis Cath. ver. 1, 2, c. 17, and Schindler, Lex. Pentaglot., p. 1492.

CHAPTER III.

Verse 1. *By night on my bed, &c.*] And when the people of the house of Israel saw that the clouds of glory were removed from them, and the holy crown (*a*) that was given to them at Sinai was taken from them, and they were left dark as the night; then they sought the holy crown, which was removed from them, but they found it not.

Israel said one to another, Let us arise, and go and surround the tabernacle of the congregation, which Moses fixed without the camp; and let us seek instruction from the Lord, and the holy shechinah, which is removed from us. And they went about the cities, and in the streets, and in the broad places; but they found it not.

Verse 2. *I will rise now, &c.*] The children of

Verse 3. *The watchmen that go about the city, &c.*]

(a) The same is mentioned in the Targums of Jon. and Jerus. in Exod. xxiii. 25. By this holy crown seems to be meant the shechinah or presence of God, and so it is explained in Shirhashirim Rabba in chap. iv. 12; or else the law, which is very frequently called so, Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 4. Midrash Kokelet in c. 7, 1. Pirk. Aboth. c. 4, s. 13.

The congregation of Israel said, (b) Moses and Aaron, and the Levites which keep the charge of the word of the tabernacle of the congregation, who go round about it, found me, and I inquired of them concerning the shechinah of the glory of the Lord, which was removed from me. Moses, the great scribe of Israel, answered, and thus he said: I will go up to the highest heavens, and I will pray before the Lord; perhaps atonement may be made for your transgressions, so that he may cause his shechinah to dwell among you as before.

Verse 4. *It was but a little that I passed, &c.*] It was but a very little time, and the Lord turned from the fierceness of his anger, and commanded Moses the prophet to make the tabernacle of the congregation, and the ark, and caused his shechinah to dwell in it; and the people of the house of Israel offered their offerings, and studied in the words of the law in the chamber (c) of the school of Moses their master, and in the chamber of Joshua, the son of Nun, his minister.

Verse 5. *I charge you, &c.*] When the seven nations (d) heard that the children of Israel were about to possess their land, they arose as one man, and cut down the trees, and stopped up the fountains of water, and destroyed their cities, and fled. The holy blessed God said to Moses the prophet, I have sworn to their fathers, that I will bring their children to inherit a land flowing with milk and honey; but how shall I bring them to a land that is desolate and empty? Now, therefore, I will cause them to stay forty years in the wilderness, and my law shall be mixed with them, and after that those wicked nations shall build what they have destroyed. And then said Moses to the children of Israel, I charge you, O congregation of Israel, by the Lord of hosts, and by the fortresses of the land of Israel, that ye presume not to go up to the land of Canaan until the forty years are ended. When it shall be the good pleasure of the Lord to deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hands, then shall ye pass over Jordan, and the land shall be subdued before you.

Verse 6. *Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness, &c.*] When the Israelites came up out of the wilderness, and passed over Jordan with Joshua the

son of Nun, the people of the land said, Who is this choice nation which comes up out of the wilderness, perfumed with the sweet incense, and supported through the righteousness of Abraham, who worshipped and prayed before the Lord on Mount Moriah, and is anointed with the anointing oil, through the righteousness of Isaac, who was bound in that place of the sanctuary which is called the mountain of frankincense; for whom wonders are also wrought through the holiness of Jacob, who wrestled with him until the morning ascended, and prevailed over him, and was delivered, he and the twelve tribes?

Verse 7. *Behold his bed, which is Solomon's, &c.*] When Solomon, the king of Israel, built the house of the sanctuary of the Lord in Jerusalem, the Lord said by his word, How beautiful is the house of this sanctuary, which is built for me by the hands of King Solomon, the son of David! and how beautiful are the priests, when they spread their hands, and stand upon their desks, and bless the people of the house of Israel by the sixty letters (e) which were delivered to Moses their master, and with that blessing which surrounds them like a high and strong wall, and by which all the mighty men of Israel prevail and prosper!

Verse 8. *They all hold swords, &c.*] And the priests and the Levites, and all the tribes of Israel, all of them take hold of the words of the law, which are like to a (f) sword, in which they employ themselves as men that are expert in war; and every one of them has the (g) seal of circumcision sealed upon their flesh, even as it was sealed upon the flesh of Abraham; and by it they prevail as a man that has his sword girt upon his thigh, wherefore they are not afraid of noxious spirits (h) and apparitions, which walk in the night.

Verse 9. *King Solomon made himself a chariot, &c.*] King Solomon built for himself (i) a holy temple of the trees of (k) Zangebila, fir-trees, and cedars, which came from Lebanon, and covered it with pure gold.

Verse 10. *He made the pillars thereof, &c.*] And after that he had finished it, he put in the midst of it the ark of the testimony, which is the pillar of the world; and in it the two tables of stone, which

(b) These are also supposed to be intended by the watchmen in Shirhashirim Rabba, and by Jarchi and R. Aben Ezra in loc.

(c) It was a common practice with the Jewish doctors to teach, dispute, and converse about religion in chambers or upper rooms. See Mishna Tract. Shabbath. c. 1, s. 4.

(d) The Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jobusites, Deut. vii. 1.

(e) The same is mentioned in Shirhashirim Rabba in loc. and in Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 11. There being just this number of letters in the forms of blessings with which the priests were to bless the people of Israel, in Numb. vi. 24, 25, 26.

(f) The law is likewise compared to a sword, in Bereshith Rabba, Parash. 21. See Eph. vi. 17. Heb. iv. 12.

(g) The apostle Paul calls circumcision σημεῖον περιτομῆς, σφραγὶς τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῆς πιστεως, "the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith," Rom. iv. 11.

(h) So this "fear in the night" is interpreted by some of the rabbins in Shirhashirim Rabba in loc. and in Bemidbar Rabba,

Parash. 11. Though others of them in the said places explain it of the fear of hell, which is like to the night; as they do also in Gemara Rab. Tract. Sanhedrin c. 1, fol. 7, col. 1.

(i) By this chariot R. Aben Ezra also understands the house of the Lord; and in Shirhashirim Rabba, and by Jarchi in loc. it is interpreted of the tabernacle, as it is by some of the Jews, in Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 12, though others think the ark is intended; and others in the same place would have the world meant, which way they explain it in Zohar in Gen. fol. 2, l. The word אֲמִרִין very properly signifies "the marriage bed," so called from אָמַר which signifies "to fructify," or "to be fruitful." Hence אֲמִרִין לְבַנְתָּ is a very usual phrase with the rabbins to express the celebration of marriage. Vide Buxtorf. epist. Heb. lib. 2, ep. 7.

(k) Elias Levita, in his Methurgeman on this word, says that this is cinnabar. He seems to mean a kind of red wood, which dyers use; but observes, that some say it is the spice we call ginger. So David de Ponia renders it in his Lex. Heb. fol.

## The Targum, or Chaldee paraphrase, on the Song of Songs.

Moses placed there in Horeb, which are more precious than silver purified, and more beautiful than the best gold; and he spread and covered over it (*l*) the veil of blue and purple, and between the cherubims which are over the mercy-seat the shechinah of the Lord abode, whose name dwelleth in Jerusalem, above all the cities of the land of Israel.

Verse 11. *Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, &c.*] When king Solomon came to make the dedication of

the house of the sanctuary, a crier went forth in strength; and thus he said, Go forth and see, ye inhabitants of the provinces of the land of Israel, and ye people of Zion, the crown and diadem wherewith the people of the house of Israel crowned king Solomon in the (*m*) day of the dedication of the house of the sanctuary, when he rejoiced with the joy of the feast of tabernacles; for king Solomon kept at that time the feast of tabernacles (*n*) fourteen days.

54, 4; and indeed it is joined with pepper in Maimon. Tract. Shebitat Asur, c. 2, s. 6. Biath. Hamikdash, c. 7, s. 13, and Beracoth, c. 8, s. 7. It is most likely to be a kind of cedar.

(*l*) *Vide* Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 12. Shirhashirim Rabba, and Jarchi in loc.

(*m*) Most of the Jewish writers refer this to the time of the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, and the setting up of the tabernacle by Moses; so Jarchi and Shirhashirim Rabba in loc. Shemoth Rabba, Parash. 52. Vajikra Rabba, Parash. 20,

Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 2 and 12. Præfat. Echa Rabbati. fol. 21, 2.

(*n*) In 1 Kings viii. 65, it is said that "Solomon held a feast seven days and seven days, even fourteen days;" the reason of which distinction is because the first seven days were kept for the dedication of the altar, and the other for the feast of tabernacles; see 2 Chron. vii. 8, 9: whereas our Targumist would have the feast of tabernacles kept the whole fourteen days, contrary to the command in Lev. xxiii. 34. *Vide* R. Levi Ben Gerson, and R. David Kimchi in 1 Reg. viii. 65.

## CHAPTER IV.

Verse 1. *Behold, thou art fair, &c.*] And in that day king Solomon offered up a (*a*) thousand burnt-offerings upon the altar, and his offerings were graciously accepted by the Lord. Bath Kol (*b*) went forth from heaven; and thus it said, How fair art thou, O congregation of Israel, and how fair are the princes of the congregation and the wise men, (*c*) who sit in the sanhedrin, who enlighten (*d*) the world; the people of the house of Israel, and are like to young doves; yea, even the rest of the children of thy congregation; and the people of the earth are righteous, as the sons of Jacob (*e*), who gathered stones, and made a heap thereof on the mount of Gilead!

Verse 2. *Thy teeth are like, &c.*] How fair are the priests and Levites, who offer up thine offerings, and eat the holy flesh, and the tithes, and the offering of fruits; and are pure from all oppression and rapine,

even as clean as Jacob's flocks of sheep when they were shorn, and came up from the brook (*f*) Jabok, among whom there was no oppression or rapine, and they are all of them like to one another, and always bear twins; neither is any barren, or that miscarrieth among them.

Verse 3. *Thy lips are like a thread, &c.*] And the lips of the high-priest inquire in prayer, on the day of atonement, before the Lord; and his words turn the transgressions of Israel, which are like to a thread of scarlet, and make them white (*g*) as pure wool; and the king, who is their head, is full of the commandments, as a pomegranate; besides the (*h*) Amarcalin and (*i*) Archonin, who are next the king, who are righteous; neither is there any iniquity in them.

Verse 4. *Thy neck is like the tower, &c.*] And the head of the school, who is thy master, is powerful in righteousness, and mighty in good works, as David

(*a*) In 1 Kings viii. 63, the sacrifice of peace-offerings which Solomon offered was two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep: but the number of burnt-offerings is not mentioned.

(*b*) See note on chap. ii. 14.

(*c*) So the words are explained in Shirhashirim Rabba in loc.

(*d*) So Christ calls his disciples the "light of the world," Matt. v. 14.

(*e*) This refers to the account that is given of what passed between Jacob and Laban, in Gen. xxxi. 46, 47. See Jarchi in loc.

(*f*) This is the ford Jacob passed over with his wives and children, when he went out to meet his brother Esau, Gen. xxxii. 22. Mention is made of it in several other places of Scripture: Deut. ii. 37 and iii. 16. Josh. xii. 2.

(*g*) The Jews say, that when the scape-goat was sent into the wilderness, a scarlet thread was tied to the temple door, which, as soon as the goat was arrived in the wilderness, turned white; which was not only a token to them of its arrival there, but was also an indication of their sins being forgiven; as it is said, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow," Isai. i. 18. See Mishna, Tract. Yoma, c. 6, s. 8, and

Es Chayim, *ibid*. This scarlet thread, they say, ceased turning white forty years before the destruction of the temple, which was about the time Jesus Christ, who was typified by the scape-goat, made atonement for sin; Talmud Yoma, fol. 39, col. 2. This tradition the Targumist seems to have in view here.

(*h*) These officers were of the tribe of Levi, Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 3. Their number was never less than seven; their work was to take the care and charge of the keys of the court; and one might not open the door unless all seven were present, Mishna, Tract. Shekalim, c. 5, s. 2. Maimon. Hilch. Cele Hamikdash, c. 4, s. 17. Jarchi in 2 Reg. xii. 9; though Kimchi, in 2 Reg. xii. 9 and xxii. 4, thinks that they were treasurers, who had the charge of the public money. The etymology given of this word is very different. Baal Aruch says this officer was so called because he was מַרְאֵי עַל הַבַּיִת *mar al haccol*, "lord over all:" the same is given in Vajikra Rabba, Parash. 5, where Shebna the treasurer, Isai. xxii. 15, is said to be one of those officers. Elias Levita, in his Methurgeman, says he was so called because כֹּל אָמַר *omar col*, "he said" or "prescribed" all things.

(*i*) This is from the Greek word Ἀρχων, and signifies princes, rulers, or governors.

king of Israel, by the word of whose mouth the world is restored, who in the doctrine of the law employs himself; in which the people of the house of Israel placing their confidence, overcome in war, as if they held in their hands all kinds of warlike instruments of mighty men.

Verse 5. *Thy two breasts, &c.*] Thy two Redeemers which shall redeem thee; (*k*) Messiah, the son of David, and Messiah, the son of Ephraim, are like to Moses and Aaron, the sons of Jochebed, who may be compared to young roes that are twins; who by their righteousness fed the people of the house of Israel forty years in the wilderness with manna, and with fatted fowls, and water of (*l*) the well of Miriam.

Verse 6. *Until the day break, &c.*] And all the time that the house of Israel held fast in their hands the religion of their righteous fathers, they drove away those noxious spirits that walk in the night-time, or in the morning, or at noon-day; because that the shechinah of the glory of the Lord dwelt in the house of the sanctuary, which was built on Mount Moriah; for all the noxious and destroying spirits fled at the smell of the sweet incense.

Verse 7. *Thou art all fair, &c.*] And when thy people, the house of Israel, do the will of the Lord of the world, he praises them in the highest heavens; and thus he saith, Thou art all fair, O congregation of Israel, and there is no (*m*) spot in thee.

Verse 8. *Come with me from Lebanon, &c.*] The Lord said by his word, Dwell with me, O congregation of Israel, who art like to a modest (*n*) damsel, and go up with me to the house of the sanctuary, where the heads of the people, which dwell by the river of (*o*) Amana, and the inhabitants that reside on the top of Mount (*p*) Talga, and the people which are in Hermon, shall bring gifts unto thee, and they that inhabit the strong fortified cities, which are as powerful as lions, shall pay tribute to thee; *yea*, an

offering shall be brought from the cities of the mountains, which are mightier than the leopards.

Verse 9. *Thou hast ravished my heart, &c.*] Fixed upon the (*q*) table of my heart is thy love, O my sister, the congregation of Israel, who art like to a modest damsel; fixed upon the table of my heart is the love of the least of thy children, who is righteous as one of the great men of the sanhedrin, as one of the kings (*r*) of the house of Judah, on whose neck the crown of the kingdom is put.

Verse 10. *How fair is thy love, &c.*] How fair is thy love to me, my sister, the congregation of Israel, who art like to a modest damsel! How excellent is thy love to me, more than the (*s*) seventy nations; and the good (*t*) report of thy righteous ones is more excellent than all spices!

Verse 11. *Thy lips, O my spouse, &c.*] And when the priests pray in the holy court, their lips drop as the honeycomb; and so does thy tongue, O thou modest damsel, when thou deliverest songs and hymns, sweet as milk and honey; and the smell of the (*u*) priests' garments is as the smell of Lebanon.

