3 Vols

THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN ROBINSON,

PASTOR OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS.

WITH

A MEMOIR AND ANNOTATIONS

BY

ROBERT ASHTON,

SECRETARY OF THE CONGREGATIONAL BOARD, LONDON.

VOLUME I.

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PREFACE.

THE Committee of the Congregational Union of England and Wales originated the "Wycliffe Society" in 1843, for the purpose of reprinting "the more rare and important Tracts and Treatises of the Puritans and Nonconformists of Great Britain."

The Society was not able, from a variety of causes, to publish more than two volumes 8vo. of the intended series: one entitled "Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe;" and the other, "Select Works" of the Rev. David Clarkson, B.D.

Preparations had been made for reprinting the entire works of the Rev. John Robinson; but these were suspended till a more favourable opportunity should present itself for introducing them to the public.

A growing desire for Puritan History and Literature having been created, within the last few years, the subject of reprinting Robinson's Works was again considered by the Committee of the Congregational Union, and at their request a paper was read by the Editor at the Autumnal Assembly of the Union, held at Southampton, in October, 1850, containing proposals for the republication of the Works.

The project was approved by the Assembly, and the Editor was urged to complete his preparations.

The Rev. Dr. Campbell, Pastor of the Church worshipping in the Tabernacle, Moorfields, and Editor of the *Christian Witness* and the *British Banner*, feeling a deep interest in the object, promptly and generously undertook the responsibility of the republication; and to him, therefore, the whole Congregational community in both hemispheres are chiefly indebted for the reproduction of the writings of their venerated ancestor.

It is with no ordinary feelings of satisfaction the Editor records the spontaneous and liberal support given to the undertaking by a large body of subscribers, both in Great Britain and in the United States.

The desire to become more fully acquainted with the characters and works of the Puritans and Nonconformists is a hopeful sign of the times. Those venerable and sainted men were champions for the truth and martyrs for liberty. They live in their writings and in the Histories of their deeds. Their "Tracts and Treatises" constitute a precious treasure for the present and coming generations, as elaborate expositions of Christian truth, as undying testimonies to the spirituality of Christ's kingdom and its independence of state support and secular control, and as earnest apologies for the inalienable right of man to freedom of thought, liberty of conscience, and selection of worship.

The Press has lately been prolific in publications respecting the Puritans and the Pilgrim Fathers.

To the earlier works of Pearce, in his "Vindication of Dissenters," Neal, in his "History of the Puritans," Conder, in his valuable work on "Protestant Nonconformity," Brook, in his "Lives of the Puritans," and Bogue and Bennett, in

their "History of Dissenters," there have been added, more recently, the valuable publications of Hanbury's "Historical Memorials of the Independents," Price's "History of Protestant Nonconformity," Fletcher's "History of Independency in England," Stoughton's "Spiritual Heroes," Stowell's "Puritans in England," Wilson's "Pilgrim Fathers," Marsden's "History of the Early Puritans," and Hunter's "Collections concerning the Early History of the Founders of New Plymouth." In America also, the Press has lately sent forth Dr. Young's most interesting and charming "Chronicles of the Pilgrim Fathers," to which the Editor acknowledges himself greatly indebted, Punchard's "History" and "Views of Congregationalism," Cheever's "Pilgrim Fathers," Sumner's "Memoirs of the Pilgrims at Leyden," with many others of varied form and titles.

The relation of Mr. Robinson to modern Congregationalists both in England and in the United States, gives him a claim to the respect of its adherents throughout the world. The churches in Southwark and New Plymouth trace their origin to the church at Leyden. Both English and American Independents look with affectionate interest to Leyden, as the refuge and the home of their predecessors; and to Mr. Robinson as their father and friend. A debt is therefore due to his memory, which, though late, is now attempted to be discharged. The effort has been made, for the first time, to collect all the genuine productions of his pen, whether treatise, tract, or letter, scattered through the private libraries of antiquarians and the public libraries of the country, and to embody them in a complete Edition of his Works. One tract only appears to be want-

ing, entitled "Manumission," the substance of which may, however, be found in the closing sections of his "Defence of the Synod of Dort," contained in the third volume.

Mr. Robinson's Letters are distributed throughout the volumes in their appropriate places.

The "Memoir" is brief, but contains all the ascertained facts of his history, with a few occasional notes explanatory of the text.

The Works have not been arranged in chronological order, as this would have required the breaking up of some of the treatises into parts, to equalize the volumes. A chronological list will be supplied, by which they may be traced in their connexion and progress.

The works have been printed verbatim from the copies, excepting that the orthography has been modernized, and manifest typographical and clerical errors have been corrected.

Some of the treatises have been broken up into chapters and sections, for more convenient reference, and more fully exhibiting to the eye the design of the author; but even in this case, the divisions and headings have been interposed, without altering, in the slightest degree, the form and arrangement of the successive paragraphs.

The Editor has been greatly assisted in his laborious work by various ministers and gentlemen, to whom he would present his sincere and grateful acknowledgments. Among his coadjutors must be noticed especially, Benjamin Hanbury, Esq., Edward Bean Underhill, Esq., Joshua Wilson, Esq., Joseph Davey, Esq., George Sumner, Esq., Joseph Hunter, Esq., J. Kitson, Esq., the Rev. John Tyndale, of Oxford, the Rev. G. B. Bubier, of Cambridge,

Rev. John Alexander, Norwich, Rev. John T. Burt, M.A., of Mundham, Rev. John Waddington, London, Rev. Evan Davies, Richmond, and last but not least, his beloved friend and brother, the Rev. Dr. Campbell, whose united advice, researches, and contributions, have greatly enhanced the value of the publication, and rendered it more worthy of the confidence and support of the public.

The Editor would direct especial attention to the exceedingly valuable and interesting document appended to the Memoir, entitled, the "Descendants of Robinson." It is a contribution by the Rev. Dr. Allen, of Northampton, Massachusetts, formerly President of Boudoin College, author of the "American Biographical Dictionary," and other works. Such a contribution would, under any circumstances, have been gratefully accepted; but, presented as it was, in so spontaneous, generous, and cordial a manner, although forming part of a new Biography of Robinson, which the venerable Doctor is preparing for the American press, it demands special acknowledgment, and the expression of the Editor's most sincere and hearty thanks.

This first collected edition of the Works of the Pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers, is now committed by the Editor to the Congregationalists throughout the world, assured that they will have no reason to be ashamed of their distinguished ancestor, and thankful that these "Remains" will now be preserved from decay, and that the name of their excellent Author will not sink into oblivion, but be held in grateful and everlasting remembrance.

ROBERT ASHTON.

PUTNEY, SURREY,
Sept. 5th, 1851.

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MEMOIR OF

REV. JOHN ROBINSON.

SECTION I.

MR. ROBINSON, A PURITAN IN NORFOLK.

(1575—1604.)

No complete Life of Mr. Robinson was written by any of his contemporaries. Numerous references are made to his history and character in the writings both of friends and foes. To collect, compare, and harmonize these scattered statements and allusions have occasioned his modern biographers no little difficulty. The means of furnishing a perfect Life are not extant. The present Memoir contains all that can be learned respecting Mr. Robinson: it elucidates some points hitherto left in obscurity, and supplies some additional information inaccessible to former historians.

The parentage, education, youthful predilections, and exploits of a distinguished man, are important to be known. They give an interest and specificness to his biography, and take it out of the mere generalizations of an every-day Memoir. Unhappily none of these things can be learned respecting Mr. Robinson. He was born in 1575. He first appears to our view as a youth of seventeen, having finished his home-studies, and about to matriculate at Cambridge. He came hither out of the Midland Coun-

ties: whether from Lincolnshire or Nottinghamshire is undetermined; the preponderance of evidence is in favour of the former. Joseph Hall, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, who appears to have known him intimately, having been his contemporary at college, and who became the antagonist of Robinson, states that "Lincolnshire was his county." He graduated at Cambridge. Two colleges in the University present nearly equal claims to have been his *alma mater*.

EMANUEL COLLEGE is generally considered to have been the home of his student life. The following entry occurs in the register of the college:—

"John Robinson, entered as sizar, March 2nd, 1592; took his M.A. 1600, and B.D. 1607."

This latter date renders his connexion with Emanuel College more than doubtful. He had become a Separatist before 1607, and was then the pastor of the mother Church of the Pilgrims in Nottinghamshire. Having renounced the Established Church, he disclaimed her honours as well as her emoluments; and it is not probable that he would seek literary distinction at her hands, even if it were possible to obtain it under such circumstances.

The CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE register exhibits a record which appears to identify Mr. Robinson, of Leyden, with her *alumni*:—

"John Robinson, F. Lincsh., admitted 1592. Fell. 1598."

The Rev. Richard Masters published in 1749, a history of this college, and gives a list of all its members from its foundation, in which a similar entry to the above also occurs, and to which he appends a note, intimating his belief that this was the Robinson who had been beneficed near Yarmouth, but on being prosecuted by the Ecclesiastical Courts, had fled to Leyden and set up a congregation upon the model of the Brownists.*

* The Rev. Dr. Lamb, Master of Corpus Christi, in his edition of

Entering the University at the early age of seventeen, his religious opinions could scarcely have been formed, nor could he have had very definite views respecting the work of the ministry. The time he was at Cambridge was one of considerable religious excitement. Several zealous Puritan clergymen preached at St. Mary's and other churches. Their evangelical preaching gave great offence to the authorities of the University. But the most distinguished Puritan there was the Rev. William Perkins, who was public catechist of Corpus Christi, and whose duty it was "to read a lecture every Thursday in the term, on some useful subject of Divinity;" he preached also at St. Andrew's Church, and attracted multitudes of persons from the town, the University, and surrounding neighbourhood, by his faithful, earnest, and spirit-stirring discourses. As Mr. Robinson states that his "personal conversion" was effected in the Church of England, it is no improbable supposition that the faithful and zealous labours of Mr. Perkins, the catechist of his College, and under whose ministry he sat, were the means of his spiritual illumination and conversion.* His subsequent writings testify that he held Mr. Perkins in the highest esteem; he used

Masters's work, "with additional matter and a continuation to the present time, 1831," gives two entries respecting this John Robinson, which more fully describe his University honours, but substitute "Nottinghamshire" for "Lincolnshire." The reason of such variation from the register and Masters is not given.

Dr. Lamb's reference to Robinson among the fellows of the College, is as follows:—

"1598. Robinson, John, M.A., Nottinghamshire, succeeded Mr. Morley. He resigned his fellowship, 1604."

In the General List of Members of the College, according to the order of admission, Dr. Lamb's entry is the following:—

"*Robinson, John, Notts. Admitted 1592, M.A., 1599.†

† The asterisk (*) distinguishes the fellows of the College.

* *Vide* A Manudiction for Mr. Robinson, &c. &c., supposed to be

his tutor's "Catechism on the Foundation of Religion," in the instruction of the youth of his own congregation: he moreover published another catechism on Church Principles, as an appendix to that of his venerable friend.*

Having completed his terms at the University, Mr. Robinson proceeded to Norfolk, and in the neighbourhood of Norwich began his ministerial labours. He was at first a Puritan only, and hence officiated awhile in the National Church. His scruples respecting the ceremonies and the vestments were strong and lasting; and, omitting or modifying them in his services, he was subject to annoyances and persecution from the Ecclesiastical authorities, and was temporarily suspended from his clerical functions. The parish in which he laboured has not been ascertained.†

It is doubtful, from Joseph Hall's testimony, in his "Common Apology for the Church of England," whether Mr. Robinson was ever fully inducted into a "living;" his conscientious scruples preventing his submission to the regulations necessary for "full orders." On being suspended by the Bishop, he retired to Norwich, where he collected a

written by Rev. William Bradshaw, author of the "Unreasonableness of Separation, &c." 4to. 1614.

* *Vide* A Catechism, vol. iii. page 421—436.

† Joseph Hunter, Esq., F.S.A., having suggested, in his valuable tract entitled "Collections concerning the Early History of the Founders of New Plymouth, the first Colonists of New England," that Mundham, Norfolk, might have been his parochial cure, as Blomfield the historian of Norfolk states that a Mr. Robinson was incumbent there about the time, inquiry has been made at Mundham, and the parochial register examined. Regular entries are made from 1595 to 1612, but, as they are without signatures, they cannot furnish any evidence respecting Mr. Robinson's incumbency. But from the records of the Corporation of Norwich, and from the consignation or visitation book in the Bishop's Register office in that city, it appears the Rev. *Robert* Robinson, and his son of the same name, were respectively incumbents from 1595 to 1608. The question, therefore, of John Robinson's connexion with Mundham is finally settled in the negative.

congregation of Puritan worshippers in that city and from the surrounding neighbourhood, many of whom were subject to fines and imprisonment for attending his faithful and affectionate instructions.*

His attachment to his Norwich friends remained unabated through life. After the lapse of twenty years, when residing at Leyden, on learning that the Rev. Mr. Yates of that city, a good man, but Puritan Conformist, had circulated a tract, denouncing lay-preaching, he wrote a treatise in refutation, for their special benefit, entitled "The People's Plea for the Exercise of Prophecy," the preface to which evinces his undiminished regard for his former charge, and his deep solicitude for their spiritual benefit.†

During his residence at Norwich, his mind was still agitated and perplexed respecting his duty in relation to the church. A passage in his reply to Mr. Bernard, exhibits the mental struggles through which he passed at this eventful period of his history.

* Mr. Ainsworth in his "Counterpoyson" incidentally alludes to Mr. Robinson's labours in Norwich, and the hazard incurred by the people in attending thereon. Addressing himself to Mr. Crashaw, to whose sermons he was replying, he says—"If any among you, not meddling with the public estate of your church, but feeling or fearing his own particular soul-sickness, do resort to a physician, whose receipts are not after the common sort, for advice about his health, or of friendship and acquaintance to see him, he is subject to the censure and thunderbolt of your church. Witness the late practice in Norwich, where certain citizens were excommunicated for resorting unto and praying with Mr. Robinson, a man worthily reverenced of all the city for the grace of God in him, as yourself also, I suppose, will acknowledge, and to whom the cure and charge of their souls was erewhile committed. Would any unmerciful man have dealt so with his bond-slave in a case of bodily sickness? But hereby all may see what small hope there is of curing the canker of your church."—Ainsworth's Counterpoyson; or, an Answer to Mr. Crashaw's Four Questions propounded in his sermon preached at the Crosse, Feb. 14, 1607, page 145.

† *Vide* vol. iii. People's Plea, &c., pages 285—7.

"I do indeed confess, to the glory of God and my own shame, that a long time before I entered this way [of separation,] I took some taste of the truth in it by some treatises published in justification of it, which, the Lord knoweth, were sweet as honey to my mouth; and the very principal thing which, for the time, quenched all further appetite in me, was the over-valuation which I made of the learning and holiness of these and the like persons, [the Evangelical Puritans], blushing in myself to have a thought of pressing one hair-breadth before them in this thing, behind whom I knew myself to come so many miles in all other things. Yea, and even of late times, when I had entered into a more serious consideration of these things, and, according to the measure of the grace received, searched the Scriptures whether they were so or not, and by searching found much light of truth, yet was the same so dimmed and overclouded with the contradictions of these men, and others of the like note, that, had not the truth been in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, Jeremiah xx. 9, I had never broken those bonds of flesh and blood, wherein I was so straitly tied, but had suffered the light of God to have been put out in mine own unthankful heart by other men's darkness."*

Though suspended, he still wished to retain his position in connexion with the Establishment. He trusted that some modification of the rigours of conformity might be adopted, and that, in some chaplainship to a public institution, or in some private chapel duly licensed, he might conduct public worship according to his own views of Christian simplicity. For this purpose he applied to the corporation of Norwich for the Mastership of the Great Hospital, then generally held by a clergyman, or for a building to be secured to him by lease, in which he might officiate. In both objects he failed. Hopeless with re-

* *Vide* vol. ii., A Justification, &c., pages 51, 52.

spect to further ecclesiastical reformation, and convinced that all attempts at harmonizing his scriptural views with canonical law, and subject to the suspicions, informations, and oppressions by the dominant party, he solemnly resolved and "on most sound and unresistible convictions," to carry out his puritanical principles to their just consequences, and to separate himself altogether from the church of his youth and his affections.

The circumstances now detailed throw light on his ecclesiastical position and struggles, and furnish a satisfactory answer to Joseph Hall's ungenerous insinuation, that he was the victim of disappointment and chagrin, and hence suddenly abandoned his clerical profession and resolved on becoming a Separatist.*

SECTION II.

MR. ROBINSON A SEPARATIST AT SCROOBY.

(1604—1608.)

MR. ROBINSON left Norwich, virtually if not nominally a Separatist. Cambridge being the direct road to the

* "Neither doubt we to say," observes Hall, "that the mastership of the hospital at Norwich, or a lease from that city (sued for repulse) might have procured that this separation from the communion, government and worship of the Church of England should not have been by John Robinson."

"And, touching ceremonies, you refused them formerly, but not long; and when you did refuse them, you know not wherefore; for, immediately before your suspension, you acknowledged them to be things indifferent; and for matter of scandal by them, you had not informed yourself, by your own confession, or a whole quarter of a year after."

Hall states, moreover, and that positively, that he had not become a Separatist even when he left Norwich.—Hall's Works: Common Apology for the Church of England, vol. ix. pages 430, 480.

northern part of England, he probably visited his *alma mater*, resigned his fellowship of the college, and bid adieu to his Puritan friends and brethren in that town. The resignation of the fellowship being in 1604, this may be regarded as the year of his formal connexion with the Separatists, and as the commencement of a new era in his eventful life.

It required no ordinary faith and moral courage to abandon the Church at this juncture. Persecution awaited him at every step. The determination of the king and the bishops was to imprison, fine or banish all dissidents from the dominant Church. He had counted the cost; and in proportion to the difficulties he felt in coming to the final decision, such was the strength of his present convictions. Like Abraham he went out, not knowing whither he went: like him, too, he trusted in the wisdom and faithfulness of God, who was his "shield and exceeding great reward."

He proceeded to "Lincolnshire, his county," and the parts adjacent, where he found a considerable number of Separatist brethren, who met for worship as often as they could escape the Argus eyes of their persecutors. They had previously constituted themselves into a church, by solemn covenant with the Lord and with each other, in the fellowship of the gospel, "to walk in all his ways made known, or to be made known unto them, according to their best endeavours, WHATEVER IT SHOULD COST THEM."*

This solemn and memorable transaction took place, it is generally believed, in 1602,† when Mr. Smyth and Mr. Clyfton were associated in the oversight of the church.

* *Vide* "Young's Chronicles of the Pilgrims," page 20.

† Mr. Hunter doubts the accuracy of this date, from the statement made by Bradford in his journal.—"So, after they had continued together *about a year*, and kept their meetings every Sabbath in one place or another, exercising the worship of God among themselves, notwithstanding all the diligence and malice of their adversaries, they, seeing they could no longer continue in that con-

Mr. Robinson arrived in 1604; their numbers had so increased as to render it expedient that they should form two distinct bodies, and worship in different localities; Mr. Smyth and Mr. Clyfton were chosen pastors of the respective churches, both of whom subsequently became exiles for conscience' sake, and settled at Amsterdam. Mr. Robinson remained with Mr. Clyfton's portion of the church, and was shortly afterwards chosen his assistant in ministerial labours, and on the removal of Mr. Clyfton to Holland, succeeded to his office.

This devoted band ordinarily met at Mr. Brewster's mansion "on the Lord's-day, which was a manor of the bishop's, and with great love he entertained them when they came, making provision for them, to his great charge, and continued to do so while they could stay in England."*

Mr. Brewster was a gentleman of fortune; he was educated at Cambridge, and was now living on his manorial estate at Scrooby, Nottinghamshire.

The location of this first Separatist church has long been an object of investigation and doubt. The difficulty appears to be solved by Joseph Hunter, Esq., in his valuable "Collections," concerning the first colonists of New England. The following is a summary of Mr. Hunter's proofs, identifying Scrooby, Notts, as the village, and Mr. Brewster's house as the manor, in which, when practicable, they worshipped. Governor Bradford, who was originally one

dition, resolved tc get over into Holland as they could, which was in the year 1607-8."—Hunter's Collections, page 26. Young's Chronicles, page 24.

It is evident, however, that the phrase "about a year" does not refer to the period between the covenant-taking and the final emigration of the church, which was manifestly about six years, but to the time when Mr. Robinson became sole minister of the remaining portion of the Church, and the resolution adopted to exile themselves as Providence should open the way.

* Life of Brewster, in Young's Chronicles, page 465.

of the church, and whose birthplace and residence were at Austerfield in the vicinity, states distinctly, that Mr. Brewster's house was a "manor of the bishop's."* This description of the house furnished the key to the difficulty. Scrooby is about one mile and a half south of Bawtry in Yorkshire, and from which Austerfield is about the same distance north-east, and both not far distant from the adjacent county of Lincoln. Mr. Hunter says, "I can speak with confidence to the fact, that there is no other episcopal manor but this, which at all satisfies the condition of being near the borders of the three counties." The Brewsters were residents at Scrooby: the manor place which they occupied originally belonged to the Archbishops of York, and had been leased to Sir Samuel Sandys, son of Dr. Sandys the Archbishop, in 1586. The Brewster family were now tenants of Sir Samuel, and were occupants of the mansion of the Sandys. This fact serves both as an identification of the place, and as an explanation of the circumstance, that the Sandys took great interest, at a subsequent period, in promoting the settlement of the pilgrims, under the direction of Mr. Brewster, on the shores of the Atlantic.

Scrooby must henceforward be regarded as the cradle of Massachusetts. Here the choice and noble spirits, at the head of whom were Brewster and Bradford, first learned the lessons of truth and freedom. Here, under the faithful ministration of the pastors, they were nourished and strengthened to that vigorous and manly fortitude which braved all dangers, and here too they acquired that moral and spiritual courage which enabled them to sacrifice their homes, property and friends, and expatriate themselves to distant lands, rather than abandon their principles and yield to the attempted usurpations on the liberty of their consciences.

* Young's Chronicles, page 465.

The spirit of the times, however, required that they should obtrude themselves as seldom as possible on public notice. They were objects of suspicion and distrust, and liable, if detected, to imprisonment and fine. Persecution was partially suspended during the early part of the reign of James I., but the proceedings of the monarch at the Hampton Court Conference, in 1604, unmasked his character and designs, and spread alarm and consternation through the puritanical ranks in all parts of the kingdom. His determination was to suppress the Nonconformists of every name, and especially the Separatists, who had become extremely obnoxious to the ecclesiastical authorities.

Unable to conceal themselves from the inquisitions of the spy, or to enjoy the liberty of worship they so earnestly desired, Mr. Smyth and his church resolved to flee into Holland and seek an asylum at Amsterdam. They arrived, after encountering many difficulties, in the year 1606. In the course of a few months Mr. Clyfton and several of his church adopted the same course and settled in the same city, uniting themselves with their former companions, in the church under the care of Mr. Francis Johnson and Mr. Henry Ainsworth.

Mr. Robinson was now left with the remnant of the flock. Month after month rolled away, and no abatement of the fury of the dominant party was visible. His church, with himself, resolved on following their companions to the United Provinces, where toleration, at least, if not perfect freedom, was allowed to all natives and foreigners.

Thrice was the attempt made at expatriation before they could succeed. They first resolved to sail from Boston. They formed a common fund, and hired a vessel. To avoid suspicion they embarked at night, and at the moment when they expected the vessel to be loosed from her

moorings, they were betrayed by the captain and seized by the officers of the town. They were plundered of their goods and money, arraigned before the magistrates, and committed to prison till the pleasure of the lords in council should be known. They were dismissed at the expiration of a month, seven of the leading persons being bound over to appear at the assizes.

The following spring a second attempt was made. They hired a small Dutch vessel, and agreed to meet the captain at a given spot on the banks of the Humber near Grimsby, Lincolnshire. After a delay of some hours, a part of the company, chiefly men, were conveyed to the vessel in a boat. When the sailors were about to return for another portion of the passengers, the captain saw "a great company of horse and foot, with bills and guns," in full pursuit of the fugitives on shore. He immediately hoisted sail and departed with the men he had on board, leaving their wives and children, and the remainder of the pilgrim company with Mr. Robinson, to the tender mercies of their pursuers. A few of the party escaped, the others were seized and hurried from one magistrate to another, till the officers, not knowing what to do with so large a company, and ashamed of their occupation in seizing helpless, homeless, and innocent persons, they suffered them to depart and go whither they pleased.

Other attempts at expatriation were subsequently and successfully made. The persecuted Separatists at length reached the hospitable shores of Holland, and rejoined their families and friends in the land of strangers, thankful to their Almighty Father that they had escaped in safety from the "fury of the oppressor," and the perils of the deep.

Bradford thus concludes his simple and touching narrative of these adventures: "Yet I may not omit the fruit that came hereby. For by these so public troubles in so

many eminent places, (Boston, Hull, Grimsby, where they were seized or imprisoned,) their cause became famous, and occasioned many to look into the same; and their godly carriage and christian behaviour was such as left a deep impression in the minds of many. And though some few shrunk at those first conflicts and sharp beginnings, (as it was no marvel,) yet many more came on with fresh courage, and greatly animated others; and in the end, notwithstanding all these storms of opposition, they all got over at length, some at one time and some at another, and met together again, according to their desire, with no small rejoicing."*

SECTION III.

MR. ROBINSON AN EXILE AT AMSTERDAM.

(1608, 1609.)

THE year of our Lord 1608 is memorable in the history of the Separatists. It was the year of Mr. Robinson's arrival in Holland with the remainder of the Scrooby church. Neither allowed to remain peacefully in England, nor suffered quietly to depart, they escaped to a strange land, acting on the direction of the Saviour—"When they persecute you in one city, flee to another." The removal of this church was happily not the extinction of the cause in Great Britain. Other Puritan communities, if not avowedly Separatist, existed in the northern and western parts of the kingdom. They maintained and suffered for the truth; they earnestly prayed for its diffusion and success; and many of their adherents lived to witness its triumphs, and to share in the victories it achieved. Few of

* *Vide* Young's Chronicles, pages 81, 82.

the exiles returned to England: they had a vocation to discharge. The great Head of the church designed their perplexities and afflictions as a means of preparing them for better service. Truth travels with the exiles; and as they are "scattered abroad" by the providence of God, the gospel spreads, and hence they become blessings to the nations amongst whom they are driven. These wanderers doubtless proved blessings in the land of their sojourn, but more eminently so, in the far distant regions whither they ultimately went.

Desirous of spiritual instruction and communion, Mr. Robinson and his church united themselves with their former companions now in Amsterdam, and together they became one with the original members of the English church in that city, under the pastoral care of Johnson and Ainsworth.

Spiritual life was not all they needed. Their bodies must be fed and their families supported. How these were to be accomplished became a source of deep solicitude. The temporal circumstances of these new settlers, these pioneers of truth and freedom in distant lands, were sufficiently discouraging. They were poor and in distress. Two only had possessed property, and they had sacrificed all for Christ. They were for the most part hard-working weavers, artisans, and husbandmen. The latter were the most numerous class. Scrooby was an agricultural district, and the majority of the members had come thence to the Netherlands. "They were not," says Bradford, "acquainted with the trades and traffic by which the country doth subsist, but had been used to a plain country life, and the innocent trade of husbandry. But these things did not dismay them, although they did sometimes trouble them, for their desires were set on the ways of God and to enjoy his ordinances." They, however, cheerfully submitted to the will of God, and began to seek such occupa-

tion as the city and neighbourhood would supply. Some learned new trades. Brewster, Bradford, and others, accustomed to less laborious pursuits than their companions, learned the arts of printing, dyeing, and weaving for their support. The difficulty of procuring situations and employment may be judged of, by the fact, that even Ainsworth had been, if he was not at the time, only a porter in a bookseller's shop. Their industry and peaceableness as neighbours secured the good opinion of the residents of their adopted country. Measures were taken by the archbishop and other ecclesiastical functionaries in England, to excite the suspicions and jealousies of the Dutch against the exiles, both while in Amsterdam and when at Leyden. British agents were employed in this nefarious work, but in vain. They remained undisturbed, and pursued their daily labours with satisfaction and success.

Doubtless Mr. Robinson, having no pastoral charge, was obliged to betake himself to some secular occupation for support; and even after he became pastor at Leyden, it is not improbable that he did the same. However undesirable it may be, that ministers should engage in secular pursuits, it can be no disgrace, while the fact remains that Paul was a tent-maker, and, while discharging his apostolic duties, wrought at his trade "with his own hands," and thus secured an honest livelihood.

The church at Amsterdam was much disturbed and distracted by the proceedings of Mr. Smyth and a few partisans. The society was in a perpetual broil.* Mr. Robinson's tender and loving spirit could not endure the angry recriminations of the brethren. He was a man of peace and a lover of concord. The members of his own church were like-minded, and resolved, after a residence of about a year, to remove from the tumultuous scene, and

* *Vide* an Account of the Exiled Churches, and the proceedings at Amsterdam. Vol. iii. App. ii.

seek a quiet home at Leyden, though it might not prove so advantageous to their worldly interests.

SECTION IV.

MR. ROBINSON A PASTOR AT LEYDEN.

(1609—1625.)

Mr. Robinson and his friends took their departure from Amsterdam in 1609, and settled, by permission of the authorities, at "Leyden, a fair and beautiful city, and of a sweet situation, but made more famous by the university wherewith it was adorned.* It was a town of great resort, in consequence of the celebrity of its university. Genteel families from various parts of the continent, and from England, settled there for the superior advantages of education it afforded.†

Mr. Robinson's first object, when settled at Leyden, was to secure a suitable place in which to conduct the public worship of God. No record of any public building devoted to this purpose has been found. For a time, at least, it is probable that he conducted worship in his own house,‡ and subsequently in some hired hall. Not connected with any merchant company, not patronized by the British authorities at home, nor disposed to make suit to the municipal council for assistance, no public edifice

* *Vide* Bradford in Young's Chron., page 35.

† *Vide* Stevens's History of the Scottish Church at Rotterdam, &c., page 312.

‡ When Mr. Robinson died he was described as having lived "by het Klockhuijs," or by the Clock-house, near which, Mr. Sumner states, there was a large square, on one side of which alone were a few houses. These having been pulled down and destroyed, the identical spot on which Mr. Robinson lived cannot now be ascertained. Sumner's Memoirs of the Pilgrims, page 32.

would be allotted to the use of his congregation. It is a singular coincidence, that the Scottish church should have been established in Leyden the very same year, under the ministry of the Rev. Robert Durie. To this party of English subjects a subsidy was granted, and the chapel of St. Catharine's Almshouse was assigned, which chapel they occupied till 1622, when "another was granted to them, attached to the Jerusalems Hof;" and in 1644 this also was exchanged for a still larger "room in the Kerk of the Bagyn Hof," which became the "Church of the English Reformed Community."* This coincidence of time in the settlement of Mr. Robinson and of Mr. Durie, and in the commencement of English worship by their respective communities at Leyden, has given rise to some mistakes with respect to Robinson's place of worship.†

As soon as arrangements for worship were completed, and the church was re-organized, Mr. Robinson received a

* Sumner's Memoirs of the Pilgrims, Appendix, page 24.

† Mrs. Adams, the wife of President Adams, visited Leyden in Sept. 12, 1786, and under the inspiration of an imaginary scene, thus writes—"I would not omit to mention that I visited the church at Leyden, in which our forefathers worshipped when they fled from hierarchical tyranny and persecution. I felt a respect and veneration, upon entering the doors, like what the ancients paid to their Druids." This church was pointed out to Prince, the American annalist, in 1714, by some of the oldest inhabitants, who learned from their parents that the building was devoted to English worship by the Separatists. This appears to have been an error arising from the misapprehension of the parties respecting the two different congregations which had co-existed in the city, and designated, in common parlance, "English Puritans." The Separatist church having become extinct nearly a century, and having no historical existence in the place, the two might easily have been confounded at that distance of time.

Mr. Sumner has thoroughly investigated this subject, and his conclusion, as stated in this note, appears inevitable. *Vide* Memoirs of the Pilgrims at Leyden, pages 9—14.

call from the members to become their pastor, and was ordained to the office at their united and urgent request, having Mr. Brewster as his ruling elder. Under the trying circumstances in which the church was placed at Scrooby, it is probable that the formal call to the pastorship had not been given to Mr. Robinson, though he officiated as their minister.

It has been suggested previously, that Mr. Robinson did not receive "full orders" when connected with the Established church; and this might be a reason for being ordained at the present time. But even apart from this consideration, and had he been fully ordained in the national church, he would wish to be re-ordained by his own church at Leyden, and thus carry out the principle for which he so earnestly contended in his controversy with Murton and Bernard.* He regarded the ministry of the Church of England as "a false ministry," derived as it was from the Church of Rome, and therefore to be repudiated by all who, acknowledging Christ as the Supreme Head of the Church, separated from her communion; and consequently, re-ordination would be indispensable.

The ordination was evidently performed by the church itself. Mr. Robinson says, "I was ordained publicly, upon the solemn call of the church in which I serve, both in respect of the ordainers and the ordained."† He constantly insists, in his reference to the subject, that ordination is a church act, and for a specific church, and cannot be performed scripturally by any other parties called in to officiate on the occasion. He makes exception only in the case of the apostles, and the extraordinary officers of the apostolic churches, as Timothy and Titus, who were specially called "to ordain elders in every city."

* *Vide* vol. i. Defence of the Synod, &c., pages 452, 3, and vol. ii. A Justification, &c., pages 370—450.

† *Vide* vol. i. Defence of the Synod of Dort, &c., pages 463, 4.

Settled over his flock, he zealously devoted himself to study and to labour on their behalf. He addicted himself especially to theological studies, and frequently attended the lectures of the most distinguished and learned professors in the university. He became eventually one of its members. This privilege was not obtained till six years after his settlement at Leyden. The reason of this delay does not appear; but, as Mr. Sumner suggests, it is probable that objections were raised against him, as being an exile, and that the council were indisposed to confer the peculiar privileges of the university on a person so obnoxious to the English hierarchy at home.

The following is a copy of his admission, taken from the MS. register of members:—

1615.
Sept 5° Joannes Robintsonus. Anglus
Coss. permissu. Ann. xxxix.
Stud. Theol. alit Familiam.

This incorporation with the university placed Mr. Robinson beyond the control of the town magistrates, and in addition to other privileges, entitled him to receive, free of town and state duties, half a tun of beer every month, and about ten gallons of wine every three months.*

The Calvinistic and Arminian controversies were rife at this period. The "Five Points" were daily battled for in the arena of the university, as they were the subjects of eager contest at a subsequent period in the Synod of Dort. Polyander and Episcopius were the leading antagonists at Leyden. Mr. Robinson constantly attended their lectures, with the view of becoming thoroughly acquainted with the mysterious themes involved in these discussions. He took the Calvinistic view of inspired truth, and became an earnest advocate of the doctrines now generally held by

* Sumner's Memoirs, pages 18, 19.

"Modern Calvinists." His "Defence of the Synod of Dort," and his animadversions on "Mr. Smyth's Confession," contain expositions of his views of doctrinal truth. He plunged deeper into the profundities of the Divine decrees than modern theologians are disposed to venture; and conceded a more direct agency in the permission of evil than would be allowed by Calvinistic divines of the present day. But strenuous as he was for the doctrines, he was not less so for the duties of Christianity. He regarded them as inseparable: the one supplying the motive power to the performance of the other; the duties illustrating the doctrines; and belief and practice being together necessary to constitute the perfect Christian.*

Mr. Robinson was solicited by Polyander, Festus Hommius, and other professors, about this time, (1612,) to enter the lists against Episcopius, and conduct a public discussion on the great doctrinal questions of the day, with that distinguished man. He modestly declined the overture, alleging his incompetency, but, probably, because anticipating little good from such an exhibition. Still, pressed by his friends, he at length yielded; and for three days the discussion was carried on between himself and his learned antagonist, and terminated, as they declared, in the perfect triumph of their advocate and champion.†

The Arminian doctrines becoming extensively adopted by the national clergy, the States-General of Holland—the patrons and conservators of the national church!—summoned the celebrated "Synod of Dort," in 1618-19, to adjudicate on these controverted points.

The "Synod" pronounced its decision in favour of

* *Vide* vol. i. Defence of the Doctrine, &c. chap. i.—v. pp. 265—485. Vol. iii. On Communion, &c. chap. vi. pp. 237—274.

† *Vide* Bradford, in Young's Chronicles, pages 40, 41. Winslow's Narrative in Young, page 392.

Calvinism. Politicians and divines judged this would be a death-blow to Arminianism; the followers of Arminius were to be silenced for ever; and Episcopius, the distinguished Professor at Leyden, must bow in the dust before the "Acta" of the conclave. Alas, for the decrees of councils! Episcopius and his adherents stood firm and erect, notwithstanding the solemn deliverances and angry menaces of the orthodox divines. Another power must therefore be invoked to enforce compliance with the decrees of the Synod, or punish the recusants for their obstinacy!

"The States-General soon confirmed this decree of the Synod. This being done, every preacher was called upon for subscription to the creed which the Synod had prescribed; and such as refused were at once deposed from office. Episcopius and his colleagues, who had been present at the Synod of Dort, were detained, by order of the government, at Dort, until the meeting of the commissaries of the States-General. They were then called upon, to know whether they would suspend their ministerial functions, cease writing or publishing their opinions, &c. This they declined to do. On the 27th June, 1619, they were summoned to the Hague by the States-General, and called upon to know whether they were ready to subscribe an agreement to abide by the terms which the commissioners had prescribed. This all but one (H. Leo) refused to do. Sentence of banishment was then pronounced upon them. They asked leave to return under escort to their homes, so as to put in order their family affairs, collect their dues, and discharge their debts. This was refused; and they were sent the next day, under the charge of an armed guard, to their respective places of banishment.

"In regard to the remonstrant preachers generally of Holland, they were not only forbidden to perform the duties of their office, but their flocks were forbidden to

assemble for the purposes of worship. Violent contests of course ensued all over the land. In some places blood was spilled, and life sacrificed. About two hundred remonstrant preachers were deposed; among the rest, John Gerard Vossius, regent of the Theological College at Leyden, lost his place. Caspar Barlæus, a famous Latin poet of those times, and Peter Bertius, a celebrated geographer, both of Leyden, also lost their places. The storm swept away even civilians also, who manifested any favouritism for the party of the remonstrants."*

Mr. Sumner, in page 20, reflects on Mr. Robinson for the part he took in these controversies:—"It is to be lamented that in these discussions Robinson is found taking the part of the bigots. But principles, in a certain sense, change with times, and it would be unjust to judge his conduct by the standard of other days than his own. There are few, I think, among the sons of the Pilgrims, who would not wish to find him ranged with the friends, rather than with the persecutors and final butchers of the wise, the just, the generous Barneveldt."

It is to be regretted that Mr. Sumner could find no softer term than "bigots," by which to characterize the associates of Mr. Robinson; or should have attempted to implicate him in the unrighteous and cruel proceedings of the "States," in the banishment of the Arminian professors and ministers on account of their religious tenets; and in the execution of that distinguished patriot, advocate, and statesman, Barneveldt,—the friend, indeed, of the remonstrants, but the alleged plotter against the authority of his prince, and in which character, however unjustly, he was beheaded, May 13th, 1619.†

There is no evidence to prove that Mr. Robinson ever countenanced or justified these proceedings. Indeed, his

* *Vide* Biblical Repository, vol. i., art. Arminius, pages 257, 258.

† *Vide* Brand's History of the Reformation, &c. book 43.

sentiments, spirit, and character would shield him from all suspicion on this ground. The accidental circumstance, therefore, that he held disputations with Episcopius in the presence of the Leyden Professors, should not subject him to the slightest suspicion, however qualifiedly expressed, of having taken the part of the "bigots;" or of sympathizing in the slightest degree with the "persecutors and final butchers of Barneveldt." Indeed, the imputation is an anachronism, as this sad, unjust, and tragical event did not take place till seven years after Mr. Robinson's public advocacy of the doctrines in question.

Amidst these national controversies and contests, Mr. Robinson pursued "the even tenor of his way." His time was fully occupied in his ministerial, pastoral, and literary labours. His pen was in constant requisition. Scarcely had he settled at Leyden before he commenced authorship. The first known production of his pen was his "Answer to the Censorious Epistle" of Joseph (Bishop) Hall. This was followed by his elaborate defence of the "Separation," in reply to Bernard. Other Treatises, Letters, Essays, &c., followed in due succession, proving that their author was a man of application and perseverance, of extensive reading, and diligent research. His writings are varied in their character, and adapted specially to the controversies of the day. Many of the questions he debated are still undetermined. The doctrinal, ecclesiastical, and ritual difficulties, which perplexed our ancestors more than two centuries since, remain unsolved; but considerable assistance may be obtained from some of Mr. Robinson's works towards their solution. He wrote earnestly, and expressed himself sometimes rather warmly. The controversialists of those times were not over soft and bland in their language towards each other; but Mr. Robinson has fewer of these lingual asperities than most of his contemporaries. The existence of these,—thorns on roses,—must be regretted. He was a

man of a large and catholic soul, of a warm and loving heart; and if terms are employed by him, occasionally indicating the contrary, they must be attributed rather to the ardour of composition than the uncharitableness of his spirit. His affectionate disposition and amenity of manners, secured the respect and esteem, not only of his flock, but of the pastors and members of other churches; and conciliated the regards of many others, who from national partialities, were disposed, at first, to look rather suspiciously on him and his fellow-exiles.

Mr. Robinson's public labours were necessarily restricted to the people of his charge. Little room or licence was allowed for attempts to proselyte the natives. Difference of language was a barrier to progress. The Dutch functionaries, liberal to the last degree in allowing the full exercise of his office among his own people, would not be disposed to tolerate any efforts to gain over others to the cause of the exiles.