Verse 12. *A garden inclosed, &c.*] Thy women, which are married to modest men, are as a modest damsel, and as the garden of Eden, into which no man hath power to enter except the righteous, whose souls are by angels (*x*) carried into it; and thy virgins are hid and concealed (*y*) in private chambers, and are sealed up because they are as a fountain of living water, which comes forth from under the tree, and is parted to the four heads (*z*) of the rivets: but if it is sealed with the great and holy name, it goes forth and flows, and overflows all the world.

Verse 13. *Thy plants are an orchard, &c.*] And thy young men are full of thy commands, as pomegranates, and love their wives, and beget children as righteous as themselves; and their smell, therefore,

(*k*) The Jews, observing different characters given of the Messiah, which they think irreconcilable in one person, have feigned two Messiahs; the one they call Messiah, the son of David, who shall be a potent, prosperous and victorious prince; the other, Messiah, the son of Ephraim, or Joseph, as he is sometimes called, who shall be exposed to many hardships and sufferings, and at last die in the war of Gog and Magog. Of those two Messiahs, see Talmud, Succah, fol. 52, col. 1. Zohar in Numb. fol. 68, 3; 82, 2; 99, 4; and 101, 2. Jarchi in Isai. xxiv. 18. Kimchi, Jarchi, and Aben Ezra in Zech. xii. 10.

(*l*) It is an opinion which obtains among the Jews, that on account of the merits of Moses the manna was given; and on the account of those of Aaron, the clouds of glory; and for the sake of Miriam, the well of water, which they say they enjoyed all the forty years they were in the wilderness. Shirhashirim Rabba in loc. Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 1 and 13. Targum Jon. and Jarchi in Numb. xx. 2.

(*m*) Or plague.

(*n*) Here the Greek word *νυμφη* is used, as it is also in verses 9, 10, 11, 12, and chap. v. 1.

(*o*) This was one of the rivers of Damascus; see 2 Kings v. 12, where it is read Abana: but both the Masora and Targum read it Amana; and Kimchi thinks it was called by both names.

(*p*) Or "the mountain of snow." Elias Levita, in his Methurgeman, says that Mount Shenir was called so: perhaps Mount Salmon may be meant, which had snow continually upon it; see Ps. lxxviii. 14, and R. Aben Ezra, *ibid*.

(*q*) Compare with this 2 Cor. iii. 3.

(*r*) Many of the kings of the house of Judah were holy and good men; so Aben Ezra in loc.

(*s*) See note in chap. i. 2.

(*t*) So Jarchi in loc.

(*u*) Vide Jarchi in loc.

(*x*) It was an ancient opinion of the Jews, that the ministry of angels was used in carrying the souls of saints to heaven. Thus in Debarim Rabba, Parash. 11, several angels are ordered by God to bring the soul of Moses to him. Agreeably to this notion, it is said in Luke xvi. 22 that "the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom."

(*y*) It was very usual with the eastern people to keep their virgins, especially those of note and esteem, very recluse, and not admit them to public or common conversation; but oblige them to abide much within doots. Hence they are called in the Hebrew language עַלְמוֹת, from the word עָלַם, which signifies to hide or cover, because they were not exposed to public view: wherefore the author of the second book of Maccabees calls them *καταλειστρούς παρθένους*, "virgins that were shut up;" i. e., in the houses of their parents, in private chambers, as the Targumist here says. See 2 Macc. iii. 19.

(*z*) Regard seems to be had to the river which went out of Eden, mentioned in Gen. ii. 10, and was parted into four heads or rivers, the names of which were Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel, and Euphrates. The Cabalists suppose a great many mysteries to be contained therein; see Zohar in Gen. fol. 85, 2; in Erel.

is as the excellent spices of the garden of Eden, even camphires with nards.

Verse 14. *Spikenard with saffron, &c.*] Nard, and saffron, and calamus, and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense, pure myrrh, and lign aloes, with all kinds of spices.

Verse 15. *A fountain of gardens, &c.*] And the waters of Siloah (a) go softly, with the rest of the waters which flow from Lebanon, to water the land of Israel, for the sake of those who study in the words of the law, which are like to a well of living water; and on the account of the righteousness (b)

fol. 34, 3; 37, 2, and in Lev. fol. 24, 3, where the name of this river is said to be Jobel, according to Jer. xvii. 8; and so it is in *Vajikra Rabba*, Parash. 22, and in *Bemidbar Rabba*, Parash. 21.

(a) See *Isai* viii. 6, and *Aben Ezra* upon it, who expounds the text in *Isaiah* by this in *Canticles*. *Jarchi*, in *Isai* viii. 6, says the name of this fountain was *Gibon*. In the New Testament it is called *Siloam*, *John* ix. 7, 11: it was a fountain near *Jerusalem*, *Neh.* iii. 15.

(b) The paraphrast refers here to a ceremony used at the feast of tabernacles, when the people fetched water from *Siloam*, and brought it to the priest, who poured it upon the altar with the wine of the daily sacrifice; this they say *Moses* received from *God* at *Mount Sinai*, though it is not written. This ceremony of drawing and pouring water at those times was attended with all the demonstrations of joy imaginable, as shouting, leaping, dancing, singing, blowing of trumpets, throwing of citrons, illumination of houses, &c.; insomuch that they say, that those who never saw the rejoicing of drawing water never saw rejoicing in their lives, *Mishna*, Tract. *Succa*, c. 4, s. 9, 10, and c. 5, s. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; *Jarchi* and *Ex Chayim*, *ibid.*; *Maimon.*, Tract. *Tamidin*, c. 10, s. 6, 7, 8; *Cele Hamikdash*, c. 7, s. 8, and c. 8, s. 6. They fancied the Holy Ghost was much delighted with this vain joy of theirs; nay, that in drawing water they drew him, i. e. procured his descent upon them, and abode with them as a spirit of prophecy, which they say *Jonah*

of pouring of water, which they pour upon the altar in the house of the sanctuary, that is built in *Jerusalem*, which is called (c) *Lebanon*.

Verse 16. *Awake, O north wind, &c.*] And at the north side (d) was a table, and upon it (e) twelve loaves of shew-bread, and at the south side (f) was the lamp to give light; and upon the altar the priests offered up the offerings, and caused the sweet incense to ascend from thence. The congregation of *Israel* said, Let the merciful *God* come into the house of the sanctuary, and graciously accept the offerings of his people.

obtained at this time and in this way; and, therefore, whilst they were performing this ceremony, frequently used those words in *Isai* xii. 3: "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation;" which they understand of the Holy Ghost, *Bereshith Rabba*, Parash. 70. *Midrash Ruth*, fol. 32, 2. *Jarchi* and *Ex Chayim* in *Mishna*, *ubi supra*. To this ceremony *Christ* is thought to allude, "when in the last day, the great day of this feast of tabernacles, he stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink: he that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: but this spake he of the Spirit," &c. *John* vii. 37, 38, 39. *Vide Tremell.*, *ibid.*

(c) So the temple is called in *Zech.* xi. 1: "Open thy doors, O *Lebanon*, that the fire may devour thy cedars," according to the mind of several Jewish interpreters, who, out of *Talmud Yoma*, fol. 39, 2, relate, that forty years before the destruction of the temple the doors thereof opened of themselves; at which *Jochanan Ben Zaccai* being affrighted, said, O temple, temple, now know I that thy destruction is at hand; for so prophesied *Zechariah*, the son of *Iddo*, of thee, Open thy doors, &c. *Vide R. Abendam*. Not. in *Miclol Yophi*; *Jarchi* and *Kimchi* in *Zech.* xi. 1.

(d) That is, of the sanctuary; see *Exod.* xl. 22, 23.

(e) *Lev.* xxiv. 5, 6.

(f) *Exod.* xl. 24, 25.

## CHAPTER V.

Verse 1. *I am come into my garden, &c.*] The holy blessed *God* said unto his people, the house of *Israel*, I am come into the house of my sanctuary, which thou hast built for me, O my sister, the congregation of *Israel*, who art like to a modest damsel: I have caused my *shechinah* to dwell with thee (a), I have received thy sweet incense, which thou hast made on my account; I have sent fire from heaven, and it hath devoured the burnt-offerings, and the holy drink-offerings; the libation of the red and white wine is graciously received by me, which the priests pour out upon mine altar. Now, therefore, come, ye priests that love my commandments, and eat what is left of the offerings, and delight yourselves with those good things which are prepared for you.

Verse 2. *I sleep, but my heart waketh, &c.*] After all these words the people of the house of *Israel* sinned, and he delivered them into the hand of *Nebuchadnezzar*, king of *Babylon*, who carried them into

captivity; and they were in captivity like a man asleep, that cannot be awaked out of his sleep; wherefore the Holy Ghost warned them by the prophets, and awaked them out of the sleep of their hearts. *Then* answered the Lord of the whole world, and thus he said, Return by repentance, open thy mouth, rejoice and show forth my praise, my sister, my love, O congregation of *Israel*, who art like to a dove for the perfection of thy works; for the hair of my head is filled with thy tears, as a man the hair of whose head is wet with the dew of heaven; and my *Nazaritical* locks are filled with the drops of thine eyes, as a man whose *Nazaritical* locks are full of the drops of rain which descend in the night.

Verse 3. *I have put off my coat, &c.*] The congregation of *Israel* answered in the presence of the prophets, Behold, now have I removed from me the (b) yoke of his commandments, and have served the idols of the nations; wherefore, how can I have the face to

(a) These words are similarly paraphrased in *Shirhashirim Rabba*, and by *Jarchi* in loc. and in *Bemidbar Rabba*, Parash. 13.

(b) See note on chap. i. 10.



return to him again? The Lord of the world answered them by the prophets, *saying*, And behold, now I also have removed my shechinah from thee; and how shall I return again, seeing thou hast done evil works? for I have washed my foot from thine uncleanness, and how shall I defile them in the midst of thee with thy evil works?

Verse 4. *My beloved put in his hand, &c.*] When it appeared manifest before the Lord that the people of the house of Israel would not repent and turn unto him, he stretched forth (c) his mighty arm against the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, on the other side of Jordan; and he delivered them into the hand of Senacharib, the king of Assyria, who carried them into captivity (d), to Lachlach, and Chabor, and to the rivers of Gozan, and cities of Media; and he took out of their hands the molten calf which Jeroboam, the wicked, set in Lesham-Dan, which was called (e) Pamiās, in the days of Pekah, the son of Remaliah; and when I heard it, my bowels were moved towards them.

Verse 5. *I rose up to open to my beloved, &c.*] And when the mighty stroke of the Lord lay heavy upon me, I repented of my works; and the priests offered up offerings, and burnt the sweet incense: but it was not graciously received, for the Lord of the world shut the (f) doors of repentance to my face.

Verse 6. *I opened to my beloved, &c.*] The congregation of Israel said, I was willing to seek instruction from the Lord: but he removed his shechinah from me, and my soul desired the voice of his words. I sought the shechinah of his glory: but I found it not. I prayed before him: but he covered the heavens with (g) clouds, and did not receive my prayer.

Verse 7. *The watchmen that went about the city, &c.*] The (h) Chaldeans, which kept the ways, and besieged the city of Jerusalem all around, joined themselves to me. Some they slew with the sword, and others they

carried into captivity. They took the crown royal off the neck of Zedekiah king of Judah, and carried him away to Ribla (i), where the people of Babylon, who besieged the city and kept the walls, put out his eyes.

Verse 8. *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, &c.*] The congregation of Israel said, I charge you, O ye prophets by the decree of the word of the Lord, that, if your love manifests himself unto you, you tell him that I, who love him, am sick of love.

Verse 9. *What is thy beloved, &c.*] The prophets answered and said, unto the house of Israel (k), Who is this God thou art seeking to worship, O congregation of Israel, who art fairer than all the nations? Who is this thou art desirous to fear, that thou dost so charge us?

Verse 10. *My beloved is white and ruddy, &c.*] Wherefore the congregation of Israel began to speak in the praise of the Lord of the world, and thus she said, That God I desire to serve, who in the day is covered with a garment (l) white as snow (m), and the brightness of the glory of the Lord, whose face shines as fire, because of the greatness of wisdom and knowledge, for he is making new things every day, and will manifest them to his people in the (n) great day, and his banner is over ten thousand times ten thousand angels, who minister before him.

Verse 11. *His head is as the most fine gold, &c.*] His law (o), which is more desirable than the best gold, and the interpretation of the words thereof, in which are senses, (p) heaps upon heaps, and the commandments to them that keep them are white as snow; but to those that do not keep them are black as the wings of a raven.

Verse 12. *His eyes are as the eyes of doves, &c.*] His eyes look continually (q) upon Jerusalem, to do good unto it, and to bless it, from the beginning of the year unto the end of the year, as doves which stand and look upon the water-courses, because of the right-

(c) Chald. The stroke of his might.

(d) See 2 Kings xvii. 6. and xviii. 11. 1 Chron. v. 26.

(e) Leshem being taken by the tribe of Dan, Josh. xix. 47, they called it Dan, after the name of their father; and it seems it was also called Pamiās. Both Baal Amch, and David de Pomis, say that פמיאס Pamiās was a cave at the head of the river Jordan: and it is asserted by several of the rabbins, that Jordan took its rise from hence, who therefore say that the river was so called, שׂוּרֵר מִדְּבָר sheiyored middan, "because it descended from Dan," i. e., from Leshem, Dan, or Pamiās, Talmud Baba Bathra, fol. 74. col. 2. and Bechoroth. fol. 55. col. i. Jarchi in Deut. xxxiii. 22. Kimchi in Jos. xix. 47. This in Bereshith Rabba, Parash. 63, is called פמיאס Pamiās, as it is also by Josephus, and no doubt is the same which Pliny, in Nat. Hist. l. 5, c. 18, calls Paneas, who also makes mention in c. 15 of a fountain of the same name, from whence he says the river Jordan sprung. The same is observed by Solinus, in his Polyhistor. c. 48, who calls it by the name of Peneas. Eusebius, in his Eccl. Hist. l. 7, c. 17, says that the Phœnicians called Cæsarea Philippi Paneas, and speaks of a mountain called Panceus, from whence the river Jordan has its original.

(f) In Shirhashirim Rabba, in chap. 5, 2, mention is made of פֶּתַח שֶׁל תְּשׁוּבָה "the gate of repentance," which the Lord desired the Israelites to open to him. Agreeably to this phrase, it is observed, in Acts xiv. 27, that "God had opened unto the Gentiles θύραν πίστεως; the door of faith."

(g) See Lam. iii. 44.

(h) Jarchi by these watchmen understands Nebuchadnezzar and his army. R. Aben Ezra, the kings of Greece. Shirhashirim Rabba, the tribe of Levi.

(i) See Jer. iii. 7, 9, 11.

(k) Vide Jarchi, and Shirhashirim Rabba in loc.

(l) So the Ancient of days is represented in Dan. vii. 9.

(m) In some exemplars these following words are inserted:—"And studies in the twenty-four books of the law, and in the words of prophecy, and in the Holy Writings, and in the night time employs himself in the six parts of the Mishna," which Buxtorf has omitted in his Bible, though he makes mention of them in his Recensio operis Talmud. p. 232; and indeed they greatly lessen the glory of the Divine Being, though they are designed to extol and magnify the Mishna or oral law.

(n) That is, the day of judgment, which in Jude, ver. 6. is called κρίσις μεγάλης ἡμερας, "the judgment of the great day," when not only the hidden things of darkness and the counsels of the hearts will be made manifest, 1 Cor. iv. 5, but the judgments of God also, Rev. xv. 4.

(o) The same way the words are explained in Shirhashirim Rabba, and by Jarchi in loc., and in Vajikra Rabba, Parash. 19. By this head R. Aben Ezra understands the throne of glory.

(p) That is, a variety or great multitude of them; for the Jews suppose the law may be interpreted various ways, and that there is not the least thing in it but what contains a great many mysteries. See notes on chap. i. 11.

(q) Vide Shirhashirim Rabba in loc.

eousness of those who sit in the sanhedrin, who study in the law, and give light to a cause, that it may be smooth as milk; and they sit in the house of the school, and (ר) wait in judgment until they have finished either for absolution or condemnation.

Verse 13. *His cheeks are as a bed of spices, &c.*] The (s) two tables of stone which he gave unto his people are written in (t) ten lines, like to the rows of a spice garden, producing acute meanings and senses, even as a garden produces spices; and the lips of his wise men which study in the law, drop senses on every side, and the speech of their mouths is as the choice myrrh.

Verse 14. *His hands are as gold rings, &c.*] The twelve tribes of Jacob his servants are included in the plate of the holy crown of gold, and are engraven upon the twelve (u) precious stones with the three fathers of the world, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Reuben is engraven on achmad, Simeon is engraven upon akik, Levi is engraven on barkan and affran, Judah is engraven on cachale, Issachar is engraven on ismorad, Zebulun is engraven on gihar, Dan is engraven on birla, Naphtali is engraven on esphor, Gad is engraven on

(r) That is, they proceed in trying causes slowly and gradually, and not rashly and precipitately, being willing to search thoroughly into them, that they may do justice, and pass a right sentence: this is one of the three things the men of the great congregation advised to in Pirke Aboth, c. 1, s. 1, where they say *הוה כרתיני בדין* *havu mittonin bedin*, "Be slow in judgment, settle many disciples, and make a hedge for the law."

(s) So Jarchi by "his cheeks" understands the words of Mount Sinai.

(t) Every commandment was written in a distinct line by itself, five on one table and five on the other.

(u) In the same order are the names of the twelve tribes as engraven on so many precious stones, mentioned in Targum Jerus. in Exod. xxviii. 17, 18, 19, 20; in Shemoth Rabba, Parash. 38; and in Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 2. Though different names are given of the precious stones, the names of them in the Rabbath are the same with those in Exod. xxviii. In the Targum Jer. are Chaldee names, and in this paraphrase they are different from them. Reuben's stone was the sardius, Heb. odem, Onk. samkan, Jon. semuktha, Jerus. samkatha. It is so called by all those names from the redness of its colour; here it is called achmad, perhaps from *חמדה* *chamad*, because it is very desirable. Simeon's stone was the topaz, Heb. pitdah, Onk. yarkan, Jon. and Jerus. yarketha, because of its green colour; here it is called akik: but what gem is intended by it is not certain. Levi's stone was the carbuncle, Heb. barketh, Jon. and Jerus. barketha, and here barkan, and so in Onk.; and is so called because of its bright and glistering light. Judah's stone was the emerald, Heb. nophec, Onk. ismaragdin, Jon. ismorad: both seem to mean the smaragd. Jerus. cadcedana, or the chalcedony; here it is called cachale; it is thought to be the smaragd. See Elias Levitæ Methurgeman, Buxtorf and Schindler *in voce*. Issachar's stone was the sapphire,

tabcag, Asher is engraven on frozag, Joseph is engraven on meribag, Benjamin is engraven on apantor: these are like to the twelve celestial signs, shining as lamps, polished in their works like ivory, and bright as sapphires.

Verse 15. *His legs are as pillars of marble, &c.* And the righteous they are the pillars of the world, set upon sockets of the best gold; these are (x) the words of the law, in which they study, and reprove the people of the house of Israel, that they may do his will who is filled with compassion to them, as an old man; and makes the transgressions of the house of Israel as white as snow, and is ready to make victory and war among the nations who have transgressed his word, as a man who is strong and robust as the cedars.

Verse 16. *His mouth is most sweet, &c.*] The words of his mouth are sweet as honey, and all his commandments are more desirable to his wise men than gold and silver; this is the praise of God, who is my beloved, and this is the power of the mighty of the Lord, who is dear to me, O ye prophets who prophesy in Jerusalem.

Heb. saphir, Onk. shabzez, Jon. sapphirinon, Jerus. samparyana: all intend the sapphire; here it is called ismorad, or the smaragd. Zebulun's stone was the diamond, Heb. yabalona, Onk. sabbalon; it bears those names from the hardness of it. Jon. cadcodin or chalcedony, Jerus. ein eglia, the calves eye; here it is called gihar, which some think to be the jasper. See Buxtorf *in voce*. Dan's stone was the figure, Heb. leshem, Onk. kankire, Jon. kankiranium, Jerus. zuzin; here it is called birla, which seems to be the beryl. Naphtali's stone was the agate, Heb. shebo, Onk. yarkia, Jon. arkin, Jerus. birzalin; and here it is called espor, which may be thought to be the sapphire. Gad's stone was the amethyst, Heb. achlamah, Onk. and Jon, ein eglia, the calves eye, Jerus. smaragdin, the smaragd; and here it is called yabeg: but what is meant by it I know not. Asher's stone was the beryl, Heb. tarshish, Onk. Jon. and Jerus. crum yamma; here it is called frozag. Elias in his Methurgeman says, that a topaz, in the German language, is called frozag. Joseph's stone was the onyx, Heb. shoham, Onk. burla, Jon. berlevath; both seem to intend the beryl, Jerus. bdolcha or bdellium; here it is called meribag, which some take to be the onyx. See Buxtorf *in voce*. Benjamin's stone was the jasper, Heb. jashpeh, Jerus. margalita, a pearl, Onk. pantere, Jon. apantuin; and here apantor, which Elias in his Methurgeman says is so called because it comes from Pontus; but rather because some sorts of jaspers are variegated and spotted like panthers. In the same order were the names of the twelve tribes engraven both upon the stones in the breastplate, and on the two onyx stones upon the shoulders of the ephod, according to Maimon., Tract. Cele Hamikdash. c. 9. s. 1, 7, 9.

(x) So these sockets of fine gold are explained in Shirhashirim Rabba, and by Jarchi in loc. in Vajikra Rabba, Parash. 25, and in Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 10.

## CHAPTER VI.

Verse 1. *Whither is thy beloved gone, &c.*] The prophets (a) replied, when they heard the praise of the Lord, from the mouth of the congregation of Israel,

and thus they said, For what offence is the shechinah of the Lord removed from thee, O thou who art fairer in thy works than all the nations? and which way did

(a) The persons here interrogating are said to be "the nations

of the world," in Shirhashirim Rabba. and by Jarchi in loc.

thy beloved turn himself when he removed from thy sanctuary? The congregation of Israel said, Because of the sins, transgressions, and rebellion which were found in me. The prophets said, But now return by repentance, and let us arise, both thou and we, and we will pray before him, and seek mercy with thee.

Verse 2. *My beloved is gone down into his garden, &c.*] And the Lord of the world graciously received their prayer, and came down to the sanhedrin of the wise men at Babylon, and gave refreshment unto his people, and brought them out of their captivity by the hands of Cyrus, and Ezra, and Nehemiah, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and the elders of Judah; and they built the house of the sanctuary, and appointed priests over the offerings, and Levites over the charge of the holy commandment; and he sent fire from heaven and graciously received the offerings, and the sweet incense; and as a man supplies his own beloved son with dainties, so did he deliciously feed them; and as a man that gathereth roses out of the plains, so did he gather them out of Babylon.

Verse 3. *I am my beloved's, &c.*] And when I served the Lord of the world, who is my beloved, my beloved caused the holy shechinah to dwell with me, and he fed me with dainties.

Verse 4. *Thou art beautiful, O my love, &c.*] The Lord said by his word, How fair art thou, my love, when thou art willing to perform my pleasure! beautiful is the sanctuary which thou hast built for me instead of the former sanctuary, which Solomon, king in Jerusalem, built for me, and thy dread was upon all the people in the day that thy four (b) standards marched in the wilderness.

Verse 5. *Turn away thine eyes from me, &c.*] Set thy doctors, the wise men of the great congregation, in a circle over against me, for these (c) made me their king in the captivity, and fixed the school, for the teaching of my law, and the rest of thy nobles, and the people of the earth justified me by the word of their mouth, as the sons of Jacob, who gathered stones and made an heap (d) upon the mount of Gilead.

Verse 6. *Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep, &c.*] And the priests and Levites, who eat thine offerings, and

the holy tithes, and the oblation of fruits, are pure from all oppression and rapine, for they are as clean as Jacob's flocks of sheep, when they came up from the brook (e) Jabok, for there is no oppression or rapine in them: but they are all of them like one another, and they always bear twins, neither is there any that miscarrieth or is barren among them.

Verse 7. *As a piece of pomegranate, &c.*] And the kingdom of the house of the Hasmonæans (f) are all of them full of the commandments, even as a pomegranate; besides Matthias the high-priest, and his sons, who are more righteous than them all, who very eagerly established the commandments and the words of the law.

Verse 8. *There are threescore queens, &c.*] At that time the Grecians arose and gathered sixty kings of the children of (g) Esau, clothed with coats of mail, riding upon horses, being horsemen, and eighty dukes of the children of Ishmael, riding upon elephants, besides the rest of the nations and languages, of which there's no number; and they appointed king Alexander to be the general over them, and they came to make war against Jerusalem.

Verse 9. *My dove, my undefiled is but one, &c.*] And at that time the congregation of Israel, which is like to an unblemished dove, was serving her Lord with a single heart, and was united to the law, and studied in the words of the law with a perfect heart, and her righteousness was as pure as in the day when she came out of Egypt. Lo, the sons of the Hasmonæans, and Matthias, and all the people of Israel, went forth and made war with them, and the Lord delivered them into their hands; which, when the inhabitants of the provinces saw, they blessed them, and the kingdoms of the earth, and the governors, and they praised them.

Verse 10. *Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, &c.*] The nations said, How splendid are the works of this people as the morning; fair are their young men as the moon, and their righteousness as clear as the sun; and their dread was upon all the inhabitants of the earth, as in the time their (h) four standards marched in the wilderness!

Verse 11. *I went down into the garden of nuts, &c.*] The Lord of the world said, concerning the second

(b) Which were those of Judah, Reuben, Ephraim, and Dan. See Numb. ii. and Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 2.

(c) So the word הריבני is paraphrased in Shirhashirim Rabba in loc.

(d) See note on chap. iv. 1.

(e) See note on chap. iv. 2.

(f) Schindler, in his Lex. Pentaglot. fol. 680, says that Matthias and his posterity were so called from השמון *Hasmon*, one of their ancestors, though I think there is no evidence of any of their ancestors being of that name. The Jewish writers pretty generally agree that they were so called from the word השמנין *Hashmannim*, which signifies princes or great persons, and is so used in Pa. lxxviii. 32; for they had both the high-priesthood and the princely government in their hands. So R. Aben Ezra, R. David Kimchi, and R. Sol. Ben Melec, in Pa. lxxviii. 32. David de Pomis, Lex. Heb. fol. 42, 1, and so likewise Scaliger de Emend. Temp. lib. 5, p. 436, 437; who observes that Matthias was never so called, nor was he an

high-priest, though the Targumist here calls him so, but a common priest of the course of Jehoiarib, and of the town of Moddin (see 1 Mac. ii. 1); and that this family began to be called by the name of the Hasmonæans, from the times of Simon Hyrcanus, who was both high-priest and prince of the Jewish nation, which kind of government continued in that family unto the times of Herod the Great, who destroyed both it and them; and this well agrees with what the paraphrast here says, who manifestly distinguishes the kingdom of the house of the Hasmonæans from Matthias and his sons, i. e., Judas Maccabæus and Jonathan. Of these Hasmonæans, Jarchi and Aben Ezra explain the 10th and 12th verses of this chapter.

(g) Vide Aben Ezra and Jarchi in loc, and Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 14, where those sixty queens and eighty concubines are interpreted of the sons of Noah, Abraham, Ham, Ishmael, and Esau.

(h) See note on ver. 4.

(i) temple, which was built (k) by the hands of Cyrus, I will cause my shechinah to dwell there, to behold the good works of my people, and see whether the wise men, who are like to a vine, multiply and increase, and whether their branches are full of good works, as the pomegranates.

Verse 12. Or ever I was aware, &c.] And when it appeared manifest before the Lord that they were righteous, and studied in the law, the Lord said by his word, I will not humble them any more, yea, I will not consume them: but will consult with myself to do them good, and to set them, even their excellent ones, in the chariots of (l) kings, because of the

(i) So Jarchi interprets this "garden of nuts;" though some of the rabbins in Shirhashirim Rabba think the world is meant; and by the vine, the schools and synagogues; and by the pomegranates, the students in the law.

(k) It is said to be built by Cyrus, because he gave the Jews liberty and encouragement to build it; see Ezra i. 2, 3, 4.

(l) In Shirhashirim Rabba in loc, these words are referred to

worthiness of the righteous of that generation, who are like in their works to Abraham their father.

Verse 13. Return, return, O Shulamite, &c.] Return unto me, O congregation of Israel, return unto Jerusalem; return unto the house of the doctrine of the law; return to receive the prophecy from the prophets, who have prophesied in the name of the word of the Lord; for what is your goodness, ye lying prophets, to make the people of Jerusalem go astray by your prophecies? for ye speak perverse things against the word of the Lord, to profane the camp of Israel and Judah.

the deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt, and their exaltation over the nations in the land of Canaan; to the raising of David to the throne of Israel, after he had been persecuted by Saul; and to the advancement of Mordecai to great dignity in Babylon, after his mourning in sackcloth and ashes; all which are represented as severally surprising to them.

## CHAPTER VII.

Verse 1. How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, &c.] Solomon said, by the spirit of prophecy from the Lord, How beautiful are the feet of the Israelites, when they come up to appear before the Lord (a) three times a year, in sandals of badger skin, and offer up their vows and free-will offerings; and their sons which come out of their loins are fair as the gems which were fixed upon the holy (b) crown that Bezaleel the artificer made for Aaron the priest.

Verse 2. Thy navel is like a round goblet, &c.] And the head of thy school, by whose righteousness all the world is nourished, even as the fetus receives its nourishment through its navel, in its mother's bowels; who shines in the law as the orb of the

moon, when he comes to pronounce pure or unclean, to justify or condemn; neither do the words of the law ever fail from his mouth, even as the waters of the great river, which proceeds from Eden, never (c) fail; and the seventy wise men are round about him, as a round (d) floor, whose treasures are full of the holy titles, and vows, and free-will offerings which Ezra the priest, and Zerubbabel, and Joshua, and Nehemiah, and Mordecai Bilshan, men of the great (e) congregation who are like to roses, decreed for them, because they had strength to study in the law day and night.

Verse 3. Thy two breasts are like two young roes, &c.] Thy (f) two Redeemers, which shall redeem

(a) That is, at the feast of the passover, at the feast of weeks or pentecost, and at the feast of tabernacles; see Exod. xxiii. 14, 15, 16, 17. 2 Chron. viii. 13. So the words are explained in Shirhashirim Rabba, and by Jarchi in loc.

(b) So the plate of gold was called, on which was inscribed "holiness to the Lord," which was fixed to the fore-front of the mitre on Aaron's forehead; see Exod. xxviii. 36 and xxxix. 30. This plate was two fingers broad, and reached from ear to ear; "holiness to the Lord" were written upon it in great letters, standing out, and that either in one line or in two lines; if in two lines, "holiness" was written below, and "to the Lord" above; Maimon. Hilch. Cele Hamikdash, c. 9, s. 1, 2; Ceseiph Mishna in *ibid.*, and Jarchi in Exod. xxviii. 36.