This limitation of labour formed one of the strongest inducements for a removal to other lands. Both Mr. Robinson, and his ruling elder, Mr. Brewster, together with the more active spirits in their church, felt a strong and intense desire to diffuse their principles and to enlarge the kingdom of Christ. It was a source of deep regret that their efforts were circumscribed both by their position and their language. Convinced that the cause they espoused was the cause of truth and righteousness, and that its extension would promote the well-being and happiness of mankind, they were desirous of proceeding where scope could be found for their zeal and energies. Bradford expresses himself with sweet simplicity on this point:—"They had a great hope and inward zeal of laying some good foundation, or at least to make some way thereunto, for the propagating and advancing the gospel of the kingdom of Christ in these remote parts of the world, though they should be but as

stepping-stones unto others for performing of so great a work." *

Thankful for the toleration they enjoyed in Holland, yet as British subjects, though exiled, they cherished a strong and loyal attachment to the British crown, and were ready to make any sacrifice, except that of conscience, to live under the protection of the British laws. The new settlements, or plantations, on the American coast, which had been formed under British auspices, appeared to present favourable openings for the purpose contemplated, as well as to enable them to secure a better livelihood than Leyden could afford. Frequent consultations were held between Mr. Robinson, and his elder and deacons, on the subject; and when it had assumed a definite shape, they convened the church for its consideration and discussion. The question of emigration was fully and fairly debated, the difficulties and advantages were thoroughly canvassed, and the resolution was at length prayerfully and deliberately adopted, that they would be prepared to emigrate when and whithersoever the providence of God might direct.

The reasons alleged for removal were not exclusively of a religious character. Secular motives are allowable and proper. Here was a small community, in a strange land, depending for their liberty and support on the forbearance and kindness of strangers. Their numbers were now gradually diminishing; they gained few accessions either from other British residents, or their Dutch friends. The expatriations from England were fewer than in former years. Persecution was losing its terrors in the mother country, and hopeful indications that better days were coming, induced many, who sympathized with the exiles, still to remain in their native land. The young men at Leyden, finding little occupation, were enlisting into the army, or becoming sailors, and thus leaving their homes

* *Vide* Bradford, in Young's Chronicles, page 47.

and friends. Other young persons were intermarrying with Dutch families, and, becoming naturalized, were relinquishing their English associates and were fast losing their native tongue and manners; while the entire society, composed of persons who, having no property, or having sacrificed it all for conscience' sake, and therefore obliged to labour for a livelihood, found extreme difficulty to obtain employment sufficient for the maintenance of themselves and their families. In addition, the general desecration of the Sabbath, and licentiousness of manners, in Holland, weighed powerfully on the minds of the more serious part of the people, and awakened a strong desire to remove where these causes of moral deterioration might not exist to so fearful an extent.*

The Dutch authorities, learning the English exiles intended to emigrate, anxious to retain them as subjects and friends, offered to locate them in any other part of the United Provinces, or in any of their distant colonies, and moreover to furnish them with a free passage, and with a merely nominal freightage for their live stock and goods. This offer they respectfully declined, their patriotic feelings inducing them to prefer being British colonists, whatever the difficulties or hardships they might have to encounter.†

Various places were proposed as desirable settlements. Guiana, the West Indies, Virginia, were severally considered. The last was judged the preferable situation, if they might be allowed to originate a new colony by themselves, and establish it on their own peculiar principles. Mr. Robinson, as the devoted pastor, now preached on their special duties at that crisis, and arranged special seasons for fasting and prayer. Mr. Carver, one of the deacons, and Mr. Cushman, one of the members of the

* *Vide* Bradford, in Young's Chronicles, pages 44—51.

† Young's Chronicles, p. 42.

church, were despatched to England as agents of the exiled company, to seek permission of the king to settle in some part of Virginia, to colonize which, patents had already been issued and a chartered company formed. Various delays took place, and the negotiations were at times frustrated through the disinclination of the Sovereign and his ecclesiastical advisers, to encourage settlers adverse to the English Church. The influence of the Sandys family,* under whom Mr. Brewster was formerly a tenant at Scrooby, was of eminent service at this juncture. An interesting letter is preserved, written by Mr. Robinson and Mr. Brewster to Sir Edwin Sandys, in answer to one sent by him for some further explanations respecting the intending emigrants, of which the following is a copy:—

"*To Sir Edwin Sandys.*

"Right Worshipful,

"Our humble duties remembered, in our own, our messenger's, and our church's name, with all thankful acknowledgment of your singular love, expressing itself, as otherwise, so more especially in your great care and earnest endeavour of our good in this weighty business about Virginia, which the less able we are to requite, we shall think ourselves the more bound to commend in our prayers unto God for recompense, whom as for the present you rightly behold in our endeavours, so shall we not be wanting on our parts, (the same God assisting us,) to return all answerable fruit and respect unto the labour of your love bestowed upon us. We have, with the best speed and consideration withal that we could, set down our requests in writing, subscribed, as you willed, with the hands of the greatest part of our congregation, and have sent the same unto the council by our agent, a deacon of our church, John Carver, unto whom we have also re-

* *Vide* page xviii, *supra*.

quested a gentleman of our company to adjoin himself; to the care and discretion of which two we do refer the prosecuting of the business. Now we persuade ourselves, right worshipful, that we need not to provoke your godly and loving mind to any further or more tender care of us, since you have pleased so far to interest us in yourself, that, under God, above all persons and things in the world we rely upon you, expecting the care of your love, the counsel of your wisdom, and the help and countenance of your authority. Notwithstanding, for your encouragement in the work so far as probabilities may lead, we will not forbear to mention these instances of inducement:—

"1. We verily believe and trust the Lord is with us, unto whom and whose service we have given ourselves in many trials, and that he will graciously prosper our endeavours according to the simplicity of our hearts therein.

"2. We are well weaned from the delicate milk of our mother country, and inured to the difficulties of a strange and hard land, which yet, in great part, we have by patience overcome.

"3. The people are, for the body of them, industrious and frugal, we think we may safely say, as any company of people in the world.

"4. We are knit together as a body in a more strict and sacred bond and covenant of the Lord, of the violation whereof we make great conscience; and by virtue whereof we do hold ourselves straitly tied to all care of each other's good, and of the whole by every, and so mutual.

"5. And lastly, it is not with us as with other men, whom small things can discourage, or small discontentments cause to wish themselves at home again. We know our entertainment in England and Holland. We shall much prejudice both our arts and means by removal; where, if we should be driven to return, we should not hope to recover our present helps and comforts, neither indeed

look ever to attain the like in any other place during our lives, which are now drawing towards their periods.

"These motives we have been bold to tender unto you, which you in your wisdom may also impart to any other our worshipful friends of the council with you, of all whose godly dispositions and loving towards our despised persons we are most glad, and shall not fail by all good means to continue and increase the same. We shall not be further troublesome, but do, with the renewed remembrance of our humble duties to your worship, and (so far as in modesty we may be bold,) to any other of our well-wishers of the council with you, we take our leaves, committing your persons and counsels to the guidance and protection of the Almighty.

"Your's, much bounden in all duty,

"JOHN ROBINSON.

"WILLIAM BREWSTER.*

"*Leyden*, 15*th December*, 1617."

Other letters, illustrative of the religious principles and practices of the pilgrims, are given in vol. iii., Appendix ii. pages 487, 489.

By the good providence of God, and in answer to fervent and importunate prayer, permission to settle in Virginia, North America, was at last obtained; with an assurance, that though no formal or official document was issued, they should not be disturbed or injured on account of their peculiar religious opinions and practices. The agents returned, and reported to the brethren the progress they had made. A day of humiliation, thanksgiving, and prayer, was agreed on to seek Divine direction in the present position of their affairs. The day was devoutly kept, and Mr. Robinson preached on 1 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4; "And David's men said unto him, Behold, we be

* *Vide* Young's Chronicles, pages 59—62.

afraid here in Judah; how much more then if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines? Then David inquired of the Lord yet again. And the Lord answered him and said, Arise, go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand."

At the close of the devotional exercises, the church and congregation entered on a discussion respecting the parties that should go first to the new settlement, and prepare for the reception of the others; it was, at length, resolved—"that it was best for one part of the church to go at first, and the other to stay, viz., the youngest and strongest part to go. Secondly, they that went should freely offer themselves. Thirdly, if the major part went, the pastor to go with them; if not, the elder only. Fourthly, if the Lord should frown upon our proceedings, then those that went to return, and the brethren that remained still there, to assist and be helpful to them; but if God should be pleased to favour them that went, then they also should endeavour to help over such as were poor and ancient, and willing to come."*

The volunteers for the first adventure were in the minority, and in consequence, Mr. Brewster, the ruling elder, and assistant to the pastor,† was appointed to take the ministerial oversight of the emigrants, both during the passage and in the colony, till either Mr. Robinson or some pastor from England should arrive.

The property and effects of such as were about to embark, were now sold, and the produce, with the contributions of those who remained, was thrown into a common stock, out of which the expenses of the ship, the outfit, and the voyage, were to be defrayed. A vessel of sixty tons, called the *Speedwell*, was purchased in Holland,

* Winslow's Brief Narrative, in Young's Chronicles, page 383.

† Young's Chronicles, pages 77, 78.

in which Mr. Cushman and Mr. Carver, who had negotiated the affairs of the society with the Virginia Company, with Mr. Weston, an English merchant, sailed for London, to make the final arrangements with the company and with the merchant adventurers, who had offered the settlers a loan, on sufficiently hard terms, for seven years, and also to hire another ship for freight, to accompany the *Speedwell* across the Atlantic.*

The conditions having been mutually agreed on betwixt the company, the merchants and the Leyden agents returned with the two vessels to Delft Haven, the port of Leyden. On their arrival, all needful preparations were speedily made; and on the twenty-first day of July, 1620, the whole congregation met for humiliation and prayer, when Mr Robinson preached, with deep emotion, from Ezra viii. 21, 22:—"Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen, to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken to the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him, but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him."

* "Every person above sixteen was to be counted as ten pounds in the capital stock: and the 'merchant adventurer' who advanced one hundred pounds in England, was to receive, at the end of seven years, as much of the profits of the colony as did *ten* of its hard-toiling founders; and this, in addition to a share of the land they had brought under cultivation, and the buildings they had raised. The colonists were not even allowed the liberty possessed at the present day by a Valachian serf or a Spanish slave, to work two days in the week for themselves individually; but were compelled by their agreement to toil untiringly for seven years, and always for the benefit of the company. Memoirs of the Pilgrims at Leyden, by George Sumner, page 22. *Vide* also, Young's Pilgrims, pages 81—85.

He closed his discourse with appropriate and judicious counsels to the following effect:—

Parting Advice.

"We are now ere long to part asunder, and the Lord knoweth whether ever he should live to see our faces again. But whether the Lord had appointed it or not, he charged us before God and his blessed angels, to follow him no further than he followed Christ; and if God should reveal anything to us by any other instrument of his, to be as ready to receive it as ever we were to receive any truth by his ministry; for he was very confident the Lord had more truth and light yet to break forth out of his holy Word. He took occasion also miserably to bewail the state and condition of the reformed churches, who were come to a period in religion, and would go no further than the instruments of their reformation. As, for example, the Lutherans, they could not be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw; for whatever part of God's will he had further imparted and revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it. And so also, saith he, you see the Calvinists, they stick where he left them; a misery much to be lamented; for though they were precious shining lights in their times, yet God had not revealed his whole will to them; and were they now living, saith he, they would be as ready and willing to embrace further light, as that they had received. Here also he put us in mind of our church covenant, at least that part of it whereby we promise and covenant with God and one with another, to receive whatsoever light or truth shall be made known to us from his written Word; but withal exhorted us to take heed what we received for truth, and well to examine and compare it and weigh it with other scriptures of truth before we received it. For, saith he, it is not possible the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick

antichristian darkness, and that full perfection of knowledge should break forth at once.

"Another thing he commended to us was, that we should use all means to avoid and shake off the name of Brownist, being a mere nick-name and brand, to make religion odious, and the professors of it, to the Christian world. And to that end, said he, I should be glad if some godly minister would go over with you before my coming; for, said he, there will be no difference between the unconformable ministers and you, when they come to the practice of the ordinances out of the kingdom. And so advised us, by all means, to endeavour to close with the godly party of the kingdom of England, and rather to study union than division, viz., how near we might, possibly without sin, close with them, than in the least measure to affect division or separation from them. And be not loth to take another pastor or teacher, saith he: for that flock that hath two shepherds, is not endangered, but secured by it."*

* Winslow's Narrative, in Young's Chronicles, p. 396.

Mr. Sumner doubts whether Mr. Robinson delivered such a discourse as that described in the text; or, at least, whether the extract now given contains an authentic statement of his advice. I see no reason to doubt either. Mr. Robinson, as a faithful pastor, would not be likely to part with his friends without preaching a farewell discourse; and the parting advice, as given by Mr. Winslow, bears undoubted marks of genuineness, being so thoroughly characteristic of Mr. Robinson's sentiment and spirit. Mr. Sumner demurs to Mr. Winslow's admissibility as a witness, because he wrote his narrative twenty-six years after the event, and because he was sent to England as the advocate of the Pilgrims in New Plymouth, against their accusers in the mother country. But surely a more competent witness could not be found, though his reminiscences extend over twenty-six years. He was one of Mr. Robinson's flock, at Leyden, having lived "three years under his ministry;" he was present at the service, and heard the discourse, and, as an honest witness, does not pretend to give the advice *verbatim*, but simply the substance of his

After the solemnities of the day were closed, the members of the church who were to remain at Leyden "feasted us that were to go," observes Mr. Winslow, "at our pastor's house, being large: where we refreshed ourselves, after tears, with singing of psalms, making joyful melody in our hearts, as well as with the voice, there being many of the congregation very expert in music: and indeed it was the sweetest melody that ever mine ears heard. After this they accompanied us to Delft's Haven, where we were to embark, and there feasted us again; and after prayer performed, by our pastor, where a flood of tears was poured out, they accompanied us to the ship, but were not able to speak one to another, for the abundance of sorrow to part. But we only going aboard (the ship lying to the quay and ready to set sail, the wind being fair), we gave them a volley of small shot and three pieces of ordnance, and so, lifting up our hands to each other, and hearts for each other to the Lord our God, we departed, and found his presence with us in the midst of our manifold straits he carried us through." *

Among the spectators on this memorable morning of July 22nd, 1620, were many Christian friends from Amsterdam and neighbouring towns. They hastened to mingle

remarks; but states that, "amongst other wholesome instructions and exhortations he, Mr. Robinson, used these expressions, *or to the same purpose.*" Besides, the "Brief Narrative," by Mr. Advocate Winslow, is written in a calm, simple, truthful style, and contains a statement of facts respecting the parting services at Leyden, confirmed in all points by Governor Bradford in his "History of Plymouth Colony;" why, therefore, should these few recollections of a discourse delivered under very peculiar circumstances, and such as were calculated to impress it deeply on the memory, be suspected as the creations of fancy?

Neal, and other historians, have given the parting advice in the first person, and as if taken verbatim from a copy of the address. This is unjust to Mr. Winslow, as he makes no pretension to such verbal accuracy.

* Young's Chronicles, p. 384.

their prayers and tears with those of the pilgrim fathers on their departure. It was an affecting scene, and, as the vessel was lessening in the distance, the hearts of the spectators, both from Leyden and Amsterdam, were uplifted in fervent prayers for the pilgrim voyagers. They retired to their respective homes, filled with the "joy of grief," and blessing God that their companions and friends had found grace to embark in so good and righteous a cause as that of founding a Christian colony in the remote wildernesses of the Atlantic.

The pilgrims had a prosperous voyage to Southampton, where the *Mayflower* was awaiting them. While completing their preparations, the affectionate and devoted pastor despatched a letter of counsel and advice to his beloved friends, on their conduct towards each other, and the course they should pursue in a foreign land.

"Loving Christian Friends,—

"I do heartily and in the Lord salute you, as being those with whom I am present in my best affections, and most earnest longings after you, though I be constrained for a while to be bodily absent from you. I say constrained, God knowing how willingly, and much rather than otherwise, I would have borne my part with you in this first brunt, were I not by strong necessity held back for the present. Make account of me, in the meanwhile, as of a man divided in myself with great pain, and as (natural bonds set aside) having my better part with you. And though I doubt not but in your godly wisdom you both foresee, and resolve upon that which concerneth your present state and condition, both severally and jointly, yet have I thought it but my duty to add some further spur of provocation to them that run well already; if not because you need it, yet because I owe it in love and duty.

"And first, as we are daily to renew our repentance with

our God, especially for our sins known, and generally for our unknown sins and trespasses, so doth the Lord call us in a singular manner, upon occasions of such difficulty and danger as lieth upon you, to a both more narrow search, and careful reformation of our ways in his sight; lest he, calling to remembrance our sins forgotten by us, or unrepented of, take advantage against us, and in judgment leave us for the same to be swallowed up in one danger or other. Whereas, on the contrary, sin being taken away by earnest repentance, and the pardon thereof from the Lord sealed up unto a man's conscience by his Spirit, great shall be his security and peace in all dangers, sweet his comforts in all distresses, with happy deliverance from all evil, whether in life or in death.

"Now next after this heavenly peace with God and our own consciences, we are carefully to provide for peace with all men, what in us lieth, especially with our associates; and for that end, watchfulness must be had, that we neither at all in ourselves do give, no, nor easily take offence, being given by others. Woe be unto the world for offences; for although it be necessary (considering the malice of Satan and man's corruption) that offences come, yet woe unto that man, or woman either, by whom the offence cometh, saith Christ, Matt. xviii. 7. And if offences in the unseasonable use of things in themselves indifferent be more to be feared than death itself, as the apostle teacheth, 1 Cor. ix. 15, how much more in things simply evil, in which neither honour of God, nor love of man, is thought worthy to be regarded! Neither yet is it sufficient that we keep ourselves by the grace of God, from giving offence, except withal we be armed against the taking of them, when they be given by others. For how unperfect and lame is the work of grace in that person who wants charity to cover a multitude of offences, as the Scripture speaks! Neither are you to be exhorted to this grace only upon the common

grounds of Christianity, which are, that persons ready to take offence, either want charity to cover offences, or wisdom duly to weigh human frailties, or, lastly, are gross, though close hypocrites, as Christ our Lord teacheth, Matt. vii. 1—5; as indeed, in my own experience, few or none have been found which sooner give offence, than such as easily take it; neither have they ever proved sound and profitable members in society, which have nourished this touchy humour. But, besides these, there are divers motives provoking you, above others, to great care and conscience this way. As first, you are many of you strangers, as to the persons, so to the infirmities one of another, and so stand in need of more watchfulness this way; lest, when such things fall out in men and women as you suspected not, you be inordinately affected with them; which doth require at your hands much wisdom and charity, for the covering and preventing of incident offences that way. And lastly, your intended course of civil community will minister continual occasion of offence, and will be as fuel for that fire, except you diligently quench it with brotherly forbearance. And if taking of offence causelessly or easily at men's doings be so carefully to be avoided, how much more heed is to be taken, that we take not offence at God himself: which yet we certainly do, so oft as we do murmur at his providence in our crosses, or bearing patiently such afflictions as wherewith he pleaseth to visit us. Store we up therefore patience against the evil day; without which we take offence at the Lord himself in His holy and just works.

"A fourth thing there is carefully to be provided for, to wit, that with your common employments you join common affections, truly bent upon the general good; avoiding, as a deadly plague of your both common and special comfort, all retiredness of mind for proper advantage, and all singularly affected any manner of way. Let every

man repress in himself, and the whole body in each person, as so many rebels against the common good, all private respects of men's selves not sorting with the general conveniency. And as men are careful not to have a new house shaken with any violence, before it be well settled, and the parts firmly knit, so be you, I beseech you, brethren, much more careful that the house of God, which you are, and are to be, be not shaken with unnecessary novelties, or other oppositions at the first settling thereof.

"Lastly, whereas you are to become a body politic, using amongst yourselves civil government, and are not furnished with any persons of special eminency above the rest to be chosen by you into office of government, let your wisdom and godliness appear not only in choosing such persons as do entirely love, and will diligently promote the common good, but also in yielding unto them all due honour and obedience in their lawful administrations, not beholding in them the ordinariness of their persons, but God's ordinance for your good; nor being like the foolish multitude, who more honour the gay coat than either the virtuous mind of the man, or glorious ordinance of the Lord. But you know better things, and that the image of the Lord's power and authority, which the magistrate beareth, is honourable, in how mean persons soever. And this duty you both may the more willingly and ought the more conscionably to perform, because you are, at least for the present, to have only them for your ordinary governors, which yourselves shall make choice of for that work.

"Sundry other things of importance I could put you in mind of, and of those before mentioned in more words. But I will not so far wrong your godly minds as to think you heedless of these things; there being also divers among you so well able to admonish both themselves and others of what concerneth them. These few things, therefore, and the same in few words, I do earnestly commend

unto your care and conscience, joining therewith my daily incessant prayers unto the Lord, that He who hath made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all rivers of waters, and whose providence is over all His works, especially over all His dear children for good, would so guide and guard you in your ways, as inwardly by His Spirit, so outwardly by the hand of His power, as that both you and we also, for and with you, may have after matter of praising His name all the days of your and our lives. Fare you well, in Him in whom you trust, and in whom I rest.

"An unfeigned well-wisher of your

"happy success in this hopeful voyage,

"JOHN ROBINSON."*

This letter is without date, but internal evidence testifies to its having been written between the period of their embarkation at Delft Haven and their sailing from Southampton; and is further proved to have been written between July 22nd and 27th, by the following letter to Mr. Carver, bearing date July 27th, 1620, in which he refers to the letter addressed to the whole company.

"My Dear Brother,—

"I received, inclosed, your last letter and note of information, which I shall carefully keep and make use of, as there shall be occasion. I have a true feeling of your perplexity of mind, and toil of body; but I hope that you, having always been able so plentifully to administer comfort unto others in their trials, are so well furnished for yourself, as that far greater difficulties than you have yet undergone (though I conceive them to be great enough) cannot oppress you, though they press you, as the apostle speaketh. "The spirit of a man (sustained by the Spirit of God) will sustain his infirmities," Prov. xviii. 14. I doubt

* *Vide* Young's Chronicles, pages 91—96.

not, so will yours; and the better much, when you shall enjoy the presence and help of so many godly and wise brethren, for the bearing of part of your burden; who also will not admit into their hearts the least thought of suspicion of any, the least negligence, at least, presumption, to have been in you, whatsoever they think of others. Now, what shall I say, or write unto you, and your good wife, my loving sister? Even only this I desire, and always shall, mercy and blessing unto you from the Lord, as unto my own soul; and assure yourself that my heart is with you, and that I will not foreslow my bodily coming at the first opportunity. I have written a large letter to the whole, and am sorry I shall not rather speak than write to them; and the more, considering the want of a preacher, which I shall also make some spur to my hastening towards you. I do ever commend my best affection unto you, which if I thought you made any doubt of, I would express in more, and the same more ample and full words. And the Lord, in whom you trust, and whom you serve, ever in this business and journey, guide you with His hand, protect you with His wing, and show you and us His salvation in the end, and bring us in the meanwhile together in the place desired (if such be His good will), for His Christ's sake, Amen.

"Your's

"*July 27th*, 1620. JOHN ROBINSON."*

The two vessels sailed in company from Southampton, on August 5th, 1620, and proceeded as far as Dartmouth, where, on account of the leaky condition of the *Speedwell*, they were obliged to put in for repairs. The ship having been refitted, they again put out to sea, when, after a few days, the captain reported that the vessel could not proceed. They ran into Plymouth Harbour. The vessel was again examined, and found neither suitably rigged,

* Young's Chronicles, pages 89—91.

nor fitted for such a voyage as was contemplated; it was therefore resolved that the *Speedwell* should be sold, and that the *Mayflower* should proceed alone, with as many passengers as she could carry. One hundred and one embarked, leaving nineteen to follow at a future opportunity.

The gallant *Mayflower*, with her precious cargo, left Plymouth Harbour on September 6th, 1620. She encountered severe gales, but weathered them all; but did not reach the American continent till November 9th, 1620. Her destination was the Hudson River; but the wintry blasts, and the perilous shoals, rendered it expedient that they should change their course, and land at Cape Cod. Here they dropped anchor. A party was sent ashore to examine the nature of the coast and the country, and on their return, this Christian band resolved on instant debarkation. Before they left the vessel, however, they entered into mutual engagements with each other, adopted a code of regulations for their colony, and chose one of their number—Mr. Carver—as their governor; and on the memorable eleventh day of November, in the year of grace, 1620, the pilgrims landed on the spot which they designated Plymouth Rock, in remembrance of the last town in England they visited, and where they had been received with so much hospitality and kindness by Christian friends.

On this inhospitable and dreary spot, with the prospect of winter before them, without food but such as was left of their ship's provisions, or they might casually procure on the beach or in the bush, this company of pilgrim exiles, trusting to that gracious Providence which had hitherto been their guide, established themselves both as a colony and a church; and thus has there sprung, from the Separatist Church at Leyden, that mighty commonwealth which now extends over the immeasurable regions of

Northern and Central America, and which is destined to exert a power and influence over the older nations of Europe and the world, the results of which no human sagacity can foresee or predict.*

"Hail to thee, poor little ship *Mayflower* of Delft Haven —poor common-looking ship, hired by common charter-party for coined dollars—caulked with mere oakum and tar—provisioned with vulgarest biscuit and bacon,—yet what ship *Argo*, or miraculous epic ship, built by the sea gods, was other than a foolish bumbarge in comparison! Golden fleeces, or the like, these sailed for, with or without effect. Thou, little *Mayflower*, hadst in thee a veritable Promethean spark—the life-spark of the largest nation on our earth,—so we may already name the Transatlantic Saxon nation. They went seeking leave to hear sermon in their own method, these *Mayflower* Puritans—a most indispensable search; and yet, like Saul, the son of Kish, seeking a small thing, they found this unexpected great thing. Honour to the brave and true! they verily, we say, carry fire from heaven, and have a power that themselves dream not of. Let all men honour Puritanism, since God has so honoured it!"†

On the return of the *Mayflower* to England, tidings of the safe arrival and settlement of the pilgrim fathers were conveyed to Mr. Robinson, and were received by him with the liveliest gratitude and joy. He still cherished towards his expatriated flock the warmest affection. The pastoral relation continuing unbroken, though oceans rolled between, he was solicitous alike for their temporal and spiritual welfare. He sympathized with their difficulties, and rejoiced in their success. Learning that, in consequence of the rigours of the climate and the hardships

* Governor Bradford's History of New Plymouth in Young's Chronicles, page 4.

† Chartism, by Thomas Carlyle, chap. viii. page 80.

incident to their situation, many of the devoted band had fallen by the hand of death during the winter, he immediately addressed to them the following affectionate and sympathizing letter:—

To the Church of God in Plymouth, New England.

"Much beloved Brethren,—

"Neither the distance of place, nor distinction of body, can at all either dissolve or weaken that bond of true Christian affection in which the Lord by his Spirit hath tied us together. My continual prayers are to the Lord for you; my most earnest desire is unto you; from whom I will not longer keep (if God will) than means can be procured to bring with me the wives and children of divers of you and the rest of your brethren, whom I could not leave behind me without great injury both to you and them, and offence to God, and all men. The death of so many, our dear friends and brethren, oh! how grievous hath it been to you to bear, and to us to take knowledge of; which, if it could be mended with lamenting, could not sufficiently be bewailed; but we must go unto them, and they shall not return unto us. And how many, even of us, God hath taken away here, and in England, since your departure, you may elsewhere take knowledge. But the same God has tempered judgment with mercy, as otherwise, so in sparing the rest, especially those by whose godly and wise government you may be, and (I know) are so much helped. In a battle it is not looked for but that divers should die; it is thought well for a side if it get the victory, though with the loss of divers, if not too many, or too great. God, I hope, hath given you the victory, after many difficulties, for yourselves and others; though I doubt not but many do and will remain for you and us all to strive with.

"Brethren, I hope I need not exhort you to obedience unto those whom God hath set over you in church and com-

monwealth, and to the Lord in them. It is a Christian's honour to give honour according to men's places; and his liberty, to serve God in faith, and his brethren in love, orderly, and with a willing and free heart. God forbid! I should need to exhort you to peace, which is the bond of perfection, and by which, all good is tied together, and without which it is scattered. Have peace with God first, by faith in his promises, good conscience kept in all things, and oft renewed by repentance; and so, one with another, for his sake, who is, though three, one; and for Christ's sake, who is one, and as you are called by one Spirit to one hope. And the God of peace and grace and all goodness be with you, in all the fruits thereof plenteously upon your heads now, and for ever. All your brethren here remember you with great love; a general token whereof they have sent you.

"Your's ever in the Lord,

"JNO. ROBINSON.

"*Leyden, Holland, June* 30, *Anno* 1621."*

Mr. Robinson remained contentedly with the remnant of his church at Leyden. He cherished the hope that he with his family, and others, might be speedily summoned by the heroic band, to the shores of the Atlantic. He resolved, however, not to leave, till the wives and children of the brethren who had gone already could accompany him. In the same spirit of benevolence and self-denial which prompted him to remain on the banks of the Humber with the wives and children of the fugitives, he continued at Leyden to support and watch over the more helpless and dependent part of his Christian family.

A letter was sent by Mr. Robinson to his beloved friend, Mr. Brewster, two years after the pilgrims had left Europe, which expresses his earnest desire to embark, but shows

* Young's Chronicles, pages 473—475.

the difficulties of his position, and the improbability of a speedy settlement in Plymouth.

"Loving and dear Friend and Brother,—

"That which I most desire of God in regard of you, namely, the continuance of your life and health, and the safe coming of those sent unto you, that I most gladly hear of, and praise God for the same. And I hope Mrs. Brewster's weak and decayed state of body will have some repairing by the coming of her daughters, and the provisions in this and other ships sent, which I hear are made for you; which makes us with the more patience bear our languishing state, and the deferring of our desired transportation, (which I call desired, rather than hoped for,) whatsoever you are borne in hand with by others. For first, there is no hope at all that I know, nor can conceive of, of any new stock to be raised for that end, so that all must depend upon returns from you, in which are so many uncertainties, as that nothing with any certainty can thence be concluded. Besides, howsoever, for the present, the "adventurers" allege nothing but want of money, which is an invincible difficulty; yet if that be taken away by you, others, without doubt, will be found. For the better clearing of this, we must dispose the adventurers into three parts; and of them some five or six (as I conceive) are absolutely bent for us above others. Other five or six are our bitter, professed adversaries. The rest, being the body, I conceive to be honestly minded, and lovingly also towards us; yet such as have others, namely, the forward preachers, nearer unto them than us, and whose course, so far as there is any difference, they would advance, rather than ours. Now what a hank these men have over the professors you know, and I persuade myself that for me, they, of all others, are unwilling I should be transported; especially such as have an eye that way them-

selves, as thinking, if I come there, their market will be marred in many regards. And for these adversaries, if they have but half their will to their malice, they will stop my course when they see it intended, for which this delaying serveth them very opportunely; and as one rusty jade can hinder by hanging back, more than two or three can or will, (at least if they be not very free,) draw forward, so will it be in this case. A notable experiment of this they gave in your messenger's presence, constraining the company to promise that none of the money now gathered should be expended or employed to the help of any of us towards you.

"Now touching the question propounded by you, I judge it not lawful for you, being a ruling elder, as Rom. xii. 7, 8, and 1 Tim. v. 17, opposed to the elders that teach, and exhort, and labour in the word and doctrine, to which the sacraments are annexed, to administer them, nor convenient, if it were lawful.

"Be you heartily saluted, and your wife with you, both from me and mine. Your God and our's, and the God of all His, bring us together, if it be His will, and keep us in the meanwhile and always, to His glory, and make us serviceable to His majesty, and faithful to the end. Amen.

"Your very loving brother,

"JOHN ROBINSON.*

"*Leyden, Dec.* 20, 1623."

The latter part of this letter evinces the tenacity with which Mr. Robinson held his opinion respecting church order: not consenting that the Lord's Supper should be administered even by his elder, Mr. Brewster, though the church had no pastor with them, nor was likely to obtain one till some distant period. Contending as he does in his work for the right of the church to select and ordain its ministers, it is surprising that he should have objected,

* Vide Young's Chronicles, pages 475—477.

in such a case as this, to the appointment of Mr. Brewster to this duty, at least till he could himself come over and preside amongst them. The principle on which only he could consistently justify such advice as he gave, was the idea that the two churches, in Leyden and in New Plymouth, were but one, and that no change in its organization or officers was at present desirable. This surely is consistency carried to an extreme. The ordinance was of more importance than the office. It was instituted before the office; and, being a social institution, the church surely was competent to its administration, when a pastor could not be obtained.

"Hoping against hope," he earnestly desired to exercise his pastoral function for a few years, among his Transatlantic friends. But the Great Head of the Church was pleased to arrange otherwise, and to call him away from the scenes of toil and suffering on earth, to the repose and blessedness of heaven. He laboured in his spiritual and ministerial vocation during five years after the colonization of part of his church. He sickened on Saturday, February 22nd, 1625, but preached twice on the following day. An "inward ague" consumed him. His strength gradually failed, and in eight days he was numbered with the dead. The first day of March, 1625, witnessed his departure to brighter regions—a day of deep lamentation to his church at Leyden and in America, and of poignant regret to the friends of the Redeemer, both in Holland and in England, by whom he was known and his character appreciated. He died in the prime and vigour of his days, and in the full maturity of his powers, being only fifty years of age. No record of his dying experience or sayings is preserved. He retained the full possession of his faculties. He was visited constantly by members of his church. They were importunate in their prayers that he might be spared. But his testimony was concluded,

his work was done. The foundations of a growing church and empire were deeply laid on distant shores by those "spiritual heroes" whom he had trained in intelligence and piety. He was no longer needed. The pilgrims must cease from man, and look only to Him whose pillar of cloud and of fire had hitherto conducted them, and by whose presence and blessing alone they could advance and prosper.

Mr. Robinson was conveyed to his long home amidst the tears and regrets of his family and friends. Mr. Winslow states, that such was the respect in which Mr. Robinson was held by the citizens, that "when God took him away from them and us by death, the University and ministers of the city accompanied him to his grave with all their accustomed solemnities, bewailing the great loss, that not only that particular church had, whereof he was pastor, but some of the chief of them sadly affirmed that all the churches of Christ sustained a loss by the death of that worthy instrument of the Gospel."* Mr. Prince also states that he was informed, when at Leyden, "that he was had in high esteem both by the city and University, for his learning, piety, moderation and excellent accomplishments; the magistrates, ministers, scholars and most of the gentry mourned his death as a public loss, and followed him to the grave,"† and moreover, that he was buried in the "chan-

* Winslow's Narrative, in Young's Chronicles, pages 392, 393.

† Prince's New England Chronology, page 238.

Mr. Sumner demurs to the accuracy of both these statements:—he regards them as mere exaggerations and embellishments of truth, and calculated, if not designed, to give a factitious honour to the memory of the Leyden pastor. Mr. Winslow certainly was not in Holland at the time, but his visit to Leyden was only about twenty years subsequently, when many of the congregation, and of his former fellow-worshippers, were still living, and could give him information respecting the funeral solemnities. There is no improbability that some of the professors of the university of which Mr.

cel" of one of the churches of the city which had been appropriated to the use of his congregation.

The tombs of martyrs and the graves of the illustrious dead have ever been held in veneration. Visits to these hallowed spots are constantly made by those who imbibe their sentiments and seek to walk in their steps. It is not surprising, therefore, that the burial-place of Mr. Robinson should have been eagerly sought after by the descendants of the pilgrim fathers. Mr. Prince states it to have been in "the chancel" of the church, given by the magistrates of the city, and occupied by the exiles. But that church has not been discovered, and the result of Mr. Sumner's researches seems to render it improbable that any building of the kind was ever appropriated to their use.

"It was not without some difficulty that I found at Leyden the place of Robinson's grave, being misled at first by the statement of Prince, that he was buried in a church which had been granted to his congregation. Having sought at the Stadt-House and at other places for some record, without success, I, at last, in a small closet attached to the cathedral church of St. Peter, full of old dust-covered volumes, fell upon one which contained a record of the receipts of the different churches in Leyden, from 1619 to 1629. Most of these receipts were for burial fees; and on

Robinson was a member, and ministers of the city, with whom he lived on terms of intimacy, should join the procession and accompany it to the grave. The plague was indeed in Leyden, but not very prevalent; and as Mr. Robinson had not died of that fell disease, and his friends had visited him to the last moment of existence, there would be no very formidable objection, to the professors and others giving this last testimony of their respect to their beloved friend and associate.

Mr. Prince's statement may be taken with some qualification, as he did not visit Leyden till 1714—nearly a century after the event described—and could receive only traditionary information derived from the ancestors of his friends. He appears evidently to have been misinformed respecting the church and the chancel.

looking over the lists of each church for the year 1625, the year of Robinson's death, I found the receipt for his interment, at the Peter's Kerk, the church in which I then was. The title of this manuscript volume is "Blaffaarden van de Hoofd-kerken, Ad. 1619 tot 1629;" and the receipt for Robinson's burial is in the following words :—

1625 } Openenen en huer van Jan Robens,
10 Mart. } Engels predekant—9 florins.

Or, in English, "Open and hire for John Robens, English preacher—nine florins." This sum of nine florins is the lowest paid for any person whose burial is recorded. Mr. De Pecker, who, under the Director-General at the Hague, is the administrator of the affairs of the churches in Leyden, and who is well acquainted with the mode of interment at different periods, informed me that this sum was paid only for the hire, for a few years, of a place immediately under the pavement, in one of a large number of square pits, containing space sufficient for four coffins. *At the end of seven years, these bodies were all removed.* For tombs which were walled up, the prices paid were much higher. The profession of each person buried is named in the register; and those against whose names the receipt of nine florins is put, were, I found, invariably persons in the humblest walks of life, journeymen weavers, &c., while others, who are noted as mechanics or artisans, were buried in places of fifteen and eighteen florins."

Mr. Robinson died March 1st, 1625; he was buried on the 4th of March. In the Gravenboeck, or Book of Interments, which was deposited in the Stadt Huis, in 1812, the following record appears of Robinson's interment :—

1625.
4 Maart.—Jan Roelends, Predicant van de Engelsche Gemeente, by het Klockhuijs—begraven in de Pieter's Kerk.
Translation.—John Roelends, Preacher of the English sect, by the Belfry—buried in the Peter's Church.

"The church of St. Peter is the oldest in Leyden, and the date of the first building is now quite unknown. In September, 1121, Godebald, twenty-fourth bishop of Utrecht, consecrated it by the name of St. Peter and St. Paul, and in 1339 it was much enlarged."*

The following letters or extracts announce and deplore the departure of Mr. Robinson to his last home. They are taken, as Dr. Young states, "from Governor Bradford's Letter-book, which was recovered about fifty years since, from a grocer's shop in Halifax, Nova Scotia." A considerable portion of the volume had been destroyed before it was discovered to be so valuable a document. The fragment is now preserved with the utmost care, as a precious relic of the devoted man by whom the letters had been collected.

I.

"To his loving Friend, Mr. William Bradford, Governor of Plymouth, in New England, these be, etc.

"Loving and kind Friends, etc.,

"I know not whether ever this will come to your hands, or miscarry, as other of my letters have done; yet in regard of the Lord's dealings with us here, I have had a great desire to write unto you, knowing your desire to bear a part with us, both in our joys and sorrows, as we do with you.

"These, therefore, are to give you to understand that it hath pleased the Lord to take out of this vale of tears, your and our loving and faithful pastor, and my dear and reverend brother, Mr. John Robinson, who was sick some eight days, beginning first to be sick on a Saturday morning; yet the next day, being the Lord's day, he taught us

* *Vide* Sumner's Memoirs of the Pilgrims at Leyden, pages 16, 17, 32.—Printed by the Massachusetts Historical Society.

twice, and the week after, grew every day weaker than other, yet felt no pain, but weakness, all the time of his sickness. The physic he took wrought kindly, in man's judgment, yet he grew every day weaker than other, feeling little or no pain, yet sensible to the very last. He fell sick the twenty-second of February, and departed this life on the first of March. He had a continual inward ague, but I thank the Lord, was free of the plague, so that all his friends could come freely to him; and if either prayers, tears, or means would have saved his life, he had not gone hence. But he having faithfully finished his course, and performed his work, which the Lord had appointed him here to perform, he now rests with the Lord in eternal happiness; we wanting him, and all church governors, not having one at present, that is a governing officer among us. Now for ourselves, here left, (I mean the whole church,) we still, by the mercy of God, continue and hold close together in peace and quietness, and so I hope we shall do, though we be very weak; wishing (if such were the will of God) that you and we were again together in one, either there or here; but seeing it is the will of the Lord, thus to dispose of things, we must labour with patience to rest contented, till it please the Lord otherwise to dispose of things. * * * * *

"Your assured loving friend,

"*Leyden, April 28th, Anno* 1625. ROGER WHITE."

II.

The Leyden people to Bradford and Brewster.

"To our most dear and entirely beloved Brethren, Mr. William Bradford, and Mr. William Brewster, grace, mercy, and true peace be multiplied from God our Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

"Most dear Christian Friends and Brethren,

"As it is no small grief unto you, so is it no less unto

us, that we are constrained to live thus disunited each from other, especially considering our affections each unto other, for the mutual edifying and comfort of both, in these evil days wherein we live, if it pleased the Lord to bring us again together; than which, as no outward thing could be more comfortable unto us, or is more desired of us, if the Lord see it good, so see we no hope of means of accomplishing the same, except it come from you; and therefore must with patience rest in the work and will of God, performing our duties to him and you asunder; whom we are not any way able to help, but by our continual prayers to him for you, and sympathy of affections with you, for the troubles which befall you; till it please the Lord to reunite us again. But, our dearly beloved brethren, concerning your kind and respective letter, howsoever written by one of you, yet as we continue with the consent (at least in affection) of you both, although we cannot answer your desire and expectation, by reason it hath pleased the Lord to take to himself out of this miserable world our dearly beloved pastor, yet for ourselves we are minded, as formerly, to come unto you, when, and as, the Lord affordeth means; though we see little hope thereof at present, as being unable of ourselves, and that our friends will help us, we see little hope. And now, brethren, what shall we say further unto you? Our desire and prayer to God is (if such were his good will and pleasure), we might be re-united for the edifying and mutual comfort of both, which, when he sees fit, he will accomplish. In the mean time, we commit you unto him, and to the word of his grace; whom we beseech to guide, and direct, both you and us, in all his ways, according to that his Word, and to bless all our lawful endeavours for the glory of his name, and the good of his people. Salute, we pray you, all the church and brethren with you, to whom we would have sent this letter, if we knew it could

not be prejudicial unto you, as we hope it cannot; yet fearing the worst, we thought fit either to direct it to you, our two beloved brethren, leaving it to your goodly wisdom and discretion, to manifest our mind to the rest of our loving friends and brethren, as you see most convenient. And thus entreating you to remember us in your prayers, as we also do you, we for this time commend you, and all your affairs, to the direction, and protection of the Almighty, and rest,

"Your assured loving friends,

"And brethren in the Lord,

"FRANCIS JESSOP,
THOMAS NASH,
THOMAS BLOSSOM,
ROGER WHITE,
RICHARD MAISTERSON.

"*Leyden, Nov. 30th, A.D.* 1625."

The following letter was written by Mr. Blossom, one of the members of the church, who had returned in the *Speedwell* to London, and thence proceeded to Leyden again; but who, in a few years after Mr. Robinson's death, found means of emigrating to New Plymouth, and became a deacon of the church.

III.

Thomas Blossom to Governor Bradford.

"Beloved Sir,—

"Kind salutations, &c. I have thought good to write to you, concerning the cause as it standeth both with you and us. We see, alas, what frustrations and disappointments it pleaseth the Lord to send in this our course, good in itself, and according to godliness taken in hand, and for good and lawful ends, who yet pleaseth not to prosper as we are, for reasons best known to himself; and which also

nearly concerns us to consider of, whether we have sought the Lord in it as we see, or not. That the Lord hath singularly preserved life in the business to great admiration, giveth me good hope that he will, (if our sins hinder not,) in his appointed time, give a happy end unto it. On the contrary, when I consider how it pleaseth the Lord to cross those means that should bring us together, being now so far off, or farther than ever, in our apprehension; as also to take that means away which would have been so comfortable unto us, in that course, both for wisdom of counsel, as also for our singular help in our course of godliness; whom the Lord (as it were) took away even as fruit falleth before it was ripe, when neither length of days, nor infirmity of body, did seem to call for his end. The Lord even then took him away, as it were in his anger: whom, if tears would have held, he had remained to this day. The loss of his ministry was very great unto me, for I ever counted myself happy in the enjoyment of it, notwithstanding all the crosses and losses otherwise I sustained. Yet indeed the manner of his taking away hath more troubled me, as fearing the Lord's anger in it, that, as I said, in the ordinary course of things, might still have remained, as also the singular service he might have yet done in the church of God. Alas! dear friends, our state and cause in religion by his death, being wholly destitute of any that may defend our cause as it should against our adversaries; that we may take up that doleful complaint in the Psalm, that there is "no prophet left among us," nor any that knoweth how long. Alas! you would fain have had him with you, and he would as fain have come to you. Many letters and much speech hath been about his coming to you, but never any solid course propounded for his going; if the course propounded the last year had appeared to have been certain, he would have gone, though with two or three families. I know no man amongst us knew his

mind better than I did, about those things; he was loth to leave the church, yet I know also, that he would have accepted the worst conditions, which in the largest extent of a good conscience could be taken, to have come to you. For myself, and all such others as have formerly minded coming, it is much-what the same, if the Lord afford means,

* * * * * * *

"Yours to his power,

"THOMAS BLOSSOM.

"*Leyden, December* 15, *Anno* 1625."*

Mr. Robinson left a widow to deplore the loss of so beloved and devoted an husband, and it is believed also that two sons, John and Isaac, survived their father. They continued to reside at Leyden for a few years; and, as Hoornbeck the Leyden professor states, in consequence of contentions that arose among the surviving members of the church respecting hearing of the Word, united themselves to the Reformed Church in Holland.†

Dr. Allen's paper on the descendants of Mr. Robinson is appended to this Memoir, and gives an ample and interesting account of their history and dispersion.

SECTION V.

MR. ROBINSON, HIS CHARACTER AND WRITINGS.

No records of Mr. Robinson's private history or religious experience are extant. His character and attainments must, therefore, be judged of by his writings, and the few testimonies that were borne respecting them by his friends and his foes. Those who knew him intimately speak of his character in terms of admiration. His deep piety and

* *Vide* Young's Chronicles, pages 478—488.

† *Vide* Hoornbeck Summa Controversarium Religionis, page 741. Ed. 1658.

extensive erudition, his amiable, affectionate, and catholic spirit, his exemplary conduct and his unspotted reputation, are themes of their eulogy and praise.

He was "a man not easily to be paralleled for all things, whose singular virtues we shall not take upon us here to describe. Neither need we, for they so well are known both by friends and enemies. As he was a man learned and of solid judgment, and of a quick and sharp wit, so was he also of a tender conscience and very sincere in all his ways; a hater of hypocrisy and dissimulation, and would be very plain with his best friends. He was very courteous, affable, and sociable in his conversation, and towards his own people especially. He was an acute and expert disputant, very quick and ready, and had much bickering with the Arminians, who stood more in fear of him than of any in the university. He was never satisfied in himself until he had searched any cause or argument he had to deal in, thoroughly and to the bottom; and we have heard him sometimes say to his familiars 'that many times both in writing and disputation, he knew he had sufficiently answered others, but many times not himself:' and was ever desirous of any light, and the more able, learned, and holy the persons were, the more he desired to confer and reason with them. He was very profitable in his ministry and comfortable to his people. He was much beloved of them, and as loving was he unto them, and entirely sought their good for soul and body."*

"Yea, such was the mutual love and reciprocal respect that this worthy man had to his flock and his flock to him, that it might be said of them, as it was once said of that famous emperor, Marcus Aurelius, and the people of Rome, that it was hard to judge whether he delighted more in having such a people, or they in having such a pastor. His love was great towards them, and his care

* *Vide* Governor Bradford's Dialogues, in Young's Chronicles, pages 451, 452.

was always bent for their best good, both for soul and body. For, besides his singular abilities in divine things, wherein he excelled, he was able also to give direction in civil affairs, and to foresee dangers and inconveniences; by which means he was very helpful to their outward estates; and so was every way, as a common father unto them. And none did more offend him than those that were close and cleaving to themselves, and retired from the common good: as also such as would be stiff and rigid in matters of outward order, and inveigh against the evils of others, and yet be remiss in themselves, and not so careful to express a virtuous conversation. They, in like manner, had ever a reverent regard unto him, and had him in precious estimation as his worth and wisdom did deserve; and although they esteemed him highly whilst he lived and laboured among them, yet much more after his death, when they came to feel the want of his help, and saw by woful experience, what a treasure they had lost, to the grief of their hearts and wounding of their souls; yea, such a loss as they saw could not be repaired." *

Hoornbeck, in his "Summa Controversarium," already referred to, says, "John Robinson was most dear to us while he lived, was on familiar terms with the Leyden theologians, and was greatly esteemed by them. He wrote, moreover, in a variety of ways against the Arminians; and was the frequent opponent and bold antagonist of Episcopius himself in the university."

Even Baylie, the opponent of the Independents, while denouncing in no measured terms the whole denomination in his "Dissuasives against the Errors of the Times," acknowledges that "Robinson was a man of excellent parts, and the most learned, polished, and modest spirit that ever separated from the Church of England."

Similar incidental testimonies might be collected and

* Bradford's History, in Young's Chronicles, pages 36—38.

transcribed; but these may suffice to prove the great respect in which he was held, as a man, a scholar, and a Christian.

His writings demonstrate that he was pre-eminently a man of God, and a most conscientious and devoted minister of Jesus Christ.

His love to the Divine Word was supreme, and conformity to it was his intense desire. Only the "most sound and unresistible convictions of conscience by the Word of God," could satisfy him as to the course he should pursue either as a Christian or a pastor. "It is unto me a matter of great scruple and conscience, to depart one hair-breadth (extraordinary accidents ever excepted,) from their (the Apostles') practice and institution, in anything truly ecclesiastical, though never so small in itself, whatsoever, by whomsoever, and with what colour soever is invented and imposed, touching the government of the church, which is the house and tabernacle of the living God. And a partner in this faith I do hope to live and die; and to appear before Jesus Christ with boldness in that great and fearful day of his coming."*

Mr. Robinson's docility and candour are transparent. He was ever ready to receive instruction from friends or foes. Though decided in his convictions, he did not deem himself infallible. Hence the advice he gave, both in his Farewell Address, and in his Letter of Instructions to his Church, when about to proceed on their voyage, "to receive whatsoever light or truth should be made known to them from the written Word." The same sentiment repeatedly occurs in his various treatises, as particularly in the close of his preface to his "Religious Communion." "Had my persuasion in it (the truth) been fuller than ever it was, I profess myself always one of them, who still desire to learn further or better what the good will of God is."

* *Vide* vol. iii., Apology, pages 40, 41.

Though a firm believer in the inspiration and infallibility of the Scriptures, he was not a believer in the finality of human interpretations of the Bible. Hence his lamentation, that many Protestants had come to "a period in religion," and would proceed no farther than their respective masters, Luther or Calvin, had led them. He was persuaded that a fuller development of the truth would be made, as men proceeded in the prayerful investigation of the Holy Oracles.*

He became a Puritan, a Separatist, and an Exile, on purely conscientious grounds. His dissent he always represents as his necessity and his cross. "Whereupon we (the weakest of all others) have been persuaded of this truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, though in great and manifold afflictions, and to hold out his testimony as we do, though without approbation of our sovereign, knowing that, as his approbation in such points of God's worship, as his Word warranteth not, cannot make them lawful: so neither can

* The editor having understood that some American Unitarians were anxious to claim Mr. Robinson as one of their party, made inquiries respecting the grounds on which such a claim was attempted to be founded. He was gratified to learn, for the sake of the honesty of the claimants, that it was not because they sympathized with the doctrinal sentiments of Mr. Robinson, he being a strenuous advocate for the "doctrines of grace," especially for those of the Trinity and of the Atonement, but because he was, according to modern parlance, "a man of progress." They imagine he would sympathize with themselves, who, discarding not only all "creeds," but the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, and retaining only a few elementary truths of revelation, are striving to form thereon a basis of catholic unity and charity among all Christians! Such an amalgamation of heterogeneous parties, Mr. Robinson would most surely have denounced. He contended earnestly "for the faith once delivered to the saints," as his "Defence of the Synod of Dort" abundantly proves; and while he believed that "still more light would break out from the Scriptures," he could never suppose that the truths already discovered would be eclipsed by any additional illumination to be vouchsafed from heaven.

his disallowance make unlawful such duties of religion as the Word of God approveth, nor can he give dispensation to any person to forbear the same. Dan. iii. 18; Acts v. 29.*

"Accounting it a cross that I am in any particular compelled to dissent from them (his Christian countrymen) to whom God hath tied me in so many inviolable bonds, but a benefit and a matter of rejoicing, when I can in any thing, with good conscience, unite with them in matter, if not in manner, or where it may be, in both. And this affection, the Lord and my conscience are my witnesses, I have always nourished in my breast, even when I seemed furthest drawn from them, and have opposed in others and repressed in mine own (to my power) all sour zeal against, and peremptory rejection of such, as whose holy graces challenged better use and respect from all Christians. †

There are some shades of difference between the opinions and practices of Mr. Robinson respecting church government and ordinances, and those of the modern congregationalists.

He maintained the spirituality and self-government of the church of Christ, but allowed the interference of the magistrate to compel attendance on public worship, though not to dictate opinion. More light has certainly been revealed to his descendants on this subject: and doubtless, had he lived much longer, he would have renounced his notions respecting magisterial interference in religious affairs. He was not singular in his opinion. His immediate contemporaries, Johnson, Jacob, and Ainsworth, sympathized with his views. Robert Browne was greatly in advance of him and these eminent men. They pleaded for "toleration and liberty," Mr. Browne for liberty entire. Mr. Robinson's Baptist contemporaries, but whose publications were subsequent to Browne's, had more clear and definite views on liberty of conscience than Mr. Robin-

* *Vide* vol. ii., "Justification," &c., page 13.

† *Vide* vol. iii., "Treatise on Lawfulness of Hearing," page 353.

son's. Some of their tracts have been recently published,* and contain both vigorous and earnest appeals on behalf of unqualified and perfect liberty of conscience and worship. The celebrated Roger Williams was originally an Independent, and studied and wrote his elaborate treatise on the "Bloudy Tenent of Persecution" while an Independent, but did not publish it till a few years afterwards. In the meanwhile he had joined the Baptist community, but had now changed his opinion respecting the ordinances altogether.

Mr. Robinson's opinions on all points respecting church officers, and government, and worship, are briefly stated in his Catechism, in the third volume of this work, but are amplified and detailed in various parts of his writings. Convinced of the truth of his principles, he desired their extension through the world, and uttered his belief of their ultimate triumph, in these remarkable words: "Religion is not always sown and reaped in one age. One soweth and another reapeth. The many that are already gathered, by the mercy of God, unto the kingdom of his Son Jesus, and the nearness of many more through the whole land, for the regions are 'white unto harvest,' do promise, *within less than a hundred years*, if our sins and theirs make not us and them unworthy of his mercy, a very plenteous harvest."†

The prediction was verified. One hundred years passed, and the great principles Mr. Robinson contended for had spread throughout England, and a considerable portion of America. A second century has gone, exhibiting the power and triumph of the truth; and the third is fraught with still more hopeful indications of the universal spread of the gospel, and of the establishment of spiritual and voluntary churches of Christ throughout the world.

* *Vide* Tracts on Liberty of Conscience, published by Hanserd Knollys Society.

† Vol. ii., "On Justification," page 66.

THE

DESCENDANTS OF THE REV. JOHN ROBINSON

TRACED BY

REV. WILLIAM ALLEN, D.D.,

NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS,

FELLOW OF THE AMER. ACAD. OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, AND MEMBER OF THE AMER. ANTIQ. SOC., AND OF THE HIST. SOC. OF MAINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, AND NEW YORK; AND FORMERLY CONGREGATIONAL MINISTER, PITTSFIELD, AND PRESIDENT OF BOUDOIN COLLEGE, IN MAINE.

"MANY a man," says Milton, "lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, imbalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life."

As Mr. Robinson did not live a burden to the earth, but a benefactor of the world; so it is a great satisfaction to witness now a reviviscence of his valuable but long forgotten writings, and to perceive, that they are to be accessible to a great multitude of his Puritan followers.

It is but the truth to say, that many tens of thousands of Christian men hold his name in honourable remembrance. He yet lives by his example, and by the influence of his sacrifices and toils; and in the third century after his death, he enjoys the singular distinction of being equally honoured in the east and the west,—in two countries separated by a mighty ocean.

Doubtless the natural inquiry will now spring up in many minds—Has Robinson "a life beyond life" in a different sense from being the author of "a good book?" Does his "life-blood" still flow in the veins of descendants who are the imitators of his virtues?

In answer to such inquiries I am happy to be able to say, that I have recently conversed with several of his descendants, who bear his name, ministers of the gospel, who receive and love the same truths which commended themselves to his intellect and heart, and who, by reason of their descent from him, feel an incitement to preach faithfully the same pure, uncorrupted gospel of salvation, which he announced to his fellow-men, and in the maintenance of which he was constrained to flee from his beloved native land, finding, as an exile, his grave among strangers. Useful and distinguished men, now deceased, have been also among his descendants, of whom the following is a brief account.

It was four or five years after the death of Mr. Robinson, before provision could be made for the removal of his wife and children to Plymouth. In 1629, thirty-five families were transported from Leyden to New England, at the heavy expense of five hundred pounds, paid by the brethren in the colony: another company came over the next year at a still greater expense—"a rare example of brotherly love and Christian care in performing their promises to their brethren, even beyond their power." In one of these companies were the wife and children of Mr. Robinson.

We have the names of but two of his children, John and Isaac. John settled at or near Cape Ann, and had a son Abraham, who died at the age of one hundred and two years. Of others in this line nothing is known.

Isaac settled near Plymouth, at Scituate, where he was a freeman in 1633: probably he was born about 1610.

He removed in 1639 to Barnstable. Such was his reputation in the colony, that in the years 1646 and 1651, he was chosen one of the assistants to the Governor. Two explanations have been given of the fact that he failed to be re-elected, and was dismissed from civil employment: the first is, that during the disturbance occasioned by the Quakers, being appointed by the court, with J. Smith, J. Chipman, and J. Cooke, to attend their meetings, "to endeavour to reduce them from the error of their ways," he himself became infected with the poison of their doctrines, and therefore was obnoxious to the people. The other account of the matter is more likely to be true—that he opposed the severe laws against the Quakers and the persecuting spirit of the times, and therefore was left out of office and disfranchised, as was also J. Cudworth, the assistant from Scituate; but that to both were restored their rights, as freemen, by Governor Winslow, in 1673.* He died at Barnstable, more than ninety years of age; "a venerable man," says Prince, in his Annals, "whom I have often seen." As Prince was born in the adjoining town of Sandwich, in 1687, he might, while a boy, have often seen Mr. Robinson, supposing that he died about the year 1700.

Rev. John Robinson, of Duxbury, was the son of James, and the grandson of William Robinson, of Dorchester, near Boston. William was a member of the church in 1636, and died in July, 1668. While many of his descendants maintain that he was the son of John Robinson, of Leyden, there are others who have doubts on this point. It is remarkable, that there are no historical records to settle the question absolutely. As his name does not appear among the first settlers of Dorchester, he might have emigrated to that town in early life, from Scituate, only a few miles distant, where Isaac Robinson lived, the

* Moore's Lives of the Governors, &c., page 178.

undoubted son of Rev. John Robinson. Two of William's grandsons were named John, which may be a circumstance of some value.

Rev. John Robinson, the son of James, was born in Dorchester, April 17, 1675, and was graduated at Harvard College, in Cambridge, in 1695. As early as September 2, 1700, he was invited to settle in Duxbury, but was not ordained until June 15, 1702, or soon afterwards. He married, January 31, 1705, Hannah Wiswall, the daughter of his predecessor in the ministry. He was dismissed in 1739, and soon removed to Lebanon, in Connecticut, where several of his children lived, and where he died, November 14, 1745, in the seventy-first year of his age. His daughter Mary, aged sixteen, and his wife, were drowned in a passage to Boston, September 22, 1722. His other children were as follows:—

Hannah, who married Nathaniel Thomas, of Kingston, and died in 1731.

Alethia, who married Rev. Abel Stiles, of Woodstock, Connecticut.

Betsey, or Elizabeth, who married Rev. Jacob Elliott, of the parish of Goshen, in the town of Lebanon, Connecticut, and who died in 1758.

John, the son of Rev. John Robinson, of Duxbury, was born April 16, 1715, and married a Miss Hinckley, of Lebanon, Jan. 17, 1743. He removed to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where he was a teacher. He died at his son Samuel's, in New Concord parish, in the town of Norwich, August 21, 1784.

Samuel, the son of John Robinson, jun., was born June 7, 1752, and died at Oxford, State of New York, March 2, 1815.

John W. Robinson, the son of Samuel, was born April 5, 1779, and died at Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania, about 1840: his brother Andrew now lives at Norwich, Connecticut, and two brothers at Oxford, New York.

Ichabod, born December 12, 1720. His son William, born at Lebanon, August 15, 1754, graduated at Yale College, in 1773, was ordained as the minister of Southington, in Connecticut, in 1780, and died on his birthday, August 15, 1825, aged 71 years. He was the father of a distinguished son, now living, Rev. Edward Robinson, D.D., Professor of Sacred Literature in the Union Theological Seminary, New York City, author of Biblical Researches in Palestine, 3 vols., Taylor's Calmet revised, Grammars, Lexicons, &c.

It may be added, that Catharine Holbrook, the wife of Dr. T. W. Harris, the librarian of Harvard College, is a descendant of Samuel, the brother of Rev. John Robinson, of Duxbury; and that Dr. Harris is persuaded, from the investigations he has made, that she is descended from Rev. John Robinson, of Leyden.

Faith, the daughter of Rev. John Robinson, was born 1718, married, in 1735, Jonathan Trumbull, for many years the distinguished Governor of Connecticut, the friend and coadjutor of Washington during the revolutionary struggle, who died in 1785. Mrs. Trumbull died in 1780. Their son Jonathan was afterwards the Governor of Connecticut for eleven years, and died in 1809.

Faith Trumbull's daughter, Faith, married General Jedidiah Huntington, of Norwich, a distinguished officer in the army of the revolution, whose grand-daughter was the late Mrs. Sarah Lanman Huntington Smith, wife of the learned and faithful missionary, Rev. Dr. Eli Smith, of Syria. Thus the pure gospel, which Robinson was the means of sending to America, this admirable woman, a descendant of Robinson, assisted her husband to convey to the shores of Asia. She died near Smyrna, September 30, 1836. Her memoir was written by Rev. Dr. E. W. Hooker.

Another daughter of Faith Trumbull, Hope, married General William Williams, of Lebanon, a patriot and sol-

dier of the Revolution, who died in 1811, aged eighty. Her son, David Trumbull, of Lebanon, who died in 1822, was the father of Abigail Trumbull, who married Peter Lanman, of Norwich; of Joseph Trumbull, of Hartford; of John Trumbull, of Colchester; and of Jonathan George W. Trumbull, of Norwich, who has in his possession a silver cup, with a handsome handle, bearing engraved on it the initials of his ancestor, John Robinson. As, probably, having been his, and brought from Leyden by his widow, it is deemed a treasure. Thus it is seen that the distinguished families of Huntington, Trumbull, and Williams, in Connecticut, are descended from the pastor of the Plymouth pilgrims.

Peter Robinson was also the son of Isaac; perhaps his eldest son. His descendants are very numerous. He was one of the original members of the church in Scotland parish, in the town of Windham, Connecticut, in 1735, as was also his son Peter. His children (the great grandchildren of John Robinson), were nine in number—Peter, Israel, Thomas, Simeon, Isaac, Benjamin, Joseph, Elizabeth, and Martha.

Elizabeth married Josiah Smith, and Martha married Barnabas Allen, of Canterbury.

The children of Peter Robinson, the second, were twelve in number, born from 1726 to 1748,—Samuel, Experience, Peter, Elizabeth (who married John French), Jacob, Nathan, Abner, Ruth (who married William Cushman, of Brooklyn, Connecticut), Eliab, Rachel (who married Cornelius Coburn), Bathsheba, and Joshua.

The children of Samuel, the eldest son of Peter the second, were eleven,—Dorcas, Jemima, Asher, Claghorn, Sybil, Samuel, Ephraim, Abel, Richard, Oliver, and Sarah; Ephraim, Abel, and Richard removed to Pawlet, Vermont.

Peter Robinson, the third, died at Windham, of the small pox, July 17, 1778: his son Arad, of the same disease, July

16. His other children were Rosamond, who married Nathaniel Wales, and died at Windham, March, 1849, aged ninety-two; Rhoda, Peter, Patrick, and Abigail.

Peter Robinson, the fourth, died in 1830, and had children—Arad, Olive, Polly, Lucy, Betsey, and Abigail. Arad lives in Franklin, Connecticut.

Jacob Robinson, the son of Peter the second, had nine children, among whom were Vine, late judge of Windham county, and Solon, who was living in 1850, at Crown Point, Lake county, Indiana.

Nathan, the son of Peter the second, had children—Salome, Vienna, Newell, Rowena, Adrian, Nathan, Rufus, and Roswell.

Abner, the son of Peter the second, had children—Philena, Lois, Mehetabel, Abner, Mary, Elizabeth, Septimius, Polly.

Eliab, the son of Peter the second, died in Pittsford, Vermont, in April, 1836, aged ninety-three. His children were Lucy Williams, who married Joshua Kingsley of Pittsford; Rev. Ralph Robinson, living, in 1850, in New-Haven, near Oswego, New York; John Williams; Albigence Waldo Robinson, M.D., also of New Haven, and Rev. Septimius Robinson, of Morrisville, Vermont.

The children of Rev. Ralph Robinson, who is of the sixth generation, reckoning John Robinson as the first, are—Rev. Ebenezer Weeks Robinson, of Lisbon, New London County, Connecticut; Jonathan Edwards Robinson, of Richland, New York; and Rev. Samuel Newell Robinson, of Truxton, New York.

The children of the Rev. Septimius Robinson are Betsey Ann; Henry Wright Robinson, of Johnson, Vermont; Leroy Holmes Robinson, Editor of the *Stanstead Journal*, Stanstead, Canada East; James Caswell Robinson, of Hartford; Septimius Dwight Robinson of West Springfield; and William Allent Robinson.

The children of Joshua, son of Peter the second, were Erastus, Betsey, Ruth, Gurdon, and Dolly.

The children of Experience, son of Peter the second, were James, Tryphena, Elias, Alethia, Lydia, and Andrew, who died at Windham in 1849, aged eighty-six.

The children of James, the son of Experience, were James Robinson, of Boston, and Deacon Gurdon Robinson, late of Lebanon; Lucy, who married James Smith; Bela, Sophia, Fanny, and Marcus Tullius.

The children of Gurdon Robinson, who are of the eighth generation, are—Luther Robinson, teacher, Boston, and Asa Aspinnall Robinson.

From this very imperfect and incomplete account of the descendants of Robinson, it will be concluded that they are very numerous, scattered over New England and other States of the Union: it will be seen that they are in various respectable and useful stations in life.

The pride of ancestry is not a very commendable emotion; but the consciousness of being descended from the excellent of the earth—the servants and friends of God—whose example lives in faithful history, and the benefit of whose prayers, long since uttered, may descend even to us, should be an incitement to the imitation of their virtues, and to strenuous efforts in the cause to which they were devoted.

After surveying the life of the illustrious Robinson, in respect to whom we are assured, that he has passed away from the toils of the earth to the paradise of God, how can the words of the great Head of the Church fail to come with new force upon our heart—"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life!"

NEW ESSAYS;

OR,

OBSERVATIONS DIVINE AND MORAL.

NEW ESSAYS;

OR,

OBSERVATIONS DIVINE AND MORAL,

COLLECTED OUT OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, ANCIENT AND MODERN WRITERS, BOTH DIVINE AND HUMAN;

AS ALSO

OUT OF THE GREAT VOLUME OF MEN'S MANNERS:

TENDING TO THE FURTHERANCE OF KNOWLEDGE AND VIRTUE.

By JOHN ROBINSON.

"Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning."—Prov. ix. 9.

Experientia docet, aut nocet.

PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1628.

THE PREFACE.

In framing these mine Observations, Christian Reader, I have had, as is meet, first and most regard to the Holy Scriptures; in which respect, I call them divine: next, to the memorable sayings of wise and learned men, which I have read or heard, and carefully stored up as a precious treasure, for mine own, and others' benefit; and lastly, to the great volume of men's manners, which I have diligently observed, and from them gathered no small part thereof; having also had, in the days of my pilgrimage, special opportunity of conversing with persons of divers nations, estates and dispositions, in great variety. The names of the authors, specially known, out of whom gathered anything, I have, for the most part, expressed: partly to give them their due; and partly, that the authority of their persons might procure freer passage for their worthy and wise sayings, with others: and make the deeper impression of them in the reader's heart: in the method I have been neither curious, nor altogether negligent, as the reader may observe. Now as this kind of study and meditation hath been unto me full sweet, and delightful, and

that wherein I have often refreshed my soul, and spirit, amidst many sad and sorrowful thoughts, unto which God hath called me, so, if it may find answerable acceptance with the Christian Reader, and a blessing from the Lord, it is that which I humbly crave, specially at His hands, who both ministereth seed to the sower, and fruit to the reaper. Amen.

JOHN ROBINSON.

PREFATORY NOTICE BY THE EDITOR.

THE following Essays were written during the latter part of Mr. Robinson's life, and published in the year of his death. They are the result of extensive reading and observation. They abound in instructive and important apothegms and maxims, both collected and original.

The references to Authors are only incidental and general, designed more to exhibit the thought, than to confirm or illustrate a fact or a truth. No attempt has been made, on this account, to verify them; the task would, indeed, have been hopeless.

Three Editions of the Essays have been found and examined—1625, 1628, 1642; this Reprint has been made from the Edition of 1628.

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ESSAYS.

CHAPTER I.

OF MAN'S KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

"THE Lord giveth wisdom, and out of his mouth cometh knowledge, and understanding," saith Solomon, Prov. ii. 6: and therein warneth us, to lay our ear close to the mouth of God, and when he speaketh once, Psa. lxii. 11, we may hear twice, and having our closed hearts opened by his Spirit, may attend to the words of grace, and wisdom, which proceed from him, and are able to make us wise to salvation.

As all our wisdom to happiness consists, summarily, in the knowledge of God, and of ourselves;* so is it not easy to determine, whether of the two goes before the other. But, as neither can be without other, in any competent, or profitable measure, or manner; and as in vain the eye of the mind is lifted up to see God, which is not fit to see itself;† so seem the reasons of most weight, which prefer the knowledge of God to the first place. For, first, God in his Word and works is the rule and measure of man's goodness, and man, at his best, but formed, and reformed after God's image. As in nature, the rule is before that which is to be ruled by it, so must it be in our knowledge. Secondly, such is our inbred pride, and hypocrisy, as that, whilst we look only upon ourselves, and upon other creatures here below, we think we are somebody for goodness, and virtue; but are then brought to that confusion in ourselves, which is requisite for our humiliation, when we come to take some

* Calvin. † Bernard.

knowledge of the super-excellency of God: even as our bodily eye forthwith dazzleth being cast upon the bright sun; how quick, and strong-sighted soever it seem, whilst it is set only upon earthly objects. Thirdly, so absolutely necessary is the knowledge of God, as that we can ascribe nothing, as is meet, unto him, of whom, and for whom, we and all things are, till we first know him in his Word and works, but, even in our best devotions, with the superstitious Athenians, shall build our altars "to the unknown God," Acts xvii. 23, and with the blind Samaritans, worship we "know not what," John iv. 22. To conclude: he that pretends the service of God, and yet knows him not in his Word, and works of creation, and redemption also, wherein his face is seen, is like him that counterfeits himself to be the household servant of some great lord, whose face he never saw, nor once came within his court gates.

Some ambitious and curious wits, but not able, and no marvel, to raise up, and advance their notions to God's infiniteness, for the comprehending of it, have laboured to depress, and pull him down to their dwarfish conceptions of him; and have, indeed, rather made him some great and giant-like man, or angel, than, as he is in truth, an infinite God; allowing him an essence, power, and wisdom hugely great, but not properly infinite and immense: as though God could not be that, which they cannot conceive of him.

The essence of God is known only to himself, but is undiscernible to all men, and angels: partly by reason of its infiniteness, which therefore no finite understanding can comprehend; and partly, for that no voice, sign, or form can sufficiently express it either to sense or reason. And if God have placed such light and glory in some created bodies, as that we cannot intentively fix our bodily eye upon them, without dazzling; what marvel is it, though the eye of the understanding of all men, and angels dazzle, in the too curious, and intentive contemplation of his infinite, and infinitely glorious majesty itself? So as, if the most wise and learned Christians should, with the heathen philosopher,* undertake to descry God's being; they would be compelled, as he was, after one day's respite, to crave two; and after two, four; and so still to double the time, with

* Thales.

acknowledgment, that the more they searched into it, the more unsearchable it appeared.

Albeit the understanding of man, though glorified, cannot possibly comprehend God's infinite being, yet shall we, coming to enjoy the blessed vision of God, whereof the angels, and "spirits of just men perfect," are made partakers, know in a far both greater measure, and more excellent, and immediate manner, than now we do. "We now walk by faith, and not by sight," 2 Cor. v. 7, as we then shall do: "We now see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: knowing him even as we are known of him." 1 Cor. xiii. 12. And for the present, we are by the means of revelation vouchsafed us in his Word and works, partly within and partly without us, to be led in our prayers, praises, and meditations of God, to such a being for the object thereof, as in which, first, there is nothing which hath the least affinity with the imperfection found in any creature;* for the expressing whereof those attributes serve, which we call negative; as immortal, invisible, a spirit, that is, no body, and the like; showing what God is not, though not what he is. Secondly, Which is that eminently, infinitely, and essentially, which we, in the creature, call power, wisdom, goodness, and whatsoever else imports any perfection: and thirdly, which is that first fountain, and original of all goodness in all creatures. And by these three stairs doth our understanding raise up itself from created things to the knowledge of God. This knowledge we must seek with all earnest diligence, and store it up carefully in the treasury of our hearts: that knowing God, we may love him, and trust to him, and fear him, and honour him; that as the daughters of Jerusalem, Cant. v. 8, though before marvelling what ailed the spouse of Christ to be so affectioned towards her beloved, and so earnestly to seek after him, as she did, when they once came to take knowledge of his perfect beauty, would then seek him with her: so we knowing God, specially in the face of Christ Jesus, may so be ravished with love of his Majesty, as to have our whole heart set to seek, and find him, in whose presence is satiety of joys evermore.

* Dionysius.

CHAPTER II.

OF GOD'S LOVE.

God loveth himself first, and most, as the chiefest good, and all other good things, as he communicates with them less, or more, the effects of his own goodness. And from this infinite love of his own infinite goodness is it, that he so severely punisheth some creatures, though the work of his own hands, which he always loveth. For, first, The creature by sin violating God's holiness, and despising his authority in his righteous commandments, and so going on in impenitency, and unbelief; and withal it being impossible, that God's love of his own holiness, and justice, and the honour of the same, and the love of the creature's happiness, so obstinately dishonouring him, should stand together; it cannot be, but that the latter must give way to the former, and greater, and the creature so sinning become miserable, rather than God forgetful of his own honour and glory.

God reveals his glorious Majesty in the highest heavens, his fearful justice in the hell of the damned; his wise and powerful providence is manifest throughout the whole world; but his gracious love and mercy in, and unto his church here upon earth; which he therefore hath chosen, and taken near unto himself, that in it might be seen the riches of his glorious grace. And, albeit, all things in God are infinite, and one; yet are the effects of his love more wonderful, and excellent, than of any other of his attributes; as appears in that, his greatest, and strangest, work of giving his only begotten Son to the cursed death of the cross, for his enemies, out of his love and mercy. This the Scriptures, and worthily, call a "great mystery," 1 Tim. iii. 16, and which, for the rareness of it, was not only "hidden from the sons of men," Eph. iii. 10, but also from the very angels in their perfection of created knowledge. Which manifold grace, and wisdom of God they, therefore, "desire to look into, and learn by the church." 1 Pet. i. 10—12.

Love in the creature ever presupposeth some good, true, or apparent in the thing loved, by which that affection of

union is drawn, as the iron by the loadstone: but the love of God on the contrary, causeth all good wrought, or to be wrought in the creature.* He first loveth us in the free purpose of his will, and thence worketh good for, and in us; and then loves us actually for his own good work, for, and in us: and so still more and more, for his own further work. And hence ariseth the unchangeableness of God's love towards us, because it is founded in himself, and in the stableness of the good pleasure of his own will. And although the arguments of comfort be great, which we draw from the certain knowledge of our love to him; yet are those infinitely greater, which are taken from the consideration of his love to us; as being not only the ground of the other, but in him also infinite, and unchangeable. And, hereupon, it was, that the sisters of Lazarus seeking help for their sick brother sent Christ word, not that he, who loved him, though that were not nothing, but that "he whom he loved, was sick." John xi. 3.

As by the hand of a friend reached unto us we are made partakers of the strength of his whole body, to hold, or help us up; so by the hand of the love of God reached down from heaven, in the Gospel, we become interested in the most comfortable apprehension, and happy use of all other his attributes whatsoever. The more wise, powerful, holy, glorious, eternal, and infinite God is, the more happy are we by means of his love, and mercy in Christ, which moveth him to use, and improve them all for our good, and to communicate them with us, as his friends,† in their effects, so far as serves for our happiness. He, whom God loves though he know it not, is a happy man: he that knows it, knows himself to be happy. Which caused the apostle to make in his own name, and in the names of all the "beloved of God," Rom. viii. 35—39, that glorious insultation over all the enemies of his, and their happiness, that they could not separate him, or them, not from the power, or wisdom, or holiness; but not "from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus." From this "love of God," as from a spring-head, issueth all good both for grace, and glory. Yea by it, which is more, all evil by all creatures intended, or done against us, is turned to good

* Scaliger. † Philo.

to us. By it our afflictions work together with our election, redemption, vocation, &c., for our good. By reason of it "the stones of the field are at league with us, and the beasts of the field at peace with us," Job v. 23: yea even the very sword that killeth us, the fire that burneth us, and the water that drowneth us, is a kind of spiritual, and invisible league with us, to do us good. Upon the knowledge of this "love of God shed abroad into our hearts by the Holy Ghost," is laid the foundation, and ground-work of whatsoever good thing we return again unto God, with acceptation at his hands. Upon this we do build our faith, and confidence in him, by this our cold and frozen hearts are not only thawed, but inflamed also with love again to him, and to men for him; as the earth being heated by the beams of the sun beating upon it, reflecteth heat again towards the heavens, and upon all the bodies between it, and them. Lastly, from hence arise all the pleasing services, wherewith we present his Majesty. For howsoever we owe ourselves, and whatsoever we are, or can do, unto him, as our gracious, and powerful Creator, and absolute Lord; yet can we do nothing heartily, and as we ought, but from the faith, and feeling of his love in Christ, and by the motion of "the spirit of a sound mind given unto us." 2 Tim. i. 7. But being once drawn sweetly by the cords of God's goodness, and love, we readily, and pleasingly follow after him; as being debtors, and constrained, not by necessity, but, which binds more strongly, by love.*

The tokens of this "love of God" in Christ are not only by us highly to be prized, but carefully to be discerned; lest we bring ourselves into a fool's paradise, and grow presumptuously secure; which is the forerunner of sudden, and certain destruction. We must therefore in this scrutiny neither trust ourselves, nor any other creature, but God alone in the testimony of his Word, and the Spirit, which "knows, and makes known the mind of God," 1 Cor. ii. 10—12; and by which we may unerringly learn; first, what the tokens of his love are; and secondly, who they are which partake of them; and thirdly, that we ourselves are of that blessed number. Now, amongst them all, there is none so certain, and infallible, though those of feeling

* Austin.

be more joyful, as the gracious work of true repentance in the "mortifying of the old man in his sinful affections," Rom. viii. 13; and in "the quickening power of Christ's Spirit," Gal. v. 25, to willing, though weak, "obedience to all God's commandments." Psa. cxix. 6. As we may certainly know, that the sun shines, by the beams, and heat thereof below, though we climb not into heaven to see, so may we have certain knowledge of God's gracious love towards us, without searching further than our own hearts, and ways, and by finding them truly, and effectually turned from sin to God.

As God may so far hate some evil in a person, for example, the adultery of David, and other sins accompanying it, as to punish the same severely in this world, and yet not hate the person himself; so may he, on the other side, love some good in a man, so far, as to reward it highly in this life, and nevertheless, not love, but hate, the person in whom it is found; as may be seen in the zeal of Jehu for the Lord, 2 Kings ix. 10, against wicked Ahab, and his house. And if our narrow, and partial hearts can, upon occasion, hold and preserve this difference between persons, and things; how much more may, and doth the same right well stand, with the distribution of rewards, and punishments made by the most holy, and wise God? As then, when the Lord manifests some signs of his anger at us, and hatred against the evils in us, we must take heed we conclude not presently, that therefore we in our persons are hated of him, and castaways, except the evils reign in us without repentance; so must we, on the other side, take more care, considering how by self-love we are commonly in more danger thereof, that we conclude not of the love of God towards our persons, from every effect of some kind of love, and liking of some particular good things in us; and not except those good things be such, as make us good also, as faith and holiness do, transforming us, as it were, into their nature, and kind: as in the parable of the wheat, and tares, the good seed, Matt. xiii., is expounded, the children of the kingdom because they grow of the good seed of the Gospel; and by their regeneration, as it were, turn very word and spirit.

CHAPTER III.

OF GOD'S PROMISES.

THE promises of God are a kind of middle thing between his purpose, and performance of good unto them, whom he loveth. And as wicked Jezebel, 1 Kings xix. 2, could not satisfy her hatred of Elias the prophet, in intending evil to him, and executing it upon him, in time, as she could; unless withal she thundered out against him terrible threatenings in the meanwhile: so, much less can the love of our good God satisfy itself in a gracious purpose of good towards us in his heart, and actual performance of it accordingly, in due time, except withal, he make it known unto us beforehand, both for our present comfort in the knowledge thereof, and for the ground of our hope and expectation of the good things promised, and accordingly to be received at his hands, in their time: he having by his promise bound over unto us both his love, and truth, and other attributes for performance. And herein the Lord provides very graciously for his poor servants, who are ofttimes brought into that distressed state both outward and inward, as they have very little else, save the promises of God, wherewith to comfort themselves. Which yet are sufficient, if we improve them, as we ought; considering, first, his love, moving him to promise, and the unchangeableness of it: secondly, his wisdom directing him to promise nothing unfit; thirdly, his power enabling him, and fourthly, his truth binding him to all performance: in regard whereof, God hath made himself a debtor, though not by receiving from us, yet by promising unto us; promise being, as we say, due debt.*

God ever performeth what, and as, he promiseth, and not one good thing for another, as some think: no, not heavenly for earthly, nor a greater good for a less. For howsoever so to do, might stand with his bounty, and goodness; yet his truth binds him to his word, which is truth, John xvii. 17. Spiritual good things necessarily accompanying salvation he promiseth absolutely unto his; other

* Austin.

good things, ordinarily, upon condition. Which, considering, that through our abuse of them, they may prove prejudicial to our spiritual man, if so be the Lord should promise absolutely, as the former; it were, many times, indeed, not to promise a benefit, but to threaten a hurt rather. And, truly, we may observe in the dangerous falls, and miscarriages of the wise Solomon, unto whom temporal good things were absolutely promised, in the fullest measure, and accordingly performed, how graciously our wise, and good God provides for our slippery state, in scantling his promise of good things of that kind to our spiritual skill, and care of using them, for the advantage of our true, and eternal happiness. We are, therefore, first, to beware, that we expect not absolutely temporal prosperity, lest by so doing we both wrong the Lord's truth, and our own faith in the things promised indeed, by doubting of them, because we have failed of obtaining of other things by us presumed of, but not promised by the Lord. Secondly, we must as firmly believe, and expect the performance of temporal promises, as the Lord hath made them, as of eternal. For, albeit his love do not manifest itself in like degree in promising both; yet his truth is alike bound to exhibit both, being once promised. Neither is that person in earnest with God, who pretending faith for eternal good things, yet dare not trust his word for temporal. Such as despise heavenly things, and love earthly, usually pretend their trusting of God for the former, of which they are indeed profanely secure, but will trust themselves, and their own fingers for earthly, which in truth they set by. I must therefore thus conclude with myself touching those matters, —seeing "God hath promised all good things to them that love him," Psa. xxxiv. 9: if this, or that bodily good thing, good in itself, be indeed for my good, I shall receive it from him, in due time: and if I receive it not, it is a real testimony from him, that indeed it is not good for me, how much soever I desire it.