(c) The same is said of them in Zohar in Exod. fol. 34, 3, and xxxviii. 2: see Gen. ii. 10, and note on chap. iv. 12.

(d) The great sanhedrin consists of seventy persons, besides the nasi or prince, at whose right hand sat Ab Beth Din, or the father of the house of judgment: before them sat the two scribes, and the rest of the sanhedrin took their places according to their age or dignity, and sat in a semicircular form, or, as they express it, נרין עגולה *cachatsi goren agullah*, "as the half of a round corn floor," to which they compare this assembly. So that both the prince and father of the court could see them all, Mishna Tract. Sanhedrin, c. 4, s. 3. Jarchi and Ez Chayim, *ibid.* Maimon. Hilch. Sanhedrin, c. 1, s. 3, and Ceseiph

Mishna. *ibid.* Shemoth Rabba, Parash. 5. Vajikra Rabba, Parash. 11. R. Aben Ezra in loc. Midrash Echa Rabba Præfat fol. 38, 4. Midrash Kohelet in chap. i. 11.

(e) This was the sanhedrin or great council, collected by Ezra the scribe, after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, of which he was president. This assembly consisted of one hundred and twenty persons, of which these here mentioned were the chief. There are others reckoned with them by some, as the three prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, with Daniel, Hananiah, Mishaal, Azariah, Seraiah, Relialah, Mispal, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah: the last of this venerable body of men, they say, was Simeon the Just; who, about forty years after the building of the second temple, met Alexander the Great coming against Jerusalem, and appeased them. These men were called אנשי כנסת הגדולה *anshey keneseh haggedolah*, "the men of the great congregation," because they restored the law to its pristine glory, and purged the Jewish church from those corruptions which had crept into it during the captivity in Babylon. They are said to have received the oral law from the prophets, who had received it from the elders, and they from Joshua, and Joshua from Moses, and to have transmitted it down to posterity, Pirke Aboth, c. 1, s. 1, 2, and Jarchi, *ibid.* Maimon. Præfat in lib. Yad. Vide Buxtorffii Tiberiad. in c. 10.

(f) See note on chap. iv. 5.

thee, Messiah, the son of David, and Messiah, the son of Ephraim, are like to Moses and Aaron, the sons of Jochebed, who may be compared to two young roes that are twins.

Verse 4. *Thy neck is as a tower of ivory, &c.*] And (g) the father of the house of judgment, who determines thy causes, is mighty over thy people to bind them, and to bring him forth who is condemned in judgment, even to bring him forth, as Solomon the king, who made a tower of ivory, and subjected the people of the house of Israel, and returned them to the Lord of the world. Thy scribes are full of wisdom, as pools of water; and they know how to number the computations of the (h) intercalations; and they intercalate the years, and fix the beginning of the months and the beginning of the years at the gate of the house of the great sanhedrin, and the chief of the house of Judah is like to David the king, who built the fortress of Zion, which is called the tower of Lebanon, on which, whoever stands, may number (i) all the towers that are in Damascus.

Verse 5. *Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, &c.*] The king who is set over thee, a righteous head, is as (k) Elijah the prophet, who was jealous with a jealousy for the Lord of heaven, and slew the false prophets in the mount of Carmel, and reduced the people of the house of Israel to the fear of the Lord God; and the poor of the people, which go with a bowed-down head because they are poor, shall be clothed in purple, as Daniel was clothed in the city of Babylon, and Mordecai in Shushan, because of the righteousness of Abraham, who long before consulted the Lord of the world; and because of Isaac, whom his father bound in order to offer him up; and because of the holiness of Jacob, who pilled the rods in the gutters.

Verse 6. *How fair and how pleasant art thou, &c.*] King Solomon said, How beautiful art thou, O congregation of Israel, when thou bearest upon thee the

yoke of my kingdom, when I correct thee with chastisements for thy transgressions, and thou bearest them in love, and they appear in thy sight as delicious dainties.

Verse 7. *This thy stature is like to a palm tree, &c.*] And when thy priests (l) spread their hands in prayer, and bless their brethren, the house of Israel, their four hands are separated like the branches of the palm-tree, and their stature is as the date; and thy congregations stand face to face over against the priests, and their faces are bowed to the earth like a cluster of grapes.

Verse 8. *I said, I will go up to the palm tree, &c.*] The Lord said by his word, I will go and try Daniel, and see whether he is able to stand in one temptation as Abraham his father, who is like to a palm-tree branch, stood in (m) ten temptations; yea, I will also try Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, whether they are able to stand in their temptations; for the sake of whose righteousness I will redeem the people of the house of Israel, who are like to clusters of grapes; and the fame of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, shall be heard in all the earth; and their smell shall be excellent, like the smell of the apples of the garden of Eden.

Verse 9. *And the roof of thy mouth is like the best wine, &c.*] Daniel and his companions said, We will surely take upon us the decree of the word of the Lord, as Abraham our father, who may be compared to old wine, took it upon him; and we will walk in the way which is right before him, even as Elijah and Elisha the prophets walked, through whose righteousness the dead, which are like to a man asleep, were raised; and as Ezekiel, the son of Buzi, by the prophecy of whose mouth those who were asleep were awaked, even the dead which were in the valley of (n) Dura.

Verse 10. *I am my beloved's, &c.*] Jerusalem (o) said, All the time that I was walking in the way of

(g) See note on ver. 2.

(h) The Jewish year consisted of twelve lunar months, and sometimes they intercalated a thirteenth month, which they called Veadar, or the second Adar, which was always done by the direction and at the pleasure of the sanhedrin; as also the fixing of the beginning of the months, by the phasis or first appearance of the moon, Maimon. Hilch. Kiddush Hachodesh, c. 1, s. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; c. 4, s. 1, 9, 10, 11, 13, and c. 5, s. 1, 2, 3, 4. The men of the tribe of Issachar were famous for their knowledge in these things, Bereshith Rabba, Parash. 72, Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 13. Midrash Esth. Parash. 4, and Kimchi in 1 Chron. xii. 32.

(i) Jarchi relates out of the Midrash, that from the house of the forest of Lebanon, which Solomon built, a man might number all the houses which were in Damascus.

(k) So these words are paraphrased in Shirhashirim Rabba in loc, and in Vajikra Rabba, Parash. 31.

(l) When the priests blessed the people, they stretched out their hands and lifted them above their heads, with their fingers spread out; only the high-priest never lifted up his above the plate of gold upon the mitre; and though, at the time of blessing, the priests and people stood face to face, right over against each other, yet the priests never looked upon the people, but kept their eyes upon the ground, as in the time of prayer; nor might the people look in the faces of the priests, lest their minds should be disturbed thereby; which ceremony the Targumist

here refers to, Maimon. Hilch. Tephila, c. 14, s. 3, 7 9. Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 11. Targum Jon. in Numb. vi. 23.

(m) The same is said in Targum Jerus. in Gen. xii. 1. Bereshith Rabba, Parash. 56. Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 15. Pirke Aboth, c. 5, a. 3, and Jarchi, *ibid.*; where he, out of Pirke Elieser. has given us an account of them in this following order, viz., 1st. Nimrod sought to kill him, and he was hid in a field thirteen years. 2. He cast him into Ur of the Chaldees, or into a furnace of fire. 3. He banished him from the land of his nativity. 4. The Lord brought a famine in his days. 5. Sarah was taken into the house of Pharaoh. 6. The king came and carried Lot his brother's son away captive. 7. It was shown him between the pieces, that four kingdoms should rule over his children. 8. He was commanded to circumcise himself and his children. 9. To put away Ishmael and his mother. And 10. To slay his son Isaac.

(n) In this valley Nebuchadnezzar set up his golden image. Dan. iii. 1. And here the Jews say the children of Ephraim were slain, who went out of Egypt before the time; as also the Israelites, whom the Chaldeans slew when they carried them captive; and that this is the valley Ezekiel was brought into by the Spirit of the Lord, Ezek. xxxvii. 1; and these the dry bones he prophesied over, which lived and stood upon their feet an exceeding great army, Targum Jon. in Exod. xiii. 17. R. Saadiah Gaon in Dan. iii. 1. Jarchi in Ezek. xxxvii. 1.

(o) That is, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, or the *Shahar*

the Lord of the world, he caused his shechinah to dwell with me, and his desire was towards me: but when I turned aside out of his paths, he removed his shechinah from me, and carried me away among the nations; and they ruled over me as a man rules over his wife.

Verse 11. *Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field, &c.*] When the people of the house of Israel sinned, the Lord carried them into captivity, into the land of Seir, the fields of Edom. The congregation of Israel said, I beseech thee, O Lord of the whole world, receive my prayer which I have prayed before thee, in the cities of the captivity and in the provinces of the people.

Verse 12. *Let us get up early to the vineyards, &c.*] The children of Israel said one to another, Let us get up early in the morning, and let us go to the synagogue and to the school, and let us search in the book of the law, and see whether (p) the time of the

redemption of the people of the house of Israel, who are like to a vine, is come, that they may be redeemed out of their captivity; and let us inquire of the wise men, whether the righteousness of the righteous, who are full of the commandments as pomegranates, is made manifest before the Lord; whether the time is come to go up to Jerusalem, there to give praise to the God of heaven, and to offer up the burnt-offerings, and the holy drink-offerings.

Verse 13. *The mandrakes give a smell, &c.*] And when it is the pleasure of the Lord to redeem his people out of captivity, it shall be said to the king Messiah, Now is the end of the captivity completed, and the righteousness of the righteous is become sweet as the smell of balsam, and the wise men fix their habitations by the gates of the school; they study in the (q) words of the scribes, and in the words of the law. Arise now, take the kingdom which I have reserved for thee.

the church, as in chap. vi. 13. The church is frequently called so in the Old Testament, and likewise in the New; see Gal. iv. 26. Heb. xii. 22. Rev. xxi. 3, 10.

(p) The Jews vainly expect the time of redemption by the Messiah to be future, when it is past many hundred years ago, as they might easily learn from the book of the law and the prophets; particularly from Jacob's prophecy in Gen. xlix. 10, from Haggai's in chap. ii. 6, 7, 8, and from Daniel's weeks in chap. ix. 24, 25, 26. See this fully proved in a book called "The prophecies of the Old Testament respecting the Messiah considered," &c. Chap. iii.

(q) The words of the scribes are mentioned before the words of the law, and are, indeed, by the Jews, preferred unto them.

They say the words of the beloved, i. e., the wise men, are better than the wise of the law; so they paraphrase the words in Cant. i. 2: they assert that the law cannot be understood without the words of the scribes; that the oral law is the foundation of the written law, and not the written law the foundation of the oral law; and that he that transgresses the words of the wise men as much deserves death, as though he had been guilty of idolatry, murder, or adultery, or profanes the sabbath; nay, that if these say their right hand is their left, and their left hand is their right, they are obliged to hearken to them, Shirhashirim Rabba, in c. 1, 2. Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 14. Matthe Dan. Dialog. 3, fol. 31, 3. Jarchi in Deut. xvii. 11. Vide Buxtorf. Recensio Operis Talmud. p. 222, 223, &c.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Verse 1. *O that thou wert as my brother, &c.*] And when the King Messiah (a) shall be revealed unto the congregation of Israel, the children of Israel shall say unto him, Be thou with us for a brother, and let us go up to Jerusalem, and let us suck with thee the senses of the law, as a sucking child sucketh the breasts of its mother; for all the time that I was wandering without my own land, whenever I remembered the name of the great God, and laid down my life for the

sake of his Deity, even the nations of the earth did not despise me.

Verse 2. *I would lead thee, and bring thee, &c.*] I will lead thee, O king Messiah, and bring thee to the house of my sanctuary; and thou shalt teach me to fear the Lord, and to walk in his paths; and there will we keep (b) the feast of Leviathan, and drink old wine, which has been reserved in its grapes ever since the day the world was created, and of the

(a) The Jews very seldom speak of the birth or nativity of the Messiah as future, but only of a revelation or discovery of him to them, which they expect; for they are under self-convictions that he was born long since. Some of them say he was born on the day the house of the sanctuary was destroyed, but is hid because of their sins and transgressions; and that either in the sea, or the walks of the garden of Eden; and some say that he sits among the lepers at the gates of Rome, from whence they expect he will come unto them, R. Aben Ezra, in Cant. vii. 5. Targum in Mic. iv. 8. Talmud Sanhedrin, fol. 98, col. 2. Targum Jerus. in Exod. xii. 42.

(b) The Jews expect a very sumptuous feast to be made for the righteous in the days of the Messiah, which will consist of all sorts of flesh, fish, and fowl, of plenty of generous wine, and of a variety of the most delicious fruit; some particulars of which they have thought fit to give, and are as follow: 1. They say an exceeding large ox shall be served up, which they take to be the behemoth in Job xl., of which they say many things

monstrous and incredible; as that it lies upon a thousand hills, and feeds upon them all, and drinks up all the waters which are gathered together in a year's time, in the river Jordan, at one draught, Vajikra Rabba, Parash. 22. Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 21. Targum in Ps. l. 10. Jarchi in *ibid.*, and in Job xl. 20. 2. The next dish is the leviathan and his mate, which they say are "the great whales" mentioned in Gen. i. 21. The male, they say, God castrated, and the female he slew, and salted it against this feast, Talmud Baba Bathra, fol. 74. Targum Jon., Jarchi, and Baal Hatturim in Gen. i. 21. Vajikra Rabba, Parash. 13. Targum Sect. in Esth. iii. 7. Aben Ezra in Dan. xii. 2. 3. They speak of an exceeding large fowl, which they call Ziz, that shall be one part of this entertainment, of which they say many things incredible; as particularly, that when its feet are upon the earth its head reaches the heavens; and when it stretches out its wings, they cover the body of the sun, Baba Bathra, fol. 73, col. 2. Targum and Kimchi in Ps. l. 10. Vajikra Rabba, Parash. 22. 4. After all this shall be served up

pomegranates, the fruits which are prepared for the righteous in the garden of Eden.

Verse 3. *His left hand should be under my head, &c.*] The congregation of Israel said, I am chosen above all people, because I have bound the tephillin (c) upon my left hand, and upon my head, and have fixed the mezuzah (d) on the right side of my door, in the third part thereof, over against my chamber; so that the noxious spirits have no power to destroy me.

Verse 4. *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, &c.*] The king Messiah shall say, I adjure you, O my people, the house of Israel, wherefore do ye stir up yourselves against the people of the earth to go out of captivity? and why do ye rebel against the army of Gog and (e) Magog? tarry a little while until the people which come up to make war against Jerusalem are destroyed; and after that the Lord of the world will remember unto you the mercies of the

righteous, and then it will be his good pleasure to redeem you.

Verse 5. *Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, &c.*] Solomon the prophet said, When the dead shall live, the mount of *olives* shall be (f) cleaved asunder, and all the dead of Israel shall come out from under it; yea, even the righteous, which die in captivity, shall pass through subterraneous (g) caverns, and come out from under the mount of *olives*: but the wicked which die and are buried in the land of Israel shall be cast away, (h) as a man casts a stone with a sling; then all the inhabitants of the earth shall say, What is the righteousness of this people, which ascend out of the earth, even ten thousand times ten thousand, as in the day they came up out of the wilderness to the land of Israel, and are deliciously fed by the mercies of the Lord, as in the day when they were hid (i) under Mount Sinai to receive the law; and in that very hour Zion,

a variety of the most pleasant and delightful fruits, which are in the garden of Eden, which the Targumist here speaks of. And lastly, The wine which will then be used will be generous old wine, which, as it is said here and elsewhere, was kept in the grape from the creation of the world, Zohar in Gen. fol. 81, 4. Targum Jon. in Gen. xxvii. 25, and Targum in Eccles. ix. 7. Something of this gross notion seems to have obtained among the Jews in the times of Christ; see Luke xiv. 15. Vide Buxtorf Synagog. Jud. c. 50.