As God's goodness shines most clearly in his promises, so man's perverseness abuseth, and misapplieth them above all other parts of his Word. A great many divide God's promises from the other parts of his revealed will, and making small, or none account, that either the rules of the

Word appertain unto them for direction, or the precepts for obedience, or the threatenings for restraint; yet do lay their sacrilegious hands boldly upon the promises, as their true, and undoubted right. And the reason is, because the promises contain in them things good, and pleasing to man's nature; which, because we would gladly have true, we readily believe, and apply. But, such separate what God hath joined together, and in effect, "take away from the words of the book of God; and God will take away their part out of the book of life." Rev. xxii. 19. Others again transform commandments into promises, with great, and dangerous error. For example; where it is said, "The priest's lips should preserve knowledge," Mal. ii. 7, the Romish priests challenge an immunity from erring, whence they should take warning, that they err not. So, from Christ's teaching, that a city set upon an hill, cannot be hid, they will wring a promise of perpetual visibility of church and ministry from him, where he intends only an exhortation to his disciples, after, to become apostles, unto answerableness both in life, and doctrine, to the eminency of their places. Some again make conditional promises, absolute, as that, "Whose sins ye bind upon earth, they are bound in heaven," Matt. xviii. 18: forgetting that it must be the church gathered together in Christ's name, that is, both furnished with lawful authority, and using it lawfully. Likewise, that Christ will preserve the ministry, and ministers, and "be with them to the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 19, 20: leaving out the condition going before, which is, that they do their duty in their places, in making disciples, and baptizing them, and teaching them to observe whatsoever he had commanded them. Lastly, how many, because God promiseth forgiveness to sinners, whensoever they repent, promise unto themselves repentance upon an hour's warning, before their death, though they go on in sin all their life long? but the saying of the ancient is memorable in this case, "He that promiseth forgiveness to him that repents, doth not promise repentance to him that sins." But, on the contrary, as he that makes a bridge of his own shadow, cannot but fall in the water; so neither can he escape the pit of hell, who lays his own presumption, this way, in the place of God's promise.

CHAPTER IV

OF THE WORKS OF GOD, AND HIS POWER, WISDOM, WILL, GOODNESS, ETC., SHINING IN THEM.

It is a received truth in divinity, that whatsoever is in God, is God. So the will of God, considered as the foundation of that which he wills, and as inherent in him, is nothing else, but God willing; his justice nothing else, but God just; his mercy but God merciful; and so for the rest of the Divine attributes. And as every work of God is founded in some of those attributes: and that by name, in his understanding, as judging the thing to be good; in his holy will agreeing thereunto; and in his power effecting all things: so this foundation and first cause of them all being immanent, and inherent in God, is God essentially, of what nature soever, always good, the work be without him, which his will and power effecteth. Neither is this will of God to work by his power, wrought in him by any thing without himself, for then he should receive addition of perfection from the creature moving him thereunto: though, yet it be most certain, that there are many things, which God neither in his wisdom judgeth fit to be done by him, nor wills the doing of them, nor would work or do them by his power, but upon the creature's work going before. For example: God wills, and works the condemnation of some sinners, because he judgeth fit, willeth, and will work therein the manifestation of the glory of his justice; but this condemnation, which otherwise he would not lay upon any, he both wills, and works by, and for, the creature's sin, according to his eternal, and unchangeable purpose of will in himself.

When the Scriptures speak, and we, according unto them, of any thing done by God, in respect of the creature, before the world was made; it must be understood as meant only of his foreknowledge, and decree of will, and purpose of doing. For things could be done no otherwise, than they could be; nor could be otherwise, than in God, who alone was; nor could be in God otherwise, than in

his foreknowledge, and will: according to which he works them actually, in time, by his power.

These three attributes, as before I intimated, his power, will, and wisdom, do concur to the producing of all, and every one of his works. His power worketh and effecteth all things: his will sets his power a-working: his wisdom directs both the one, and other; his will in willing; and his power in working. Touching his power: "The right hand of the Lord," Psa. cxviii. 15, 16, which, in men, is the instrument of strength, is exalted, and by it he can do what he will, and much more than he will. And whereas God cannot lie, or deny himself, or the like, it is, immediately, because he will not, and that not of impotency in him, but of potency, and perfection of excellency:* as, on the contrary, it is the power of man's weakness that he can do amiss. So, for things importing contradiction, as that the same thing should be, and not be at once, or not be that which it is, or the like; it is religiously said by some, rather, that such things cannot be done by God, than, that God cannot do them; seeing the reason of this impossibility of their so being is not in God's nature, but in theirs.

The will of God is one, as God is one. But as there is "one spirit, but diversity of manifestations," 1 Cor. xii. 5, 6; so, this one internal will of God doth exercise, and extend itself diversely to, and upon, divers objects. This extension and exercise of this one will of God is, of us, to be considered in divers degrees. The weakest and most remiss degree is to will the suffering of evil.† For, though God, to speak properly, wills not sin, yet he willingly suffers it; not as ignorant of it, nor as neglecting it, nor as unable to prevent it, but as willingly, wittingly, and of purpose suffering that evil to be done, which he could easily hinder, if he would oppose his omnipotent power. The next degree of God's willing, stands in commanding good, and approving of it, where it is found: and thus God "wills and commands that all men should repent," Acts xvii. 30: thus he wills, "that all should come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved," 1 Tim. ii. 4: and thus, lastly, he would have "the wicked turn from his

* Tertullian. † Scaliger. Junius.

wickedness; and live, and not die," Ezek. xxxiii. 11. And these things and the like he seriously wills, to wit, by way of commanding and requiring them, and of approving them, wheresoever they are found. The highest, and most intent degree of willing in God, is, when he so wills a thing, as, withal, he employs his omnipotent power for the effecting of it: and by this "he doth whatsoever he pleaseth in the heavens, and in the earth," Psa. cxv. 3. The former will, which stands in commanding, promising, and the like, may be, and is too often resisted, and made ineffectual by men; this latter, never possibly; except men be stronger than God. By it, his power availeth to make things to be, which were not, to continue them that are, to work all good, and to order all evil unto good.

And, as the works of God's power, according to his will, are manifold, so "hath he wrought them all in wisdom," Psa. civ. 24. For, notwithstanding both the absoluteness of his will, and infiniteness of his power, in regard whereof one saith, it is more becoming God to ascribe any power to him, than to make him impotent;* yet is he neither wilful in willing, nor unwieldy in working. By his wisdom he not only eternally, and infallibly knoweth himself, and all creatures that are, or can be, and what either he, or they, or both together will do, or can do, and that upon supposition of whatsoever can be supposed; but both willeth, and doth, in time, himself, what he willeth, and doth it also for good cause, and to good purpose, and accordingly, either, on the one side, hinders; or, on the other, sustains, effects, and orders every motion of every creature.

By exercising these attributes God worketh all his works whether immediate by himself alone, or mediate by the creatures, which he useth of all kinds, and every one according to his kind, whether good or evil, reasonable or without reason. By God's works, I mean all things whatsoever are in the world, or have any being, and existence in nature. For, "he hath made the whole world, and all things therein," Psa. cxlvi. 6. "In him we live, and move, and have our being: he giveth all to all things," Acts xvii. 28. "And of him, and through him, and for

* Tertullian.

him are all things," Rom. xi. 36. As he gives being unto all things that are, by communicating the effects of his being with them; so, is there nothing either so casual, in regard of men, as that he directs it not; or so voluntary, as that he determines it not; nothing so firm, but he sustains it; nor so small, but he regards it; nor so great, but he rules it; nor so evil, but he overrules it.

Neither can any of the works of God possibly be other than very good, and righteous, seeing they are all wrought by the exercising of his holy will, divine power, and godly wisdom. And, if a simple man owe the honour to him that is of greater wisdom and understanding than himself, to think, upon occasion, that the other hath reason for that which he speaks, or does, though he, in his shallowness, cannot reach unto it, how much more do all men and angels owe this honour unto God, to believe always, that whatsoever he saith is true, and whatsoever he doth, good, and righteous, though they discern not the reason of it. *

Some of the works of God are such, as we can rather admire at them, than discern of them: some again are such as, at which proud flesh is ready to repine, and murmur. Amongst the works of God's most wise and powerful providence upon bodily things, it is most admirable, that the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon, and stars, should by their influence, and operation, have such power, and effects upon the bodies here below, as to change, order, and dispose the air, earth, and water, with all things framed, and compounded of them, as they appear to do, by Scripture, sense, and experience. Yet, if we consider, besides the two "greatest lights," Gen. i. 14; and most powerful agents, the sun and moon, the numberless number of the stars, their huge greatness, the variety and excellency of virtues, wherewith they are furnished far above the most precious pearls, or any earthly quintessence, Job xxxviii. 31—33; and with all these, the infinite power and wisdom of him that made, and constituted them; it will not seem incredible unto us, that the least, and suddenest natural change in the air, water, or other elementary bodies, should be wrought by the position, and disposition of the stars, and celestial bodies.

* Austin.

Neither doth this at all diminish, or detract from the honour of the Lord in governing the world, but rather amplifieth it; as it adds to the honour of the skilful artificer, so at the first to frame his clock, or other work of like curious device, as that the several parts should constantly move, and order each other in infinite variety, he, as the maker and first mover moving, and ordering all. Where yet this difference must always be minded, that the artisan leaves his work, being once framed, to itself; but God by continual influx preserves, and orders both the being and motions of all creatures. Here also, we except both unnatural accidents; and specially, supernatural, and miraculous events; which are, as it were, so many particular creations, by the immediate hand of God.

In them that are made partakers of the grace of God, the remainder of corrupt reason is readiest to rise up at the work of God's providence in "the prosperity of the way of the wicked, and workers of iniquity," Jer. xii. 1; Psa. xxxvii. 1, 35: especially, if they themselves be pressed with any singular afflictions; as we may see in David, Jeremiah, and others. But the same men of God, who were in their persons, present examples of human frailty, do in their writings, by the Holy Ghost, afford us matter sufficient for Divine comfort, and direction; as, first that, before we come to "plead with God, how his works are righteous, we know and acknowledge them all to be righteous," Jer. xii. 1; that so we may learn how and wherein their righteousness consists. Secondly, that God is both as good to those whom he loves, in their afflictions, as in their prosperity; and as wroth with his enemies, in their momentary prosperity, as if his rod were already upon their backs. Thirdly, that he hath appointed a day, in which he will right whatsoever seemeth crooked in the meanwhile; and will fully, and for ever, recompense both the good and evil: in the expectation of which day, and of the work of the Lord in it, we should satisfy ourselves, for the present, and suspend our thoughts till the manifestation of his righteous judgment therein.

In them that desire to establish man's righteousness rather than God's either righteousness, or power, fleshly reason is most apt to quarrel, partly with that work of God's mercy, by which he freely justifies a sinner; and partly with

those his just dispensations, upon which followeth the creature's sin and misery for sin. But for the former, it stands not with the riches of God's mercy, and grace, whereof he would make full manifestation in the justifying of sinners, to borrow any thing of man's merit; but well becomes his bounty, freely to bestow both the gift, and hand to receive it. For the latter, it must be considered, that God's work, so far as it is his, is good, as well in the sinful doings, or miserable sufferings of men, as in their most holy, and happy estate. The person that sinneth, with all his parts, and powers of soul, and body, is God's work: so is the preservation, and sustentation of both person, and personal abilities; so is the natural motion itself, whether within, or without the person, in which, the sin is like the halting in the horse's going; and lastly, so is, not only the voluntary permission of the sin, which he could easily hinder by his omnipotent power, if he would oppose it; but also the ordering both of sin and sinner to his own supernatural ends. For example, the act of Judah and Tamar, morally considered, was sinful, and impure; but naturally, good, and blessed of God with a son, of whom Christ came according to the flesh. So the abominable sins of Absalom were ordered of God unto most just punishments of the sins of his father David.

There is a twofold use of the world, and works of God in it: the one natural, the other supernatural.* The former is common to men with beasts; who are alike cherished with the heat and influence of the sun; alike nourished by the fruits of the earth. The other is peculiar to men with the holy angels, by which they behold the face of the Creator's power, wisdom, goodness, &c., as in a most clear looking-glass, Rom. i. 20; Psa. xix. 1—6; and are provoked accordingly to praise, and glorify him in his wonderful works: even as by beholding some curious piece of workmanship, much more, if, therewith, we have singular use of it, of a skilful artificer, we are led, in the view of the work, to the commendation of the workman.† And look how much the soul excelleth the body, yea the spiritual man the natural; so much is this use of God's creatures more excellent than the former. And so the opinion of the philoso-

* Bodinus. † Perkins.

pher, who thought, he was born to look upon the sun, and heavens,* was not wide, but short; nor absurd, but defective; for he should have pierced further, even through the heavens, unto him, that made, and governs them, whose glorious power, and goodness shine in them; that so he might have glorified him as God, in his works. For, though by that glimpse of light in the creatures, we cannot attain to the knowledge of God, as our Father in Christ; yet are we both to honour him according to it, and to be provoked by it to further search, and inquiry after him, in such means of revelation, as by which he further manifests himself; which are his word and gospel of salvation: even as he, that lying in a dark dungeon spies some small glimpse of light, will grope towards it by the wall, hoping to find some door, or window, by which it comes in. Acts xvii. 27. For neglect of this, the very wisest of the heathens were left inexcusable; and not glorifying God, whom they knew in his works of creation of the world, but becoming vain in their own imaginations, and serving the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever, were given over of God to a mind void of judgment, to do the things which are inconvenient." Rom. i. 20, 21. Now, of how much sorer punishment shall we be guilty; if together with this lesser glimpse of Divine light by the creatures, we despise also the more glorious light of the gospel, not honouring God aright either as our powerful Creator, or merciful Redeemer by Christ Jesus? But if we so honour him, and make him great in our own hearts, and before men, what we can, as he hath manifested, and made known himself in his word, and works; he will honour us with himself for ever, in glory.

CHAPTER V.

OF CREATED GOODNESS.

EVERY thing that is, and hath being, is in that regard good, and of God. Rom. xi. 36; Psa. clxvi.; Acts xiv. 17; xvii. 24—28. The natural parts and powers of body and soul of most wicked men remain in themselves, notwithstanding all infection of evil in them, God's good creatures:

* Anaxagoras.

so do the natural acts and motions of those parts and powers, in themselves considered, notwithstanding any moral accessory of evil in them, arising either from the evil affection wherewith, or unlawful object, upon which they are performed. There can be no evil in the work, which is not first in the worker, as the cause. And so, a wicked person being worse than a wicked action, if the sin prevail not so far, as to make the part or faculty of the person in which it is, to cease to be a part, or power created of God; neither doth it so far prevail in the action, or work, as to make it cease to be, in itself, a created motion, and, therein, a natural good thing.

God is, and so, by all, is to be acknowledged for the giver of every good gift, James i. 17, that is, of everything save sin: which sin is nothing that hath being in nature, but an absence of, and crossness to that which should be; as darkness is of, and unto light. And so the good father would not say, that his mother gave him milk, but God by her.* And though the good which we enjoy, come to us by never so ready, and ample means, yet must we always religiously mind, that both the means are of God's raising, and ordering; and the blessing upon them, for our good. And if Job saw by faith, Job i. 21, 22, that all the evils and harms that came unto him and his, though by the devil's, and wicked men's means, were from the Lord, as supreme orderer of all things; how much more should we look upon God, as the author, and worker of all the good that befalleth us?

Notwithstanding, if God so far honour any persons, as to make them hands, and instruments (specially voluntary) for the reaching of any blessing unto us from himself; we also, and that, even therefore, are to love and honour them: as David not only blessed the Lord as the author, but Abigail also, as the minister, of the good counsel which she gave him, for the not avenging of himself upon Nabal. 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33.

Actions, besides their natural entity, or being, are by one distinguished, and that aptly, according to a four-fold goodness. † First, An action is sometimes "good in itself, and to them to whom it is done, but not to the doer; as works of

* Austin. † Lombard.

mercy done, but not for God. Secondly, Good in itself, and in the doer, but not to him, to whom it is done; as the preaching of the word to them that despise it. Thirdly, Good in itself, and the doers, and to whom it is done; as the same preaching to him that receives it. Fourthly, Though neither good in itself, nor in the doer, nor for him to whom it is done, as an evil, or injury; yet good, as it is ordered by God to an end supernaturally good." "Who," as saith another, "would not suffer evil, but as knowing how to work good out of it?" * In actions of the third kind only, goodness is entire in all its parts and relations.

A man should never glory in that good, how great soever, which is common to a beast with him; nor a wise man in that, which is common to a fool with him, no, nor a good man in that, which is common to a wicked man with him; seeing, notwithstanding it, the person may be out of God's favour, and accursed. And therefore Christ our Lord would not have his disciples rejoice, or, glory that the devils were subject unto them (which was, though much, yet common to the workers of iniquity, Matt. vii. 23, with them), but that their names were written in heaven. Luke x. 20.

Many so measure the good which they afford others, by the list of their own will, as they deceive themselves in the whole piece of their goodness, by the bad list that goes about it. They will do what good they list, and when they list, and where they list, and as they list; as though their goodness were not due debt, though not immediately to men, yet to God, and so to men, for, and according unto God: for whom, even they owe love to all men, Rom. xii. 10, who owe nothing else to any; and the same upon bill, and therefore to be payed, in law, whensoever, and by whomsoever the Lord will call for it, and not when, and as pleaseth them. These conditions are requisite, that we may do well, in doing good. First, We must do things in obedience to God's commandments, and in honour of his name, and gospel; and must ever have that end in our eye, as archers have their mark. Secondly, That we do it at all times, as we have opportunity; "sowing our seed in the morning, and in the evening not holding our hand." Eccl.

* Austin.

xi. 6. We must beware of that agueish goodness, which comes by fits only, and when men are pleased: for so, they say, the devil is good.

Thirdly, We must do good readily, and whilst we have opportunity; "not saying to our neighbour, Go, and come again to-morrow, and we will do it," if it be in our power to-day. Gal. vi. 10; Prov. iii. 28. For who knoweth what a day will bring forth, and whether the opportunity of doing good, will continue till to-morrow, or no? He that giveth, or doth other good, readily, giveth twice;* he scarce once, or at all, that doth it slackly: he rather, in truth, suffers a good turn to be drawn from him, than doeth it. Living springs send out streams of water; dead pits must have all that they afford, drawn out with buckets. We should, therefore, have the mind,† though we want the ability, of Theodosius the emperor, who did much good, upon request; but more of his own accord and unasked: and so meet, as one saith, a just request in the teeth, and grant it before it be made; as God many times doth ours. Isa. lxv. 24. He that defers a good turn, loseth two things: the time, and manifestation of a loving affection.‡ Both which, are precious. And without which loving affection, all the kindnesses, which we show to any, are but so many false witnesses to the unbelieving and unkind heart.

Fourthly, According to our ability; knowing, that as our receivings are from God, greater or less, so must our accounts be, for good doing. It is true, that God looks to the heart of the doer, and measures the work by the will, as men measure the will by the work: but this, according, to that which a man hath. 2 Cor. viii. 12. Else, albeit poor men may love as much as the richer, though they have not so much money to do good withal; yet is not the will good, except they do the good they are able.§ And this our ability we must not measure according to our wantonness, and unbelief, but, according to the truth of the thing, and equity of the case: which is, that our superfluities give way to our brethren's conveniences: our conveniences to their necessities: yea even our, though great, necessities to their extremities, for the supplying of them. 2 Cor. viii. 12—15.

* Seneca. † Eusebius. ‡ Seneca. § Bernard.

Fifthly, we must have respect to men's present wants; and not only consider, what we can best spare, but withal, what they stand most need of; as having learned of our Lord and Master, in his Gospel, that our duty is to "feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick," Matt. xxv. 35, 36, &c., as their need is: whereby we may do a great good turn in a small matter: even one loaf, yea a shive,* to him that is hungry, and the showing of a spring of water to him that is thirsty, being a benefit.†

Sixthly, "we must do good to all," Gal. vi. 10, knowing, that wheresoever a man is, there is a place for a good turn:‡ but, more specially, to some, according to the singular bond, natural, civil, or religious, wherewith God hath tied us together. To good men we must do good because they do deserve it; to strangers, because they may deserve it, and do stand in need of it; to all men, because God deserves it at our hands, for them; to our friends, because we owe it them; and to our enemies to heap coals of fire upon their heads—the coals of charity to thaw, and soften their hardness, if it may be, and at which we must aim: or else the coals of anger from God for their unplacableness towards us. Matt. x. 42; Luke x. 32—37; Matt. v. 44; Rom. xii. 20.

Lastly, a good man, how gracious soever, and ready to do good, "guideth his affairs with discretion," Psa. cxii. 5; not sowing his seed in barren ground, by bestowing favours without difference; for that is rather to throw away, than to bestow a benefit.§ And it is not the least difference between man's good nature, and God's good grace, that, whereas the former makes men much-what alike kind to all, the latter, though also to all, yet with great difference put between person and person; as men sow their seed diversely in soils that differ.

Although, this good nature, and the grace of God be as different as heaven and earth: the one being of ourselves, that is, of nature created; and the other the gift of God by supernatural grace: and that a man be neither the nearer God for his good nature, where the grace of God is wanting; nor the further off for his ill, where it pleaseth God to use his all-sufficient work of grace: yet the sweet and kind natural disposition in some, much advantageth the manifes-

* A slice. † Seneca. ‡ Ibid. § Ibid.

tation of their smaller measure, which an ill nature, as we speak, so much obscures, as it can scarce be seen of other men; though the Lord's eye pierces through all such human prejudices.

It is the main order, which God hath set both in grace, and nature, that the superior should do good to the inferior. So, God doth good to all, and receives good from none: our "goodness reacheth not to him." Psa. xvi. 2. The sun and stars give their light, and influence to the earth, Psa. cxxxvi. 8, 9, but receive nothing back from it: "parents lay up for their children, not children for their parents." 2 Cor. xii. 14. And for this end God bestows good things, both inward and outward, upon some above others, in ample measure, that their abundance might supply the others want. It were good for other men, that the mighty of the earth, duly, considered this; but better for themselves, as it is better to do good to others, than to receive good from them. But this most wise and equal order of God is perverted everywhere, by man's iniquity; and they who are less able, must still be adding to the greater's heap: * so as, if accounts were diligently kept, it would be found in most places of the world, that the meaner sort bestow more on the better able, then these of them.

When I consider, what good the rich and mighty otherwise in the world, might easily do, if they had hearts answerable; and how little they do, for the most part; it seems horrible unthankfulness, and iniquity in them, and matter of indignation against them: but then, on the other side, when I consider, how little good I myself do, in my meanness, and others my like, to that which I should, and might do, if I did my utmost; I find reason to be most angry at myself, and mine own unprofitableness; and to be glad, and thankful, that so much good is done by the other, as is.

In benefits and good turns done, and received, it is the best, and right order, that he, who doth them, should forget, and conceal them; and he remember, and speak of them, that receives them.† And, therefore, the first of the three graces is so ordered, as ever to look forward for the doing of more good, and never backward, to upbraid with good done: which, where it is used, takes away the grace of the

* Terence. † Seneca.

kindness; and is as unpleasing, as the after upbraiding of meat in the stomach, eaten with delight. The other two ever look towards the first, to signify, in how continual remembrance, benefits received should be born. Which accordingly to acknowledge with thankfulness, is a ready way to procure further good; as from God, who specially delights in a thankful heart, and would have a reflux of his blessings to keep them sweet, as waters are by flowing to, and fro;* so likewise from such men, as either are, or would seem to be like unto God, in goodness, and bounty.

To use to speak much of men's unthankfulness, even where there hath been great fault that way, for benefits received, both argues a mind not so free in well-doing, as is meet; and that looks too much for thanks from men, and too little, for reward from God: and is, withal, a course for a man to quench his own charity and forwardness, in other men's unthankfulness.

It is a more blessed, that is, both, a more comfortable thing, and that, wherein a good work is more properly performed, to give, than to take; Acts xx. 35, to do, than to receive good: and so all good men should strive both to be able, and willing, so to do. Yet should a good, and wise man, as God sends occasion, be indifferent to either. Neither can he, in truth, do kindness, as he ought, that is not willing to receive kindness, as he needs. It comes partly from a suspicious, but specially, from a vain-glorious heart, that some, who are forward in affording kindness, can yet scarce, though there be just occasion, have the like fastened upon them. Such desire to be too like unto God, who doth good to all, but receives none back again from any: but the very greatest must remember that he is not God, but man, and so stands need of other men. "The head cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee." 1 Cor. xii. 15. Besides, to refuse a kindness offered is to shame it, as a ball ill sent, and let fall to the ground.† Neither hath a true Christian any cause to be ashamed of his condition in receiving good from others: seeing that, as in doing good, he is in God's place; so, in receiving it, in Christ's stead. Matt. xxv. 35—40.

* Ferus. † Plutarch.

CHAPTER VI.

OF EQUABILITY, AND PERSEVERANCE IN WELL-DOING.

WHATSOEVER is done for God, saith one, is done equally: and the apostle more fully: "The grace of God teacheth us to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts; and to live soberly," Tit. ii. 12, in ourselves, justly towards others, and holily towards God. True goodness is comely, and well proportioned in all the parts; whereas the counterfeit is still at jar in itself, and like the patches of a beggar's cloak. A wise man should be a wise man at all times, and in all things; and so should a good man, be a good man. Otherwise when a good thing is done, specially if it be not ordinary, the goodness seems rather to arise from some other motive from without, than from within the person doing it. Besides, what strange thing is it to see a stone fall downward, or a spark fly upward? So, nor to see a fool do foolishly, or a lewd person like himself. But for a wise man to do foolishly, or a good man wickedly, is not only hateful, but monstrous.

He that hath not in him all Christian graces, in their measure, hath none; and he that hath any one truly, hath all. For, as in the first birth, the whole person is born, and not some parts, so is it in the work of regeneration, the whole person is born again, though not wholly. There is but one spirit, both of faith and hope and love and humility and patience; which all have, that are Christ's; and "if any have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Eph. iv. 5, 6; Gal. v. 22; Rom. viii. 9. This Spirit though God but drop, as it were, into some, and pour into others with a full hand, so as one Christian far exceeds another in degree of graces: yet are the habits of all graces, and that, as I conceive, equally one with another, though not equal to those in other men, infused, at once, into the same men's hearts, by that Spirit: but so as, in time, by divers occasions and means, both the habits, or graces themselves, and the exercise of them, inward, and outward, have their different increase in the same persons; till each have attained to the degree of grace allotted to

him, and serving for the preparing of him for the glory prepared for him of God.

Perseverance in good is not any particular grace, or virtue,* but the consummation, and store-house of all virtue and goodness.† Evil men stand in need of all graces; the good, only of this of perseverance, without changing, to the end, that they lose not the things which they have done, or suffered, but that they may receive a full reward. and in due season reap, if they faint not. 2 John 8; Gal. vi. 9.

Where I speak of the necessity of not changing, I mean that changing, which is either to the contrary reigning evil, or to a total want of true goodness. Otherwise, even nature, which works most necessarily, may have its most natural work interrupted, and changed, for a time, and yet not be destroyed: witness the fire in Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, Dan. iii. 21—27, which though it retained in it, both the nature and heat of fire, yet did not burn the three confessors, which were cast into it. How oft do men, though remaining, in nature, reasonable creatures, perform acts plainly unreasonable and brutish, through ignorance, or appetite? How much more is it possible, that a man though not wholly destitute of God's grace, may, through the remainders of his corruption, advantaged by occasion of temptation, practise some particular, and the same gross evils, out of which, in time, he recovers himself by repentance. Who, not foolish himself, will say that David was simply a fool, even when, by occasion of special temptation of Satan, he did a very foolish act, in numbering the people? 2 Sam. xxiv. 10. We are not, therefore, to measure a person's state by some one, or few acts, done, as it were, by the way, and upon instance of some strong temptation, but according to the tenor, and course of his life. Else, what wise man should not be a fool also? Or what fool should not be a wise man? What Nabal should not be liberal, yea bounteous, when he makes a feast like a king? A rebel lurking in a kingdom, may, by some advantage watched, and taken, prevail against the lawful king, in a conflict, or two; and yet, for all that, not reign in the kingdom: so may the

* Bernard. † Tertullian.

treacherous flesh, lurking in a spiritual man, get the mastery in some combat; and yet not, therefore, drive the Lord quite out of his kingdom there. Yea, the same flesh ever lusting against the Spirit, Gal. v. 17, even in them which are led of the Spirit, and leading them into captivity to the law of sin, Rom. vii. 23, doth oft so far prevail in them, as to captive them in some particular by-paths both of judgment, and practice, not so easily discerned, all their life long. "For who can understand his errors?" Psa. xix. 12. And for these particular enormities, whether actions or courses, of godly persons, howbeit, considering them in themselves, and in their external acts, there appear in them no difference, from those of the same kind, practised by men utterly godless; yet, is there a great difference in God's eye, not only in the person of the doer, in God's account, but also in his own heart, and affection, even in the very doing of them: in which the Lord sees the inward strugglings of grace, though, alas, too weak, by the person's default, tending and bending the clean contrary way; and, therein, plainly differencing the doer from the profane contemners of God, doing the same things: in whom there is, either altogether peace without any strife and resistance, whilst the strong man keeps the house; or that resistance which is merely of natural conscience, terrifying with fear of punishment only, without the hatred of sin, which is, though too weak and feeble, in the other.

Although, it be a greater work of grace to become of vicious and evil, good and virtuous; than so to continue, or to grow therein; yet, considering the mighty, and many enemies of our salvation, and the great stumbling-stones in our way, and with these, the heavy clog of our own corruption, which we draw after us: it will be and is found a matter of no small difficulty, not to be weary of well-doing, nor to faint, before we come to reap in due time, that, which we have formerly sown to the Spirit. Gal. vi. 9. And this, the experience of all ages confirmeth; in which there are few, which do the first works, and leave not their first love, Rev. ii. 4, 5: fewer that bring forth more fruit in old age, and are fat and green. Psa. xcii. 14. And yet we know, that albeit of the labourers in the vineyard, who received each his penny, some entered sooner, and some

later, and some not till the very last hour of the day, yet all continued their labour till the evening. Matt. xx. 9, 10. So for ourselves we must make account, that at what time soever any begins, only he that continues to the end, shall be saved. Mark xiii. 43.

And, indeed, it is a great honour to God, when a good man, notwithstanding all discouragements either from within, or from without, perseveres in the course of goodness begun, and gives not over till he come at the goal, how tiring soever his way be.* Such a one shows, "that the Lord is faithful, and that, there is no unrighteousness with him." Psa. xcii. 15. To which purpose the saying of Polycarp is very remarkable; who, being provoked by the Proconsul to blaspheme Christ, answered; that he had served him now eighty and six years, and had never had hurt by him in anything, why then should he speak evil of him?† On the contrary, he that departs from the Lord in the course of godliness formerly held, greatly dishonours him, as the servant doth his master, in leaving him before his time be out. Such a one makes show, as if out of judgment and experience, he disliked goodness; and, therein, really accuseth God, as if he had found some evil in him, or at least, not that good, which he promised, and the other expected. And to that purpose, the Lord, in great indignation, expostulates with the Jews, and asks, "What iniquity they or their fathers had found in him, that they were gone from him after their vanities." Jer. ii. 5.

It is dangerous in course of religion and godliness to fall forward by errors, preposterous zeal, or other misguidance; yet not so much so, as to fall backward by an unfaithful heart. The former may break his face thereby, and lose his comfort in a great measure both with God and men: but the latter is in danger, utterly to break the neck of his conscience, as old Eli brake his neck bodily, by falling backward from his seat, and died. Are there not many Eli's in all ages? And as the least declension from God is dangerous; so is total, desperate: neither will God ever forgive that sin, or give repentance to any so sinning, but hath utterly excluded every such a one out of the otherwise infinite bounds of his mercy in Christ.

* Gregory. † Eusebius.

The preaching of the word of God is the means to beget faith and grace; but for the nourishing, and increasing thereof, we must therewith join the observation in our places of "whatsoever Christ hath appointed his apostles to teach," Matt. xxviii. 20: in the use whereof, as the sanctified means for the obtaining of that end, we shall keep ourselves in the fear of God, and not fall from our stedfastness; and withal, "grow in grace, and in the acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus," 2 Pet. iii. 17; if not in bulk, yet in firmness; as when the body leaves growing in bigness, it knits better than before. Neither indeed can we be safe from being drawn away from God otherwise, than by continual drawing nearer unto him. For, our way to heaven is up a hill, and we drag a cart-load of our corruptions after us; which, except we keep going, will pull us backward, ere we be aware.

The Holy Ghost in those vehement exhortations of the faithful to perseverance, enforced with so many promises, and threatenings, both shows therein man's proneness, and danger, in himself, to fall away; and also affords the means, by which God will preserve his sanctified ones from apostasy; * using the same as evangelical conducts of grace for his working of that perseverance in them, which he requires of them, and that, rather by our being "apprehended of Christ," Phil. iii. 12, as the apostle speaks, than by our apprehending him. As the father leading his weak child in a slippery way bids him hold him fast by his hand, lest he fall, which he also puts forth unto him, yea, wherewith he takes hold of the child, that so by communicating his strength with him, he may stand, and not fall. The Lord that saith unto his, "Seek ye my face," Psa. xxvii. 8, and gives them a heart to answer, "Thy face, Lord, do we seek:" gives each of them also, when he warns them to stand fast, and not to fall away and the like, to answer effectually, Lord, "by these thy commandments thy servant is warned to stand fast and to beware, lest I fall away, as hypocrites do." Psa. xix. 11. And, whensoever God either promiseth unto men, or purposeth in himself absolutely an event touching any his good work in or by them; he withal both purposes, and promises, and accordingly affords them both

* Austin.

means convenient, and skill and will to use them; and, therewith, an answerable blessing upon them, for infallible success.

In regard of this grace of perseverance, the truly godly have an advantage above Adam in innocence. He received to himself, at the first, his portion of grace, and goodness from God, being made after his image, and full freedom, and power both to use, and increase it. But instead thereof, he soon misspent, and lost all, by transgression. God therefore, as a gracious, and wise Father, hath provided better against our misgovernment, and made Christ Jesus our Head, and Feoffer of trust for our state of grace, that he, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," Col. ii. 9, might still furnish, and supply us, as we have need; lest we having all put into our own hands, as Adam had, should misspend, and cast away all, as he did. And so the same Christ our Lord, and Head, partly, by his mediation and intercession with the Father; partly, by the continual supply of his Spirit assisting us in our weaknesses, and recovering us in our falls; and partly, by his Divine power restraining the enemies of our salvation, most faithfully preserves us in the grace of God; not suffering the living members of his body to be plucked from it; nor the habitation of his holy Spirit wholly, and for ever to be possessed by his, and his elect's enemy, Satan.

The Scriptures speak of men's falling from the grace of God, as they do of their receiving it. When the apostles entitle particular churches, or persons, saints, "sanctified in Christ, partakers of the heavenly calling, and such as in whom God will perfect the good work begun in them, until the day of Christ, as it is meet to speak and judge of them all," Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 1; Phil. i. 6; Heb. iii. 1; they do not so judge and speak in respect of the inward truth of the things, as certainly being in their hearts, which they neither did, nor could ordinarily know: for "God only knoweth the hearts of all the children of men: the things of a man no man knoweth, save the spirit of a man which is in him," 1 Kings viii. 39; 1 Cor. ii. 11; but according to the outward appearance, and profession made, in word and deed: so when they speak of the falling away of particular churches, or persons, from God; they are to be understood,

as they mean; and mean, as they know: that is, according to the outward appearance, and profession which men formerly have made, and then do make; leaving to God, and men's selves, which only know them, the inward, and hidden things of the heart: which too many causelessly make show of; sometimes deceiving themselves, and sometimes others, and sometimes both, till the time of revelation of hidden things come. And, whereas, weak Christians might unhappily stumble at the revolt from faith and holiness formerly professed by many, as if there were not that stableness, satisfaction, and comfort in the gospel, and grace thereof, which it promiseth; the Lord, in great wisdom, and mercy, removes this stone of offence out of their way, by intimating plainly, that those apostates were never, truly and thoroughly, made partakers of the gospel's grace, from the former profession whereof they had unfaithfully declined. Thus the Holy Ghost teacheth, that the ground, what show soever it made, in which the seed sown was either withered by persecution, or choked by worldly cares, Matt. xiii. 21, 22, or pleasures, and which brought not forth fruit to the harvest, was never good; but either stony, or thorny ground: that they whose faith was overthrown, were not "vessels to honour, but to dishonour," 2 Tim. ii. 20; nor truly built upon the steady foundation of God: nor of them who had the seal of his Spirit; nor were of his known ones: that those "who fell away, and crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh," were but formerly "as the earth which drinks in the rain, which comes oft upon it," Heb. vi. 6, 7, and yet brings not forth herbs, but thorns and briers: that they, who "bring in damnable errors, and they who "follow their pernicious ways," 2 Pet. ii. 1, both the one and other "departing from the holy commandment delivered unto them, and turning the grace of God into wantonness," were, at their best, but as dogs, though having for a time cast up their stomach, and vomited; and as "swine washed from their mire;" and as Jude saith, "ungodly men of old ordained to that condemnation," Jude 4, and crept in, to wit into the churches, unawares: and, to conclude, that they, which went out from the apostles and churches, by heresies, and profaneness, were not, to wit, truly, and indeed of them

before. 1 John ii. 18. Thus God's wisdom, and mercy provides a shield of faith against the fiery darts of men's hypocrisy and perfidiousness; wherewith otherwise, the tender hearts of weak Christians might be deeply wounded by Satan.

CHAPTER VII.

OF RELIGION, AND THE DIFFERENCES AND DISPUTATIONS THEREABOUT.

ONLY men of all earthly creatures are capable of religion:* which is, also, so natural unto all men, how barbarous soever, that, rather than any country, city, or family would want whereon to bestow their devotions, they would "worship they know not what," Acts xvii. 23; John iv. 22: yea, which is more, that which they do know, not only to be base and vile, as stocks and stones, but also hurtful, and evil.† As then religion, in the general, is natural; and false religion, of corrupt nature: so is true, and Christian religion by supernatural revelation. For how can that worship of God please him, which is not according to his will? "And who knoweth God's will but by revelation of his Spirit?" 1 Cor. ii. 11, 12. But vain men are ready to deem God like themselves, imagining, that the things which please them, please him as well. Hereupon the heathens have devised to themselves gods, and goddesses of theft, murder, and all manner of filthiness: and even Christians, in name, at least, because the kings and lords of the earth account themselves honoured by their subjects, when they entertain them with pompous shows, and pageants of witty device, are ready fondly to imagine, that their witty, specially stately devices and fancies please the Lord himself, as they do, them: and, therein, deny unto him his two properties; of simplicity in the things; and power in appointing them:‡ but if we will give God his due in religion, we must have him both for the object, and appointer of our worship. The apostate Israelites of old, and antichristians since, are said to have "worshipped devils," 2 Chron. xi. 15; Rev. ix. 20; not for that they did,

* Calvin. † Cicero. Lactantius. ‡ Tertullian.

at least, ordinarily, direct their worship unto devils; but, for that, at least, more commonly, they followed their suggestions, in the devised manner of worshipping, though even the true, God. As in directing our worship unto him alone, we honour, and acknowledge his majesty and fatherhood, as being "our Father in heaven," Matt. vi. 9; so in receiving it from him as the only institutor, we honour, and acknowledge both his love in providing, and his wisdom in contriving, and his authority in commanding the manner of his service, and means of our salvation thereby.

This religion is the means of God's worship, and withal, of man's happiness:* which two main ends, God in great wisdom and mercy hath joined together inseparably, that the desire of the latter might provoke to conscience of the former, and the exercise of the former effectually promote, and further the obtaining of the latter. And this, being the only way to happiness, ought to be common to all men, rude and skilful; base and honourable; high and low.† And so all Christians are one in Christ, and Christ one in, and unto them. Gal. iii. 28; John xvii. 21. For though the terrene, and worldly state of the persons, who are Christians, be very different; yet is their spiritual estate of Christianity all one. There is one Lord Christ, through whom, and one faith, by which they are justified, and that equally; one Spirit by which they are sanctified, though in different degrees; one calling of God begun, and perfected by the same gospel, and ordinances thereof. No man's highness of worldly estate can set him above the lowest part of it, or them: nor any's meanness keep him down from flying as high a pitch of Christianity, as any other. An afflicted outward state stands in need of religion to sustain it: a prosperous, to perfect it in eternal happiness, besides the moderating of it in the meanwhile. And, seeing our religion is to God alone; and only the manifestation of it to men; we ought to be alike grounded in it, and resolved of it, and zealous for it; whether w enjoy the favour of the times, or the contrary.

All things requisite for the performance of religious exercises are not parts of religion; but some are of natural necessity; others for civil order, and comeliness. The

* Morneus. † Ficinus.

former need neither be taught, nor commanded, being imposed by absolute necessity, which is the strongest law. and most pressing master, that may be.* The other are such, as without which all exercises of religion would be confused, and unorderly, and like the chaos which " God made in the beginning, void and without form, and whose face darkness covered." Gen. i. 1, 2. For these, the general rules of the Word, with common-sense and discretion, are sufficient. Notwithstanding, though things be not therefore comely, and orderly, because they are done of custom, or commanded by authority; but are therefore both used and commanded, lawfully, because they are comely, and orderly: yet if either custom commend, or authority com mand things that are such indeed, wise, godly, and peaceable men should hold themselves even therefore the more bound unto them.

Religion is the best thing, and the corruption of it the worst: neither hath greater mischief and villany ever been found amongst men, Jews, Gentiles, or Christians, than that which hath marched under the flag of religion, either intended by the seduced, or pretended by hypocrites. The Jews in zeal of God, such as it was, persecuted Christ himself to the death: and Saul in a kind of zeal of the law, was no less than a " blasphemer, persecutor, and oppressor." 1 Tim. i. 13. Pompey the Roman having erected that *arcem omnium turpitudinum*, would not call it the stage, or stews, as it was; but the Temple of Venus.† And what shall we think of the Spaniards' Romish zeal? who, by their own bishop's relation in his first instance of Spanish cruelty, hanged upon one gallows thirteen innocent Indian women, in honour of Christ and of his twelve apostles.‡ But God is not pleased with good intentions exercised in evil actions; much less either pleased, or deceived with the vizards of impiety, and inhumanity: but as he will repay unto the wicked according to their evil works of all kinds; so will he render double vengeance unto them, who under the livery of religion seek countenance for impiety and wickedness.

A man hath, in truth, so much religion, as he hath between the Lord, and himself, in secret, and no more,

* Thales. † Tertullian. ‡ Glasse of Spanish Cruelty.

what shows soever he makes before men: and makes sound proof of his religion both before God, and men, so far as he is forward and ready to every good work, especially to the works of mercy towards them that need. "Pure religion and undefiled before God the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep a man's self unspotted from the world." James i. 27. There are many civil hypocrites, who, if they converse honestly, and kindly with men, presume of great acceptance from God, though they have little care to know his will in his Word, and less to observe his precepts, and ordinances of worship. There are also religious hypocrites not a few, who because of a certain zeal which they have for and in the duties of the first table, repute themselves highly in God's favour, though they be far from that innocency towards men, specially from that goodness, and love indeed, which the Lord hath inseparably joined with a truly religious disposition. Such persons vainly imagine God to be like unto the most great men, who, if their followers be obsequious to them, in their persons, and zealous for them in the things, which more immediately concern their honours, and profits, do highly esteem of them; though their dealings with others, specially meaner men, be far from honest, or good. But God is not partial, as men are: nor regards that church, and chamber religion towards him, which is not accompanied in the house, and streets, with loving-kindness, and mercy and all goodness towards men. Such are also stuffed with self-love in their very service of God, and do but flatter him for their own advantage: "For if they love not," and that in truth and deed, "their brother whom they see, how can they love God whom they see not?" 1 John iv. 20. Besides, they sacrilegiously divide the two tables of the law one from the other, making the two great commandments, which Christ saith, are like one to another, to be unlike in effect. In these, pharisaism lives, and faith is dead: who as they shame Christianity, and Christ in it, what in them lies; so shall their recompense from him be answerable at that day, when every man shall receive honour or shame, according to the works, especially of mercy, and goodness that way, which he hath done, or not done in the flesh.

The common saying, "As good never a whit, as never the better," is verified in the works of religion: which not being performed, as they ought, for substance, are accounted, as not done, in regard of God's acceptance, and the doer's present benefit. So the new "inhabitants of Samaria served not the Lord; and yet they served the Lord." 2 Kings xvii. 33. So "he is not a Jew, who is one outwardly, neither that circumcision, which is outward," to wit only, "in the flesh," Rom. ii. 28, 29. So the carnal Corinthians in eating the Lord's supper, did not that which "was to eat the Lord's supper," 1 Cor. xi. 20, 21, to wit, with acceptance from God, and profit to themselves, for the present. I say, for the present: for by after repentance those very Corinthians might come to have and obtain the right use and end of the Lord's ordinance formerly abused by them, and unuseful to them: and so might Simon Magus, by repentance, of the baptism profanely, on his part, received at the first. The reason of this is, because the effect of the Word, and sacraments, and other ordinances of religion is neither natural, as of meat and drink, which must either nourish presently, or not at all: nor depends upon the worthiness of the minister, as the Donatists imagined; no, nor upon the present fitness of the receiver simply, though both minister and receiver ought to be worthy, and fit: but upon God's blessing of that which is his own, in his time, it may be many years after the receiving, unto his elect, and in mercy covering what was formerly amiss both in giver and receiver.

Besides them, who put on "forms of godliness," 2 Tim. iii. 5, and religion only, as men put on their clothes, because to be naked of all religion would be both shameful, and in many places dangerous; and them, who for love of lucre and riches feign and dissemble in religion;* many of those who seriously mind it, make their choice amiss; as either led by custom of times, and places, in which they live; or by affection and admiration to and of some special persons; or traduced by some vehement passion of anger, fear, envy, or the like; or misled by some guileful appearance, without due examination. And having so done, they commonly set themselves earnestly to advance

* Lactantius.

that faction into which they have once entered, and to depress all others, though oft without competent knowledge of one, or other. Wherein yet they miss, whichsoever is good, or bad; since either may be either, for aught they know. Notwithstanding, we owe this honour to the particular courses of religion which we have once embraced, or wherein we have been brought up, and received any good, that we leave it not lightly; nor further in any particular, than we needs must; nor at all, in the things, which God, in it, in true, and distinct consideration, hath blessed to our spiritual good. To be lightly moved in religion, is childish weakness: but to be stiff without reason, manly obstinacy: and better to be a child in weakness, than a man in perverse obstinateness. The former thinks too well of others, by whom he is too easily moved: the latter thinks too well of himself, despising other men, and God's gifts, and graces in them; as if "the word of God came either from him, or to him alone." 1 Cor. xiv. 36. And this fault of the two, is both the worse, and more dangerous: the former may in time be more easily confirmed in the truth; as a child, in time, becomes a man: the other is seldom and hardly reclaimed, by reason of his hardness and obstinacy.

Disputations in religion are sometimes necessary, but always dangerous; drawing the best spirits into the head from the heart, and leaving it either empty of all, or too full of fleshly zeal and passion if extraordinary care be not taken still to supply, and fill it anew with pious affections towards God, and loving towards men. And this the more, considering how the controversies in religion are generally carried with more heat, than of any other subject: for that, besides reason, art, credit, and persuasion of truth, and right, which warm men in other differences, they are in this inflamed, as it were, with zeal for God, and his service: for whom, and which, not to be fervent, seemeth to be derogatory to his, and its honour. We are therefore carefully to beware, and earnestly to pray, that we may in controversies of religion strive for God, and according unto God: seeing in them we both may easily, and do dangerously err, if we miss at all: and therewith, that we neither make our adversary's cause worse than it is; nor

conceive a sinister opinion of his affections in it, without reason. In both which men seek unhonest and unconscionable advantages: and are sorry in effect, that they whom they oppose, are not worse than they are.

He that strives for error, strives for Satan against God: he that strives for victory, strives for himself against other men: but he that strives for truth against error, helps the Lord against God's and his own enemy, Satan, the father of lies; and this specially, if withal he handle God's cause according unto God. A man shows most knowledge and understanding in the matter of truth: but most grace in the manner of handling of it, with reverence, holiness, and modesty.

No faculty hath so many unskilful ones to meddle in it; as that of disputing in matter of religion. Which cometh to pass, either because men think it a shame for them not to have both knowledge in, and zeal for that subject: or because they make account in truth, that they venture nothing but words in the voyage, and so can have no great loss: or else, which, is common with ignorants, because they still presume they gain, with whom, or about whatsoever they meddle: whereas, if they had modesty to call things into consideration, and wisdom to discern of them aright, they would find themselves plain losers, where they think their gain greatest.

Divers men are effected diversly with the oppositions, and arguments this way brought against their tenets. Some through feebleness of heart are afflicted with them, as with a troop of enemies invading their possessions: others are lightly turned about, like weather-cocks, with every puff of new doctrine. The complaint is just, and great of the vanity, and wantonness of men, and women, in finding, and following new fashions of apparel: but it were well, if this vanity and newfangledness, were to be seen only on peoples' backs, and that the complaint were not as just, and more grievous of the profane wantonness of many in taking up new forms of faith, and religion, specially in places of liberty, and where men may profess any religion, or none, if they will, without bodily danger. I have known divers, that have more lightly and licentiously changed their religion, and that in no small points,

than a sober man would do the fashion of his coat: and who, in my conscience, if it might but have gained, or saved them twelve pence, would have held their former religion still. Others by oppositions are drawn into further search, and examination of things, Acts xvii. 11: and this is commendable, where the matter is such, as we either understand not thoroughly, or may err in. Some again, though of weak understanding, no sooner hear an objection against anything, which they hold, but forthwith they fall upon it with an answer. And this they do oft out of a conceit that it is a point of wit in them, and credit to them, to say something to everything, though little to purpose to anything: in whom the Proverb is verified, to the contrary, "He that answereth a matter before he knows it, it is folly, and shame unto him." Prov. xviii. 13. Others there are again, who trust most to the scorpion's sting, their venomous tongue, in disgracing, instead of refuting, both cause and person of their opposites, by all possible means: and these are for the most part such, as presume that the times, which they serve, and their credits with them, will countenance, and authorize against their underling adversaries the slanders, and calumnies which they either maliciously invent, or lightly receive, or uncharitably conceive against them: which therefore they spit freely abroad with black tongues as serpents do their poison, to blast, and corrupt whatsoever they light upon. These hot reproachers are often as cold disputers.* There want not also, who affect differences in religion with others, either in wantonness, and for ostentation of wit; or in affectation of singularity; or in envy at superiors; or in contempt of inferiors; or to gratify the mighty, by opposing such, specially of mean condition, as the other hate, and despise. But we should affect strife with none; but study, as far as can be, to accord with all; accounting it a benefit, when we can so do with any; and the contrary, across; and the same the greater, by how much their gifts, or graces, or places are greater, or the bond nearer between them, and us, whether natural, or civil, or religious. Lastly, there are to be found too many, who make either proud contempt, or bold obstinacy a buckler to ward all blows of

* Scaliger.

arguments, that are, or can be brought against their preconceived opinions. We ought to be firmly persuaded in our hearts of the truth, and goodness of the religion, which we embrace in all things; yet as knowing ourselves to be men, whose property it is to err and to be deceived in many things; and accordingly both to converse with men in that modesty of mind, as always to desire to learn something better, or further, by them, if it may be: as also to beg at God's hands the pardon of our errors, Psa. xix. 12; and aberrations, which may be, and are secret in us, and we not aware thereof.

Whosoever offers the word of God, and holy Scriptures for justification of his religion, deserves to be heard, and to have his cause examined for the very Word's sake, whose testimony he offers to produce: as in civil course, he who offers to bring for his cause witnesses honourable, and worthy of credit, will be admitted to plead it for his witnesses' sake, though not for his own.

No difference, or alienation in religion how great soever, either dissolves any natural, or civil bond of society; or abolisheth any the least, duty thereof. A king, husband, father, &c., though an heathen, idolater, atheist, or excommunicate, is as well, and as much a king, husband, or father, as if he were the best Christian living: and so both oweth, and hath owing unto him reciprocally the duties and offices of that state, in which he is set, by an inviolable right: which they that deny, are monsters amongst men, and enemies to human societies.

Divisions amongst a few, though not in the greatest matters, are most observed, because first, it is expected that weak parties should be firmly united for their better defence. Secondly, a few, and their doings are remarkable for their fewness, as a handful of foreigners in a strange country. Thirdly, their differences are oft more vehement, partly for the greater zeal, spiritual or carnal, of the persons; and partly because their opposition is more immediate; whereas amongst many it will be hard, but some mediators will be found to moderate things.* And this is the reason, why the danger of civil tumults is greatest in such countries, as in which two religions only are in use.

* Bodinus.

Lastly, all will be bold with them, and ready to proclaim their miscarriages to the full, and above truth.

The most count it the best and safest way in differences of religion without further question, to take the strongest part: that doing as the most do, they may have the fewest find fault with them. Such forget God who is strongest of all. But the best and safest way indeed, is to get true, and sound conscience of things certain, and without controversy. Such a person God will direct in his ways, so far, and certainly, as not to miss of the main end, life eternal; and therewith in mercy will pardon all other his human aberrations. "With mine whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments." Psa. cxix. 10.

Men are for the most part minded for, or against toleration of diversity of religions, according to the conformity which they themselves hold, or hold not with the country, or kingdom, where they live. Protestants living in the countries of Papists commonly plead for toleration of religion: so do Papists that live where Protestants bear sway: though few of either, specially of the clergy, as they are called, would have the other tolerated, where the world goes on their side. The very same is to be observed in the ancient Fathers, in their times: of whom, such as lived in the first three hundred years after Christ, and suffered with the churches, under heathen persecutors, pleaded against all violence for religion, true or false: affirming that it is of human right and natural liberty, for every man to worship what he thinketh God:* and that it is no property of religion to compel to religion, which ought to be taken up freely; that no man is forced by the Christians against his will, seeing he that wants faith, and devotion, is unserviceable to God: and that God not being contentious, would not be worshipped of the unwilling:† whereas, on the contrary, the latter, having the emperors Christian, and on their side, incited, and pressed them to violent courses. But considering, that to tolerate is not to approve; and that the magistrates are kings, and lords over men properly, and directly, as they are their subjects, and not as they are Christ's; but that by accident, and as the

* Tertullian. † Lactantius.

same persons who are civilly their subjects, are spiritually Christ's and Christians; and lastly, considering, that neither God is pleased with unwilling worshippers, nor Christian societies bettered, nor the persons themselves neither, but the plain contrary in all three; the saying of the wise King of Poland* seemeth approvable, that it is one of the three things which God hath kept in his own hands, to urge the conscience this way, and to cause a man to profess a religion, by working it first in his heart.

If the order in Israel be objected; it may be answered, first, that the land was holy, as no land now is; that one nation separated from all other nations to be the Lord's peculiar people, as no nation now is; the kings types and figures of Christ, as no kings now are: and secondly, that none were, in truth, compelled to the Israelitish church and religion; but being of it, whether Israelites, or proselytes, were to be "cut off from the Lord's people, and destroyed out of hand for presumptuous sins," Num. xv. 30—36: Psa. ci. 7, 8; or working iniquity; or for "not serving God with all their heart and might," 2 Chron. xv. 13. Kings by this course would come short of the number of subjects, in whose multitude their honour stands: and unto churches, few or none could possibly be added.

If it be further objected, that men may be by the magistrate constrained to the outward acts of justice, honesty, and the like, though destitute altogether of the inward virtues; it may be answered, that these serve properly, and immediately to preserve civil societies, of which magistrates are properly kings, and lords, and so do obtain their proper ends, if the very outward things be done, though never so unwillingly: but of religious actions the proper end is not civil society, nor is attainable but by faith, and devotion in the heart of the doers.

Lastly, to that of the Father, "that many who at first serve God by compulsion come after to serve him freely and willingly,"† I answer, that neither good intents, nor events, which are casual, can justify unreasonable violence: and withal, that by this course of compulsion many become atheists, hypocrites, and familists: and being at first con-

* King Stephen. † Austin.

strained to practise against conscience, lose all conscience afterwards. Bags and vessels overstrained break, and will never after hold anything. Yet do I not deny all compulsion to the hearing of God's word, as the means to work religion, and common to all of all sorts, good and bad; much less excuse civil disobedience palliated with religious shows, and pretences; or condemn convenient restraint of public idolatry, so as this rule of reason holds its place, viz., that the bond between magistrate, and subject is essentially civil; but religious accidentally only, though eminently.* For conclusion of this matter, let the godly magistrate consider, that as there is no church-state and profession so truly Christian, and good, in which too many may not be found carried in their persons with a spirit plainly antichristian; so there is hardly any sect so antichristian or evil otherwise, in church profession, in which there are not divers truly, though weakly led, with the Spirit of Christ in their persons, and so true members of his mystical body. With whom to deal rigorously for some few aberrations of ignorance, or infirmity, were more to please Christ's enemy in the oppressing of the person, than Christ, in so repressing his failing in some particulars, specially if they be not fundamental.

As then the Christian magistrate hath his power of magistracy from God, which his Christianity serves to sanctify, and direct: so, undoubtedly, he is to use it for God, and his honour, and that in his true worship, in which he is specially honoured, and against the contrary; yet with these two cautions:—First, That as the greater sins of other kinds, do not so violate and dissolve the marriage-bond, as adultery doth, by reason of its direct opposition thereagainst: so neither do idolatry, or heresy, how great sins soever in themselves, so outlaw a subject civilly, as do seditions, murders, adulteries, and the like directly violating, and disturbing civil societies. The second is, That no authority of man may bring into, or uphold in the Church either doctrine, or ordinance of religion, or person, which last is not lightly to be regarded, seeing the other two serve for it, unto which the Lord in his Word hath not first given testimony of approbation for

* Keckerman.

that use: seeing magistrates are not governors against, nor besides, but under God, in their dominions.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

THE holy Scriptures are that Divine instrument, and means, by which we are taught to believe what we ought, touching God, and ourselves, and all creatures; and how to please God in all things, unto eternal life. I speak of believing things, seeing faith comes by hearing: for else, we know things touching God by that which we see, feel, and discern, in and by his works. We are led to the knowledge of God in his power, wisdom, goodness, justice, and mercy, by his works both without, and within us; and whensoever God either doth, or suffers a thing to be done, though not so much as insinuated formerly in his Word, we then know it to be his will, that such a thing should be, as certainly, as if he had expressly revealed it before in the Scriptures. I speak of pleasing God in all things; first, because entire obedience, so far as human frailty will permit, is the immediate end, and use of the word of God; and the way, and means to salvation: secondly, to meet with that dangerous presumption of doing that, which is necessary to salvation, as many use to speak, though with affected ignorance of, and apparent disobedience to many of God's commandments. Who knoweth with how little God can, and doth save many, being faithful in learning what they can, and in observing what they know? Though much more be necessary to such as have means to know more. And thirdly because it is no child-like, but a bastardly disposition, to take care for serving God no further, though, alas, all be little enough for that, than to be sure of the Father's inheritance. The heart of a man is then assured before God, and hath a warrant from heaven against eternal confusion, when he can say, with good conscience, that he "hath respect to all God's commandments." Psa. cxix. 6.

God would have his will written, that is, his Word to become Scripture, partly for more certainty of truth to

men, and to preserve it the better from being corrupted; as all make account, that things set down in black and white, as they speak, are most firm: partly, for accord, and unity of churches, and Christians in the same truth; who, if they differ so much, notwithstanding they use the same rule, what would they do, if their rules were different, or uncertain? and partly, for more community; seeing books and writings may both easily be dispersed whither the voice of teachers cannot come, and also be read in private by Christians, when they are apart from their teachers.

Neither all things which the prophets of God wrote, were written by Divine inspiration, but some of them humanly, as their human affairs, common to them with other men, required: neither was all wherein they were divinely inspired, brought into the public treasury of the church, or made part of the canonical Scriptures, which we call the Bible;* no more than all which they spake, was spoken by the Spirit; or all which they spake by the Spirit, written, John xx. 31; xxi. 25: but only so much, as the Lord in wisdom, and mercy, thought requisite to guide the church in faith and obedience, to the world's end: so as the Scriptures should neither be defective through brevity, nor burthensome by too great largeness, and prolixity. And thus to judge is more answerable both to God's providence in preserving the Scriptures from miscarrying; and to the Church's care, and faithfulness in keeping safe this heavenly treasure committed to her custody; than to say with some, that any of the books, or parts of the canonical Scriptures are lost.

It no more detracts from the authentic authority, or general use of some parts of the Holy Scriptures, that they were penned upon some special occasions, than of the sermons of Christ, the prophets, and apostles, that some of them were preached upon special occasions. And surely, it seems a strange conceit, that the authority of the writing should be the less, because the thing written was suggested by the Holy Ghost, and so penned, upon special occasion offered: as such Scriptures were.

The Scriptures are not only authentic in themselves, as

* Junius.

having the Spirit of God for the author both of matter, and manner, and writing, 2 Pet. i. 21; but do also, as they say, carry their authority in their mouths, binding both to credence, and obedience, all whomsoever, unto whom they come, and by what means soever. And if God "left not himself without witness," Acts xiv. 17, in his works of creation, and providence; how much less in his written Word? wherein, without comparison, he reveals himself much more clearly, than the other way: which is therefore discernible by itself, as is the sun by its own beams, and light; and which, as one saith, he that studies to understand, shall be compelled to believe.* Their assertion, therefore, who hold, and teach, that we are to receive the Scriptures for the churches' testimony, because usually, as others more truly and religiously speak, we receive them by its testimony,† is in effect none other, than that we are to believe God for men's cause: whereas, on the contrary, if a man should find the book of the Holy Scriptures in the highway, or hidden under a stone; yet he were bound to learn, receive, believe, and obey them, and every part of them, in his place, though without, yea against the liking and approbation of all the men in the world: except God must not be God without men's liking.‡ And if the word preached by Christ, the prophets, and apostles, in their time, whether to Jews, or Gentiles, were absolutely to be believed, and obeyed, by every one that heard it, without other, or further testimony; why not as well, and much, now, by all that read it written? "He that receives the testimony" of Christ for itself, whether exhibited in speech, or writing, "sets to his seal that God is true," John iii. 33: he that receives it for the testimony of the Church, sets to his seal, that men are true. But the child of God knows his Father's voice.§

The profit and power of the Scriptures, both for stay of faith, and rule of life, and comfort in all manner of afflictions, no tongue or pen is able so fully to express, as every true Christian finds, and feels, in his own experience. There is but one true happiness, life eternal; one giver of it, God; one Mediator, Jesus Christ; and so but one means of imparting it, the word of God: by which, he that

* Tertullian. † Whitaker. ‡ Tertullian. § Morneus.

is both author and finisher of all, both begins, and perfects all. "Blessed is the man, that hath his delight therein, and meditates in the same, day and night," Psa. i. 1, 2: that so he may learn the things upon earth, the knowledge whereof will fit him for heaven.*

When we avow the Scriptures' perfection, we exclude not from men common sense, and the light of nature, by which we are, both subjects capable of understanding them, and directed in sundry manners of doing the things commanded in them: yea, besides other human helps, we both acknowledge, and beg of God as most needful for their fruitful understanding, the light of his Holy Spirit: only we account, and avow them as a most perfect rule neither crooked any way, nor short in anything requisite. This their sufficiency and perfection is not to be restrained to matters simply necessary to salvation: for who can say, how many, or few, and no more, nor less, they are? But to matters necessary to obedience, that we may please God in all things, great, or small; expressed, or intended, and to be gathered by proportion, and just consequence. 1 Thess. iv., 1. "Without faith we cannot please God," Heb. xi. 6; and "Faith comes only by the word of God," Rom. x. 17; which we must therefore make our guide in "all our ways." Prov. iii. 6. And if we be to "give an account of every idle word," Matt. xii. 36, and so for every vain thought, or work, there is then a law of God for these smallest matters; for where no law is, there is no transgression; and where there is no transgression, or fault, there is no account to be given. But as philosophers say, that the least natural things are not sensible, by reason of their smallness; so may, and doth it too easily fall out, that we fail through want of skill or care in applying our rule of direction, both in smaller matters, and others of greater moment also. But this is not because the Scriptures are defective in directing; but we either blind in discerning, or negligent in searching, or both. And if the holy Scriptures' direction reach unto the whole course of our life, how much more of our religion, or worship of God? in which nothing is to be practised, but that which is to be believed; nothing to be believed, but that which is to be taught;

* Jerome.

nothing to be taught, but according to the Scriptures. This being the first thing that we are to believe, that we must believe nothing, but according to them.* All things else are human; and human it is to err, and be deceived. The custom of the Church is but the custom of men: the sentence of the fathers but the opinion of men: the determinations of councils but the judgments of men.† To conclude, one only place of holy Scriptures rightly understood, and fitly applied, will have more power, and fasten deeper upon a truly good, and godly heart; than all the consenting authorities of men, and angels, though uttered with the tongue of men, and angels.

As the title set over the head of Christ crucified, was the same in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, so are the Scriptures the same, whether in the original, or other language into which they are faithfully translated. Yet, as the waters are most pure, and sweet in the fountain, so are all writings, Divine and human, in their original tongues; it being impossible, but some either change, or defect, or redundancy will be found in the translation, either by default of the translator, or of the tongue, into which it is made.

In a translator is required, specially, skill in words, and tongues; in an expositor, judgment in things. That translation is most exact, which agreeth best with the original, word for word, so far as the idiom, or propriety of the language will bear: so as for words, or phrases, in the original, proper or common; simple, or figurative; perspicuous, or doubtful; words and phrases of the same sort, proper or common, and so of the rest, be put, and retained in the version: lest the interpreter bring his own commentary for the Scripture text. On the contrary, the commentary is best, which shows most clearly the sense, scope, and meaning of the text, in what words soever.

As the law-maker best knows the meaning of the law, and how it is to be expounded, so for the exposition of the holy Scriptures, the Spirit of God, as the author thereof is first and most to be consulted with, by faithful and earnest prayer, from a good conscience, that God may fulfil his promise made of "giving his Holy Spirit to them that ask it," Luke xi. 13, and of "reveal-

* Tertullian. † Whitaker.

ing his secrets to them that fear him." Psa. xxv. 14. And so some special instruments of renewing the gospel's light in the former age, have professed, that they learned more this way by prayer, than by much study otherwise.*

There is in Scripture but one proper, and immediate sense; others are rather collections from it, relations unto it, or illustrations of it, than immediate senses. The literal sense is to be followed, as being most natural, what may be, and not to be refused, if it may stand without danger, without blasphemy, and according to other Scriptures.† And here it must be noted, that Christ, and his apostles in expounding Moses and the prophets, did not only infallibly express their conceptions and meanings, but the meaning of the Spirit speaking in them; and that, by reason of their more plentiful measure of the same Spirit and experience withal, in some particulars, as I conceive, further than the prophets themselves understood: albeit they always knew the immediate drift of the spirit and meaning of the things, which they spake, and were not as the Pythonists, or other the like instruments of the devil, uttering oracles which they themselves understood not.

The lawyers have a rule, and the same competent to the matter whereof they treat, that laws of favour are to be extended, as largely as may be: but odious laws, as they speak, as much straitened and confined within the narrowest bounds of interpretation. But all God's laws and instructions must, in honour of the lawgiver, be expounded in the largest sense that they can bear: that so they may reach as far, and bind as fast, as may be. This the infiniteness of his wisdom challengeth, in directing us; of his authority, in commanding us; of his mercy, in promising; and justice, in threatening: which, by so interpreting, and applying his Word, we acknowledge, and honour, as is meet. And as they are blame-worthy, who out of a scrupulous fear, lest they should add to the Scriptures, allow them no further meaning, than the words express; so is their sin greater, and full of presumption, who shorten and straiten the Scriptures' instruction to that which is expressed in so many words, that they may make room thereby,

* Luther. † Irenæus.

for their own devices. A scripture commandeth, promiseth, or threateneth whatsoever is contained in it, though not expressed; and that is contained in it, which can truly and justly be gathered from it, though by never so many consequences, or inferences; though the fewer the less dangerous, by reason of our weakness of discourse.

Particular words and phrases, more obscure, are to be interpreted according to the scope and mind of the speaker, the Holy Ghost, in the place, which is, both in time, and excellency, before the thing spoken,* and that for which the Spirit speaketh as it doth in the place: neither is the scripture profitable, except the scope be first found.† And to hang upon a word, phrase, or sentence in a text, without looking to the main drift, is, if any other, the character of an heretical disposition. With this, that other most necessary rule hath affinity; namely, that the words are to be understood according to the subject matter:‡ the words of law and gospel according to the different nature of law and gospel; the words of an history, historically; of a sacrament, sacramentally and mystically; and, accordingly, notes of universality, according to the extent of the matter, or person spoken of.

As we oft find out, and learn men's meaning by some of their company, and of such as are about them, which we could not learn of themselves, so may we gather the meaning of a scripture, otherwise hard to be understood, by marking the things which accompany it, and which are above and below, as the Jews used to speak, and Christians with them.§

Like as the lamps in the golden candlestick did one help another's light; so doth one place of holy scripture, another's. And though a thing found in one place, if in one indeed, be as true, and bind as strongly, as if it were a thousand times written; yet so to insist upon any one place, in a difference, as to neglect others, is the highway to error, and to lose the right sense, by breaking the scripture's golden chain, whose links are all fastened together.‖ And as one place must be expounded by another; so must the more brief and obscure by the more plain, and large,

* Celsus. † Chrysostom. ‡ Melancthon.
§ Tertullian. ‖ Chrysostom.

and not the contrary, and cross way: for that were not to lighten the darkness of a text, but to darken its light: according to that of the father:—The fewer must be understood according to the more; and one saying must rather be taken according to all, than against all.*

Touching precepts affirmative, and negative, first, they are usually either kept, or broken together. He who doth not what he should do, commonly doth what he should not do; if a man be "drawn away" from God, he is easily "ensnared by his own lust," James i. 14. On the contrary, he that doth his duty faithfully, hath as it were, a *supersedeas* from the Lord, against the temptations of sin, and Satan. The way not to "fulfil the lusts of the flesh is to walk in the Spirit." Gal. v. 16. Secondly, the received rule, that affirmative precepts bind always, but not to always, as negatives do, is true, being rightly understood. We are to take no time for doing evil, and but some time for the doing of the best good, to wit, as we have opportunity, and ability. Gal. vi. 10. Thirdly, in the prohibition of an evil we must ever understand the command of the opposite virtue; and so on the contrary. He that saith expressly "Thou shalt not kill," means also, as well, Thou shalt preserve thy neighbour's life. Lastly, There is both more virtue, and more vice practised in affirmatives, than in negatives. It is more good, to do good, than not to do evil: and more evil, to do evil, than not to do good; though both the tree that brings forth evil fruit, and that brings forth no fruit, shall be cut down, and cast into the fire.

The oppositions intended in Scriptures are diligently to be observed, upon mistaking whereof error followeth; upon neglect, maimed obedience. For example: the apostle in teaching that there is but "one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. viii. 4—6; doth not oppose the Father to the Son; nor the Son to the Father, for either is God, either Lord: but both to all, whether creatures, or idols. So where Christ bids his apostles "baptize them that believe," he doth not exclude their infants; but such as believe not the gospel being preached unto them. Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 16. Likewise, where Paul saith of the incestuous man, that he was "re-

* Tertullian.

buked of many;" he opposeth not many to all, as some conceive, but to one, viz. himself. 2 Cor. ii. 6.

Lastly, he that will expound the Scriptures, ought in honour of the graces of God bestowed upon other men, and in conscience of his own infirmity, with the holy use of other means, to join the reading and searching of the commentaries and expositions of such special instruments, as God in mercy hath raised up for the opening of them, and edifying the church thereby: remembering always, that "the word of God neither came from him, nor to him alone." 1 Cor. xiv. 36. He that depends too much upon other men's judgment, makes as if the word of God came not to himself at all: he that neglects it, as if it came to him only. Of which two evils the latter is so much the worse, as arrogancy in a man's self is more odious both to God, and men, than either slackness in examining, or dulness in discerning, or excessive fear of departing from the opinion, specially received, of others.

It is strange, and lamentable, that, in the great profession of the Scriptures made in our days, so many should be ignorant of the difference between the law, and the gospel, of which two heads the Scriptures consist: making the gospel nothing else, but a more favourable, and easy law, and thereby transforming grace into nature; a promise to be received, into a commandment to be fulfilled: and the offering of new life, even the life of Christ, into the exacting of old, and due debt only. Gal. ii. 20. God, as an absolute Lord, gives his holy law, saying, "Do this and live:" and therein properly exacts obedience, as a natural debt, of the reasonable creature, thereunto enabled by creation: but as a gracious Father publisheth the gospel, in it offering help to the miserable and helpless creature, and working withal, according to the election of grace, power, and will to receive the help, and hand offered. This if many considered, as they ought, they would not, as they do, plead the power of man's free-will in spiritual things, against the free grace of God; nor exclude, as some of them do, the infants of believers from the covenant, and baptism of the church: as though God could not show grace, because they cannot show free-will to receive it.

The utmost ordinary means of revelation of God's will for man's salvation and happiness, is the gospel. When the law written in man's heart by creation was almost worn out, God gave it written in tables of stone. But life, and freedom from sin, and death, being "impossible to the law in that it was weak, through the flesh," Rom. viii. 3; and all men by it, whether considered as written in tables of stone, or of the heart, by creation, "coming short of the glory of God," Rom. iii. 23; it hath pleased the same God by the gospel of his Son Christ to provide a gracious remedy, that the sick to death, by the justice of the law might be cured; yea the dead revived, by the grace of the gospel, and mercy of God therein. And other remedy besides, and beyond this, for the obtaining of salvation, God hath not revealed. He that fulfils not the righteousness of the law, violates God's justice: but remaining obstinate against the grace of the gospel also, he despises, with God's justice, his mercy; and his authority in both. And what remains for such, but a fearful expectation of the work of his terrible power, of "the revelation of his wrath from heaven against all, specially such, ungodliness of men"? Rom. i. 8. "For if the word" (of the law) "spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward: how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation" (of the gospel); "which, at first, began to be preached by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him?" Heb. ii. 2, 3.

CHAPTER IX.

OF AUTHORITY AND REASON.

AUTHORITY leads us to the author of a thing, and bids us rest in his word, whether for credence to his relation, or obedience to his commandment. Reason wills us to look to the thing itself, and to the arguments for or against it, taken either from common sense, or natural principles, and conclusions, or other undoubted grounds of truth, or goodness of matter. The ground in authority is, in a sort, personal; in reason, real. It is a kind of impeachment of

authority, to examine the reasons of things: so is it a prejudice to reason's work to call authority to counsel, save only when God speaks; for then the authority justifies the reason; and reason bids receive the authority, and do all things commanded without reasonings. Phil. ii. 14.

The authority and credit of him that relates a matter, whether man, or angel, yea or God himself, makes it not the truer in itself, but the more readily to be believed by them that hear it. The testimony of God in his Word, that in the beginning he made the world of nothing, and will judge men and angels at that day by Jesus Christ, is only therefore true in itself, because God indeed hath done the one, and will do the other; but is therefore by us to be believed as true, because he so testifies in his Word.

Divine authority is to sway with us above all reason: yea reason teacheth, that God is both to be believed, and obeyed in the things for which man can see no reason. And hence it is, that the Lord hath so severely punished men's transgressing his laws of ceremonies, and Divine institutions, called by the schoolmen, voluntary precepts; for that in commanding of them God's absolute authority most clearly appears, and man's pure obedience in observing them. 1 Sam. vi. 19; 2 Sam. vi. 6—8; 2 Chron. xxvi. 18, 19. Human authority hath more or less weight, according to the worth of the person, or other circumstances; but as the monies of all men, high and low, good and bad, are alike; so are the reasons. The meanest man's reason, specially in matter of faith, and obedience to God, is to be preferred before all authority of all men. I say, specially of faith; yet not excluding other subjects. For though I will and ought to do some things, simply because I am commanded; yet I will not therefore simply believe that anything is good in itself. And albeit I am bound to obey human authority in sundry things, for the commanding of which I know no reason, yea know there is no reason; yet know I reason for mine obedience, even the honour of authority, and preservation of peace. The thing commanded may be unjust, and evil in him that commands, and yet good in me, obeying his authority in it. For example: a matter of outward wrong to me commanded by the magistrate; in the doing whereof I sustain damage, but sin not.

God who made two great lights for the bodily eye, hath also made two lights for the eye of the mind; the one, the Scriptures, for her supernatural light; and the other reason, for her natural light. And indeed only those two are a man's own: and so is not the authority of other men. The Scriptures are as well mine, as any other man's; and so is reason as far as I can attain to it. But the authority of others is not mine, but theirs: which when I use, I borrow, and lay to pawn unto them, whom I cannot satisfy, or secure by the other means, which are mine own. Who would borrow of others that hath enough of his own to satisfy as well?

God, who, though he be absolute Lord, so often annexeth reasons to his precepts, teacheth even the most powerful and mighty upon the earth, in their governments, to prefer reason before authority. And the man that would not rather rule men by reason, yea, beasts, if they were capable thereof, than by violent authority, is himself inhuman, and beast-like.

The authority of God's Word and testimony is always the same, as being grounded upon his unchangeable verity: but the credit of men's judgments is less, or more according to variety of circumstances. Men deserve most credit in the faculty wherein they have been most exercised; for none can judge so well of the craft, as the craftsman.* So, more likely it is, that a man wise, learned, and studious in the Scriptures, especially, if withal, he be such a one, as unto whom God hath promised, in ordinary course, as unto one that fears him, to reveal his secrets, should find the truth, than one flighty, illiterate, and of more shallow meditations. In former ages the devil hath so far prevailed, as that men in superstitious reverence, have, as it were, pinned their faith and religion upon the sleeves of the Church's authority, and clergy's learning; putting out, or winking with, their own eyes, that their guides might lead them: and this blindfold devotion is yet affected by too many. But withal, there want not, specially in places of liberty, whose minds Satan hath so far possessed with the contrary delusion, as they think it half popery, so much as to seek counsel and direction at men of learning and knowledge; lest, forsooth, they should be deceived by them. This suspicion hath been,

* Anacharsis.

and is, too much occasioned by the abuse of learning to covetousness, and ambition in the learned: but is taken and held up by the other, partly by unbelief, whilst they more fear the devil's subtlety in deceiving them by learned men, especially being in any measure conscionable, than they trust to the blessing of God upon his own gifts in them for their information; partly, from conceitedness in themselves, as if they were indeed very popes, and exempted from danger of erring; and partly, through partial affection to their preconceived opinions, of which they are as loath to hear any ill, as fond parents are to hear ill of their children, though there be never so much cause, lest thereby they should be brought out of love with them. But as we are more to desire, and endeavour that we ourselves may walk in the ways of God, than others; so should we rather desire and more endeavour, as we have occasion, to converse with men of knowledge, and such as may inform us, than with them that know less than ourselves, and do depend upon us for information. And to conclude; as learning makes the good better, and the bad worse: so is it more likely, that a man should be bettered by it, than not; and that knowing what concerns him, he will be the more ashamed of the contrary.*

It is also more probable, that many, specially wise, and godly, should find the truth, than one, as many eyes see more than one: whereupon it was that the very apostles in some cases of practice sought or took the advice of others; which help, our dulness makes much more necessary for us. Acts xxi. 24—26.

Into this account we must also bring the advantage of ages and times in which men live: and so more credit in matters controverted between Rome and us, is to be given to the churches, and fathers of that first age after Christ, than of the latter, when the mystery of iniquity, rising by degrees, had gotten too great, both height and breadth.

Besides, the occasions offered have their weight in these balances. Austin is observed, by the occasion of the error of Pelagius, to have examined more diligently, and more exactly discerned, and in presser† terms to have propounded the truth, in the points of predestination, and free will,

* Comenius. † More precise.

than others, his ancients. Many are ignorant, yea mistake, specially in smaller matters, not properly because they want either skill, or will to find out the truth in them, but occasion only pressing them to examine things received by tradition, or done of custom without ground of reason.

With these also we must join the consideration of such advantages, as the latter times have of the former, whose helpful labours they enjoy: by which those which follow them, though in themselves meaner than they, are enabled to discern of many things, better than the other that went before them; as a dwarf set upon the shoulders of a giant can see further than he.

Lastly, it is more likely, that of two, in any measure alike otherwise, he who suffers affliction for conscience of God, should have the truth, than he that gets worldly benefit by his course in religion; specially if he have not in a great measure learned to deny himself, and this world: it being their guise to dissemble herein, who love lucre, and riches: as too many do.*

The credit commending a testimony to others cannot be greater than is the authority in itself of him that gives it; nor his authority greater than his person. The person, then, being but a man, the authority can be but human, and so the faith but human, which it can challenge. The custom of the Church is but the custom of men: the sentence of the fathers but the opinion of men: the determination of councils but the judgments of men,† what men soever. And so, if all the men in the world, not immediately directed, as were extraordinary prophets, and apostles, in whom the Spirit spake, and testified by them, should consent in one, as they, notwithstanding their multitude, were but men, though many, so was their testimony but human, though of many men; neither could it challenge any other than human assent unto it: and not that, neither absolutely, either in matters of discourse of reason, wherein it is possible that men should deceive themselves; or of relation from others, by whom they may be deceived. We are therefore to beware, that we neither wrong ourselves by credulity; nor others by unjust suspicion. To receive without examination men's sayings, is

* Lactantius. † Whitaker.

to make of men, God: to reject them lightly, is to make of men, devils;* or fools, at the best. The latter hath pride and uncharitableness for the ground: the former either argues men to be simple, which cannot; or idle, which will not; or presumptuous, which think they need not; or superstitious, which dare not judge; or, which is worst of all the rest, desirous in a kind of humble hypocrisy to shelter an evil conscience before God under the shadow of great men's authority.

To press immoderately men's authority in Divine things, is to wrong God's, which alone is authentic; and whose will, and it alone, and all it, so far as is fit for us to know it, we know more certainly to be contained, and preserved, without corruption, in the Scriptures, than any father's opinion in the books which go under his name. This also wrongs men's faith, and reason, captivating them by prejudice; and rather offering a hand to lead the blind, than a light for the help of him that hath eyes to see with. I have known some, who, if they light upon a peremptory author, and bold asserter of things, were ready to be still of the same opinion with the book which they last read, their weaker judgment being overborne, rather by the strength of other men's asseverations, than reasons. Lastly, this engenders endless contentions: as is to be seen in some learned men's writings, in which there is more ado about the meaning of such or such a place in a father, than were enough to determine the whole controversy by the Scriptures and good reason.

These things notwithstanding, there is both a lawful, and convenient use of human testimony, even in Divine things; as first, for the convincing of such thereby, as regard it too much, and God's word too little. Thus Paul amongst heathens, even in his very sermons, alleged heathenish poets, and philosophers; and we in our writings rightly allege fathers, and councils against papists, and others, who more regard the sayings of an ancient father, or canon of a council, than the written word of the Ancient of Days. They are twice overcome, who are beaten with their own weapons, in which they trust. Secondly, it induceth a moral probability, though no abso-

* P. Martyr.

lute necessity of truth: and though we see not the truth by other men's eyes, but by our own, yet may we be something held up in the arms of their testimony to see it the better, and so be helped, as Zaccheus was, by the tree, into which he climbed, to see Christ. So the apostles in penning some parts of Holy Scripture, upon occasion of differences in the churches, and opposition to their apostolical authority, took in, for the better passage with men, of God's undoubted truth, the concurring testimony, even of ordinary Christians: though both the decrees and epistles were penned by infallible and immediate direction of the Holy Ghost, as well, and as much, as any other parts of canonical Scriptures. Acts xv. 23, 29; Gal. i. 2. Thirdly, citation of human authority helps to wipe away the aspersion of schism, and singularity, when we can show that our assertions and practices have agreement with such as are in account in the churches. Lastly, it commends both a man's modesty, and diligence, when he inquires after, and withal, his cause, in the eyes of men, when he appears to know the judgments of others in the things he handles: as it is, on the other side, an imputation to him that knows them not; and that even where it is otherwise, no benefit, to know them.

The authority of him that prescribeth, or commandeth, within his limits, is the same, whether the matter be great, or small. God is God, in the smallest things, which he requires; and man but man, in his deepest charges. The prophets, and apostles in their writings are extraordinary, and pastors and teachers, ordinary ministers; and neither are either more or less in any part of their ministry, for the instruction of the churches. So likewise all true reasons are of the same force in themselves, to confirm that for which they are brought: neither is any one stronger than other, but only more evident. The best but proves of itself the things to be so; and the meanest, if found, doth as much.

CHAPTER X.

OF FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE: REASON, AND SENSE.