(c) These were four sections of the law, written on parchments, folded up in the skin of a clean beast, and tied to the head and hand. The four sections were these following, viz.: The first was Exod. xiii. 2—11. The second was Exod. xiii. 11—17. The third was Deut. vi. 4—10. The fourth was Deut. xi. 13—22. Those that were for the head were written and rolled up separately, and put in four distinct places in one skin, which was fastened with strings to the crown of the head towards the face, about the place where the hair ends, and where an infant's brain is tender: and they take care to place them in the middle, that so they may be between the eyes. Those that were for the hand were written in four columns, on one parchment, which, being rolled up, was fastened to the inside of the left arm, where it is fleshy, between the shoulder and the elbow, that so it might be over against the heart. These they call tephillin, from the root פתל פתל "to pray," because they use them in the time of prayer, and look upon them as useful to put them in mind of that duty; in Matt. xxiii. 5 they are called φυλακτήρια, *phylacteries*, because they think they keep men in the fear of God, are preservatives from sin, nay, from evil spirits, and against diseases of the body; they imagine there is a great deal of holiness in them, and value themselves much upon the use of them, Targum, Jon. Jarchi and Baal Haturim in Exod. xiii. 9, 10, and Deut. vi. 8. Maimon. Hilch. Tephilin, c. 1, s. 1; c. 2, s. 1; c. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; and c. 4. 1, 2, 25. Mattath. Dan. Dialog. 2, fol. 9, 4 and 10, 1. Vide Buxtorf. Synagog. Jud. c. 9, and Leo Modena's History of the Rites, &c., of the Present Jews, par. 1, c. 11.

(d) These were two passages in the law, the one was Deut. vi. 4—10, the other was Deut. xi. 13—22, which were written on a piece of parchment in one column, which, being rolled up and put into a pipe of reed or wood, was fastened to the right side of the door-post: this they imagine was useful to put them in mind of the Divine Being, to preserve them from sin, and from evil spirits, Targum Jon. in Deut. vi. 9. Maimon. Hilch. Tephilin, c. 5, s. 1, 6, and 6, 13. Vide Buxtorf. Synagog. Jud. c. 31.

(e) Magog was one of the sons of Japhet, Gen. x. 2, from whom very probably the people called by those two names

sprung, who seem to be the Scythians or Tartars; for Josephus, Antiq. Jud. l. 1, c. 7, calls the Scythians Magogæ; and Hierapolis in Coele Syria, Pliny (Nat. Hist. l. 5, c. 23) says, was called by the Syrians Magog; and Marcus Paulus Venetus, l. 1, c. 64, says that "the countries of Gog and Magog are in Tartary, which they call Jug (perhaps rather Gug), and Mungog." Vide Schindler, Lex. Pent. fol. 288. Mention is made of these in Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix., Rev. xx. 8, 9; with which last text may be compared what the Targumist here says. The Jewish rabbins, in their writings, very frequently speak of the war of Gog and Magog, which they expect in the days of the Messiah. See Mr. Mede's works, book 1, disc. 48, p. 374, and book 3, p. 713, 751.

(f) See Zech. xiv. 4.

(g) The Jews are of opinion, that those of their nation who die and are buried in other lands, at the resurrection of the dead shall not rise where they died and were buried; but shall be rolled through the caverns of the earth, into the land of Canaan, and there rise. This they call גילגול הגהות *gilgul hammethim*, "the rolling of the dead," or גילגול החילות *gilgul hammechiloth*, "the rolling through the caverns," which they represent as very painful and afflicting; and say that this was the reason that Jacob desired he might not be buried in Egypt, and is now one reason why the Jews are so desirous of returning to their own land: nay, at this time the more wealthy and religious among them go thither on this very account, especially when advanced in years, that they may die, and be buried there, and so escape this painful rolling under the earth, Bereshith Rabba, Parash. 96. Midrash Hannealam in Zohar in Gen. fol. 68, 4. Jarchi in Gen. xlvii. 29. Kimchi in Ezek. xxxvii. 12. Vide Buxtorf. Synagog. Jud. c. 3, and Lex. Talmud. fol. 439.

(h) Though the resurrection of the dead is one of the thirteen articles of the Jewish creed, yet many of them are of opinion that it is peculiar to the righteous, and that the wicked shall have no share therein; but that their bodies perish with their souls at death, and shall never rise more, R. David Kimchi, in Ps. i. 5, and in Isai. xxvi. 19. R. Saadiah Gaon, in Dan. xii. 2. Vide Pocock, Not. Misc. c. 6, p. 180, &c.

(i) The Targumist here refers to a fabulous notion of the Jews, that when the people of Israel came to Mount Sinai to receive the law, the Lord plucked up the mountain, and removed it into the air, and set the people under it, where he gave the law unto them; this they collect from Exod. xix. 17 and Deut. iv. 11. And this, they say, is the *apple-tree* under which the church is here said to be raised up, Targum Jon. Jarchi and Baal Haturim in Exod. xix. 17. Jarchi and Shirhashim Rabba in loc.

which is the (*k*) mother of Israel, shall bring forth her sons, and Jerusalem receive the children of the captivity.

Verse 6. *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, &c.*] The children of Israel said in that day unto their Lord, We pray thee, set us as the signature of a ring upon thine heart, as the signature of a ring upon thine arm, that we may not be carried captive any more; for strong as death is the love of thy Deity, and mighty as hell is the envy which the people bear unto us; and the hatred which they have reserved for us is like to the coals of the fire of hell, (*l*) which the Lord created on the second (*m*) day of the creation of the world, to (*n*) burn therein those who commit idolatry.

Verse 7. *Many waters cannot quench love, &c.*] The Lord of the world said unto his people, the house of Israel, If all people, (*o*) which are like to the waters of the sea, which are many, were gathered together, they could not extinguish my love unto thee; and if all the kings of the earth, which are like to the waters of a river that runs fiercely, they could not remove thee out of the world: but if a man will give all the substance of his house to obtain wisdom in the captivity, I will return unto him (*p*) double in the world to come; and all the spoils (*q*) which they shall take from the armies of Gog shall be his.

Verse 8. *We have a little sister, &c.*] At that time

the angels of heaven shall say to one another, We have one nation in the earth, and her righteousness is very little, and the kings and governors do not bring her forth to make war with the armies of Gog. What shall we do for our sister, in the day when the nations shall speak of going up against her to war?

Verse 9. *If she be a wall, &c.*] Michael (*r*) the prince of Israel shall say, If she is fixed as a wall among the people, and gives silver to procure the (*s*) unity of the name of the Lord of the world, I and you, together with their scribes, will surround her as borders of silver, that the people may have no power to rule over her, even as a worm hath no power to rule over silver; and though she (*t*) is poor in the commandments, we will seek mercies for her from the Lord; and the righteousness of the law shall be remembered to her, in which infants study, being written upon (*u*) the table of the heart, and is placed over against the nations as a cedar.

Verse 10. *I am a wall, &c.*] The congregation of Israel answered and said, I am strong in the words of the law as a wall, and my sons are mighty as a tower; and at that time the congregation of Israel found mercy in the eyes of her Lord, and all the inhabitants of the earth asked of her welfare.

Verse 11. *Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon, &c.*] One nation came up in the lot of the Lord of the world, (*x*) with whom is peace, which is like to

(*k*) So Jerusalem is said to be "the mother of us all," in Gal. iv. 26.

(*l*) גהנום *gehinnom*, "the valley of Hinnom," where the idolaters caused their children to pass through the fire to Molech, and burned them, 2 Chron. xxviii. 3 and xxxiii. 6. Jer. vii. 31 and xxxii. 35. R. David Kimchi, in Ps. xxvii. 13, says that Gehinnom was a very contemptible place near Jerusalem, where all manner of filthiness and dead carcasses were cast; and that a continual fire was kept there to burn them: hence the word is used very frequently by the Jewish rabbins, to signify the place where the wicked are punished after death; and so the word γέννα is used in the New Testament; see Matt. v. 22 and x. 28, and elsewhere.

(*m*) The same is asserted in Talmud Pesach. fol. 54, 1. Bereshith Rabba, Parash. 4, and 11 and 21. Shemoth Rabba, Parash. 15. Zohar in Deut. fol. 120, 1. Jarchi in Isai. xxx. 33; and yet at other times they reckon hell among the seven things which were created before the world was, Talmud Pesach. fol. 54, 1, and Nedirim. fol. 39, 2. Zohar in Lev. fol. 14, 4. Targum Jon. in Gen. iii. 24. See Matt. xxv. 41.

(*n*) The punishment of the wicked in hell is very frequently expressed by Jewish writers, by their burning in fire and brimstone, Berehith Rabba, Parash. 6 and 51. Zohar in Gen. fol. 71, 3. Raya Mehimna, *ibid.* in Lev. fol. 7, 2. Targum Jon. and Jerus. in Gen. iii. 24. Targum Jerus. in Gen. xv. 12. Targum in Eccles. viii. 10 and x. 11. Targum in Isai. xxxiii. 14. R. David Kimchi in Isai. xxx. 33. Thus idolaters, with others, are said to "have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone," Rev. xxi. 8.

(*o*) So the words are explained in Shemoth Rabba, Parash. 49. Bemidbar Rabba, Parash. 2. Zohar in Numb. fol. 105, 3. Raya Mehimna, *ibid.* in Gen. fol. 51, 3. Shirhashirim Rabba, Jarchi and Aben Ezra in loc.

(*p*) See Mark x. 30. Luke xviii. 30.

(*q*) See Ezek. xxxix. 9, 10.

(*r*) See Dan. x. 13, 21 and xii. 1. The Jews suppose that every nation or kingdom has an angel set over it, to be its pre-

sident, protector, and defender; and that Michael was he that presided over Israel.

(*s*) That is, the knowledge of the unity of God. The doctrine of the unity of the Divine Being is the second article of the Jewish creed, where they say that "God is one, and that there is no unity in any respect like his;" this they very much magnify and extol. Hence they often have those words in their mouths, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord," Deut. vi. 4; which, they think, is entirely inconsistent with a trinity of persons. Hence, says Maimonides (Hilch. Yesod Hattorah, c. 1, s. 4), "This God is one, not two, or more than two; but one. For there is no unity like his in any of the individuals which are found in the world; neither is he one in species, which comprehends more individuals; nor one in body, which is divided into parts and extremes; but he is so one, that there is no other unity like it in the world." All which is not so much opposed to the polytheism of the heathens, as to the plurality of persons in the trinity, and the incarnation of Christ. But though modern Jews have exploded the doctrine of the trinity, as inconsistent with that of the unity of the Divine Being, yet their more ancient writers do very manifestly speak of it as the great mystery of faith, Zohar, edit. Sultzbac. in Gen. fol. 1, col. 3; in Exod. fol. 18, 3, 4, fol. 58, 1, and fol. 66, 2, 3; in Lev. fol. 27, 2, and in Numb. fol. 67, 3. Jetzira, edit. Rittangel. fol. 1, 4, 6, 38, 64. Vide Josep. de Voisin. Disp. Theolog. de S. Trinitate, Allix's judgment of the Jewish church, against the Unitarians, c. 9, 10, 11.

(*t*) In Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Exod. fol. 38, 3, it is said that "no man is poor but he that is so in the law and in the commandments;" and that "the riches of a man lies in them;" and in Vajikra Rabba, Parash. 34, where those words in Prov. xxii. 2, "The rich and poor meet together," are mentioned, it is said, "The rich is he that is rich in the law, and the poor is he that is poor in the law;" see also Zohar in Numb. fol. 91, 3; with all which compare 1 Tim. vi. 18.

(*u*) See note on chap. iv. 9.

(*x*) In Shirhashirim Rabba in loc. it is explained in the



*The Targum, or Chaldee paraphrase, on the Song of Songs.*

a vineyard ; (y) he placed it in Jerusalem, and delivered it into the hands of the kings of the house of David, who kept it as a vine-dresser keeps his vineyard ; after that Solomon king of Israel died, it was left in the hands of his son Rehoboam ; Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, came and divided the kingdom with him, and took out of his hands ten tribes, according to the word of Ahijah of Shiloh, who was a great man.

Verse 12. *My vineyard, which is mine, &c.*] When Solomon, the king of Israel, heard the prophecy of Ahijah of Shiloh, he sought to (z) kill him ; but Ahijah fled from Solomon, and went into Egypt. And at that time king Solomon was informed by prophecy that he should rule over the ten tribes all his days : but after his death Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, should rule over them ; and the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, should reign over.

Verse 13. *Thou that dwellest in the gardens, &c.*] Solomon said at the end of his prophecy, The Lord of the world shall say to the congregation of Israel in the end of days, O thou congregation of Israel,

same way ; R. Aben Ezra, by Solomon in the next verse, understands the King Messiah ; though it is interpreted of Solomon, king of Israel, by the Targum and Jarchi in loc., by Maimon. Yesod Hattorah, c. 6, s. 12, and in Zohar in Exod. fol. 91, 3.

(y) So it is explained of the people of Israel, under the

which art like to a garden highly esteemed of among the nations, and sits in the school with the companions of the sanhedrin, and the rest of the people which hearken to the voice of the chief of the school, and learn from his mouth his words, cause me to hear the law, the voice of thy words, when thou sittest to justify and condemn, and I will consent to whatever thou dost.

Verse 14. *Make haste, my beloved, &c.*] In that very hour the elders of the congregation of Israel shall say, Flee, O my beloved, the Lord of the world, from this defiled earth, and cause thy shechinah to dwell in the highest heavens, and in the time of straits, when we pray before thee, be thou like a roe, which, when it sleeps, (a) has one eye shut and the other eye open ; or as a young hart, which, when it flees, looks behind it : so do thou look upon us, and consider our sorrow and our affliction, from the highest heavens, until the time comes that thou wilt take pleasure in us, and redeem us, and bring us to the mountain of Jerusalem, where the priests shall offer up before thee the sweet incense.

government of Solomon in Shirhashirim Rabba, and by Jarchi and Aben Ezra in loc.

(z) This is a very great mistake of the Targumist ; for it was Jeroboam, and not Ahijah, who fled into Egypt, whom Solomon sought to kill ; see 1 Kings xi. 40.

(a) The same is mentioned in Shirhashirim Rabba in loc.

THE  
G I T A G O V I N D A ;

OR THE  
SONGS OF JAYADEVA.

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A mystical poem, supposed to have a near resemblance to the BOOK OF CANTICLES, many passages of which it illustrates.

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PART I.