FAITH, in general, is a firm assent upon knowledge to an affirmation, for the credit or authority of him that affirmeth a thing, whether God, or angel, or man.* To some things we assent by sense, and natural light: to some for certain proof of reason: but the assent of faith rests upon the fidelity of the speaker, and not upon the sense or reason of the thing, how agreeable to either soever it be. Yet, so as the more reasonable the thing related is, the more readily we believe it to be true. The thing believed, faith apprehends primarily, as a matter of truth, and, therein, hath its seat in the understanding. Divine faith assents to the revealed will of God, for the authority and truth of God, which cannot deceive. That faith, or act of faith by which we are justified is a due assent to, and application of the promises of the gospel, as made, and appertaining to us in particular: the general promise upon condition of application duly, and rightly made, being as much for certainty, as either extraordinary revelation, or particular nomination of person. This application of God's promises in Christ hath evermore affiance necessarily, and immediately joined with it. For, being by the Spirit of God, and word of the gospel, persuaded of God's love in Christ, we cannot but trust unto him, rest, and repose ourselves upon him, and expect accordingly from him, all good. But as we must lay hold of the stay or prop before we can rest upon it, so must faith go before affiance in order of causes, and we lay hold of God's love before we can repose ourselves upon it.

"Hope is the expectation of the good things promised,† having faith for its foundation." Heb. xi. 1. These two, faith and hope, have many the same objects, yet neither all, nor any in the same respect. We believe things past, present, and to come: but hope for things to come only. We believe both promises, and threatenings; both rewards, and punishments, in the order set by God: but hope only for things desirable. And for the very same things in themselves believed, and hoped for, as for example, the resur-

* Ursinus. † Scaliger.

rection of the body, and life everlasting, we believe them as present in God's promises, which faith applies unto us; but hope for them as absent, and to come in performance, unto which hope carrieth us.

"Faith begets hope," Rom. v. 4, 5; for, by believing the forgiveness of our sins, and God's promises, for the present, we are encouraged to expect, and hope for all future good. And hope, again, as a good child, helps to relieve its father, faith, in time of need: whereupon the apostle saith of the faithful, that "if they had hope only in this life, they were of all men the most miserable." 1 Cor. xv. 19. For what availeth it a man in misery to believe eternal life, if he had not hope in time to obtain it, and therewith freedom and redemption from distress? But we have therefore comfort in believing, because we have hope of enjoying in due time.

Love is the affection of union in regard of the loving; and of well-wishing, in regard of the creature loved.* And Divine love is the affection of union with God in his grace and glory, in which man's happiness consists; and with the creature, according unto God. Faith is the root, and love the sap spreading forth itself, for the fruits of good works, throughout all the branches of our lives: faith the beginning, and love the end of our conversation.† "By faith we live the life of the Son of God," Gal. ii. 20, and receive all good from him, by love we are moved, and persuaded, to use what we have to the good of men, and praise of God.‡ And whereas faith makes a man some great thing, richer than the richest, and lord of the whole world,§ love makes him a "servant unto all men," 1 Cor. ix. 19, in humbling, and applying himself unto them, in all lawful things, for their good. Now, albeit love have these two prerogatives; first, that it persuades most effectually, and immediately, to the use, and employment of all the good things which we have received from God, to the benefit of others; and secondly, that, whereas faith and hope are determined formally in this life, and ended in sight in the life to come, love abideth there also, 1 Cor. xii. 13; and that, in these two respects the apostle ascribes an excellency, and chiefness to love above the other: yet herein faith hath this singular pre-eminence, that whereas by love

* Scaliger. † Ignatius. ‡ Cyril. § Luther.

we, and what we are, become God's; and men's for God: by faith, not only all other things, but even God himself becomes ours for all-sufficient good unto us: as he saith, "I am thy God all-sufficient." Gen. xvii. 1. By it, the will and word of God is ours for our instruction, and direction; his righteousness ours, for our justification; his Spirit for our sanctification; his power for our protection; and his glory for our happiness in the fruition thereof.

This faith in Christ is a gift supernatural, not only in regard of nature corrupted, but even created;* which, therefore, is not so properly repaired in men by grace, as are some other virtues, but, after a sort, new built from the ground; as directing to that attribute in God primarily for its object, whereof Adam in innocence had no need; which is, mercy through Christ, against the misery of sin, and punishment. Unto this faith most precious promises are made, and most excellent things affirmed of it: and that, not only for the excellence of the grace in itself, which yet is great, and greatly honoureth God; in his truth, which it believeth; in his power, as able; and love, as willing to bestow all good things upon us: but specially for an attractive, and applying faculty which it hath above other virtues, to make God ours, and all creatures with him, according unto God, as is aforesaid. To believe in Christ is to receive him, and the promises touching him. And hereupon it is said of that cloud of witnesses, that "by faith they quenched the violence of fire, stopped the mouth of lions, put to flight the armies of aliens," &c. John i. 12; Heb. xi. 1; xii. 1. The reason whereof seems to be, for that, as by justifying faith they applied the righteousness of God, to salvation; so by the faith of miracles, they apprehended, and applied the infinite power of God, to the producing of those supernatural effects.

The strength of true Christian faith, the devil knows to his cost; as that, by which he, the prince, with his whole army, the world, hath been so often foiled, and overcome. Eph. ii. 2; 1 John v. 19. For, being by faith persuaded, that in doing, or suffering according to the will of God, we please him, and are under his protection, and blessing, we stedfastly persevere in well-doing, and patiently endure all

* Perkins.

things for his name's sake: whereupon he, especially in the day of their distress, assaults the faith of the godly, that that might fail Luke xxii. 32; as knowing that if the root of faith be shaken loose, the fruit of good works will wither. Faith, therefore, must as a welcome passenger be well carried, and conveyed through the sea of temptations in the vessel of a "good conscience," 1 Tim. i. 5, that it suffer not shipwreck by the leaks of an evil; directed by the chart of God's word, and promises rightly understood, that it run not a wrong course; and having ever in a readiness the sure and stedfast anchor of hope against a stress; and continually gathering into the outspread sails of a heart enlarged by prayer, and meditation, the sweet and prosperous gusts of God's Holy Spirit, to drive it to the desired haven.

This faith, if it be not grounded upon God's word, is fancy: if it receive not the same word in every part, but where it lists, it is sauciness: if it work not as well, yea more, in an afflicted state, as in a prosperous, it is nothing but fleshly presumption: if it be not fruitful in all good works, as we have opportunity, and are able, it is dead; and will in the end, like the faith of the devils, afford only matter of trembling. James ii. 19. Lastly, it must be firm, and not ambiguous, or going by peradventures; else it is not faith, but opinion.*

Yet are we not here to imagine an idea of faith, free, in this infirmity of our flesh, from doubting.† The tree may stand, and grow also, though shaken, and bended with the wind: so may faith hold its both standing, and life, notwithstanding such doubtings, as the flesh, ever lusting against the spirit, mingleth with it. Against which weakness and imperfection of our faith we have this firm comfort, that we are not saved for, no, nor by the perfection of the instrument, which faith is, but of the object, Christ, which it apprehendeth, and so may with a true, though palsy hand of faith receive, and keep both Christ, and all his benefits.‡ This weakness and disease of faith we must not commend, as Papists do; nor nourish like secure persons; but cure, with all diligence, by the holy and diligent use of the ministrations sanctified of God, and given by

* Bernard. † Chemnitius. ‡ Perkins.

Christ, "for the perfecting of the saints, and edifying of the body, till we attain in the unity of faith, and acknowledgment of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, according to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph. iv. 12, 13. Also, we must nourish faith by frequent meditations of God's love, and promises in Christ, and of the gracious effects of them; and must, as the prophet and apostle teach us, "live by it," Habak. ii. 4; Heb. x. 38: both doing in faith and assurance of acceptance at God's hands, what we do, not only in the works of his worship, but, in those also of our conversation with men; and puting ourselves in all our ways, under his protection, and that specially in the time of distress, or danger; that as the bodily hand gets, and gathers strength by being diligently used in works competent, so may also the spiritual hand do, which faith is.

Now, as, for our successful "wrestling against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickednesses in high places," Eph. vi. 12, we must put on, amongst other parcels of the armour of God, the shield of faith; so must we not forget the helmet of salvation, hope, whose strength is great to bear off all blows of temptation, and that with cheerfulness. For what burdens of afflictions, and temptations will not he cheerfully undergo, that expects, undoubtedly, their speedy ending in endless happiness? Alexander the Great meaning to invade Asia, and giving away his riches aforehand, being asked, what he would reserve for himself, answered, Hope.* But what is the shadow to the substance? He hoped for the kingdom of Persia, we, of heaven. And what if his hope stretched itself to the monarchy of the whole world? It was but to this world, wherein also it was frustrated, and perished with him. But "the anchor of our hope is cast within the veil," Heb. vi. 19, and extendeth to the world to come; being also firm, and steadfast, and which cannot be disappointed, nor shall have other end than in being perfected in the end of all, the full fruition, and eternal possession of happiness with God. "Were it not for hope, the heart would break: but we having this hope, faint not, but hold fast the possession thereof without wavering; yea even glory in

* Quintus Curtius.

afflictions under the hope of the glory of God." Heb. x. 23; Rom. v. 3.

Lastly, touching love; as it is the affection of union, so it makes, after a sort, the loving and loved, one: such being the force thereof, as that, he that loveth suffereth a kind of conversion into that which he loveth, and by frequent meditation of it, uniteth it with his understanding, and affection.* Thus, to love God is to become godly, and to have the mind, after a sort, deified, "being made partakers of the Divine nature," 1 Pet. i. 4, in its effects: to love the world is to become a worldling; and so of the rest. Thus, in the parable of the tares, the children of the kingdom are called good seed, Matt. xiii. 24, and wheat, as growing, and becoming wheat of the wheat, or seed sown in them, as the wheat ear groweth of the wheat corn: as on the contrary, ungodly men are said to "have eyes full of adultery," 2 Pet. ii. 14, and the like; and not only to be sinful, but "sin, unrighteousness, darkness, and Belial," 2 Cor. vi. 15; as being even metamorphosed and transformed into the evils which they love, and delight in. O! how happy is that man, who by the sweet feeling of "the love of God shed abroad into his heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given him," Rom. v. 5, is thereby, as by the most strong cords of heaven, drawn effectually, and with all the heart, to love God again, who hath loved him first; and so becomes one with him, and rests upon him, for all good, and happiness.

For this our love to God, there is required, not only the positive affection of the heart aspiring unto union with God, upon knowledge of him,† as the chiefest good, both in himself, and to us in Christ, and a contentation in him so known, and obtained; but withal, that we exercise, prove, and approve, that, our love to him, in our love to such good persons, and things, as unto which he hath imparted some sparks of his goodness; especially to his good children, and good word, and ordinances. He cannot love him that begetteth, saith the Apostle, 1 John v. 1; iv. 7—10, who loveth not him, and that in deed and truth, who is begotten, in truth of affection, and in deed of action, for his comfort; and this with greater bent of both,

* Scaliger. † Zanchius.

as the graces of God are more eminent in him. Neither loves he God, that loves not his word, and that, both in affection of heart, and effect of ready obedience to all his commandments. Psa. cxix. 6; John xiv. 15. We must take heed of a shadowish love of goodness and piety only, in the abstract; and must love it in the concrete, where both the person, and good in him, are visible; in whom hypocrites, for the most part, hate and persecute it. He but pretends to others, the love of goodness, or imagines it in himself, that loves not good men for it. Lastly, "he that loves not his brother whom he sees, how can he love God whom he sees not?" 1 John iv. 20. Not, but that there is matter of love infinitely more than in any, or all men; but because for the loving of God, we want the advantage of sense, and motive of compassion, by which our love to our distressed brethren is helped.

This "love is the fulfilling of the law," Rom. xiii. 10; the love of God being the greatest commandment; and the love of our neighbour like unto it. It is also that to which the gospel in the end leads us: by which gospel, or "new covenant," Heb. viii. 8, God writes his laws in the mind and heart of his: and so perfects the one in the other. And so natural to Christians is this brotherly love, as that the apostle makes account he needs not write to the churches, to teach them that which God taught them so many ways. 1 Thess. iv. 9. By this "we know ourselves to be raised from death to life," 1 John iii. 14, by it all others know us to be Christ's disciples, if we love one another. John xiii. 35. "See," said the heathens, pointing at the Christians, "how they love one another!"* and See, said the Christians of them, how they hate one another. Oh that heathens could not now say of Christians, as they sometimes said of them!

If we were perfect in this love, we needed no other law to rule us, either in the duties towards God, or our neighbours, no more than do the angels in heaven, and souls of the faithful men departed, who by the law of love alone, do live both most perfect, and most happy lives. And, indeed, to love as we ought, is a very happy thing, wherein we resemble God, and the angels: as by the contrary, we

* Tertullian.

complice* with the devil, and wicked men, who live "in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another." Titus iii. 3. And, howsoever naturally we desire rather to be beloved, than to love; yet is it incomparably a more both excellent and blessed thing to love, than to be beloved; as it is "to give rather than to receive." Acts xx. 35.

Besides, love is the loadstone of love: and the most ready, and compendious way to be beloved of others is to love them first. They taking knowledge thereof, will be effectually drawn to answerable good-will, if they be not harder than iron, and such as have cast off the chains and bonds of common humanity: for even "publicans and sinners love those that love them." Matt. v. 46. Yea, admit thy love of them never come to their knowledge, yet will God by the invisible hand of his providence, bend their hearts, by mutual affection unto thee, at least, so far as is good for thee: and wherein they are inflexible, and defective, he will make supply out of the abundance of his love, and goodness; that so it may be verified which is written; "with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again." Luke vi. 38. To conclude this point: let the grace of God herein specially triumph over our corruption: that, whereas, by nature, we would be loved of them whom we hate, by grace we may "love them which hate us." Matt. v. 44. And this is a great work of grace indeed; and yet most necessary for all Christ's disciples. We must not be like the pharisees who instead of enlarging their own affections, straitened the law of loving their neighbours, unto such as loved them, or dwelt within a certain compass of them: but we must account all our neighbours that need pity or help from us: and our Christian neighbours, and brethren also, if the Lord have received them, though they be neither minded in all things as we are; nor towards us as we are towards them.

Lastly, as faith is to rule love, that it prove not lust; and hope, that it prove not presumption: so also must it, reason and sense in all their operations, which it no way abolisheth, but orders, and sanctifies. Luke x. 27. And as in nature, the denomination is from the predominant quality, so is it in our course of life. To live by reason

* Are accomplices with.

is to live the life of a man; to live by sense is to live the life of a beast: but to "live by faith is to live the life of the Son of God," Gal. ii. 20, and to be, in its effects, "partakers of the Divine nature," 1 Pet. i. 4; and that, not only in the reasonable, but in the sensitive faculties also. For these three, faith, reason, and sense, being all God's works in a man, cannot be contrary, in their right use, one to another: neither can anything be true in one, which is false in another: neither doth, or can any one of them destroy another, but use, order, and perfect it: reason, sense; and faith, both sense and reason. For "faith comes by hearing," Rom. x. 17, at the first, and is nourished, and increased both by hearing, and seeing, and by the benefit of all other senses afterwards. Neither can it possibly either be begot, or nourished, or increased, but by the discourse of reason ordered and sanctified by the Spirit of God. Which Spirit's work is so effectual, as it makes even the meanest powers of nature created in a man to serve effectually for the furthering of the highest works of supernatural grace. Sweet is the harmony of all the powers and parts both of the soul and body of a sanctified person!

Reason is that wherein man goes before all other earthly creatures * and comes after God only, and the angels in heaven. For whereas God and nature hath furnished other creatures, some with horns, some with hoofs, others with other instruments, and weapons both defensive, and offensive; man is left naked, and destitute of all those, but may comfort himself in that one endowment of reason, and providence, whereby he is enabled to govern them all.† Now, who would not strive to excel other men in that, wherein men excel all other creatures? How much more, in that, to which few men attain, true faith and the life thereof?

* Seneca. † Plutarch.

CHAPTER XI.

OF ATHEISM AND IDOLATRY.

SOME are Atheists in opinion; others in affection; but many more in conversation of life. There are but few of the first coat, and which can so wholly blot out the remainders of God's image written by creation in their hearts, as to leave them altogether empty, and devoid of the knowledge, conscience and reverence of a Divine Majesty; and which come to conclude roundly in their hearts, that there is no God. Yet, some, without doubt, in time, and by degrees, proceed from Atheism in conversation, to Atheism in affection; and from Atheism in affection, to Atheism in opinion and judgment. Men civilly honest, seldom or never become Atheists in persuasion; but lewd and flagitious persons do; who being pursued by the fury of an accusing conscience for heinous evils, wish, and no marvel, that there were no Judge in heaven to condemn them: and so come at last to be persuaded in themselves of that, which they gladly would have true; and are justly left of God to such horrible delusion, that so sinning without fear, they may perish without remedy. And this is the reason, why there are more Atheists in opinion, in our days, than of old; even because so many are more bent upon mischief: and living wickedly in this world, bear themselves in hand, and so get to believe, that there is no justice in the world to come.* Another reason is the proportion of wit to which our age is come, above the former. In regard hereof it is, that Atheism, though dissembled, and concealed by the same ungracious wit, which begets it, is a thousand times more to be feared in the land, than Papism. Men have too much wit to become Papists, in any generality: and just enough to fit them for Atheists, if God's powerful hand restrain them not. The very simple dare not become Atheists, but are more in danger to prove superstitious, and to "believe everything," Prov. xiv. 15: the very understanding hardly can but have, by sound reason and

* Morneus.

sad thoughts, will they, nill they, some acknowledgment of a Divine Majesty forced upon them: but persons of frothy wit and vicious life, are fitly tempered for the impression of Atheism for the devil.

Atheism is incomparably worse, and more odious, than idolatry; as it is more intolerable in a state, or kingdom, to enterprize the overthrow of all kingly power and sovereignty, than to detract how much soever, from the lawful king's, or magistrate's due honour, and to give it to a stranger. Besides, whereas idolaters, and superstitious persons, having in them some reverence of a Divine power, are thereby both restrained from many mischiefs, and provoked to many good actions: the Atheist wanting both this Divine restraint and motive, both runs riot in wickedness and villany, and is barren of all good things; neither doing good, nor forbearing evil, further than for mere fear, or shame of men.

Atheists used to be very confident in their assertions, as the orator observes in Velleius:* partly, lest they should seem unto others to doubt, or fear, that there is a God, who will punish their impieties; and partly to "encourage themselves in their wickedness," Psa. lxiv. 5, as fearing lest they should be drawn into some conscience and awe of God's Majesty. It is oft true in this case amongst others, that the most cowards are the greatest boasters.

Idolatry either makes that to be God, which is not; or God to be that, which he is not. It is exercised either in intending Divine worship, so known to be, to that which is not God: or in intending a devised worship to the true God; wherein men make a will of God, which is not, and so a God willing, which is not: or else in an act of worship in itself, though neither professed nor judged such by him that performs it. Rom. i. 23; Acts xvii. 23; Exod. xxxii. 4; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 3—7. Such men's actions reprove both their intention in heart and profession in word, and cannot be excused by either from idolatrous.

This sin in God's people is usually compared by the Holy Ghost to the whoredom of a wife; and God's anger at it to the husband's jealousy, in that case. And as adultery most directly impeacheth the marriage bond, and so

* Cicero.

procures the bill of divorce: so doth idolatry, the church's covenant with the Lord, and provokes to sequestration from him. Yet herein two rules must be held. The former, that not only special idolatry, but even all, or any other wickedness with profane obstinacy adjoined, separates from God. Secondly, that all sin whatsoever is founded upon a kind of idolatry. In sins of omission we acknowledge not God, for our God, as we ought, in doing what he commands: in sins of commission we make some other thing our God; as our riches, if we trust to them, as to God; or our belly, if for it we do what God forbids the doing of. Col. iii. 5; Phil. iii. 19.

CHAPTER XII.

OF HERESY AND SCHISM.

It is an ancient, and received saying, that heresy ariseth from want of faith, and schism from want of love: which also hath its truth, being rightly understood. Yet if we mark, we shall find the Scriptures to speak something otherwise of both the one, and other, than men commonly understand. We usually call obstinate error in the foundation, heresy, 1 Cor. xi. 19; Gal. v. 20; Titus iii. 10: but the Scriptures many times seem rather to place it in the perverseness of the will and affections, whether the matter be great, or small, than in the error of the judgment: the word also αἵρεσις signifying any election, or choice of will which a man makes; or sect which he followeth, whether good, or bad; whether in matters of greater, or smaller moment. Besides, men are often accounted heretics, with greater sin, through want of charity, in the judges; than in the judged, through defect of faith. Of old, some have been branded for heretics, for holding antipodes; others for holding the original of the soul by traduction; others for thinking that Mary the mother of Christ had other children by her husband Joseph: the first being a certain truth; and the second a philosophical doubt; and the third, though an error, yet neither against foundation nor post of the Scripture's building. As there are certain elements and foundations of the oracles of

God, and of Christain faith, which must first be laid, and upon which other truths are to be built, Heb. vi. 1: so must not the foundation be confounded with the walls, or roof; nor errors lightly to be made fundamental, or unavoidably damnable. Yea, who can say with how little, and imperfect faith in Christ, both for degree and parts, God both can, and doth save the sincere in heart? Whose salvation depends not upon the perfection of the instrument, faith; but of the object, Christ. As, on the contrary, there are some vulgar, and common errors, though less severely censured, which are apparently damnable; as by name, for a man to believe, and expect mercy from God, and salvation by Christ, though going on in affected ignorance of, or profane disobedience to God's commandments.

And for schism; the Scriptures note it as sometimes made from the church, but most commonly in it. From it, by the ten tribes sequestering themselves from Judah and Jerusalem, 1 Kings xii. 16, the only place where the Lord had promised to dwell by his solemn church presence: and after Christ, by certain of the Hebrews forsaking the assemblies of the Christians. Heb. x. 25. The former was from the only true instituted and ministerial church in the world; which was then one individual, and not many, as now, and that by idolatry. The latter, from all Christian churches, and persons by total defection from Christ himself. The other schisms mentioned were made in the church, either through the carnal lusts, bearing too great sway, of envy, strife, and uncharitableness, 1 Cor. iii. 2, 3, 12, 25, whilst the stronger despised the weaker, and the weaker judged the stronger; or by heresy, and profaneness of manners; of which the apostles Peter, Jude, and John speak. Jude xix.; 2 Pet. ii. 1; 1 John ii. 16.

That, which is commonly called schism, ariseth, if it be affected, from the conceit of faith, and want of love; but may fall out, upon simple error of judgment, or scrupulosity of conscience; by occasion whereof a person may sequester himself, either in, or from, some particular church in some inferior courses of religion, from them, towards whom he yet bears much more true, and hearty Christian affection, than the most of them do, who unite with them therein.

And if, only an uncharitable heart make an uncharitable person before God, and a proud heart, a proud person; then he, who upon due examination and certain knowledge of his heart, finds and feels the same truly disposed to union with all Christians, so far as possibly he can see it lawful; though, through error or frailty, he may step aside into some by-path, that way: yet, hath that person a *supersedeas* from the Lord in his bosom, securing him from being attached for a schismatical person and so found in the court of heaven; what blame soever he may bear from men upon earth, or correction from God, for his failing, upon infirmity, therein.

No man can endure to be withdrawn from, nor easily dissented from, by another, in his way of religion; in which, above all other things, he makes account, that he himself draws nearest unto God. Therefore to do this causelessly, for not the separation but the cause makes the schismatic,* though out of error or scrupulosity, is evil; more, to do it out of wantonness of mind or lust to contend, or affectation of singularity: most of all, to do it out of proud contempt or cruel revenge against others.

CHAPTER XIII.

OF TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD.

TRUTH is either natural or moral. Natural truth stands first in the conveniency and agreement of the notions of the mind with the thing conceived;† and secondly, of the means of manifesting it (especially, speech) with the thing to be manifested. Moral truth stands in the conveniency and agreement of a person with himself; namely of his heart with his tongue, and speech. The same consideration is to be had of truths contrary, in its kind; which is falsehood. Whereupon also it comes, that a man may sin, and speak falsely, not only in speaking that which he knows or may know to be false, for what end soever he speak it, yea, though it be, that he may not deceive:‡ but also in speaking that which is true, in itself, if he know it not, that he might or so as he may deceive by it.

* Tertullian. † Scaliger. ‡ Austin.

All truth, by whomsoever spoken, is of God,* and of his Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, in some its manner and degree of working. John xv. 26. Whereupon it followeth, that nothing true in right reason, and sound philosophy, is, or can be false in divinity. The truth in the inferior faculty is subordinate to that in the superior, in all things, and comes short of it in many things; but can in nothing be contrary unto it, seeing God, and his Spirit's work, cannot be contrary to himself. I add, though the truth be uttered by the devil himself, yet is it originally of God. John viii. 44. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of himself; but when he speaks the truth, he speaks of God; who so far useth or rather abuseth him, as to utter, and profess that which he hateth.

We ought to reverence excellent men, but the truth more, as Dionysius said of Nepos;† and Aristotle of Plato,‡ and Socrates. And good reason, seeing a main cause of our reverencing of men is their knowledge, and profession of the truth. No prescription, say the lawyers, lies against the king: say we, with the Father, against the truth: § which, by the verdict of a great king himself, and his nobles with him, Ezra iv. 19, is greater than the king; no space of time, no patronage of person, no privilege of place; from which, blind or simple custom, commonly, getting footing and growing into use by succession, is brought to cope with truth itself; and that, the most violently, where the persons are the most brutish, and godless. But our Lord Christ called himself truth, not custom: neither is falsehood, error or heresy convinced by novelty, but by truth. This truth is always the same whilst the God of truth is in heaven, what entertainment soever it find with men, upon earth: it is always praiseworthy, though no man praise it;‖ and hath no reason, or just cause to be ashamed, though it often goes with a scratched face. They that fight against it are like the floods beating upon the strong rocks, which are so much the more miserably dashed in pieces, by how much they are the more violently carried. Though fire and sword assault it, yet will it not be killed, or die: and though by

* Ambrose. † Eusebius. ‡ Aristotle. § Tertullian.
‖ Cicero.

violence it be buried quick, yet will it rise again; and if not before, yet when all flesh shall rise again; and when truth, which was first, and before falsehood and error, shall be last, and abide for ever.

We must love, and attain to the knowledge of the truth in ourselves, first; lest we be clouds without rain, promising that to others, which we ourselves want; and must in our places, afterwards make manifestation and profession of it; and not be like the grave, insatiable in receiving in, and barren in returning anything back, but must be always ready, as we see hope of doing good, to propagate it; like the philosopher, who being found fault with for disputing with all that he met with, wished that the brute beasts also could understand him, that he might impart something even to them; yea in our kind, like God himself, that "gives wisdom to all that asks it of him," James i. 5, and to Christ the Lord, that word of God, and true light, "which enlightens every one that comes into the world," John i. 9: and sometimes, even, when we see no hope of doing good, if duty bind us, though hope fail us; that so the non-proficients may have cause rather to complain of themselves, for not learning, than of us, for not manifesting the truth unto them.* And, albeit, all truth is not to be spoken at all times: "A fool uttereth all his mind; but a wise man keeps it in for afterwards," Prov. xxix. 11, yet nothing not true at any time, or for any cause. He that hath but a right philosophical spirit, and is but morally honest, would rather suffer many deaths, than call a pin, a point, or speak the least thing against his understanding or persuasion.

A man in pleading for the truth may show his judgment and understanding best, in the matter; but his grace and godliness, in the manner, when he handles a good cause well, and the Lord's cause after the Lord's manner. Sometimes men pretend God's truth, and zeal for it, when indeed they make their pleas for truth serve only for hackneys, for their lusts to ride on whither they would have them: sometimes men seriously intend truth, and yet mingle both with their good intention, and, it may be, true assertion also, such their personal corruptions, and distempers,

* Austin.

as Christ loseth more by their inordinateness that way, than he gains, both by their sound knowledge and fervent zeal of and for his truth.

The most account a lie more shameful, than sinful: and therefore make it a matter of great disgrace, to take the lie, especially in the hearing of others; and yet make it no matter of conscience to make the lie before God, and his angels. Ah, foolish people, thus to honour yourselves, and other vile men, your likes, more than God himself, and the angels with him; and withal, base in your pride, who will rather bear the lie at your own mouth, than at another's! When a man speaks against his knowledge, his own heart tells his tongue it lieth; which to put up quietly, argues both a graceless and an abject spirit. Whereas, both grace and true courage also may be shown in bearing the lie at another's mouth, by overcoming such indignation and anger rising thereat, as is harder to conquer than a city.

"The devil is the father of lies," John viii. 44, which whilst they, in the womb of whose heart he begets them, impute to other and better causes moving them thereunto; they are, but like harlots, who for their credit's sake, father their bastards upon honest men. Many things even good, may occasion lying, as all good, may do all evil, but nothing can bring it forth, and cause it, save the womb of our own corrupt heart impregnated by the devil. Now if, both by the law of God and light of nature, it be an abominable confusion, for "a woman to lie down before a beast," Lev. xviii. 23, what is it for man or woman to prostitute themselves to Satan for the gendering of so misshapen a monster, as a lie is? And very rightly is a lie called monstrous, considering both the devil's kinds, of which it comes, and also the disproportion in it, often between the speech, and the thing spoken; and always between the tongue, and heart of the speaker. Neither doth the goodness of the meaning, though never so good, excuse the evil of the doing, when, as a lie, is told. He that tells a lie for God, is an acceptor of persons, and God will surely reprove him, saith Job. Job xiii. 6. And no marvel. "Since his own heart condemns him, God which is greater than his heart, and knoweth all things, will con-

demn him much more." 1 John iii. 20; Rom. iii. 7. And if a lie told, that through it the truth of God may more abound to his glory, procure just condemnation; what may they expect that use to lie for meaner, though good ends? He that tells a lie for a good end, puts the devil into God's service, which neither his truth needs, nor his holiness will endure; but he that tells a lie for an evil purpose, as the most do to cover preceding evils, which they are more ashamed to confess, than to practise, helps therein the devil in his own business. But "whosoever loves, and makes a lie, hath no right to the tree of life, nor shall enter the gates into the holy city, but shall remain without, with dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters," Rev. xxii. 14, 15: we see with whom the Lord ranks liars, what reckoning soever the world makes of them, or they of themselves.

He that tells one lie is, not only, the more prone to tell another, and so a third, which is common to all evil doers, but, for the most part, necessitated so to do for the covering of the former; as beggars cover one patch with another; and that, a lesser with a greater, and often a simple lie with a false oath, as was Peter's case. Besides, he that is once taken in a manifest lie will hardly escape suspicion when he speaks the truth, that I may not say, with one, that he deserves not to be trusted, no, not in that wherein he desires you would not trust him. Neither doth he wrong himself alone, for aftertime, but others also, who speak the truth.* By some lying, others when they speak truly, are not credited:† especially such as have any conformity with them in other things; that is oft seen in effect, which is said of the host, that being once deceived by one that held his hat before his eyes, when he gave thanks, at meat, would never trust any afterwards that used that fashion.

CHAPTER XIV.

OF KNOWLEDGE AND IGNORANCE.

THE first line of the repaired image of God in man, and that by which he is first united to God, is sound know-

* Plautus. † Bernard.

ledge: the second, is the sincere love of the heart, Col. iii. 10: which draw with them in the third place, the other affections and senses of soul and body.* As the wagon is guided by the wagoner, and he by his eye: so is the body by the soul, and it, by the eye of understanding and knowledge. "If the eye be single, the whole body will be full of light." Matt. vi. 22.

To believe a thing further than we know it, is indeed impossible; to love it, lightness; to hate it, injustice; seeing it may deserve the contrary, for aught we know.†

He that knows not in his measure, what he ought to know, especially in the matters of God, is but a beast, amongst men: he that knows what is simply needful and no more, is a man, amongst men: but he who knows, according to the helps vouchsafed him of God, what may well be known, and so far, as to direct himself and others aright, is as a god, amongst men. And to this purpose the Lord tells Moses, that he "should be to his brother Aaron, instead of God." Exod. iv. 16. Such bear the lively image of God's wisdom.

The knowledge even of things evil is good, and the greater the better, so as it be neither experimental, nor with approbation, nor have other infections accessory joined with it. The apostle knew Satan's devices better than the Corinthians did, 2 Cor. ii. 11: and God, only wise, and good, only knows all the both good and evil of men and angels. Prov. xv. 3. And so pleasing a thing is knowledge to reasonable creatures, not immeasurably degenerated, as "the light is pleasant to him that hath eyes to behold it," Eccles. xi. 7, that not only they who strive to attain unto it by likely means; but even many, who hold a course tending to all ignorance, and error, do desire it, as a natural good: and if not much the thing itself, yet the opinion of it, hating the imputation of ignorance, as a matter vile, and reproachful. By how much the more monstrous are many, and grown out of kind; who make reckoning, that it concerns not them to get, or have any more knowledge, than is simply necessary for the maintaining of a poor barren and half-brutish life?

How many, especially of the meaner sort, to let pass

* Zanchius. † Tertullian.

men's secure, yea affected ignorance, in Divine things, would think it half curiosity in themselves or others of their rank, to know the east from the west; or what the reason is of the sun's setting, and rising again every day, though they see the thing continually before their eyes? The punishment of Nebuchadnezzar is upon such people, who had an ox's heart in a man's body. Dan. iv. 25—33.

Of them that seriously desire, and carefully use means to obtain knowledge, the ends are very different. Some desire to know that they might know, which is curiosity: some that they might be known, and that is vanity: some only to make profit of their knowledge, and that is covetousness: some, on the other side, to edify, and better themselves, and this is true wisdom: and some withal, to do good to others, which is godly charity.*

The means to get knowledge, specially divine; are, First to love it: "If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding: If thou seekest her, as silver, and searchest for her, as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." Prov. iii. 3, 4. The second is the knowledge of our ignorance: it being an effect of Christ's coming, "that they which see not" to wit, in the conscience of their own blindness, "might see; and that they which see, might be made blind." John ix. 39. To which join that of the philosopher, that many more would attain to knowledge, and wisdom, if so many did not think, that they had already attained to it.† A third is the fear of God, to which he hath made the promise of revelation of his secrets, and to "teach such the way which they shall choose," Psa. xxv.: who will also set themselves the most carefully to learn it. A fourth is prayer, by which this wisdom and knowledge, as with a strong hand, is fetched from heaven. James i. 5. A fifth is the reading and meditating upon, specially, the Divine Scriptures, and withal, other approved authors. For, as the affections are most moved by hearing, so the judgment is best informed by reading. The last means is the company and society of wise and understanding men: whereupon it was, that the

* Bernard. † Seneca.

Queen of Sheba pronounced the servants of Solomon happy, which continually stood before him to hear his wisdom. They who profit not in knowledge and wisdom by conversing with wise men, are unworthy of their company; and worthy to keep, or keep with, oxen and asses.

Besides the forementioned means of getting knowledge, there is a mediocrity, and meanness of outward estate not a little advantageable to this purpose; which if it be too low, and depressed, keeps down the disposition ingenuous, and apt to great things; as his emblem imports, who holds a wing in the one hand, but hath the other clogged with a great stone.* On the other side, a state great and prosperous, usually lifts up men above the love of knowledge, and learning; making them arrogant in themselves, and fastidious of the labour and industry requisite for the getting of understanding; and often endangers the very quenching of that spark of natural desire, to become wise, which God hath kindled in all men's breasts, in bodily and beastly sensualities. Gen. iii. 6. Hereupon it was, that Plato judged the Cyrenians by reason of their prosperous estate, incapable of any good information, and constitution of a commonwealth by good laws.† "Man is in honour, and understandeth not; he is like the beasts that perish," Psa. xlix. 12, 20: and not understanding, he perisheth like the beasts, and worse. Few of great state in the world, are humanly; fewer, divinely wise.

"The knowing to do good, and the not doing it, is sin," James iv. 17: not because it is known, but because it is not practised: as meat undigested hurts the body, not because it is taken into the stomach, but because it is not, by concoction, turned into good nourishment.‡

Papists call ignorance the mother of devotion; and so make reckoning, that, if they, the multitude especially, be ignorant enough, they are devout enough. But the philosopher, though a heathen,§ who thought all sin to come of ignorance, shot nearer the mark, than those left-handed Christians. And in truth, where the reasonable faculties of understanding and will come to work; the will therefore wills, or nills a thing, because it is judged good or bad in the particular, by the practical understanding: whose office

* Alciatus. † Plutarch. ‡ Bernard. § Socrates.

it is to direct the will in its choice. For example. Peter though knowing and judging it, *in thesi*, and in the general, better to confess Christ, than to deny him; yet, being in the high-priest's hall, and in the midst of his enemies, thought it, in that particular place and case and state of things, better to deny his Master, than to confess him: better I mean, not in regard of that good, which we call honest, and virtuous, but profitable, and commodious, for his present peace. He neither would nor could have chosen the denying of him, but as a good apparent, and in show.

Ignorance is not always blameworthy, but then only, when we are ignorant of that which we should know. Yea, not only some ignorance, but, which is more, even some error is, in a sort, commendable: as when we judge of men, whose hearts we know not, by the outward appearances which they make, though they be inwardly, and in truth, nothing less. So Philip charitably and Christianly judged Simon Magus a true believer, and accordingly baptized him; though in truth, he then was, and soon after appeared to be, "in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity." Acts viii. 13. In some other cases, ignorance, though it justify not wholly, yet excuses a failing in part; and that more or less, as the thing whereof we are ignorant, either is more or less necessary to be known of us; or can be known more or less easily: and thus "the servant that knows not his master's will, and commits things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with fewer." Luke xii. 48. On the contrary, there is an ignorance, which both shows, and makes the ignorant culpable of greater judgment. And that is either affected or inflicted. Affected, when a man either of purpose shuts his eyes, lest he should take knowledge of the sin which he loves, and is loath to forsake; or purposely neglects the use of the means of attaining to knowledge; or doth the things, upon which ignorance cannot but follow; as in making himself drunken: * or fills the eyes of the mind with the dust of wilful prejudice and partiality. Inflicted, when God to recompense former disobedience, "gives men up to a mind void of judgment," Rom. i. 28, in the things discernible by the very light of

* Zanchius.

nature. Thus not to know, nor do the will of our master, deserves double stripes.

CHAPTER XV.

OF SIMPLICITY AND CRAFTINESS.

SIMPLE persons are prone to suspect, that all wise men are crafty: and crafty mates, to despise all honest men, as simple and silly. The simpleness of the former makes them suspicious, and the naughtiness of the latter causeth them to measure other men's shoes by their own last; and to conceit, that none are honest, but for want of wit to deceive. But both experience and reason teach, that craftiness and deceit argue men to be conscious of their own imbecility* and weakness, one way or other; which makes them, hare-like, to trust to the double and turn, rather than to the right-on course. And so, many of shallow wits, improving thoroughly their skill to deceive, prove their craftsmasters that way; showing that craft and fraudulency stand more in the wills, than wits of men. I add, that as David by seeming beside himself, deceived Achish, 1 Sam. xxi. 13, 14: so many make advantage of their simpleness, to deceive the more easily. For appearing simple, they are unsuspected; and though they be taken something tardy, yet if the matter be not very foul, men are ready, in compassion of their weakness, rather to ascribe it to their want of wit, than of honesty.

And, as this of simple appearance is one, so are there other singular engines of deceit; specially if they fall into the hands of such, as know how to use them. The first is the show and appearance of honesty, especially of religion: and therefore the preamble of the whorish woman, for the inveigling of the simple youth, was, that she had her "peace-offerings upon her, and had paid her vows." Prov. vii. 10. And indeed, what good heart would suspect him of unfaithfulness with men, that seems entire with God, and to walk under the conscience of his presence, and judgment? A second, is flattery, by which even wise men are made fools and led as it were, by the lip. By this the

* Seneca. Bodinus.

devil brought our first parents in Paradise, into a fool's paradise, by bearing them in hand, that in following his counsel, they were in a way to "become as gods." Gen. iii. 5. A third, is the mingling of some truth with falsehood, and matter of deceit, as hucksters do their wares good with bad, that so impostures may not be discerned by being viewed alone.* The last is to keep touch in smaller things, that, thereby, men may take their opportunity with more both ease and advantage to deceive in greater; as is said of Fabius Maximus.†

The safest way not to be deceived by others, specially to our spiritual prejudice, is not to deceive ourselves; which till we do, no other can deceive us. Hence is it, that God in his Word so often warns us, that we be not deceived and that we deceive not ourselves and our own souls. But and if we either put out our own eyes with our finger, through passion or prejudice, or willingly wink at dangers, which we might foresee; who will pity us, if we fall into the ditch of deceit which others dig for us?

Whilst crafty men deceive others, they themselves, though they little consider it, are most deceived by Satan, whose instruments they are, fitted for his hand, and purposes. And what avails it the ravenous bird to devour that, which belongs not to her, if therewith, she herself be taken by the leg in the fowler's snare? Besides, even in respect of men, howsoever such wily-beguiles may for a time, if they carry close, amongst other advantages, get the opinion of prudent and politic persons, and be accounted the more wise, by how much they have the more skill to deceive;‡ yet if their craftiness come to be found out and appear, they become often a prey to all, and always a scorn to the most simple; like the wily fox who being once caught, hath his skin plucked over his ears, wherewith every fool will have his cap furred, as a worthy lord was wont to say.§ Such are heirs apparent to Ahithophel's comfort and reward. 2 Sam. xvii. 23.

His rule was peremptory that said, a wise man will not deceive, nor cannot be deceived:‖ so was his profession both of wisdom and honesty loud, who chose this motto,

* Irenæus. † Livius. ‡ Petrarch.
§ Lord Willoughby. ‖ Seneca.

Fallere vel falli res odiosa mihi: and though usually it be worse to deceive, than to be deceived, though Austin and who not, met with many that would deceive, but never with any that would be deceived,* as a sin is worse than a cross: yet whereas to be deceived is always either a cross, or a sin, or both; a man may, in some case, and manner deceive, without either; as did Athanasius the President Lucius,† who pursuing him, and approaching near the boat, wherein he was, asked for Athanasius, and was answered by him, whom he knew by name, but not by face, that Athanasius was hard before him, and that if he made haste, he might presently overtake him: who thus escaped, deceiving his Arian persecutor, by speaking nothing but the truth, and that both wisely and with good conscience.

CHAPTER XVI.

OF WISDOM AND FOLLY.

Some have been found not only contented with, but glorying in the name of irreligious and unhonest: but hardly ever any were willing to bear the note of foolish or unwise. And even of them, in whom is found some true love of virtue and goodness, how few are there, that either indeed do or would be thought to do anything, in favour thereof, which might, in the least degree, impeach the credit of their wisdom, in the eyes of the partial world? So fain would all be counted, though few in truth be, wise. The main reason of this seems to be, that whereas the want of wisdom imports impotency and inability; irreligion and dishonesty are by election and free choice. The pride of men, if God's grace correct it not, makes them more impatient of a want either inward, or outward, arguing them to be weak and impotent; than of a grosser vice in either, upon their own free election and choice of will. And hence it is, that many boast of things done by them for some particular advantage, which they know to be evil, and unlawful.

It is the first, and a great point of wisdom to know wherein true wisdom stands: specially, seeing that the thing, which God calls wisdom, and which the world calls wisdom, are as

* Austin. † Eusebius.

different, as heaven and earth; yea as heaven and hell. That cannot but be best, which God so valueth. It is known from the world's wisdom, by first, its object: secondly, the properties which attend it: thirdly, the school where it is learnt: fourthly, the end to which it tends. The object is Christ primarily, who "of God is made unto us wisdom," 1 Cor. i. 30; and in whom are hidden all the treasures thereof, which the gospel, the "wisdom of God," Col. ii. 3, openeth unto us. He that knows Christ aright in the gospel, knows both God and man, and the most gracious and glorious effects of both united in one. Secondly, "the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without jangling and without hypocrisy." James iii. 17. The other is clean contrarily qualified: thick and muddy with lusts, and monstrously compounded, arrogant, self-willing and self-loving, inexorable, quarrelsome, crafty, and cruel. Thirdly, the wisdom of God is learnt in the school of Christ, and upon the book of Holy Scriptures: the other hath so many masters, as there are corrupt either lusts within a man, or customs in the world. Lastly, the wisdom of God teacheth to provide surely for the spiritual and eternal state, though with prejudice to the bodily, and temporal: the other bids, make sure work for the flesh, and pinch not it, though the spiritual man speed hardly by it. He that will be wise to God, must be a fool to the world: which yet makes him not a fool in worldly affairs, but skilful how to order them aright, both for the spiritual life and natural also, as far as it is subordinate unto it.

The high-way to wisdom Divine or human is to observe and consider the reasons and causes of things. He that believes a thing because God affirms it, shows faith; he that does it because God commands it, obedience: but he that joins with these the reasons of the doctrine or exhortation in the word, gets into his heart the props of wisdom against the storms of temptation both of unbelief and disobedience. So in human affairs, he that minds or remembers things to be thus or thus, gets skill in the things: but he that observes and learns the reasons and causes why they come so to pass, or are so done, he takes the right course to become wise in the matter, of what kind soever.

A wise man is the same, though his outward state be changeable, yea changed from a prosperous to an afflicted or the contrary way: else he but hits right at a venture, when he doth well in either of both. His condition is rather happily fitted to him, as the hour once a day comes to the hand of the clock that stands always still, than he to it, by true wisdom.* A wise man will wish the more prosperous state, but fear the more afflicted, and use that which falls and his wisdom in it. The sailor, who wants skill, may miss his course, or drown his ship in a fair wind; but he needs most skill in a tempest: so is the wisdom of a man most seen in the right guiding of himself and his affairs in a stress of trouble and affliction, I have seen it in experience, that many, specially women, and women-like men; who have showed forth much goodness in a quiet and prosperous state of things, if any great storm of trial have happened to have overtaken them, have, through the want of wisdom's chart, and compass, lost all, and not only been altogether uncomfortable, but above measure, burdensome both to others, and themselves. The apostle by the work of the wisdom of God "knew both how to be abased, and how to abound." Phil. iv. 12.

He that is not wise for himself first, cannot be wise for another, either in bodily or spiritual things; though he may do him good in both. But that is rather by occasion or in humour; than upon ground of true wisdom. God and nature, which teach every man to love himself most; and his neighbour, truly and heartily, as himself; teach him withal, to use his best wit and skill, for the promoting of his own welfare. By love of himself, I do not mean that ravenous self-love, which eats up all "love of God," 2 Tim. iii. 2, and of other men, save for a man's self: but that affection of created nature, inclining every man to procure his own true welfare, to his power, every way. The former is rather hatred of a man's self in effect, Prov. xxix., whatsoever the positive affection be; but now, the question is, what this, himself, means. Himself, is not his worldly riches, nor honour nor any the like appurtenance; but his soul and body in a convenient state and constitution to perform good duties, and to obtain true happiness. He that is wise

* Plutarch.

for this himself, is wise to God and for other men's true good. But for that other common, and commonly called self-love, in which men foolishly mistake, by taking that for themselves, which is not: the best that can be wished to such, is, that they have little wit and less authority: and that specially considering the deepest wisdom of such vermin is, not to care, how much and in how great things they harm others, so they may benefit themselves never so little, in comparison; like the thief, that to get the gold ring, would eat off the finger upon which it stuck close.

If the wealthiest life were the best, wisdom were not so much to be desired; considering how many mere Nabals, and rich fools the world hath. And if the merriest life were the best, it were better to be a fool, than wise. The eagle continually gnaws the heart of Prometheus: and in much wisdom, is much grief; so as "he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow," Eccl. i. 18, saith the wise man, out of his own experience: whereas, on the contrary, natural fools, and many artificial fools also, almost always laugh and are merry; as having neither grace to mourn for sin, nor wit to be much troubled with crosses. But for all that, "wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness," Eccl. ii. 13; yea for that, if there were nothing else: seeing "by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better," Eccl. vii. 3; whereas "the laughter of fools is like the crackling of thorns under a pot."

There is in truth no greater recreation in the world, than to converse with wise men. Yet many cannot make themselves merry, without a fool: though Solomon amongst all the vain delights, which he could devise, or procure, got not a fool to make him merry with.* Such companions of fools might for the most part save that charge, and say that, in earnest, which a wise man said for fashion: when at any time I would be merry with a fool, I laugh at myself.†

Solomon in his Proverbs uses to call good and godly men, wise; and wicked persons, fools: partly because there is folly and madness too, in all wickedness; partly because the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, as both making men careful to learn their duties, and having a promise of "direction in the way that they shall choose," Psa. xxv. 4,

* Cartwright. † Seneca.

5, 9: and partly to free true piety and goodness from the reproach of folly, Acts xvii. 32, and simpleness cast upon them by worldly-wise men, 1 Cor. i. 18: who, as the heathen-wise counted the doctrine of the gospel foolishness, so do these worldly-wise judge all true conscience of it, and obedience unto it to arise from want of wit, and superstitious simplicity. But say men what they will, the gospel is the wisdom of God; and the obedience of it, the wisdom of God's people in his sight, and in all theirs, that judge aright: which to neglect, and true happiness in it, is the madness of folly.

We say of some that they have good wits, if wise men had them in keeping. But as wooden daggers are fitter for some, than those of iron and steel; so a blunt wit is indeed fittest for him, who wants discretion and wisdom how to use it: without which the sharp wit is as dangerous, as is the sharp knife in a child's hand, or dagger at a fool's back. And as sharp wits without wisdom are dangerous, so are they pernicious without grace: serving to make men both more incorrigible, and more inexcusable, and fitter instruments of the devil, for mischief: even as the fat soil unordered brings forth greatest plenty of thorns and weeds. "The serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field," Gen. iii. 1: and of him before the rest the devil made choice to deceive by: who accordingly so well fitted his turn at the first, as ever since he hath well liked, and much used such subtle and serpent-like instruments for mischievous purposes. But the serpent, who was more subtle than other beasts, was also cursed by the Lord above all other beasts; and so are those serpent-like men; for whom how much better were it, if they had been born idiots, and natural fools, than to abuse God's good gifts of natural wit, to the dishonour of the giver, as they do!

CHAPTER XVII.

OF DISCRETION.

DISCRETION is a skill enabling a man to improve himself in all his affairs and whatsoever he is, or hath, to best advantage, according to variable circumstances and occasions.

Sapience, or wisdom stands in bare contemplation of things excellent gathered from principles and conclusions: prudence and discretion are for practice: which if we will distinguish; the latter, discretion, is to be restrained to things fit or unfit. This discretion is neither wit, nor wisdom, nor learning, nor any art liberal or illiberal; but that which shows how to govern them all conveniently and every other thing with them: like Iphicrates, who was neither legionary soldier, nor archer, nor targeter, but one that could rule, and use all these.*

And of such use is this discretion, in the whole course of our life in regard of the infinite variety of circumstances, according to which particulars are performed conveniently, or inconveniently; as that we may daily observe men of lesser means for the world, as riches, trading and skill in faculties, and yet doing well in it, yea better by discreet managing their little; than others, wanting this discretion, with far greater helps and measure of means otherwise. Yea, even in Divine matters, some of less knowledge, zeal, diligence, and other general graces, by the benefit of this particular virtue, are found more serviceable to God and profitable to men, than others wanting it, though far exceeding them in the former. Discretion is to be preferred before wit or art or learning; and only comes after goodness in worth.

As the serpent-like generation, specially where truth and honesty go with a scratched face and are in disgrace of the times, esteems men square and upright in their courses, for witless and silly: so must the more shallow-headed take heed, that they censure not discreet carriage, and handling of things, for crafty and unhonest; considering that other men may do that in good and honest discretion, which they, by defect thereof, could not do but in evil conscience. The same honesty and sincerity may continue in a man, though in discretion applying himself diversely to divers occasions: as the hand remains the same, whether closed into a fist or extended abroad,† or bended this or that way, as occasion serves.

Of all enemies this virtue hath none greater than pride; which deprives men, able otherwise, of much, and fools of

* Plutarch. † Seneca.

all use of discretion: as making them either rash, by which they do not, or so presumptuous in themselves, as they will not restrain and humble their understanding to due consideration of circumstances of conveniency; in the ordering whereof discretion stands. And hence it is, that proud persons above others, fall into many things uncomely and inconvenient. On the contrary, "God guides the humble," Psa. xxv. 9, in this way of discretion, amongst others. Lastly, as the "discerning of spirits" is one of "the gifts of God's Spirit," 1 Cor. xii. 7—11; so are we by prayer to beg at his hands this grace, that we may be enabled to discern both of persons and "things which differ," Phil. i. 10, so far as concerns us in our places: without which we go but by peradventures, and may do more harm than good, even when we both mean well, and do the thing which is good in itself, if unseasonably.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OF EXPERIENCE.

Only God is not taught by experience, to whose knowledge all things are present, at all times, and before all times. But there is no creature so perfect in wisdom and knowledge, but may learn something for time present and to come, by times past. The day following, saith one, is scholar to that which went before.* And the virtue, saith another, which nature denies, experience brings to wise men.† So as though it be the mistress of fools, who will learn no wisdom but that which is beaten into them with rods through a torn skin: yet are the wisest taught many things by it, and so become of commendable, admirable: as Antigonus being asked, who was the best captain in his time, answered, Pyrrhus, if he grew old.‡ And even experience teacheth, that there are many particulars, and those tending both to our natural and spiritual state, which neither our own wit, art, study, or conscience, nor the information, counsel, or example of others can teach us; which yet we learn by this dull mistress experience.

This, if it be ripe, and but joined with any indifferent

* Seneca. † Politian. ‡ Plutarch.

capacity and diligence, to compare together events past, and present occurrences, will afford better help for direction, in doubtful cases, than any other ordinary rules: as a man can better in the dark find the way, to which he hath been used, than another that never went it can do, by the best instructions and directions that can be given him. And it seems to have been one end why God gave our great grandfathers in the first age of the world, so long life, that by experience, and observation they might learn the skill, and art of sundry courses, specially of the stars:* the knowledge whereof otherwise, without miracle, would hardly, if at all, have been attained to. I conclude upon the premises, that men of experience, with which wit, and sometimes authority without wit, is still at jar, are not lightly to be gainsaid or neglected in their faculty: seeing experience is gotten by sense, which easily errs not in its proper object; whereas the discourse of reason is very subject to swerve in inferring and concluding of things. Yet hath this plodding guide, experience, this danger in it, that it leads men on in the beaten way to which it hath been used, without due consideration of such variable circumstances, as fall in, and make cases past and present, though alike in general nature, yet in particular application and consideration very unlike: of which differences wit and art make men more able to discern.

Though all knowledge be good in itself, as tending to perfect the understanding, yet the getting of it is not always good; as when it is gotten by experience of punishment, specially of sin, as our first parents got the knowledge of evil both ways, to their and our cost, in eating the forbidden fruit.† A man may buy gold, so may he experimental knowledge, too dear. Solomon seeking by experience to try the "delights of all things under heaven," Eccl. i. 2, and being too bold in wading in that stream, that he might know the depth of it, fell in, and without God's special helping hand, had been drowned therein for ever. Woeful then is the experience, which is gotten by sin, and misery, our own, or other men's either: like that of Hexophilus the physician, that butchered six hundred

* Josephus. † Austin.

men, that he might search into man's bodily nature: destroying man, that he might know him.*

The servants of God are sometimes so pressed with the sense of present temptations, as that their special comfort ariseth from the recourse they have to the "experience of the days of old, and years of antiquity," Psa. lxxvii. 7, 8: considering that God casts not off for ever, nor forgets to be favourable to his any more. So some in age, and under temptations, have received more comfort from their former experience, though of a weaker measure, of grace, in their childhood, than they could of a greater, in their riper years.

CHAPTER XIX.

OF EXAMPLES.

THE rules in some sciences, especially speculative, and for truth only, are grounded upon examples, and gathered by wise observation, and induction of particulars: but so are not Divine and moral rules. Neither is anything to be reputed good and just in itself, and so exemplary to us, because such and such men have done it: but they have done it, if doing their duty therein, because it is good, just, and lawful: and so are unto us examples of faith, patience, mercy, and the like, as they in their particular courses expressed these, and the like virtues; and not otherwise. Only he, that can do nothing but good, is our absolute example in things which concern us.

Particular facts commended in Holy Scripture are general examples, and bind to imitation, when either the same thing is elsewhere commanded in general; or where either the ground, or drift, or equity of the thing in general.† And thus the very both miraculous and meritorious works of Christ, though in their particular nature, causes, and ends inimitable, are so far forth our examples, and to be followed by us, as the holy virtues of faith, patience, and obedience towards God, and of love, and compassion towards men shine forth in them.

Moral examples serve first for confirmation, and com-

* Tertullian. † Greenham.

mendation unto others of the truth and goodness contained in precepts, and are therefore called by some the pledges of rules.* Secondly, for direction in particulars agreeable unto precepts, but not expressed in them. Thirdly, to tole† men on in obedience active, or passive; for even lazy travellers will hold out with good company, which beat the path before them. And this help examples specially afford, by taking away the excuse of frailty, that we are ready to make, against the obedience, which yet we confess, and are convinced that we owe.‡ Now the precedents and examples of godly men, as of "Abraham the father of the faithful in believing under hope against hope," Rom. iv. 18; and of Job in keeping patience in extremity of trials, and the like, are as a "cloud of witnesses," James v. 11, going before us, as did "the pillar of cloud," Heb. xii. 1, before the Israelites in the wilderness to show them the way: and do testify against our withdrawing hearts, that other frail men, as we are, by the power of the same grace of God, whereof we are made partakers, have performed due obedience unto God, in such and greater trials than ours are. So that as in the precepts we have the Word of God, and his will in it to direct us; so in those patterns of godliness we have his work, and, as it were his visible hand reached down from heaven to lead us in the way, which by his Word we are appointed to walk in. By which if we profit not, we take the name of our God in vain both in his word and works, in which he makes himself known for our good.

He who makes another his ensample, really acknowledgeth both the want and the desire of that perfection in himself, which he imitates in the other. And so Parmeno in his, how artificial soever, imitating of the grunting of a sow, aimed at but a swinish perfection.§ The like is to be said of children's playing of bulls and bears and horses. To which purpose tendeth the saying of a great lord, that women's imitation of men, as their perfection, in apparel, gesture and the like, might better be borne, than men's effeminate and degenerate imitation of women.‖ Which also the practice of Lycurgus confirmed in training up

* Plato. † To invite, or draw by allurement. ‡ Calvin.
§ Plutarch. ‖ Lord Willoughby.

maids in manly exercises, and making them thereby, after a sort, masculine; whereas usually by riot and wantonness, men are transformed into women, and made feminine.*

Many think themselves good enough, if there be any worse than they. But we should not strive with the worst, but with the best rather; making apace, and as fast as we can, after them, though we come never so far behind them, in wisdom and goodness: as the apostle exhorts the Corinthians to "be followers of him, as he was of Christ." 1 Cor. xi. 1. Yea, further, as Eupompus would imitate nature and no workman in painting: † so neither should we stint our endeavours and desires absolutely at the degree of goodness, to which any mere man is come before us: but should aim at the very perfection, which the law of God requires. Men in shooting aim at the white, though sometimes they miss the butt. Only "the law of God," Psa. xix., which only is perfect, must be made by us the absolute rule of our life and ways.

As landmarks are set up by the sea-shore not only to teach men which way to take, but sometimes also which to leave: so are sundry examples even of good men propounded in Holy Scripture not for imitation, but for warning. And a very preposterous course it is to follow good men, wherein they do evil: which they that use, are like unto apes and dotterels, that are aptest to imitate men in their mops and mows ‡ and unseemly gestures. And if it were folly in the Persians to esteem such men the fairest, as had hooked noses, because Cyrus their king had such a one; § it is mere madness in Christians to deem vices, virtues; and errors, truths, or either the one or other to be embraced, through superstitious admiration of some men's persons, in which they are found. But as the "Egyptians following the Israelites with the dark part of the cloud towards them, were drowned in the sea," Exod. xiv. 23, which the other passed through safely, so they who follow good men in their failings, and not in their virtues, shall surely be punished, when the other escape. Notwithstanding, although examples of others great and ancient cannot make sins to be no sins; yet doth it something lessen their blame, who are misled by such guides; as it was in the

* Plutarch. † Ibid. ‡ In making mouths. § Plutarch.

polygamy of the patriarchs;* and both hath been, and is in other the like traditional evils.

Some pretend the examples of good men in their failings for the excuse of the evils, which they themselves have a mind to do and would do, though none ever had done them before them or should do them after them: others, are indeed misled by their aberrations. In both the devil shows himself his crafts-master. And hardly can he more improve evil, than when he so works, that a good or great man's virtues, which he cannot abolish, should countenance and commend his vices to others. By how much therefore the more any person excelleth in knowledge, wisdom, virtue, or authority; by so much the carefuller must he be, that he furnish not from thence the enemy of God's glory, and man's salvation, with weapons of advantage for evil, from whence the special means of his overthrow therein, are to be taken, as, by God's appointment, they are, from great, and good men. And if anything possibly could, surely this would make the very saints in heaven sorrowful for their failings upon earth, that others having by their example, or other provocations, been drawn to evil, whereof they never repenting, as the principals did, do for the same suffer the eternal wrath of God, which they by true repentance have escaped.

Examples of superiors are strong cords to draw on others, either to good or evil: in which regard, it is rightly said, that great men have no small either virtues or vices: with which that of Austin consorts, the joy for the great, is great, if they be good, because it is not for them alone.† So on the contrary, when Peter "dissembled for fear of them of the circumcision; not only the other Jews dissembled likewise with him, but Barnabas also was carried away with that their dissimulation." Gal. ii. 11. How good were it for inferiors, that superiors minded this, as they ought! How much better for themselves! That they might be warned to take heed, that they increase not the guilt, and extent of their personal sins by making them exemplary. He that having many standing under him, falls from aloft, may easily bruise others besides himself, with his fall. And if the blind do lead the blind, though

* Beza. † Austin.

both "fall into the ditch," Matt. xv. 14; yet the guide falls under; and so is pressed, besides his own, with the other's burden, that falls after and upon him. As, on the contrary, he that furthers others by his holy example, in virtue and godliness, hath his part in their goodness also both in the eyes of God and men.

CHAPTER XX.

OF COUNSEL.

COUNSEL, by which we consider wisely, whether, what, and how things are to be done, for profitable ends,* is a sacred thing; † and withal so necessary to be taken not only with God, and a man's self, but with others also; as that Solomon, though peerless in wisdom, yet had his counsellors about him. "Without counsel people perish," 1 Kings xii. 6, and purposes are disappointed; but in the multitude of counsellors there is both safety, and stability. Prov. xi. 14; xii. 15, 20. It is God's peculiar to be all-sufficient in himself whether for wisdom, or otherwise. No one man but stands in need of another; and if for little else, yet for counsel.

He that gives counsel to another, therein stands in the place of God, Isa. ix. 6, who is the Counsellor, and whose "Mine," counsel is and sound wisdom. Prov. viii. 14. This, he that gives advice, must well weigh, that he neither dishonour the wisdom and goodness of God, whose place for the dispensing of these attributes, he sustains therein; nor wrong him, by whom he is so far honoured, as to be sought to, as God's mouth. And so must he also that takes counsel; that he may neither seek it at fools, which none but fools will do; nor at godless persons, specially in matter of conscience, which he that doth, desires to deceive himself, and to mock with God. Now of all counsellors, in whom any wisdom and goodness is to be found, the peremptory and bold are most dangerous, whose custom is to put men upon extremities, happily fitting their own venturesome disposition, but often above the strain, and strength of their friends or reach of reason either. Where-

* Keckerman. † Menander.

as counsellors, specially in more difficult and dangerous cases, should both very sensibly apprehend the difficulty and danger of the thing in deliberation; and withal be careful, that they spur not on their friends whom they advise, above their pace, lest they tire them by preposterous enforcements, and put them upon such difficulties, as they are not fit to struggle with. Wariness is best in advice; and boldness in execution.

Dead men, to wit, in their books, were accounted by King Alphonsus, for the best counsellors.* And indeed so are they in regard of one of the best properties of a good counsellor, which is sincerity, and unpartialness. A virtue rare, specially in inferiors, who too oft look asquint in their counsel: as either casting how to advantage themselves in counselling others, or in following the direction of Ahab's messengers to Micaiah, by speaking that which is good to, rather than for, the king. 1 Kings xxii. 13. Which latter calamity befalls great men not only by base perfidiousness of flatterers, but often by a just judgment of God punishing them with their own desires, and so ordering, that they that seek shall find such as may rather deceive them by flattery, than trouble them with the truth. Yet in these dead counsellors, books, there is wanting a lively, and likely discerning of such particular circumstances, as must be observed, and gathered by present discourse, that men counsel not at adventure; which no books can sufficiently provide for. In books we best learn general grounds of direction; but that skill is imperfect, and must have joined with it a large and piercing discourse of the counsellor's mind, who by comparing together things past and present, with due respect to singular circumstances incident, is able probably to gather things to come; in which the life of counsel consists.

Some will eloquently propound, and earnestly persuade to good and profitable courses in general; but in the meanwhile, give no direction, how or by what particular means to prosecute them, for the attaining to the desired end. Such counsellors are like him that is earnest in persuading with a traveller to hold the right way to the place, where he would be; but shows him not which it is, and what are

* Panormita.

the marks of it: or to him, who trims the lamp diligently, and sets it to burn, but pours no oil into it.* As we understand even most necessary things in vain, except we love them: so blind love, which alone in effect, the bellows of loud, but windy persuasion kindles in the breasts of many, avails nothing, where knowledge guides us not in our way. †

The fewest of them that ask good counsel, do mean indeed to follow it. Some ask counsel only in good manners, and to make show of respect to friends. Jer. xlii. 2—6; Ezek. xiv. 4—7. Others for a colour, that they did nothing, but having first heard, what such, and such, it may be, wise and godly, could say about it. And not a few, though they pretend to ask, yet indeed intend rather to give counsel; that is, to have the courses allowed by others, which they themselves affect. A man may have divers ends, in requiring the advice of others, and all of them honest, and lawful; provided he always keep his heart free to receive either information, or confirmation, or reformation from others, upon good ground.

Three sorts of men, though standing most in need of counsel, are many of them most incapable of it. First, they in great prosperity; secondly, they in extreme affliction; and thirdly, such as are weak and simple. They of the first sort are, for the most part, high-minded, and lifted up in themselves, Nabal-like, above the good counsel of other men, presuming, that they are able enough to direct themselves. 1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11. The second, are commonly either obdurate, or melted in their misery; like wax, either too hard to receive, or too soft to retain any impression; as the "Israelites for anguish of spirit, hearkened not unto Moses," Exod. vi. 9, the messenger of their deliverance. The third, are partly incapable of advice, through simpleness; and partly suspicious, either lest they should be circumvented by their friends close minding their own ends, or else thought weak, and too simple to govern, and manage their own affairs: by which prejudice it comes to pass, many times, that they become wilful and heady; because they would not be thought simple and unable to direct themselves.

It is a rule, wherein many wise men have agreed, that

* Plutarch. † Erasmus.

it is more available for the commonwealth to have an evil prince and good counsellors, than a prince good and virtuous, with corrupt counsellors about him; for that, it is more like, that one should be bettered by many, than many be corrupted by one. But the mischief is, that such as are naught themselves will make choice usually of such counsellors as themselves are, rather to flatter, than better them: as contrariwise, the good, commonly, will choose such, as may further them in goodness.

When a thing very inconvenient and absurd is propounded to us, it is not best, always, to manifest any great dislike, though we both have it in ourselves, and our reasons for it, never so present: except either urgent necessity press a sudden and violent stop of the matter; or that we have to do with him, whom we know we can oversway, by our reasons, and authority: lest by that course our friend take occasion to withdraw himself, and to conceal his affairs from us, and so to steal misery closely, and, it may be, suddenly also, if he be bent upon his course, for fear that our importunity should bring hindrance to his purpose. But it is best, at first, to put off the thing, and to provoke to further consideration, and so to gain time, with some small manifestation of dislike for the present; thereby, as it were, pointing, and making way for our after more vehement dissuasions. By which course we shall have our friend's both ear and heart more open to receive advice from us; as conceiving, that we neither are forward to cross his design, nor carried against him or it, in passion, contempt, or unadvisedness.

CHAPTER XXI.

OF THOUGHTS.

MEN say, Thoughts are free, and pay no tribute: and this is true being understood of men's custom-houses, where they cannot be searched, but as they betray themselves by some outward sign, either word, or work. But so much the more watchful we had need to be in ourselves, over those close commodities, lest we willingly feed a filthy, though secret sink within us; which, in time, will shame us

before men, as it stinks in the meanwhile, where it is, in the nostrils of God, and men, for it. Besides, if we do evil in word, or deed, men may help us, either by contrary examples, or friendly reproofs, or hateful upbraidings, or just punishments: but against sinful and unsanctified thoughts we have no help but from God alone, and ourselves, by his grace, to whom alone they are known.

Every thought of evil is not an evil thought, but only such as to which we adjoin either consent of will, or, at least, delight of affection. For besides the thoughts of, or about evil, which are either in pure speculation, or natural consideration of the thing, or with averseness of affection from the matter thought on; there are thoughts merely by suggestion from Satan, who being a spirit, and having such affinity of nature with our spirits and souls, can unite, himself, in his suggestions, with our imagination, after a manner by us inconceivable; and offer unto us thoughts of great evil, which yet we may, by grace, so resist, as that they are to be accounted his sin, and our cross only, who are constrained to bear such temptations; as we are compelled oftentimes to hear, and bear the ill counsel of wicked men, his instruments, with sin in them, and grief in ourselves, but without our sin, if we in no way hearken unto them: yea with commendation, both in the one, and other, in the victory of faith which we obtain over them. Indeed we are too ready to receive such suggestions; as tinder is to take fire; specially being subtilely fitted by Satan to our special inclinations, and occasions: and so must be more careful either to prevent them by nourishing in ourselves an abhorring of them; or to quench them if they arise, by the stream of holy meditations running in our hearts.

They, whose words and deeds are faulty and evil, and yet plead their good hearts towards God, are like malefactors, who, being convinced of theft, or the like naughtiness, by plain evidence, to their faces, do appeal to the testimony of such persons for their purgation, as they know cannot be found. If the hearts of such men could be seen of others, as their works, and words are, they would appear worse then they; as they do to God who seeth them. There is no evil in the mouth, or hand, which was not in the heart first, Matt. xv. 19, as the stream in the fountain: neither

can the flesh be corrupted, except the mind be corrupt first.*

Men judge of our thoughts by our words, and actions: but God of our words and works by our thoughts; accounting the thing whether good, or evil, as done in his sight, if once it be resolved on in the purpose of the heart. Thus "Abraham offered up Isaac by faith," Heb. xi. 17; and Judas did that which he meant to do, John xiii. 27. And as God judgeth of us, and of our doings; so ought we to do ourselves. "The thoughts of the righteous are righteous." Prov. xii. 5. And by these, good and evil men are best and truliest differenced one from another: † whereas all outward works lie common; and are many of them oft exercised equally by good, and bad. No outward works are so good, but hypocrites have done them, at times: and few, or none so evil, but some godly have at some times, by temptation, fallen into them. But how alike soever the outward faces of such sinful actions be; the difference is great in the heart of the doer, and is so seen of God to be at the very time of the doing; and by after and better fruits in their time, so manifested unto men afterwards, to have been at that time, when in the outward evil act no such difference could appear. But our only comfortable course, and that by which our hearts are assured before the Lord, is, to provide, that in them may run constantly so strong a stream of holy purposes, and settled thoughts, as may both overbear the contrary current of our flesh, and lusts; and also carry with it our outward man to all good and godly practices.

CHAPTER XXII.

OF SPEECH AND SILENCE.

MAN is endowed above beasts; especially with reason, and with speech to utter it: without which, his reason, how deep, and profound soever, were little more profitable unto others, nor many times to himself neither, than a spring hidden in the ground. Hence the tongue is called the index of the mind: and as by the index we know what is in

* Ambrose. † Cartwright.

the book; so do we by the speech what is conceived in the heart. "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." Matt. xii. 34. And so ready is the passage from the heart to the tongue, as that what is conceived in the one is usually brought forth by the other: neither doth any outward thing so soon betray a man, as his words. Though Jacob brought his brother Esau's hands, and neck, and meat, and sauce, and smell, to his father Isaac, Gen. xxviii. 22, yet could he not bring his tongue and voice: and though a man put upon his hands the gloves of dissimulation, and the shoes upon his feet, and mask his face never so cunningly; yet can he hardly so tip his tongue, but, in a short time, a wise man will discover him, and discern whether he be good, or bad; specially whether he be wise, or simple. Great is the affinity between the heart and mouth: and so the second Person in Trinity is not called the work, but the word of God. John i. 1; Rev. xix. 13.

Solomon, in his Proverbs, xv. 4, compares the speech of a wise, and righteous man to a tree of life, and to a fountain of life, and to many other pleasant, and profitable things; which must teach both them that speak to preserve pure that fountain, and to prune, dig about, and manure, with all diligence, that tree, that it may bring forth fruit to the hearers:* and so must it teach them that hear, not to neglect that benefit, but to admit, and receive the words of truth and wisdom, as seed, by which they also may conceive, and bring forth good fruit.†

"A word spoken in due season is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Prov. xv. 23. And so a wise man must provide, that his words be not only gold for their worth, but also framed to silver-like opportunity: there being a time when nothing, a time when something, but no time when all things, are to be spoken.‡

That which is generally spoken of a blessed man, that he is "like a tree that brings forth his fruit in due season," Psa. i. 3, may specially be applied to the apples of the tongue, and fruit of the lips. For the bringing forth of which, he that can observe and take a due season, shall as effectually promote his purpose, as he that takes his pull at the bell-rising. "A fool will utter all his mind," Prov. xxix. 11,

* Cartwright. † Plutarch. ‡ Hugo Grotius.

and is ready to burst, if he speak not whatsoever he thinks: but a wise man will keep a word for afterward:* and will neither run before, nor neglect, but follow opportunity. Want of wisdom makes men, commonly, too forward in speaking, and over-much wisdom too backward. As the bird often flies away, whilst the fowler still seeks to get nearer, and nearer her: so doth golden opportunity many times, whilst we wait too long for better, and fitter passage for our speech. It is better then to take a reasonable good opportunity presenting itself, than to adventure the loss of all, by waiting still for a better.

He that takes up the time, specially wise and godly men being in the company, with unprofitable, how much more, with ungodly, speech, besides the account which "he must give to God for every vain word," Matt. xii. 36, that is, for every word not some way or other, profitable; greatly wrongs the whole company, in hindering the speaking and hearing of better things by his vanities; which are like ill humours filling the stomach, and taking from it both appetite of, and benefit by better meat. Let not thy speech, saith one, be vain, but such as serves either to counsel, or to persuade, or to comfort, or to direct:† and the apostle, more divinely, "Let no corrupt communication come out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Eph. iv. 29. He that doth this, is God's minister, in his place; and hath his part in the honourable praises of that wise king, "into whose lips grace was poured." Psa. xlv. 2.

"He that can rule his tongue, considering how unruly an evil that little member is, is able also to bridle the whole body," James iii. 2, and is a perfect, and entire man, and he to whom no Christian duty is impossible. This he that cannot do, though he seem religious, both to himself, and others, deceives both; and "his religion is in vain." James i. 26. If this rule were well minded, and rightly applied, either more would bridle their tongues, or fewer seem religious to themselves and others, than do.

Many affect speaking in an imperious and commanding accent. Some out of familiar boldness with friends: but such may easily be more bold than welcome, if they have

* Seneca. † Ibid.

not both good knowledge of, and interest in their so commanded friends. Men write to friends, "yours to command," and offer their service: but they that will take all, either in substance, or ceremony, which their friends offer, will weary them in time. Some fools also affect masterfulness in speech, specially with underlings. And of them I have known some so swollen in the mouth, as they have thought, that if they gave their servant a better name, than sirrah, or boy, they lost their authority. There are also which love to snarl, and use surly and currish speech, especially towards inferiors, or equals either. It is pity such are not over some great men's dogs, to order, and govern them. Such become unsociable, and burdensome, and abuse the singular benefit of God, and nature, the tongue, and speech, bestowed on men for the mutual intercourse of their reasonable conceptions, and preservation of human society. On the contrary, besides other benefits, there is nothing, by which men may at so cheap a rate purchase good-will, especially at their hands, who are of a lower rank than themselves, as by kind, and respectful language:* which made Titus Vespasian say, as he also proved the good of it by experience, gaining the opinion, and name of the darling of mankind, that "a prince should never send away any petitioner discontented." And, albeit, as the saying is, "fair words make fools glad;" yet so do they wise men also. Good language joined with real performance, is as a pleasant sauce to wholesome meat. Without performance, where ability is wanting, it ought to be as acceptable, though it stand us not in so good stead, as if the thing we desire were done for us: and in that case we should account of good words, as Diogenes did of his wortles,† which were for sauce to other meat, and for meat, when he had no other. And even where men fail us in that, which both they are able to perform, and we have reason to look they should; better we receive from them good words, than otherwise: seeing they carry with them some appearance of respect to him, to whom they are used; whereas, the contrary cast withal contempt upon his person; which is more grievous to most men, than a moderate disappointment in their suit.

Words are like clothes, used first for necessity, after for

* Suetonius. † Whortleberries.

convenient ornament, and, lastly, for wantonness. Neither do harlots more strive to inveigle fools by wanton tricking, and trimming themselves; than do fawning orators, and word-wise men, to allure vain hearers, and readers, who, as one saith, had rather be strewed with flowers, than fed with fruits by curious and affected forms of speech. Such deserve, though they oft get a better, the reward of the harper, whom Dionysius pleased with hope whilst he pleased him with singing: and there an end of both.* And truly I know few things by which men are either more puffed up in themselves, as Theodoret taxeth Chrysostom, or purchase from others with less desert, greater opinion of excellency, than by curious and affected eloquence, whether in pompous, or plausible speech, without weight of matter.† This is vanity in all subjects, and in Divine matters, profaneness: and so the truly learned apostle professeth, that his "preaching was not with persuasible words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and power; that the Church's faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." 1 Cor. ii. 4. He that, without sound information of judgment going before, is either by eloquence, or earnestness persuaded to the liking of any course; will, if he meet with an opposite orator more eloquent and vehement than the former, be as lightly dissuaded from it, and persuaded to the contrary. As a woman over curiously trimmed, is to be suspected; so is a speech. And indeed he that goes about by eloquence, without firm ground of reason, to persuade, goes about to deceive; and he that suffers himself so to be persuaded, is willing to be deceived. I may, and will do something for importunity of speech, but if I like any thing the better, I follow passion, and not reason.

He is rightly eloquent, who observing decorum, and tempering his style according to his person, can speak fitly, fully, and eloquently of all things;‡ temperately of mean things, and weightily of matters of importance:§ and not he that can magnify his mouth above measure, and the weight of the matter; and draw Hercules' hose upon a child's leg;‖ which the wise king counted no matter of

* Plutarch. † Theodoret. ‡ Cicero. § Morneus. ‖ Agesilaus.

commendation. And besides affectation, in which men strain the strings of their eloquence, to make persons or things as good or bad; or as great or small, not as they are, but as the speaker can; I have known some by an abused benefit of nature, and art, so impotently eloquent, as that they could hardly speak in praise or dispraise of person, or thing, without doubling, and trebling upon them superlative synonymes of honour, or disgrace. Such orators would make noteable market-folk, in crying up their own wares, which they meant to sell, and in making other men's, which they would buy, double naught. Prov. xx. 14.

Both length, and shortness of speech may be used commendably, in their time; as mariners sometimes sail with larger-spread, and sometimes with narrower-gathered sails. But as some are large in speech out of abundance of matter, and upon due consideration: so the most multiply words, either from weakness, or vanity. Wise men suspect, and examine their words ere they suffer them to pass from them, and so speak the more sparingly: but fools pour out theirs by talents, without fear, or wit. Besides, wise men speak to purpose, and so have but something to say: the other speak everything of everything, and thereupon take liberty to use long wanderings. Lastly, they think to make up that in number, or repetition of words, which is wanting in weight. But above all other motives, some better, some worse, too many love to hear themselves speak; and imagining vainly, that they please others, because they please themselves, make long orations, when a little were too much. Some excuse their tediousness, saying, that they cannot speak shorter; wherein they both say untruly, and shame themselves also: for it is all one, as if they said, that they have unbridled tongues, and inordinate passions setting them a-work. I have been many times drawn so dry, that I could not well speak any longer, for want of matter: but I ever could speak as short as I would.

Some have said, that "hurt never comes by silence," Numb. xxx. 4—8; but they may as well say, that good never comes by speech: for where it is good to speak, it is ill to be silent. Besides, he that holds his tongue, in a

matter that concerns him, is accounted, as consenting. Indeed less hurt comes by silence, than by speech; and so doth less good. Some are silent in weakness, and want either of wit to conceive what to speak; or of courage to utter what they conceive; or of utterance, where the other defects are not. They of the first sort are not desperately foolish, seeing they are sensible of their own want; which is half the way to mending it: there being "more hope of such a fool, than of a man wise in his own conceit," Prov. xxvi. 12, that is, thinking himself wiser than he is. Besides, such have the wit to cover their folly; and "a fool whilst he holds his tongue, is accounted wise," Prov. xvii. 28: whereas "a babbling fool proclaims his foolishness," Prov. xii. 23. For the second, though it be a misery for a man to be compelled to keep silence, when he would speak:* and that the prison be strait, where the very tongue is tied, yet he wants not all wit, who can for fear of danger hold his tongue, and not make "his lips the snare of his soul." Prov. xviii. 7. Some again are silent in strength of wisdom, and others of passion. As deep streams are most still; so are many, of deepest judgment, through vehement intention of mind upon weighty or doubtful matters; whereas the shallower are louder, and more forth-putting. And here the testimony which Spintharus gave of Epaminondas hath place, that he met with no man in his days, that knew more, and spake less.† Again, in some, vehemence of passion and affection dams up the passage of speech. The grief is moderate which utters itself; that which is extreme is silent.‡ So Absalom hating his brother Amnon to the death, "spake neither good nor evil to him." 2 Sam. xiii. 22. Lastly, there are who can bridle their tongue in discretion, and know, not only how to take the time to speak, but also the time to keep silence, Eccl. iii. 7: which surely is no small commendation in a wise, and able person. And this the philosopher knew well, who, when all the rest of his fellows, being each to present the king with some notable sentence, or other, were forward to utter every one his ware, desired of the king's messenger, that it might be certified in his name, that he had skill to hold his peace, when others were forward to speak.

* Seneca. † Plutarch. ‡ Seneca.

CHAPTER XXIII.

OF BOOKS AND WRITINGS.

WRITING is the speech of the absent: and even he that gives a writing unto the hand of another, to be read by him, thereby, after a sort sequesters his person from him, and desires to speak with him being absent, and that, to his advantage, if his personal presence and speech may endanger either contempt, or offence.

The Lord God in providing, that the books of Holy Scriptures should be written, effectually commended the writing and reading of other books touching all subjects, and sciences lawful, and lawfully handled. For though the difference be ever to be held between Divine and human writings, so as the former may worthily challenge absolute credence, and obedience, as breathing out only truth, and godliness; whereas the other are not only to be learned, but judged also: yet even in human writings, the truth in its kind, is taught commonly both more fully, and more simply, and more piously, than by speech. For howsoever the lively voice more pierce the heart, and be apter to move affection, and that to the receiving of truth and goodness, not only by love and liking, but by faith also, and assent, "for faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God," Rom. x. 17: yet men seldom take either the pains, or time to lay down things in speech, which they do for public writings: neither can any possibly either have the opportunity to hear the tithe of that which he may read for information, or take the time for the full understanding of things remarkable spoken, which in private reading he may do. Besides, men are commonly in their writings both freer from passion in themselves, and from partial respect of others, than in their speeches. And hence it comes to be said of dead men, that they are the best counsellors; to wit, in their books, wherein they are freest from affection one way, or other. Lastly, though the father found some in his time, who because Christ had said, "Thou shalt not swear," thought they might do that in writing, which they might not do in

speech;* and confirm idolatry with their hand, so they professed it not with their tongue: yet it is usually found otherwise; and that men are, or would seem to be more religious in writing, than in speech. Who ever shall find a black-mouthed blasphemer cursing, and swearing in his books? though in daily speech he scarce utter ten words without oath, or execration. Yea, are there not many, who by the gloss of piety, cunningly set upon their writings published to the world, steal the opinion of piety, and virtue from strangers, and those that know them not, whose ordinary conversation in word and deed to them that are acquainted therewith, proclaims them no better than very atheists and epicures? I add, even touching conferences, and disputations of purpose appointed, and used, for light of truth; that though they may be, and are singularly profitable for that purpose, to a modest, and tractable disposition, which will as well hear, as speak, and be as ready to learn truth of others, as to teach it them: yet to men of more unquiet, and stiff spirits, the reading of books is a course far more convenient for information: for that, therein, will not be the provocation to inordinate anger, and passion, which in speech often falls in. Besides, he who comes to dispute, comes specially to show the truth to others: but he that comes to read an author, comes specially to learn something from him, for the most part.