THE firmament is obscured by clouds, the woodlands are black with *Tamala* (1) trees. That youth who roves in the forest must be fearful in the gloom of night. Go, my daughter; bring the wanderer home to my rustic mansion. Such was the command of *NANDA* (2), the fortunate herdsman; and hence arose the loves of *RADHA* (3) and *MADHAVA* (4), who sported on the bank of *Yamuna* (5), or hastened eagerly to the secret bower. If thy soul be delighted with the remembrance of *HERI* (6), or sensible to the raptures of love, listen to the voice of *JAYADEVA*, whose notes are both sweet and brilliant. O thou who reclinest on the bosom of *CAMALA* (7), whose ears flame with gems, and whose locks are embellished with sylvan flowers; Thou from whom the day star derived his effulgence, who showedst the venom-breathing *CALIYA* (8), who beamedst like a sun on the tribe of *YADU* (9), that flourished like a lotos; Thou, who sittest on the plumage of *GARURA* (10), who, by subduing demons, gavest exquisite joy to the assembly of immortals; Thou, for whom the daughter of *JANACA* (11) was decked in gay apparel, by whom *DUSHANA* (12) was overthrown; Thou, whose eye sparkles like the water-lily, who calledst three worlds into existence; Thou, by whom the rocks of *Mandar* (13) were easily supported; who sippest nectar from the radiant lips of *PEDMA* (14), as the fluttering *Chacora* (15) drinks the moon-beams;

*Be victorious, O HERI, lord of conquest!*

*RADHA* sought him long in vain, and her thoughts were confounded by the fever of desire. She was roving in the vernal season, among the twining *Vasanti's* (16) covered with soft blossoms, when a damsel thus addressed her with youthful hilarity: "The gale that has wanted round the beautiful clove plant breathes from the hill of *MAYLAYA* (17); The circling arbours resound with the notes of the *Cocila* (18), and the murmurs of honey-making swarms; Now the hearts of damsels, whose lovers are travelling at a distance, are pierced with anguish; While the blossoms of *Bacul* (19) are conspicuous among the flowrets covered with bees. The *Tamala*, with leaves dark and fragrant, claims a tribute from the musk, which it vanquishes; And the clustering flowers of the *Cinsuca* (20) resembling the nails of *Cama* (21), with which he rends the hearts of the young. The full-blown *Cesara* (22) gleams like the sceptre of the world's monarch, love; And the pointed thyrsus of the *Cetaci* (23) resembles the darts by which lovers are wounded. See the bunches of *Patali* (24) flowers filled with bees, like the quiver of *Smara* (25) full of shafts; While the tender blossom of the *Caruna* (26) smiles to see the whole world laying shame aside. The far-scented *Madhavi* (27) beautifies the trees, round which it twines; And the fresh *Malica* (28) seduces with rich perfume even the hearts of hermits; While the *Amra* (29) tree with blooming tresses is embraced by the gay creeper *Atimucta* (30), And the blue streams of *Yamuna* wind round the groves of *Vrindavan* (31). In this charming season, which gives pain to separated lovers, Young *HERI* sports and dances with a company of damsels. A breeze, like the breath of love, from the fragrant flowers of the *Cetaci*, kindles every heart. Whilst it perfumes the woods with the prolific dust, which it shakes from the *Malica* (32) with half-opened buds; And the *Cocila* bursts into song, when he sees the blossoms glistening on the lovely *Rasala* (33)." The jealous *RADHA* gave no answer; And, soon after, her officious friend, perceiving the foe of *MURA* (34) in the forest, eager for the rapturous embraces of the herdsman's daughters, with whom he was dancing,

## THE GITAGOVINDA.

Thus again addressed his forgotten mistress:

“With a garland of wild flowers, descending even to the yellow mantle that girds his azure limbs, Distinguished by smiling cheeks, and by ear-rings that sparkle as he plays,

HERI exults in the assemblage of amorous damsels.

One of them presses him with her swelling breast, while she warbles with exquisite melody.

Another, affected by a glance from his eye, stands meditating on the lotos of his face.

A third, on pretence of whispering a secret in his ear, approaches his temples, and kisses them with ardour.

One seizes his mantle, and draws him towards her, pointing to the bower on the banks of *Yamuna*, where elegant *Vanjulas* (35) interweave their branches.

He applauds another who dances in the sportive circle, whilst her bracelets ring, as she beats time with her palms.

Now he caresses one, and kisses another, smiling on a third with complacency;

And now he chases her, whose beauty has most allured him.

Thus the wanton HERI frolics, in the season of sweets, among the maids of *Vraja* (36),

Who rush to his embraces, as if he were pleasure itself assuming a human form;

And one of them, under a pretext of hymning his divine perfections, whispers in his ear,

‘Thy lips, my beloved, are nectar.’”

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## PART II.

RADHA remains in the forest: but, resenting the promiscuous passion of HERI, and his neglect of her beauty, which he once thought superior,

She retires to a bower of twining plants, the summit of which resounds with the humming of swarms engaged in their sweet labours;

And there, fallen languid on the ground, she thus addresses her female companion:

“Though he take recreation in my absence, and smile on all around him,

Yet my soul remembers him, whose beguiling reed modulates an air sweetened by the nectar of his quivering lip,

While his ear sparkles with gems, and his eye darts amorous glances;

Him, whose looks are decked with the plumes of peacocks resplendent with many-coloured moons;

And whose mantle gleams like a dark blue cloud illumined with rainbows;

Him, whose graceful smile gives new lustre to his lips, brilliant and soft as a dewy leaf, sweet and ruddy as the blossom of *Bandhujiva* (37),

While they tremble with eagerness to kiss the daughters of the herdsmen;

Him, who disperses the gloom with beams from the jewels which decorate his bosom, his wrists, and his ankles;

On whose forehead shines a circlet of sandal wood, which makes even the moon contemptible, when it moves through irradiated clouds;

Him, whose ear-rings are formed of entire gems in the shape of the fish *Macara* (38) on the banners of love.

Even the yellow robed god, whose attendants are the chiefs of deities, of holy men, and of demons;

Him who reclines under a gay *Cadumba* (39) tree, who formerly delighted me while he gracefully waved in the dance,

And all his soul sparkled in his eye.

My weak mind thus enumerates his qualities; and, though offended, strives to banish offence.

What else can do it? It cannot part with its affection for CRISHNA, whose love is excited by other damsels, and who sports in the absence of RADHA.

Bring, O my sweet friend, that vanquisher of the demon *Cesi* (40) to sport with me, who am repairing to a secret bower,

Who look timidly on all sides, who meditate with amorous fancy on his divine transfiguration.

Bring him, whose discourse was once composed of the gentlest words, to converse with me, who am bashful on his first approach,

And express my thoughts with a smile sweet as honey.

Bring him, who formerly slept on my bosom, to recline with me on a green bed of leaves just gathered, while his lips shed dew, and my arms enfold him.

Bring him, who has attained the perfection of skill in love's art, whose hand used to press these firm and delicate spheres, to play with me,

Whose voice rivals that of the *Cocila*, and whose tresses are bound with waving blossoms.

Bring him, who formerly drew me by the locks to his embrace, to repose with me whose feet tinkle, as they move, with rings of gold and of gems,

Whose loosened zone sounds, as it falls; and whose limbs are slender and flexible as the creeping plant.

That god, whose cheeks are beautified by the nectar of his smiles,

Whose pipe drops in his ecstasy from his hand, I saw in the grove encircled by the damsels of *Vraja*, who gazed on him askance from the corners of their eyes.

I saw him in the grove with happier damsels, yet the sight of him delighted me.

Soft is the gale which breathes over yon clear pool, and expands the clustering blossoms of the voluble *Asoca* (41);

Soft, yet grievous to me in the absence of the foe of MADHU.

Delightful are the flowers of *Amra* trees on the mountain top, while the murmuring bees pursue their voluptuous toil;

Delightful, yet afflicting to me, O friend, in the absence of the youthful *Cesara*.”

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### PART III.

Mean time, the destroyer of *CANSA* (42), having brought to his remembrance the amiable *RADHA*, forsook the beautiful damsels of *Vraja*.

He sought her in all parts of the forest ; his whole wound from love's arrow bled again ; He repented of his levity ; and seated in a bower near the bank of *Yamuna*, the blue daughter of the sun, Thus poured forth his lamentation :

" She is departed ; she saw me, no doubt, surrounded by the wanton shepherdesses ; Yet, conscious of my fault, I durst not intercept her flight.

Woe is me ! she feels a sense of injured honour, and is departed in wrath.

How will she conduct herself ? How will she express her pain in so long a separation ?

What is wealth to me ? What are numerous attendants ?

What are the pleasures of the world ? What joy can I receive from a heavenly abode ?

I seem to behold her face with eyebrows contracting themselves through a just resentment ;

It resembles a fresh lotos, over which two black bees are fluttering.

I seem, so present is she to my imagination, even now to caress her with eagerness.

Why then do I seek her in this forest ? why do I lament her without cause ?

O slender damsel, I know that anger has torn thy soft bosom ;

But whither thou art retired, that I know not.

How can I invite thee to return ?

Thou art seen by me, indeed, in a vision ; thou seemest to move before me.

Ah ! why dost thou not rush, as before, to my embrace ?

Do but forgive me : never again will I commit a similar offence.

Grant me but a sight of thee, O lovely *Radhica* ; for my passion torments me.

I am not the terrible *Mahesa* (43) : a garland of water lilies with subtle filaments decks my shoulders ; not serpents, with twisted folds.

The blue petals of the lotos glitter on my neck ; not the azure gleam of poison.

Powdered sandal wood is sprinkled on my limbs ; not pale ashes.

O god of love, mistake me not for *Mahadeva* (44).

Wound me not again ; approach me not in anger ;

I love already but too passionately ; yet I have lost my beloved.

Hold not in thy hand that shaft barbed with an *Amra* flower.

Brace not thy bow, O conqueror of the world. Is it valour to slay one who faints ?

My heart is already pierced by arrows from *Radha's* eyes, black and keen as those of an antelope ;

Yet my eyes are not gratified with her presence.

Her eyes are full of shafts ; her eyebrows are bows ; and the tips of her ears are silken strings.

Thus armed by *Ananga* (45), the god of desire, she marches, herself a goddess, to insure his triumph over the vanquished universe.

I meditate on her delightful embrace, on the ravishing glances darted from her eye,

On the fragrant lotos of her mouth, on her nectar-dropping speech,

On her lips, ruddy as the berries of the *Bimba* (46) plant ;

Yet even my fixed meditation on such an assemblage of charms increases instead of alleviating the misery of separation."

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### PART IV.

The damsel, commissioned by *RADHA*, found the disconsolate god under an arbour of spreading *Vaniras* by the side of *Yamuna* ; where, presenting herself gracefully before him, she thus described the affliction of his beloved :

" She despises essence of sandal wood, and even by moonlight sits brooding over her gloomy sorrow ; She declares the gale of *Malaya* to be venom ; and the sandal trees, through which it has breathed, to have been the haunt of serpents.

Thus, O *MADHAVA*, is she afflicted in thy absence with the pain which love's dart has occasioned : her soul is fixed on thee.

Fresh arrows of desire are continually assailing her, and she forms a net of lotos leaves as armour for her heart, which thou along shouldst fortify.

She makes her own bed of the arrows darted by the flowery shafted god : but when she hoped for thy embrace, she had formed for thee a couch of soft blossoms.

Her face is like a water lily, veiled in the dew of tears ; and her eyes appear like moons eclipsed, which let fall their gathered nectar through pain caused by the tooth of the furious dragon.

She draws thy image with musk in the character of the deity with five shafts, having subdued the *Macar*, or horned shark, and holding an arrow tipped with an *Amra* flower ; thus she draws thy picture, and worships it.

At the close of every sentence, O *MADHAVA*, she exclaims, At thy feet am I fallen, and in thy absence even the moon, though it be a vase full of nectar, inflames my limbs.

Then by the power of imagination she figures thee standing before her ; thee, who art not easily attained ; She sighs, she smiles, she mourns, she weeps, she moves from side to side, she laments and rejoices by turns.

Her abode is a forest ; the circle of her female companions is a net ;

Her sighs are flames of fire kindled in a thicket ; herself (alas ! through thy absence) is become a timid roe ; and love is the tiger who springs on her like *YAMA*, the genius of death.

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So emaciated is her beautiful body, that even the light garland which waves over her bosom she thinks a load.

Such, O bright-haired god, is RADHA when thou art absent.

If powder of sandal wood finely levigated be moistened and applied to her bosom, she starts, and mistakes it for poison.

Her sighs form a breeze long extended, and burn her like the flame which reduced CANDARPA (47) to ashes. She throws around her eyes, like blue water lilies with broken stalks, dropping lucid streams.

Even her bed of tender leaves appears in her sight like a kindled fire.

The palm of her hand supports her aching temple, motionless as the crescent rising at eve.

HERI, HERI, thus in silence she meditates on thy name, as if her wish were gratified, and she were dying through thy absence.

She rends her locks ; she pants ; she laments inarticulately ;

She trembles ; she pines ; she muses ; she moves from place to place ; she closes her eyes ;

She falls ; she rises again ; she faints : in such a fever of love she may live, O celestial physician, if thou administer the remedy ;

But shouldst thou be unkind, her malady will be desperate.

Thus, O divine healer, by the nectar of thy love must RADHA be restored to health ; and if thou refuse it, thy heart must be harder than the thunder stone.

Long has her soul pined, and long has she been heated with sandal wood, moonlight, and water lilies, with which others are cooled ;

Yet she patiently and in secret meditates on thee, who alone canst relieve her.

Shouldst thou be inconstant, how can she, wasted as she is to a shadow, support life a single moment ?

How can she, who lately could not endure thy absence even an instant, forbear sighing now, when she looks with half-closed eyes on the *Rasala* with blooming branches, which remind her of the vernal season, when she first beheld thee with rapture ?”

“ Here have I chosen my abode : go quickly to RADHA ; soothe her with my message, and conduct her hither.”

So spoke the foe of MADHU (48) to the anxious damsel, who hastened back, and thus addressed her companion :

“ Whilst a sweet breeze from the hills of *Malaya* comes wafting on his plumes the young god of desire, While many a flower points his extended petals to pierce the bosoms of separated lovers, The deity crowned with sylvan blossoms laments, O friend, in thy absence.

Even the dewy rays of the moon burn him ; and as the shaft of love is descending, he mourns inarticulately with increasing distraction.

When the bees murmur softly, he covers his ears ;

Misery sits fixed in his heart, and every returning night adds anguish to anguish.

He quits his radiant palace for the wild forest, where he sinks on a bed of cold clay, and frequently mutters thy name.

In yon bower, to which the pilgrims of love are used to repair, he meditates on thy form, repeating in silence some enchanting word which once dropped from thy lips, and thirsting for the nectar which they alone can supply.

Delay not, O loveliest of women ; follow the lord of thy heart : behold, he seeks the appointed shade, bright with the ornaments of love, and confident of the promised bliss.

Having bound his locks with forest flowers, he hastens to yon arbour, where a soft gale breathes over the banks of *Yamuna* :

There, again pronouncing thy name, he modulates his divine reced.

Oh ! with what rapture doth he gaze on the golden dust, which the breeze shakes from expanded blossoms : The breeze which has kissed thy cheek !

With a mind languid as a drooping wing, feeble as a trembling leaf, he doubtfully expects thy approach, and timidly looks on the path which thou must tread.

Leave behind thee. O friend, the ring which tinkles on the delicate ancle, when thou sportest in the dance ; Hastily cast over thee thy azure mantle, and run to the gloomy bower.

The reward of thy speed, O thou who sparklest like lightning, will be to shine on the blue bosom of MURARI (49),

Which resembles a vernal cloud, decked with a string of pearls like a flock of white water-birds fluttering in the air.

Disappoint not, O thou lotos-eyed, the vanquisher of MADHU ; accomplish his desire.

But go quickly : it is night ; and the night also will quickly depart.

Again and again he sighs ; he looks around ; he re-enters the arbour ; he can scarce articulate thy sweet name ;

He again smooths his flowery couch ; he looks wild ; he becomes frantic ; thy beloved will perish through desire.

The bright-beamed god sinks in the west, and thy pain of separation may also be removed ;

The blackness of the night is increased, and the passionate imagination of GOVINDA (50) has acquired additional gloom.

My address to thee has equalled in length and in sweetness the song of the *Cocila* ; delay will make thee miserable, O my beautiful friend.

Seize the moment of delight in the place of assignation with the son of DEVAOI (51), who descended from heaven to remove the burdens of the universe.

He is a blue gem on the forehead of the three worlds, and longs to sip honey like the bee from the fragrant lotos of thy cheek.”

But the solicitous maid, perceiving that RADHA was unable, through debility, to move from her arbour of flowery creepers, returned to GOVINDA, who was himself disordered with love, and thus described her situation :

“ She mourns, O sovereign of the world, in her verdant bower ;

## THE GITAGOVINDA.

She looks eagerly on all sides in hope of thy approach ; then, gaining strength from the delightful idea of the proposed meeting, she advances a few steps, and falls languid on the ground.  
When she rises, she weaves bracelets of fresh leaves ; she dresses herself like her beloved, and looking at herself in sport, exclaims, " Behold the vanquisher of MADHU !"  
Then she repeats again and again the name of HĒRI, and catching at a dark blue cloud, strives to embrace it, saying, " It is my beloved who approaches."  
Thus, while thou art dilatory, she lies expecting thee : she mourns ; she weeps ; she puts on her gayest ornaments to receive her lord ;  
She compresses her deep sighs within her bosom ; and then, meditating on thee, O cruel, she is drowned in a sea of rapturous imaginations.  
If a leaf but quiver, she supposes thee arrived ; she spreads her couch ; she forms in her mind a hundred modes of delight ;  
Yet, if thou go not to her bower, she must die this night through excessive anguish.

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### PART V.

By this time the moon spread a net of beams over the groves of *Vrindavan*,  
And looked like a drop of liquid sandal on the face of the sky, which smiled like a beautiful damsel ;  
While its orb with many spots betrayed, as it were, a consciousness of guilt, in having often attended amorous maids to the loss of their family honour.  
The moon, with a black fawn couched on its disk, advanced in its nightly course.  
But MADHAVA had not advanced to the bower of RADHA, who thus bewailed his delay with notes of varied lamentations :  
" The appointed moment is come ; but HĒRI, alas ! comes not to the grove.  
Must the season of my blemished youth pass thus idly away ?  
Oh ! what refuge can I seek, deluded as I am by the guile of my female adviser ?  
The god with five arrows has wounded my heart ; and I am deserted by him, for whose sake I have sought at night the darkest recess of the forest.  
Since my best beloved friends have deceived me, it is my wish to die ;  
Since my senses are disordered, and my bosom is on fire,—why stay I longer in this world ?  
The coolness of this vernal night gives me pain, instead of refreshment.  
Some happier damsel enjoys my beloved ; whilst I, alas ! am looking at the gems of my bracelets, which are blackened by the flames of my passion.  
My neck, more delicate than the tenderest blossom, is hurt by the garland that encircles it ;  
Flowers are, indeed, the arrows of love, and he plays with them cruelly.  
I make this wood my dwelling : I regard not the roughness of the *Vetas trees* ;  
But the destroyer of MADHU holds me not in his remembrance !  
Why comes he not to the bower of the blooming *Vanjulas*, assigned for meeting ?  
Some ardent rival, no doubt, keeps him locked in her embrace.  
Or have his companions detained him with mirthful recreations ?  
Else why roams he not through the cool shades ?  
Perhaps, through weakness, the heartsick lover is unable to advance even a step !"  
So saying, she raised her eyes ; and, seeing her damsel return silent and mournful, unaccompanied by MADHAVA, she was alarmed even to frenzy ;  
And, as if she actually beheld him in the arms of a rival, she thus described the vision which overpowered her intellect :  
" Yes, in habiliments becoming the war of love, and with tresses waving like flowery banners,  
A damsel, more alluring than RADHA, enjoys the conqueror of MADHU.  
Her form is transfigured by the touch of her divine lover ; her garland quivers over her swelling bosom ;  
Her face like the moon is graced with clouds of dark hair, and trembles while she quaffs the nectareous dew of his lip ;  
Her bright ear-rings dance over her cheeks, which they irradiate ; and the small bells on her girdle tinkle as she moves.  
Bashful at first, she smiles at length on her embracer, and expresses her joy with inarticulate murmurs ;  
While she floats on the waves of desire, and closes her eyes dazzled with the blaze of approaching CAMA :  
And now this heroine in love's warfare falls, exhausted and vanquished by the resistless MURARI.  
But alas ! in my bosom prevails the flame of jealousy, and you moon, which dispels the sorrow of others, increases mine.  
See again, where the foe of MURA sports in yon grove on the bank of the *Yamuna*.  
See how he kisses the lip of my rival, and imprints on her forehead an ornament of pure musk, black as the young antelope on the lunar orb !  
Now, like the husband of RETI (52), he fixes white blossoms on her dark locks, where they gleam like flashes of lightning among the curled clouds.  
On her breasts, like two firmaments, he places a string of gems like a radiant constellation.  
He binds on her arms, graceful as the stalks of the water-lily, and adorned with hands glowing like the petals of its flower, a bracelet of sapphires, which resembles a cluster of bees.  
Ah ! see how he ties round her waist a rich girdle illumined with golden bells,  
Which seem to laugh, as they tinkle, at the inferior brightness of the leafy garlands, which lovers hang on their bowers to propitiate the god of desire.  
He places her soft foot, as he reclines by her side, on his ardent bosom, and stains it with the ruddy hue of *Yavaca*.

## THE GITAGOVINDA.

Say, my friend, why pass I my nights in this tangled forest without joy, and without hope,  
While the faithless brother of HALADHERA clasps my rival in his arms?  
Yet why, my companion, shouldst thou mourn, though my perfidious youth has disappointed me?  
What offence is it of thine, if he sport with a crowd of damsels happier than I?  
Mark, how my soul, attracted by his irresistible charms, bursts from its mortal frame, and rushes to mix  
with its beloved.  
She, whom the god enjoys, crowned with sylvan flowers,  
Sits carelessly on a bed of leaves with him, whose wanton eyes resemble blue water lilies agitated by the  
breeze.  
She feels no flame from the gales of *Malaya* with him, whose words are sweeter than the water of life.  
She derides the shafts of soul-born *CAMA* with him, whose lips are like a red lotos in full bloom.  
She is cooled by the moon's dewy beams, while she reclines with him, whose hands and feet glow like  
vernal flowers.  
No female companion deludes her, while she sports with him, whose vesture blazes like tried gold.  
She faints not through excess of passion, while she caresses that youth who surpasses in beauty the in-  
habitants of all worlds.  
O gale, scented with sandal, who breathest love from the regions of the south, be propitious but for a  
moment:  
When thou hast brought my beloved before my eyes, thou mayest freely waft away my soul.  
Love, with eyes like blue water lilies, again assails me, and triumphs;  
And, while the perfidy of my beloved rends my heart, my female friend is my foe;  
The cool breeze scorches me like a flame, and the nectar-dropping moon is my poison.  
Bring disease and death, O gale of *Malaya*! Seize my spirit, O god with five arrows!  
I ask not mercy from thee: no more will I dwell in the cottage of my father.  
Receive me in thy azure waves, O sister of *YAMA* (53), that the ardour of my heart may be allayed."

### PART VI.

Pierced by the arrows of love, she passed the night in the agonies of despair, and at early dawn thus re-  
buked her lover, whom she saw lying prostrate before her, and imploring her forgiveness:  
"Alas! alas! go, *MADHAVA*, depart, O *CESAVA* (54), speak not the language of guile;  
Follow her, O lotos-eyed god, follow her, who dispels thy care.  
Look at his eye half-opened, red with continual waking through the pleasurable night, yet smiling still with  
affection for my rival!  
Thy teeth, O cerulean youth, are azure as thy complexion from the kisses which thou hast imprinted on the  
beautiful eyes of thy darling, graced with dark blue powder;  
And thy limbs marked with punctures in love's warfare exhibit a letter of conquest written on polished  
sapphires with liquid gold.  
That broad bosom, stained by the bright lotos of her foot, displays a vesture of ruddy leaves over the tree of  
thy heart, which trembles within it.  
The pressure of her lip on thine, wounds me to the soul.  
Ah! how canst thou assert that we are one, since our sensations differ thus widely?  
Thy soul, O dark-limbed god, shows its blackness externally.  
How couldst thou deceive a girl who relied on thee; a girl who burned in the fever of love?  
Thou rovest in the woods, and females are thy prey:—what wonder?  
Even thy childish heart was malignant; and thou gavest death to the nurse, who would have given thee  
milk.  
Since thy tenderness for me, of which these forests used to talk, has now vanished;  
And since thy breast, reddened by the feet of my rival, glows as if thy ardent passion for her were bursting  
from it,  
The sight of thee, O deceiver, makes me (ah! must I say it?) blush at my own affection."  
Having thus inveighed against her beloved, she sat overwhelmed in grief, and silently meditated on his  
charms; when her damsel softly addressed her.  
He is gone: the light air has wafted him away. What pleasure now, my beloved, remains in thy mansion?  
Continue not, resentful woman, thy indignation against the beautiful *MADHAVA*.  
Why shouldst thou render vain those round smooth vases, ample and ripe as the sweet fruit of yon *Tala* tree?  
How often and how recently have I said, Forsake not the blooming *HEMI*?  
Why sittest thou so mournful? Why weapest thou with distraction, when the damsels are laughing  
around thee?  
Thou hast formed a couch of soft lotos leaves: let thy darling charm thy sight, while he reposes on it.  
Afflict not thy soul with extreme anguish: but attend to my words, which conceal no guile.  
Suffer *CESAVA* to approach; let him speak with exquisite sweetness, and dissipate all thy sorrows.  
If thou art harsh to him, who is amiable; if thou art proudly silent, when he deprecates thy wrath with  
lowly prostrations;  
If thou showest aversion to him, who loves thee passionately; if, when he bends before thee, thy face be  
turned contemptuously away;  
By the same rule of contrariety the dust of sandal-wood, which thou hast sprinkled, may become poison;  
The moon, with cool beams, a scorching sun; the fresh dew, a consuming flame; and the sports of love be  
changed into agony.  
*MADHAVA* was not absent long; he returned to his beloved; whose cheeks were healed by the sultry gale  
of her sighs.

## THE GITAGOVINDA.

Her anger was diminished, not wholly abated ; but she secretly rejoiced at his return, while the shades of night also were approaching.  
She looked abashed at her damsel, while he, with faltering accents, implored her forgiveness.  
"Speak but one mild word, and the rays of thy sparkling teeth will dispel the gloom of my fears.  
My trembling lips, like thirsty *Chacorus*, long to drink the moon-beams of thy cheek.  
O my darling, who art naturally so tender-hearted, abandon thy causeless indignation.  
At this moment the flame of desire consumes my heart. Oh ! grant me a draught of honey from the lotos of thy mouth.  
Or if thou beest inexorable, grant me death from the arrows of thy keen eyes.  
Make thy arms my chains ; and punish me according to thy pleasure.  
Thou art my life ; thou art my ornament ; thou art a pearl in the ocean of my mortal birth :  
Oh ! be favourable now, and my heart shall eternally be grateful.  
Thine eyes, which nature formed like blue water lilies, are become, through thy resentment, like petals of the crimson lotos.  
Oh ! tinge with their effulgence these my dark limbs, that they may glow like the shafts of love tipped with flowers.  
Place on my head that foot like a fresh leaf : and shade me from the sun of my passion, whose beams I am unable to bear.  
Spread a string of gems on those two soft globes ; let the golden bells of thy zone tinkle, and proclaim the mild edict of love.  
Say, O damsel, with delicate speech, shall I dye red with the juice of *Alactaca* those beautiful feet, which make the full blown land lotos blush with shame ?  
Abandon thy doubts of my heart, now indeed fluttering through fear of thy displeasure, but hereafter to be fixed wholly on thee ;  
A heart, which has no room in it for another : none else can enter it, but love, the bodyless god.  
Let him wing his arrows ; let him wound me mortally ; decline not, O cruel, the pleasure of seeing me expire.  
Thy face is bright as the moon, though its beams drop the venom of maddening desire ;  
Let thy nectareous lip be the charmer, who alone has power to lull the serpent, or supply an antidote for his poison.  
Thy silence afflicts me : oh ! speak with the voice of music, and let thy sweet accents allay my ardour.  
Abandon thy wrath : but abandon not a lover, who surpasses in beauty the sons of men, and who kneels before thee, O thou most beautiful among women.  
Thy lips are a *Bandhujiva* flower ; the lustre of the *Mathuca* (55) beams on thy cheek ;  
Thine eye outshines the blue lotos ; thy nose is a bud of the *Tila* (56) ; the *Cunda* (57) blossom yields to thy teeth ;  
Thus the flowery shafted god borrows from thee the points of his darts, and subdues the universe.  
Surely, thou descendest from heaven, O slender damsel. attended by a company of youthful goddesses ; and all their beauties are collected in thee

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## PART VII.

He spake ; and, seeing her appeased by his homage, flew to his bower, clad in a gay mantle.  
The night now veiled all visible objects ; and the damsel thus exhorted *Radha*, while she decked her with beaming ornaments :  
"Follow, gentle *RADHICA*, follow the son of *MADHU* ;  
His disclosure was elegantly composed of sweet phrases ; he prostrated himself at thy feet, and he now hastens to his delightful couch by yon grove of branching *Vanjalas*.  
Bind round thy ankle rings beaming with gems ; and advance with mincing steps, like the pearl-fed *Marala*.  
Drink with ravished ears the soft accents of *Hæri* ; and feast on love, while the warbling *Cocilas* obeys the mild ordinance of the flower-darting god.  
Abandon delay : see, the whole assembly of slender plants, pointing to the bower with fingers of young leaves, agitated by the gale, make signals for thy departure.  
Ask those two round hillocks, which receive pure dew-drops from the garland playing on thy neck, and the buds whose tops start aloft with the thought of thy darling ;  
Ask, and they will tell, that thy soul is intent on the warfare of love :  
Advance, fervid warrior, advance with alacrity, while the sound of thy tinkling waist-bells shall represent martial music.  
Lead with thee some favoured maid ; grasp her hand with thine, whose fingers are long and smooth as love's arrows.  
March ; and with the noise of thy bracelets proclaim thy approach to the youth, who will own himself thy slave.  
'She will come ; she will exult in beholding me ; she will pour accents of delight ,  
She will enfold me with eager arms ; she will melt with affection.'  
Such are his thoughts at this moment ; and, thus thinking, he looks through the long avenue ;  
He trembles ; he rejoices ; he burns ; he moves from place to place ; he faints, when he sees thee not coming, and falls in his gloomy bower.  
The night now dresses in habiliments fit for secrecy the many damsels, who hasten to their places of assignation ;  
She sets off with blackness their beautiful eyes ; fixes dark *Tamala* leaves behind their ears ;  
Decks their locks with the deep azure of water lilies, and sprinkles musk on their panting bosoms.  
The nocturnal sky, black as the touchstone, tries the gold of their affections,



## THE GITAGOVINDA.

And is marked with rich lines from the flashes of their beauty, in which they surpass the brightest *Cashmirians*." RADHA, thus incited, tripped through the forest: but shame overpowered her, when, by the light of innumerable gems on the arms, the neck, and the feet of her beloved, She saw him at the door of his flowery mansion; then her damsel again addressed her with ardent exultation: Enter, sweet RADHA, the bower of HERI; seek delight, O thou whose bosom laughs with the foretaste of happiness.

Enter, sweet RADHA, the bower graced with a bed of *Asoca* leaves; seek delight, O thou whose garland leaps with joy on thy breast.

Enter, sweet RADHA, the bower illumined with gay blossoms; seek delight, O thou whose limbs far excel them in softness.

Enter, O RADHA, the bower made cool and fragrant by gales from the woods of *Malaya*; seek delight, O thou whose amorous lays are softer than breezes.

Enter, O RADHA, the bower spread with leaves of twining creepers; seek delight, O thou whose arms have been long inflexible.

Enter, O RADHA, the bower which resounds with the murmur of honey-making bees; seek delight, O thou whose embrace yields more exquisite sweetness.

Enter, O RADHA, the bower attuned by the melodious band of *Cocilas*; seek delight, O thou whose lips, which outshine the grains of the pomegranate, are embellished, when thou speakest, by the brightness of thy teeth.

Long has he borne thee in his mind; and now, in an agony of desire, he pants to taste nectar from thy lip. Deign to restore thy slave, who will bend before the lotos of thy foot, and press it to his irradiated bosom. A slave, who acknowledges himself bought by thee for a single glance from thy eye, and a toss of thy disdainful eyebrow."

She ended; and RADHA with timid joy, darting her eyes on GOVINDA, while she musically sounded the rings of her ancles, and the bells of her zone, entered the mystic bower of her only beloved.

There she beheld her MADHAVA, who delighted in her alone; Who so long had sighed for her embrace; and whose countenance then gleamed with excessive rapture.

His heart was agitated by her sight, as the waves of the deep are affected by the lunar orb.

His azure breast glittered with pearls of unblemished lustre, like the full bed of the cerulean *Fanus*, interspersed with curls of white foam.

From his graceful waist flowed a pale yellow robe, which resembled the golden dust of the water lily scattered over its blue petals.

His passion was inflamed by the glances of her eyes, which played like a pair of water-birds with blue plumage, that sport near a full-blown lotos on a pool in the season of dew.

Bright ear-rings, like two suns, displayed in full expansion the flowers of his cheeks and lips, which glistened with the liquid radiance of smiles.

His looks, interwoven with blossoms, were like a cloud variegated with moonbeams; And on his forehead shone a circle of odorous oil, extracted from the sandal of *Malaya*, like the moon just appearing on the dusky horizon;

While his whole body seemed in a flame from the blaze of unnumbered gems.

Tears of transport gushed in a stream from the full eyes of RADHA, and their watery glances gleamed on her best beloved.

Even shame, which before had taken its abode in their dark pupils, was itself ashamed, and departed, when the fawn-eyed RADHA gazed on the brightened face of CRISHNA.

While she passed by the soft edge of his couch, and the bevy of his attendant nymphs, pretending to strike the gnats from their cheeks in order to conceal their smiles, warily retired from the bower.

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## PART VIII.

GOVINDA, seeing his beloved cheerful and serene, her lips sparkling with smiles, and her eye speaking desire, thus eagerly addressed her; while she carelessly reclined on the leafy bed strewn with soft blossoms.

Set the lotos of thy foot on this azure bosom; and let this couch be victorious over all who rebel against love.

Give short rapture, sweet RADHA, to NARAYAN, (58) thy adorer.

I do thee homage; I press with my blooming palms thy feet, weary with so long a walk.

O that I were the golden ring, that plays round thy ancle!

Speak but one gentle word; bid nectar drop from the bright moon of thy mouth.

Since the pain of absence is removed, let me thus remove the thin vest that enviously hides thy charms.

Blest should I be, if those raised globes were fixed on my bosom, and the ardour of my passion allayed.

Oh suffer me to quaff the liquid bliss of those lips;

Restore with their water of life thy slave, who has long been lifeless, whom the fire of separation has consumed.

Long have these ears been afflicted in thy absence by the notes of the *Cocila*.

Relieve them with the sound of thy tinkling waist-bells, which yield music, almost equal to the music of thy voice.

Why are those eyes half-closed? Are they ashamed of seeing a youth to whom thy careless resentment gave anguish?

Oh, let affliction cease, and let ecstasy drown the remembrance of sorrow.

# THE GITAGOVINDA.

## PART IX.

In the morning she rose disarrayed, and her eyes betrayed a night without slumber ; when the yellow-robed god, who gazed on her with transport, thus meditated on her charms in his heavenly mind ;  
Though her locks be diffused at random ; though the lustre of her lips be faded ; though her garland and zone be fallen from their enchanting stations ;  
And though she hide their places with her hands, looking towards me with bashful silence, yet even thus disarrayed, she fills me with ecstasie delight.  
But RADHA preparing to array herself, before the company of nymphs could see her confusion, spake thus with exultation to her obsequious lover.  
Place, O son of YADU, with fingers cooler than sandal wood, place a circlet of musk on this breast, which resembles a vase of consecrated water, crowned with fresh leaves, and fixed near a vernal bower, to propitiate the god of love.  
Place, my darling, the glossy powder, which would make the blackest bee envious, on this eye, whose glances are keener than arrows darted by the husband of RETI.  
Fix, O accomplished youth, the two gems, which form part of love's chain, in those ears, whence the antelopes of thine eyes may run downwards, and sport at pleasure.  
Place now a fresh circle of musk, black as the lunar spots, on the moon of my forehead ; and mix gay flowers on my tresses with a peacock's feathers, in graceful order, that they may wave like the banners of CAMA.  
Now replace, O tender-hearted, the loose ornaments of my vesture ; and refix the golden bells of my girdle on their destined station, which resembles those hills where the god with five shafts, who destroyed SAMBARA, (59) keeps his elephant ready for battle.  
While she spake, the heart of YADAVA triumphed ; and obeying her sportful behests, he placed musky spots on her bosom and forehead, dyed her temples with radiant hues, embellished her eyes with additional blackness, decked her braided hair and her neck with fresh garlands, and tied on her wrists the loosened bracelets, on her ancles the beamy rings, and round her waist the zone of bells, that sounded with ravishing melody.  
Whatever is delightful in the modes of music, whatever is divine in meditations on VISHNU, (60) whatever is exquisite in the sweet art of love, whatever is graceful in the fine strains of poetry, all that let the happy and wise learn from the songs of JAYADEVA, (61) whose soul is united with the foot of NARAYAN.  
May that HRI be your support, who expanded himself into an infinity of bright forms when, eager to gaze, with myriads of eyes, on the daughter of the ocean, he displayed his great character of the all-pervading deity, by the multiplied reflections of his divine person in the numberless gems on the many heads of the king of serpents, whom he chose for his couch ;  
That HRI, who removing his lucid veil from the bosom of PEDMA, and fixing his eyes on the delicious buds that grew on it, diverted her attention by declaring that, when she had chosen him as her bridegroom near the sea of milk, the disappointed husband of PERVATI (62) drank in despair the venom, which dyed his neck azure !

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I HAVE NOW placed before my readers this extraordinary poem, which I believe will be considered by every adequate judge to be equal, if not superior, to every thing of the kind that has been produced, either by the ancients or moderns. The poem is confessedly *mystical*, relating to the pure and affectionate intercourse between the Deity and human souls ; and is capable of a very extended comment, to illustrate its phraseology, and explain its almost numberless allusions to the Mythological System of the Hindoos.

But the chief design of its introduction here is to illustrate the phraseology of the SONG OF SONGS. The most superficial reader cannot but be struck with the similarity of the language of the metaphors and imagery. There are few turns of thought in the *Song of Songs* that may not find a parallel in the *Gitagovinda* ; and even the strongly impassioned language of *Solomon* may be every where supported by that of *Jayadeva*, and *vice versa*. Could it be proved that the love between Christ and the church were really the subject of the *Canticles*, the *Gitagovinda* might be applied with the utmost success to illustrate and explain all its *imagery*, and all its allusions : but we have no key to unlock its reference ; no *data* to which we can confidently refer ; and though it be generally allowed to be a *mystic song*, yet all interpreters follow their own creed in its explanation ; and it is only on the general subject that any two of them agree. As I am not satisfied that the common method used in its interpretation is either correct or genuine, I have simply avoided the rocks on which others have been wrecked, but have constructed no chart according to which a more prosperous voyage might be projected.

The late learned and pious Mr. *Romaine* seems to have thought that a competent knowledge of the original language might lead to its proper illustration ; and is indignant at those who have attempted its explanation without this necessary qualification. Of his knowledge of the sacred language no man doubts. I, also, have brought some acquaintance with the original to bear on the subject ; but, though perhaps as well acquainted with the meaning of the

## THE GITAGOVINDA.

words as Mr. Romaine himself, I have not been able to discover his system in the poem; and I dare not by *conjecture* put a meaning on any thing that professes to be a revelation from God. I respect many of its interpreters for their piety and learning, but I cannot follow their steps: they have not proved to me that Solomon's Song refers to the love of Christ and his Church. Let this be my apology with the candid reader for not entering into a more extended comment on this extraordinary book.

ADAM CLARKE.

*London, May 1, 1823.*

To ascertain some of the *latter* PARTS of this poem, I have been obliged to trust to my own judgment; as Sir William Jones, from whom I have borrowed these, had not marked any division; and I have had the *original* of the four first PARTS only.

As to the *Old Version* of the Canticles which I have introduced, the reader will be pleased to observe, it is that which was used by our forefathers before and after the reformation: one word of which I would not presume to alter or change. It is sacred both by age and use.

## NOTES ON THE GITAGOVINDA.

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- (1) **TAMALA TREE**.—A dark-leaved tree, common in Mat'hura and other parts, but not found in Bengal.—The laurel.
- (2) **Nanda**.—The foster-father of Crishna.
- (3) **Radha**.—One of the principal and favourite mistresses of Crishna.
- (4) **Madhava**.—One of the names of Crishna, implying the possession of Ma or Lachmi, his heavenly consort.
- (5) **Yamuna**.—Vulgarly called Jumna, the river which flows by Dehlee, Mat'hura, and Ayra.
- (6) **Heri**.—A name of Crishna; importing the remover of sin and suffering.
- (7) **Camala**.—A name of Lachmi, derived from the lotos.
- (8) **Caliya**.—A huge snake who from the Jumna infested the neighbourhood of Gocul, till destroyed by Crishna.
- (9) **Yadu**.—The name of a tribe, derived from Yadu, a celebrated Raja, famed to have been descended from the moon.
- (10) **Garura**.—Not the vulture known by this name in Bengal; but a fabled bird, answering in some respects to the eagle of Jupiter, and described to be the bearer of Vishnu, the heavenly Crishna.
- (11) **Janaca**.—A Raja of Tirhoot, whose daughter Suta was offered in marriage to whoever could draw a bow of immense size; and won by Crishna, in his incarnation of Ramehundra.
- (12) **Dushana**.—A demon giant, slain by Crishna in the form of Rama.
- (13) **Mandar**.—A mountain of immense size, with which Crishna is said to have churned the ocean in his second incarnation.
- (14) **Pedma**.—A name of Lachmi, of the same meaning with Camala.
- (15) **Chacora**.—A poetical bird, described like the partridge, but imagined to be enamoured of the moon, and to feed on her beams.
- (16) **Vasanti**.—A vernal creeper, bearing a yellow and white flower.
- (17) **Maylaya**.—A mountain in the Dekkan, on which sandal trees grow in abundance.
- (18) **Cocila**.—An admired singing bird with green plumage, with red beak and feet, common in Mat'hura, and said to sing only in the spring season. The same name is given to a blackbird in Bengal, called the Rocil, which only sings in the night.
- (19) **Bacul**.—A beautiful tree, commonly called orbicular, well known in Bengal, by the names of Moulserree and Boulserree.
- (20) **Cinsuca**.—A broad leaved tree, called also the Teisoo, bearing red flowers, shaped like nails.
- (21) **Cama**.—The Hindoo god of love.
- (22) **Cesara**.—A beautiful flower, with yellow and white petals, better known by the name of Nageisur.
- (23) **Cetaci**.—The female Ceyora, a thorny shrub, whose flowers yield a fine perfume.
- (24) **Patali**.—A large hollow flower, of which one species is red, the other white.
- (25) **Smara**.—A name of the god of love, signifying *ideal*.
- (26) **Caruna**.—A delicate creeper, with small red flowers, called in Persian Ishk-peiched, or love-tangler.
- (27) **Madhavi**.—A creeper bearing small white flowers.
- (28) **Malica**.—A species of jasmine.
- (29) **Amra**.—The mango-tree; with its flowers the god *Cama* tips his arrows.
- (30) **Atimucta**.—A fragrant creeper, which runs to a great extent, called also Midmalut. It bears a flower of yellowish white, sometimes called also Madhavi.
- (31) **Vrindavan**.—An extensive forest of Vraja.
- (32) **Mallica**.—A species of jasmine, white and odoriferous.
- (33) **Rasala**.—An epithet of the mango, implying, replete with sweet juice.
- (34) **Mura**.—A demon and giant slain by Crishna.
- (35) **Vanjula**.—A large tree, called also Varvon, producing white flowers.
- (36) **Vraja**.—A country about 170 miles in circumference, between Dehlee and Agra, including the city of Mat'hura, and intersected by the Jumna.
- (37) **Bandhujiva**.—A red flower, named likewise Doperheca.
- (38) **Macara**.—An horned fish, supposed to be the hammer shark.
- (39) **Cadumba**.—A flower tree, vulgarly called Cuddum, very common in Bengal, and much esteemed by the Hindoos.
- (40) **Cesi**.—A monster slain by *Vishnu*.
- (41) **Asoca**.—A tall tree, somewhat resembling the beech, consecrated to Mahadeva.

## NOTES ON THE GITAGOVINDA.

- (42) *Cansa*.—The maternal uncle of *Crishna*, destroyed by him for his iniquities.
- (43) *Maheea*.—Literally, mighty Lord, an epithet of the god *Shiva*.
- (44) *Mahadeva*.—The great deity; also an attribute of *Shiva*.
- (45) *Ananga*.—A title of the god of love, implying incorporeal.
- (46) *Bimba*.—A common plant, called also *Cundooree*, producing red berries which are eaten by the natives.
- (47) *Candarpa*.—A name of *Cama*, the god of love, who having wounded *Siva* with one of his five arrows, was by him in revenge reduced to ashes.
- (48) *Madhu*.—A giant destroyed by *Crishna*.
- (49) *Murari*.—A name of *Crishna*.
- (50) *Govinda*.—A name of *Crishna*.
- (51) *Devaci*.—The mother of *Crishna*.
- (52) *Reti*.—The wife of *Cama*, god of love.
- (53) *Yama*.—The genius of Death.
- (54) *Cesava*.—A name given to *Crishna*, on account of the fineness of his hair.
- (55) *Madhuca*.—*Bossia*.
- (56) *Tila*.—A grain called Sesamum.
- (57) *Cunda*.—The jessamine.
- (58) *Narayan*.—A name of *Crishna*.
- (59) *Sambara*.—A tyrant destroyed by *Cama*.
- (60) *Vishnu*.—A name of *Crishna*.
- (61) *Jayadeva*.—A celebrated *Hindu* poet, the author of the preceding poem.
- (62) *Pervati*.—The consort of *Siva*.

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