Great care is to be taken, and circumspection used in writing of books; not only, though specially, for conscience of God; but also because the author therein exposeth himself to the censure of all men, and those not only then living, but also to be born, when he is dead and rotten: "*Literæ scriptæ manent.*" And under their censure he comes, whether he be wise or foolish; learned or ignorant; of sound or of corrupt judgment: and in part therewith, whether of virtuous or vicious disposition. He that commits anything to writing gives men a bill of his manners:† which every one that reads may put in suit against him, if there be cause, in the court of his own heart, and neighbour's ear.

Some, through extreme diligence are devourers of books, and of infinite reading; in whom, if there be found any

* Tertullian. † Seneca.

answerableness in memory to retain, judgment to dispose, and wit accordingly to improve things read; such persons prove singular. But this is rare by reason of the different temper of the brain requisite for such furniture. Some, are of great reading, but of so slippery memory, as they are like water conduits, which what they continually receive in at one end, they let out as fast at the other. Some, again, are mere indexes, serving for nothing but to show, where, and in what authors, things are to be found; by benefit of their strong memory. There are also of those great bookmen, that know better than most other men's judgments, than their own, in matters of controversy, through injudiciousness, or irresolution; and if they come to settle upon any, rather opinion, than persuasion, it is commonly according to the last book which they read. It is best for ordinary capacities to travel in some few books (though by occasion they may step into many), and the same picked by good advice, of impartial and experienced men; and those thoroughly to digest, and discourse upon; as it is best for weak stomachs to eat of few, and wholesome dishes: which may also be done for further use, extension, and application, than the author himself conceived, or at least, expressed. And though Lucilius wished, that his books might be read neither of men very learned, nor altogether unlearned; lest the one should understand nothing, and the other more than he intended: yet indeed he reads a book ill, that understands not something more either in, or, at least, by it, than the author himself did in penning it.

As the maladies of the minds of many have been cured by reading of books; so have the diseases of the bodies of some, and those such as wanted no other medicines; if we may believe histories: as of Alphonsus, King of Spain, by reading of Livy; and of Ferdinand, King of Sicily, by reading of Quintus Curtius. The cure is both more common, and more excellent, which the reading of the Holy Scriptures afford.

CHAPTER XXIV.

OF GOOD INTENTIONS.

A good meaning no more sufficeth to make a good action, than a fair mark doth to make a good shot, by an unskilful archer. This hath been fully verified in the Jews, who out of no less good end, than the zeal of God, and desire, such as it was, to do him pleasing service, persecuted Christ and his disciples to the death. What intention could be better, or action worse? We must not therefore take the sanctuary of fools by good meanings, without knowledge: but first setting our faces towards heaven by meaning well, must further so far honour God, and humble ourselves to him, as to resign our whole man also into his hands, to be guided by him in the way thither: joining our prayers with his, who had less need to fear stepping aside that way, than we, and yet said, "With mine whole heart have I sought thee; O let me not wander from thy commandments." Psa. cxix. 10.

And yet albeit a good end alone sufficeth not; yet there is nothing either good, or tolerable without it, no, not though it have never so good success.* Although the good meaning excuse not wholly, yet the evil wholly condemns.† This good intention and end is the first, and last in every lawful action. It is the first, and that which sets the agent a-work to do what he doth, whether working reasonably, or naturally. It is the last, and so the best, and that at which he aims, as the perfection of his work.

And this, where it is found God so much regardeth, as he sometimes prevents an evil action in him, in whom he sees a good intention; as is to be seen in Abimelech, king of Gerar, whom God kept from sinning against him, and suffered not to touch Sarah, Abraham's wife, because he had taken her into his house, in the integrity of his heart. Gen. xx. 3—6. Sometimes also God rewards the good purpose, yea though he refuse the work intended, as incompetent, for some special cause; as in David, when he would have built the Lord an house. 2 Sam. vii. 23.

* Austin. † Bernard.

Always, he that means well, yea though the work be evil, which he doth, makes the devil, after a sort, serve God in it. He that doth that, which is good in itself for an evil end, makes God serve Satan: he that doth that, which is evil for a good end, makes Satan therein, though not warrantably, serve God; as the means serve the end. And considering how little truly good doing there is amongst men, in comparison; it were well there were more good meaning, yea though it were without knowledge. By which both fewer mischiefs would be done, and they that are done would therein be less heinous. We measure things, saith one, and it is true, in a respect, by the ends of goodness; and so better miss, and we shall miss less, in the means, than in the end.* He who hath the mark in his eye, and aims at it, will hardly miss so much, as he that takes a wrong mark to shoot at. And for true goodness; he who gets this general grace, to have his heart indeed, and seriously bent upon the course of piety towards God, and innocency towards men, the Lord will not so far suffer to err in his way, as to miss of heaven in the end, notwithstanding his particular aberration of human frailty; which God will cover under the veil of his rich mercy, by the person's sincere faith, and general repentance.

CHAPTER XXV.

OF MEANS.

MEANS are so called of the middle place which they hold, between the efficient and final causes; serving the one for the furthering and achieving of the other. And so, all creatures, whether persons, or things, come under this account, in respect of him, from whom, and for whom all things are.

God is able without means to do whatsoever work of power he doth, or can do by them: and the reason is plain, for that he both creates, and provides the means; and also gives the blessing upon them, by which they are available. Neither, if we mind it, hath the Lord ever done greater works than those, which the hand of his power hath wrought either immediately; or, by means, very weak, and

* Bodinus.

feeble; which being improved by God's omnipotency have produced wonderful effects. Thus God and frogs could plague Pharaoh and all Egypt. Exod. viii. 6, 7, 14. So can the Holy Ghost and simple preaching make men wise unto salvation. 1 Cor. i. 18—21.

God often useth means very weak and base, not because he wants better; but, partly, for his own glory: as first for the glory of his goodness, that being so mighty, and excellent in majesty, he will vouchsafe to employ them: and, secondly, of his greatness, in bringing to pass what he will by them, as he told Gideon "the people were too many for him to save Israel by." Judg. vii. 2—7. When men make wars they get the powerfullest helps they can, therein betraying their own weakness:* whereas God, on the contrary wanting no man's help, ofttimes makes choice of weak means, as needing none. Partly, the Lord doth this for the means themselves, that they which God so far honours, specially for good to men, should not be despised: and partly, for others; that none should be overmuch affected with, or to them.

To trust to means is idolatry: to abuse them, want of wisdom, or of conscience, or both: to neglect them, either desperateness, when a man is without hope of good by them; or presumptuous tempting of God, when he expects good without them; or sloth, when he will not trouble himself with them. With all which, unthankfulness to the Lord is joined, who provides them as helps against our infirmities: and, therewith, profane sauciness also, if with the contempt of the means which we have, we long after such as we have not; as did the Israelites in the wilderness, in loathing manna, and lusting after flesh, Num. xi. 4, 5, 6; and the Jews in despising Christ's miracles upon earth, and desiring to see a sign from heaven of him. Matt. xvi. 1—4. We must then, as one saith, mingle our own sweat with faith to make a sweet odour withal to God. For though his power be not bound to means, yet his will binds us to such, as he in mercy affordeth; partly, as helps of our faith, which need such glasses wherein to see God's helping hand; and partly, to exercise our obedience; and partly, to stir up our diligence. And this we must do the

* Philo Judæus.

rather, for that when God purposeth good to, or by a man either, he commonly provides him means accordingly; which when opportunity serves, he expecteth he should use, in good conscience, for attaining to the good unto which they, as it were, lead him; which to neglect is to disobey a kind of real calling from God. In the careful use of natural means we show most wisdom, and that we are not like beasts without understanding: and of supernatural means, prayer, and the like, the most grace: and that we are not as men which know not God.

A man must be sure in his most careful use of means always to bear in mind the end for which he useth them; that he be not like the messenger, who so minds his way, as he forgets his errand; to sever the means, and end to which they lead ordinately, is vanity, in all courses: in Divine matters, mere madness. He that sinning without repentance, looks to escape hell, separates the ends from the means: he that without faith and obedience looks for heaven, separates the means from the end which he aims at. Both would pervert God's word, and work of providence.

CHAPTER XXVI.

OF LABOUR, AND IDLENESS.

God, who would have our first father, even in innocency, and being lord of the whole world, to labour, though without pain or wearisomeness, in dressing the garden; and when he had sinned, to eat his bread with the sweat of his brows, Gen. ii. 8—15; iii. 19, would have none of his sinful posterity lead their life in idleness; no, nor without exercising themselves diligently in some lawful calling, or other. I say diligently; for as poor men play for recreation, now and then; so do rich men work. But that sufficeth not. For God who hath in the natural body appointed unto every member its office, and function, which it is constantly to exercise; would have no member in any society, or body of men ordinarily unemployed. Neither doth that man, how great or rich soever, keep a good conscience before God, who makes labour but an accessary, and not a

principal, and that which takes up his ordinary time. Man is born to sore labour, in body, or mind, as the spark to fly upward. Job v. 7. In heaven is only rest without labour: in hell, restless pain and torment: and as sin makes the earth, which is between both, liker to hell, than heaven; so God for sin hath given to the sons of man sore travail to afflict them upon earth, Eccl. i. 13. And that in His most wise and gracious providence, considering the mischiefs that come by idleness: as, the weakening of the endowments of nature; whereas labour brings strength to the body, and vigour to the mind:* yea the consumption of grace, as rust consumes the iron for want of using:† yea, whereas idleness brings bodily poverty like an armed man, Prov. vi. 11: it brings not only spiritual poverty in graces with it, but withal, a legion of vices, like so many armed devils; puffing up the flesh with pride, and making the heart Satan's anvil, who is commonly least idle, when men are most, whereon to forge a thousand vanities, and sinful lusts, as having a fit opportunity to persuade men to do evil, when he finds them doing nothing;‡ that so they, who will not sweat on earth,§ either with the labour of the hand, or heart, though king Alphonsus said that God and nature had given kings hands as well as other men, might sweat in hell:‖ and that if they will not bear their part in the pains of men, they might partake in the pains of the devils.¶ Whereas, on the contrary, if we do that which is good, and well done, though with labour, and painfulness; the labour is soon over, and gone, whereas the goodness and reward thereof remain behind.**

Proud folk despise labour, and them that use it: and so it would be thought by many, far meaner than Joseph's brethren, a disgraceful question to be asked, as they were by Pharaoh; "Of what occupation they were?" Gen. xlvii. 3. And this difference I have observed, for the matter in hand, that whereas in plentiful countries, such as our own, it is half a shame to labour: in such others, wherein art and industry must supply nature's defects, as in the country where I have last lived, it is a shame for a man not to work, and exercise himself in some one or other lawful

* Plutarch. † Ringelberd. ‡ Jerome. § H. Smith.
‖ Bernard. ¶ Seneca. ** Musonius.

vocation. And, in truth, there is more comfort to a good man in that which he gets, or saves by his labour, and providence, and God's blessing thereupon, than in that which comes to him any other way. For he considers it not only as a fruit of God's love, but withal, as a reward of his obedience unto God's commandment of labour and travail to be undergone in this world of the children of men. It is a "blessing upon every one that feareth the Lord, and walks in his ways, that he shall eat the labour of his hands." Psa. cxxviii. 2. And, he that without his own labour either of body or mind, eats the labour of other men's hands only, and lives by their sweat, is but like unto lice, and such other vermin. Let every godly Christian, in his place, say with Christ, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work." John ix. 4. *Longa quiescendi tempora fata dabunt.*

It is a great blessing, when God gives a man grace and wisdom to take pains about things first lawful, and secondly profitable. The diligent in evil are but like the devil, who compasseth the earth, Job i. 7, and that "like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." 1 Pet. v. 8. Such do best, when they do least.* The life of others is *inquieta inertia*, busying, and ofttimes troubling both themselves, and others, with things altogether unprofitable; like the kings of Egypt in building their pyramids, to the mispending of their own money, and the people's labour. I have known divers, that with the tithe of the study, and pains taken by them, had it been rightly improved, and to profitable uses, might have benefited both themselves, and others far more, than they have done, with all their diligence, and that with good meaning also.

Labour spent upon things eternal must not be counted lost, or too much: seeing temporal things of any worth are not usually obtained without it. And surely, if heaven and happiness could be had with so little pains and trouble, as the world reckons; it were strange, if they were worth the having. And yet how many might obtain the pearl of Christ promised with less pains, than they take for earthly and transitory things, which yet ofttimes they are disappointed of!† yea, I add, than many take for hell, which

* Seneca. † Jerome.

their wickedness brings upon them unavoidably! "Labour not for the meat which perisheth: but for that meat, which endureth unto eternal life," John vi. 27, saith Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER XXVII.

OF CALLINGS.

THE effectual calling of a Christian is that by which the Lord first differenceth actually, and in the person himself, the elect from the reprobate: and by which the called approacheth, and draweth nigh unto God that calleth him: and that takes away his sin, which separated between the Lord, and him, both by justifying, and sanctifying him.

This general calling of a Christian is incomparably more excellent, and honourable, than any particular calling and state whatsoever. By it we are "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things," Eph. i. 3, both for grace, and glory. It alone is properly an holy calling, 1 Cor. vii. 20—24, hallowing all other callings: which also are so far lawful, and lawfully used, as they further it, and not otherwise. If the excellency of it were well weighed, and rightly prized, no man honoured therewith should be thought worthy to be despised for any other meanness, nor without it to be envied for any other excellency how glorious soever in the world's eye.

These two main privileges of God's providence the elect before their effectual calling are made partakers of, above others. The former that into what other, or howsoever otherwise grievous sins they fall, yet they are kept by the power of the Lord, from sinning against the Holy Ghost, of which there is no forgiveness. And this the apostle insinuates, where he testifies of himself, that before his calling by grace, he "was a blasphemer, and persecutor; but doing it of ignorance, in unbelief, he obtained mercy," 1 Tim. i. 13; which if he had done of malicious knowledge, he could not possibly have done. The second privilege is, that, though such a man may fall into great dangers, so as there is oft but a step between him and death, yet still God will rescue, and keep him alive, till he be effectually called to the participation of his grace in Christ: witness

the jailor in Philippi. Acts xvi. 27. God calls a man actually in time, as he hath chosen him in his eternal decree; that is, as he hath purposed to call, and save him in due time. And if there be a particular, and effectual calling of some above others, then was there undoubtedly a particular election, or purpose from eternity in God so to do: except we will say, that God doth that in time, which he did not from eternity purpose to do. And if the Lord work no otherwise in calling of any to the grace of Christ, than by outward means, and motives, so leaving them as some say, to the freedom of their will to determine itself by choosing, or refusing the grace offered in the gospel; then are many wicked men, so living and dying, more bound to the Lord for his work of grace towards them, than are divers his holy and faithful servants. The reason is, because many of the former have been made partakers of the outward means, and motives of grace, in preaching of the gospel, godly examples, and education, in far greater measure, and more ample, and excellent, than many of the latter have been. Neither are the true servants of God, by this doctrine, to go so far in humble thankfulness to God, as did the proud pharisee in the gospel; who thanked God, that he was not like the publican, and other sinners. Luke xviii. 11. For whatsoever else they have cause to thank God for; by these men's gospel, they have cause to thank themselves, and not God, that they are not like other men, who have been made partakers of as great, and ample outward means, and provocations of grace, as they have been.

A lawful calling is necessary for every lawful work: the general calling of a Christian, before we can perform any Christian work aright: and so a particular calling to this or that state of life, before we perform the works thereof. The inward calling is requisite, in regard of God, who knows the inwards of the man, and with what heart and affection he undertakes any state or action: so is the outward also, because God is the God of order. Also, when a man knows himself to be orderly called to a condition of life, he both sets himself more cheerfully and roundly to the works thereof, wherein he is assured he serves God's providence by his order, and appointment; and with faith expects a

blessing from God upon his endeavours in that course of life, in which his hand hath set him; and, withal, bears with comfort the crosses befalling him therein; as we see in David, whose shield of comfort against all darts of danger was, that God had selected him unto himself, and anointed him his king upon Zion, the mountain of his holiness. Psa. ii. 6; iii. 4.

Little account is made by many of a lawful outward calling: whereas indeed it is that alone, by which all states, save those that are natural, and so are subject neither to election nor change, are both constituted and continued. For what makes him, who yesterday was none, to day to be a magistrate in the commonwealth, minister in the church, steward in the family, or any other officer or member in any orderly society, but an orderly outward calling by them who have lawful authority to confer that state upon him? This being neglected opens a gap to all confusion in all states. The gifts of a man enable him to his office; his grace sanctifies both the gifts and office to the person; his inward calling persuades his heart to undertake the outward in desire to glorify God, and in love to men; his execution of it in the works thereof presuppose it, and testify his faithfulness in it: but only the outward orderly calling confers the outward state and condition of life.*

Ability for a man's calling is greatly to be desired for many reasons. For, first, it is a thing well-pleasing in God's sight, especially in the most serviceable courses of life; as we may see in Solomon, who being called to the state of a king, desired above all other things, kingly endowments, and therein pleased God greatly. 1 Kings iii. 9. Secondly, he whom God calls to a place, or sets over a business, he enables accordingly; as he did the same Solomon, being set over a people many in number, as the sand by the sea shore, with wisdom, and largeness of heart, as the sand by the sea shore, 1 Kings iv. 29. Thirdly, it is great ease to a man, when he is master of his place, and course, and able to play with it: otherwise, if he be compelled to strive continually with it, it will both make his life burdensome, and force him at some time, or other, to let fall the works thereof, as unable to wield it. Yet if

* Calvin.

such a one be willing, and able to bear it out, it is a good way for him to grow to great perfection, by daily improving his ability to the full: as Milo, by using to bear a calf every day, proved able to bear him, when he was grown an ox. Fourthly, it is an honour to a man to be excellent in his faculty, yea though it be mean in itself. And so men excelling in mean trades, or callings are more regarded, than those who are mean in more excellent faculties. One saith truly, that even ploughmen and shepherds being excellent are applauded.* Lastly, the unskilfulness of the artisan dishonours the art itself, how excellent soever in the eyes of many: although in reason it should not so be, seeing that the more excellent any profession is, it finds the fewer, whose worth can answer its excellence.†

Although callings most useful, and necessary, are most despised by proud folks; both because they are ordinary and common; and followed by mean and ordinary persons: yet it stands with a good conscience to provide, that our course of life be such, as in which we benefit human societies. And an uncomfortable thing it is to him, that hath any either fear of God, or love to men, to spend his days, and labour in such a course, as by which more hurt than good comes to the world.

It is a good and godly course for a person diligently to read, and seriously to meditate upon such places of Holy Scripture, as concern his, or her special calling: as, for the magistrate diligently to read Deut. i. 16, &c., the minister 1 Tim. iii.; and so for husband and wife, father and child, master and servant, and the rest; that by so doing we may both more fully learn, and better remember, and conscionably practise the particular duties, in which God would have us exercise our general Christian graces.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

OF THE USE AND ABUSE OF THINGS.

We are said to enjoy God alone, and to use the creatures:‡ because, we are not to rest in them, but in God only, to whom we are to be helped by them. And of the

* Pindarus. † Erasmus. ‡ Austin.

things which we use, some of them we must use, as though we used them not, 1 Cor. vii. 31: others, as though we used them. The world, and all things serving for this life, we ought to use with a kind of indifferency, and without setting the affections of our hearts upon it, or them, how busy soever our hands be about them: spiritual good things, on the contrary, and which concern our eternal happiness, we ought to use, as using them indeed, with all earnest bent of affection upon them; and as not suffering ourselves, at any hand, to be disappointed of the fruit of them.

"God," saith the wise man, "hath made everything beautiful in his time," Eccl. iii. 11: and indeed every thing is good for something: I mean everything that God hath made; for there are many vain and lewd devices of men, which are truly good for nothing, as, on the other side, nothing is good for everything. And, hereupon, Prometheus told the satyr, when he would have kissed the fire, upon his first seeing it, that if he did so, it would burn his lips, as not being for that use, but to minister heat, and light.* Some things always bear, as it were, their use on their backs, and cause also the right use of other things, where they are found; as the sanctifying graces of God's Spirit, which yet some use more fully, and faithfully, than others; and this is also a grace of God: whereas all other things have their good in their using, and not in their owning. And a great point of wisdom, and advantage for good it is to apply things to their right use, and end, whether great or small. He that can do this spiritually, is happy, though he have received but one pound, for others' five, or ten. As on the other side, how many were, though not happy, yet less miserable, if they altogether wanted the wit, learning, riches, and authority, which they want grace to use, according to the will of the giver?

A man hath that, most and best, whereof he hath the lawful use. And hereupon a follower of a great lord was wont to say, that he had, in effect, as much as his lord; though he were owner of little or nothing: considering how he had the use of his gardens, and galleries, to walk in; heard his music, with as many ears as he did; hunted

* Plutarch.

with him in his parks; and ate and drank of the same that he did, though a little after him; and so for the most other delights, which his lord enjoyed. And, in truth, what great difference is there, save in the proud and covetous mind of a man, whether he himself, or another be owner of the good things, whereof he with him, hath the lawful use and benefit?

Distinction must be put between the things themselves, and their casual and personal abuses: otherwise, the natures of the things can neither be rightly conceived of, nor expressed.* Neither doth the abuse of good things so take away, or make forfeiture of the use, as that the counsel of Lycurgus is to be followed, who would have the vines cut down, because men were sometimes drunken with the grapes.† Yet may the abuse of a thing be so common, and notorious; and the use so small, or needless; as better want the small use, than be in continual danger of the great abuse of it.

The best things abused become the worst, both naturally, and morally, by reason of a greater force in them than in other things, which we must not therefore superstitiously disavow, or cease to account the best, as they are; but we must, thereby, be warned to use them the more warily, that we may enjoy their full goodness, and not prejudice them by abuse: otherwise, we shall be liable to the curse of a greater than Aristippus, who wished a plague upon those wantons, who by their abusing it, had defamed a sweet ointment, wherein he took delight.‡

All evil stands in the abuse of good.§ And good things are abused commonly, either when they are unmeasurably used; as it is said of wine, that the first cup quenches thirst, the second procures cheerfulness, the third drunkenness, and the fourth madness: or by applying them unaptly, or to wrong ends, or persons; as when one offers light to the blind, or speech to him that is deaf; or wisdom to a brutish man;‖ or as when cowards fight with their tongues, and swash-bucklers¶ dispute with their swords: or in regard of their super-natural use, when we refer not all

* Chemnitius. † Plutarch. ‡ Laertius.
§ Tertullian. ‖ Cyprian. ¶ Noisy, riotous boasters.

to the glory of God, and our own, and others' eternal good, and welfare; which are the utmost ends of all things.

CHAPTER XXIX.

OF RICHES AND POVERTY.

It is the first degree of riches to have what is necessary; the next to have what is enough.* And, indeed, he is a rich man, who wants no outward means, wherewith to maintain himself, and his, plentifully, in that state of life in which God hath set him, whether high, or low: and he poor, on the contrary, to whom that proportion is wanting. And, hence, it comes to pass, that there are poor kings and rich cobblers; poor landlords and rich tenants: as there are warm days in winter and cold in summer; respecting the season of the year.

Besides, if a person have the possession, and not the use of riches, and be sick of that disease which Solomon saw, and experience of all ages confirms to be common among men; namely of a man, to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul, of all that he desireth: and yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, Eccl. vi. 2; I would not call him, but rather his chests and storehouses rich; seeing, he as well wants that which he hath, in regard of its use and end, as that which he hath not.†

A friend of mine in the University was wont to tell me merrily and wittily, that surely there was something in this money, more and better, than he and I saw; seeing such a great, wise, and learned man, whom he would name, loved it so well; and such another, as wise and learned as he, as well as he; and so a third, and a fourth. He knew well enough, it was not any good in it, which we saw not; but lust, and filthy covetousness in them, whose learning and wisdom should have taught them to despise and hate such base-mindedness. And in truth, if in any other thing, baseness of mind is seen in the love of money, and so they are justly contemned in the eyes of others, that are ena-

* Seneca. † Jerome.

moured of it. Some do make their belly their God, Phil. iii. 19; and those are men of an abject spirit: others their riches, for covetousness is idolatry, Eph. v. 5; and that in a special work of devotion, by trusting to them, which no man doth to his belly: yet is the covetous, of the two, the more vile, and serves the baser god: for the life, and belly, for which food is, are better than food; and yet food for the belly is the best part of riches, and that of which alone Adam in innocency stood need. If men were not above measure infatuated with sensuality, they, who know inward good things, would not affect outward, inordinately. That fools and idiots, that know no better things, should love money, is not strange: for oxen love grass; and swine draff; and every creature naturally the best thing which it knows: but that wise and learned men, and they who know the good things of the mind, specially the good things of God in his Word, should so doat upon it, is most vile, and monstrous. Some love money for itself, and for the bare possession of it, and because they delight to tell their pence: but that is the case of few of learning, or wisdom. But as moles by digging in the earth raise up hills; so do they hope to climb up by this baseness; as being set a work, this way, by ambition, for the most part, which too often breeds in the breasts of men rarely endowed; as the canker doth in sweet flowers. For such men esteeming themselves worthy of account in the world for their excellency: and perceiving riches the readiest way to procure it, or make way for it, they lay hold thereof with both hands: and being seduced with the love of money for that end, do for the getting and keeping of it, pierce themselves through with many sorrows. 1 Tim. vi. 10.

"The blessing of the Lord maketh rich," Prov. x. 22. If wealth come by inheritance; it is God's blessing that a man is born of rich friends, and not of beggars: if by means of free gift; it is his blessing, that hath made them able and willing to do us good: if goods be gotten by industry, providence, and skill; it is God's blessing that both gives the faculty, and the use of it, and the success unto it. And as riches are in themselves God's blessings, so are we to desire them of him, and to use lawful diligence to get them: for the comfortable course of our natural, and civil

state: for though we are to be able to bear poverty, if God send it, yet should we rather desire riches; as a man, though he can go afoot, yet will rather choose to ride.* Secondly, to free us from such temptations unto sin, as poverty puts many upon. Prov. xxx. 8, 9. Thirdly, that they may minister unto us and ours, more plentiful matter of exercising virtue and goodness,† especially of mercy towards the poor, and them in need. God could, if he would, either have made men's states more equal, or have given every one sufficient of his own: but he hath rather chosen to make some rich, and some poor, that one might stand in need of another, and help another, Deut. xv. 7, 11; that so he might try the mercy and goodness of them that are able, in supplying the wants of the rest. And the richer sort that make not this account, know not wherefore God hath given them their goods; and are as poor in grace, as rich in the world.

Both poverty and riches, if they be in any extremity, have their temptations, and those not small: in which regard Agur prays to God to give him neither of both, but to feed him with food convenient for him. Prov. xxx. 8, 9. And, in truth, the middle state is freest from the greatest danger either of sin, or misery, in the world: as Icarus's father told him, that the middle way was safest for his waxen wings, neither to be moistened with the water, nor molten with the heat of the sun.‡ And of the two states, the wise man insinuates in that his prayer to the Lord, that the temptations of riches are the more dangerous. Poverty may drive a man to steal, or deal unjustly with others; and after to lie, or, it may be, and, as the Holy Ghost insinuates, by swearing to "take the name of God in vain," to cover it: but if a man be rich, and full, he is in danger to deny God, and to say in pride, and contempt of him in effect, as Pharaoh did, "who is the Lord?" For hardly doth anything cause the mind to swell more with pride, than riches; both by reason of the ease and plenty of worldly good things, which they bring with them: as also of the credit, which rich men, or their purses, have in the world; and both those specially, if they have gotten their wealth by their own art, or industry. He that is

* Seneca. † Ibid. ‡ Ovid.

proud in a poor estate, would in a rich, be intolerable before men, as he is, in the meanwhile, abominable in God's sight: he that is humble in a prosperous, is a good scholar of Christ, and hath taken out a hard lesson, which the apostle would have Timothy to charge the rich withal; which is, that they should "not be high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches." 1 Tim. vi. 17. From rich men's pride in themselves ariseth, commonly, contempt of others, specially of the poor. I have known Nabals, who, in my conscience, have thought, that all that were not rich, were fools, notwithstanding any eminency in them of gifts, or graces. But thus to mock, or despise the poor, is to "reproach God that made him so," Prov. xvii. 5: and besides, if the person be wise and godly, as he may well be, for any bar that his poverty puts against him; it is withal, to despise the image of God's wisdom and goodness in him. Eccl. ix. 16. But for us; considering how the truly wise, by the Spirit of God, pronounceth that "the poor who walketh in his uprightness, is better than he that is perverse in his way though rich," Prov. xxviii. 6; as also, that "a poor and wise child is better than an old and foolish king," Eccl. iv. 13; we should have that strength of faith against sense, and carnal reason, as, in all resolvedness, to prefer an honest, or wise poor man before a rich Nabal. Besides, though still the "rich man be," and will be "wise in his own eyes; yet the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out," Prov. xxviii. 11: and by searching often finds, that little wit, being employed wholly thereabout, and less grace, serves to get wealth with. A poor and plain person seeing a Dives ruffle in silks, and glitter in gold, and silver, is half ready to worship him, as a petty god, many times: but after finds by his speech, and other carriage, by which a fool and wise man are differenced, that if he had so done, he had but worshipped a golden calf.

God sends poverty upon men to humble them, both in the want of bodily comforts, and, specially, in regard of the contempt, which it ever casts upon men in the world's eye.* And blessed indeed are they, who by poverty, and other worldly crosses, are humbled so as to become "poor in spirit," Matt. v. 3: not being of those, of whom the com-

* Martial.

plaint is, that they are *humiliati*, not *humiles*. As if a rich man be humble, he is not of the rich of the world:* so if a poor man be proud, he is not of the Lord's poor, and blessed ones.† Some are of opinion, that none but rich folks can be proud. But the pride of many, as was said of Diogenes, may be seen through their rags. And who ever saw any prouder, than some such worms, as in whom no others could discern anything outward or inward, saving the devil, that should make them so? God in his good and wise providence many times sends poverty, and other calamities upon such, to restrain them; whose overswellings of pride, if they enjoyed a prosperous state, would make them both odious and troublesome to all societies.

There be some, who out of a kind of natural diligence, patience, parsimony, and contentment with mean things, seem so fitted for a poor and mean state, as that if they were ever pressed with want, they would ever be good, and virtuous; but being rich and wealthy, are either base-minded, or arrogant, in the eyes of all men. There are also, who, by their kind and courteous disposition, seem so fitted for prosperity, and plenty, that if they ever enjoyed it, they would be no meanly good people; and yet falling into a poor and needy condition, they appear not only impatient, but unconscionable also. But the truth is, that howsoever some be fitter for the one estate than the other, and so carry it better to the world; yet he that is not, in his measure, fit for either, is indeed fit for neither. The apostle had learned, and so must all good Christians with him, "both to be full, and to be hungry; both to abound, and to suffer need." Phil. iv. 12. He that is "not faithful in a little, would not be faithful in a great deal," Luke xvi. 8—10; and so, for the contrary. He that is impatient, or unhonest in poverty, would be and is wanton, or arrogant, or otherwise faulty, though, more closely, in abundance: neither is any broken with an afflicted state, save he who is too much inveigled with a prosperous.‡ He again, whose course is either too high, or too low, in plenty, would never keep a mean in want.

The over-valuation of riches drives divers men to divers, yea, contrary appearances: some to "make themselves rich,

* Cassander. † Bernard. ‡ Austin.

though they have nothing:" and others, "to make show of poverty, though they have all abundance." Prov. xiii. 7. The former so much esteem of riches, and think them so much esteemed of by others, as that, if they seem not to the world to have them, their life is a death unto them: and therefore they will be sure to make a fair outside, and appear rich, though they be nothing less. The other esteeming themselves happy in having, and keeping them; conceal and spare that their treasure, what they can; lest by having it known, they should be occasioned, one way or other, to diminish it. Both are injurious to God, to other men, and to themselves. To God, in belying him; the former, as if he had given them that which he hath not: the latter, as not having given them that which he hath.* To others; the former, in getting into their hands the riches, which they cannot satisfy for; or credit, which they deserve not: the latter by withholding both from God and men their due. To themselves; the former, in frustrating the occasion of humiliation, unto which the Lord by poverty calls them, James i. 9, 10: the latter, by preventing, or quenching the provocations unto thankfulness to God for his plenty bestowed upon them, besides other comfortable effects thereof.

The apostle points at some Christians, so called, that "will be rich," 1 Tim. vi. 9, even, whether God will, or no; and say he what he will, and almost do he what he can, to hinder it, they will be rich, if it may be, keeping faith and good conscience in outward profession; if that will not be, they will be rich without them; and rather lose their own souls than not gain the world. Matt. xvi. 16. But "woe be unto them; for they run greedily after the error of Balaam," Jude 11; and will have God also run with them, otherwise, he is not for their company.

CHAPTER XXX.

OF SOBRIETY.

"THE grace of God," in Christ, and his gospel, "which hath appeared, teacheth us as well to live soberly, as justly,

* Cartwright.

and godly in the world." Titus ii. 12. And he that is not sober in himself, using, and desiring moderately, the good things of this natural life, as meat, drink, apparel, sleep, pastime, credit, and the rest; will neither converse righteously with men, nor piously with God. He that takes more to himself, than is due to him, cannot give either God or men their due.

Nature is content with few, and small things: for though the belly will be craving, yet it is no exacting creditor; but will be satisfied with a small proportion:* which to press with superfluities, makes things either unpleasant, or hurtful.† It is reasonable to deal with, if we give it but what we owe, and not what we can.‡ In reproof of gluttony, and excess, one saith, "that the throat hath killed more than the sword." And I think it may be truly said, that how hard soever it have gone with many in the world, at times; that more have received hurt by eating too much, than too little. And though many be of mind, that by devouring a great deal, they shall make their bodies the stronger, and lives the longer; yet is there reason to think, that were not men provoked by company, and sensual objects; or misled by inordinate appetite; or miswonted by custom; even half the meat and drink which the most use, would afford as long, and strong a state of body, and bodily health, as they do enjoy. Moderate diet, saith one, is good both for the soul and body:§ and so is it for the estate also, and the contrary, pernicious; God both saying, and ordering, "that he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich." Prov. xxi. 17. He, especially, if he be a poor man, and of small means, "that will this world's goods win, must at his belly begin."

It is a base, and beastly thing, for a man to give himself to eating and drinking, or to either of them: neither are such to be reckoned, saith one, among men but beasts.‖ But for a man to be so inordinate, as to hurt either his body or mind by excess, as a riotous youth delivers over to old age a feeble body,¶ and more feeble mind, and destitute, for the most part, both of wisdom and grace, is to follow the basest of beasts, and to become swinish: few

* Boethius. † Seneca. ‡ Patricius.
§ Jerome. ‖ Seneca. ¶ Cicero.

other beasts save swine will over-eat themselves. Neither is it any sufficient excuse for him that hath plenty to be excessive; more than for the cook that had made the meat oversalt, to say, that he had a store of salt by him. Neither yet excuseth it, that by custom some are able, as they say, to bear their drink, and not be overcome by it. For, albeit drunkenness in this be very odious, that whereas other sins deprive persons of God's image, it deprives them of man's; leaving them the use neither of reason, nor speech, in which two things man differs specially from beasts; no nor of sense, and motion accordingly, wherein beasts excel stocks and stones; but so blockifies them, for the present, that neither hand, nor foot, can do their office:* yet the Lord by the prophet denounceth a woe not only against them that are overcome by drink, which may befall some by a very little, through natural weakness of brain, but against them, who can overcome it, being "mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink." Isa. v. 22.

Considering that "meat, and so for other bodily good things, makes us not the more acceptable before God," 1 Cor. viii. 8; and that "God will destroy both the belly (in that use) and meat," 1 Cor. vi. 13; it should teach us, in the meanwhile, moderately to use all things for the belly, and natural life. But if, besides these considerations, we weigh with ourselves, how unworthy our sins make us of the least comfort by any of God's creatures; specially, if with these things concerning ourselves, we weigh how many in the world, and those of the Lord's faithful servants, stand in need of meat, drink, &c., for their natural necessity; if there be in us either fear of God, or love of men, it will work in us a great conscience not to mispend anything vainly, or riotously, wherewith we might comfort the hearts of them that need it. And they who in this case will not be warned by Moses, and the prophets, nor by Christ and the apostles neither; shall with the glutton feel the torment of the flame of hell, Luke xvi. 24, for their excess in themselves, and unmercifulness towards others.

The special use of wine, and strong drink is, that "the heavy of heart, and ready to perish might drink, and forget his poverty, and misery," Prov. xxxi. 6, 7. But the abuse

* Terence.

is more common than the use; by which the strong and stout take the greatest part therein; drinking many times, till they forget both God, and themselves; whilst the other languish in want and sorrow.

Christ and his apostles often join in their exhortations sobriety, and watchfulness together. Matt. xxiv. 42; Luke xii. 39. For drunkenness, and gluttony make men fitter for sleeping, than watching. 1 Thes. v. 6, 7. And so doth all excess in bodily things draw with it carnal security, and security, destruction. We are, therefore, to be sober in the desire and use of all earthly things, that we may watch: and to watch, that we may escape the danger of spiritual enemies, which watch for our destruction.

"When thou sittest to eat with a ruler," saith the wise man, "consider diligently what is before thee, and put thy knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to thine appetite." Prov. xxiii. 1. They that eat with rulers, or where there is variety of delicates, are apt enough to consider diligently what is before them; but it is for the most part, not to restrain their appetite, as it should be; but rather to provoke it. But a wise man will consider of his temptations, to escape the danger of them: a fool to provoke himself to swallow them the more greedily, as the fish doth the bait with the hook under it.

He only is not overtaken with unlawful things, who inureth himself, at times, to abstain from many things lawful.* He that will go as near the ditch as he can, will at some time, or other, fall in: so he who will take all the liberty that possibly he may lawfully, cannot but fall into many unlawful things.† Thereupon, Austin's mother would not allow the young maids committed to her government, to drink as much water as they would: lest afterwards, becoming wives, and having plenty, they should use excess in wine.

CHAPTER XXXI.

OF LIBERALITY AND ITS CONTRARIES.

LIBERALITY teacheth us to bestow our worldly goods, when, upon whom, and as we ought,‡ in obedience unto God, and for men's good. This is to be done without hope

* Gregory. † Austin. ‡ Aristotle.

of requital from them; as not being a mercenary virtue,* but that wherein a man looks to his duty to others, and not to profit from them.† Else it is not liberality rightly performed, but a bargain well made. Neither is that to be accounted liberality, which is done for vain glory; seeing the work is named from the affection.‡ Least of all that, when men give to some, that they may take from others.§ This is rather thievery upon condition. Many account themselves, and are by others accounted not only liberal, but even bounteous, because they give great gifts: whereas, if we consider the persons on whom, and the ends for which they so pour out themselves, and their money (and other men's also, ofttimes); we shall see that in truth they deserve no more the name of liberal, than those prodigals do, who bestow their goods upon harlots, for the satisfying of their lusts. For as that is not a benefit which wants the best part of it, namely, to be given in judgment, so neither is that liberality, which wants that part, but the casting away of a man's goods.‖

This virtue exercised in great states and gifts, is called bounty, and a kingly virtue, but may preserve the due respect of their liberality in the smallest matters, and by the poorest persons, if it be constant: which rather teacheth to give a little to many, than much to few.¶ This was verified in "the churches of Macedonia, towards the poor saints in Jerusalem; whose deep poverty abounded unto their rich liberality." 2 Cor. viii. 1, 2. The same is confirmed, by our Saviour's testimony of the poor widow's contribution of two mites, that she gave, therein, more than all the rich men. Mark xii. 42, 43. None can give more, and therein be more liberal, than he that leaves himself little or nothing.** On the contrary, none can spare more, and therein be more covetous, than he, that will not do the little which he can do, and his neighbour stands in need of. It is the dangerous error of poor men, that only the rich are covetous, or liberal. They may be, and oft are, as very misers, and odiously covetous in their penny; as the other in their pound. So may they be as liberal.

* Lactantius. † Cicero. ‡ Ambrose.
§ Cicero. ‖ Seneca. ¶ Ibid.
** Ambrose.

"Every one," saith Solomon, "is a friend to a man of gifts," Prov. xix. 6: which have in them, saith another, a kind of secret force to draw the minds of men, as the loadstone draweth iron:* and that, not only of them that desire to use the liberality of others; but of such also, as neither need, nor would use the same. Look, what liberality loseth a man in his purse, it gets him in a better place, not only in heaven, but in earth also; and the best place there, the hearts of men, and their loving affection. On the contrary, covetous men are contemned, and hated, not only of them, whom they wrong by unjust getting, or keeping; but by all others that know them, though all dare not so manifest. Their credit with others, and comfort in themselves, is only in their purses.

It is a question amongst learned men, whether of the two extremes of liberality; prodigality in the excess, or covetousness in the defect, is worse: but something the less needful to be determined, considering how often they meet together in the same person, and beget either the other. Many "lust, and desire to have," and sometimes obtain, that they may consume upon their pleasures, James iv. 2: like unto kites, and gledes, and other ravenous birds, who are ever watching and catching for prey, and yet remain ever carrion-lean, converting the greatest part of their nourishment into long feathers. As some desire riches that they may have them, so a great part of the covetousness reigning in the world, is to maintain prodigal expenses: that look what covetousness hath gathered together, riot may lash out and consume.† For men, as well as women, being with child of riot, and excess in diet, apparel, and other worldly vanities, long for riches, and great gettings, to nourish and maintain their lusts, without which they are in danger to cast their calf. On the other side, they who escape best with prodigality, are driven to repair their too great lavishness in one thing, by too great niggardliness in another. But as it was said of Catiline, that he was prodigal of his own, and covetous of other men's;‡ so the greatest mispenders, for the most part, are constrained to be as great misgetters, to feed one vice by another. Hence some borrow without means, or meaning to pay again; circumvent others, if they have

* Cartwright. † Gregory. ‡ Sallust.

more cunning than they; oppress them, if they have more power; and some are driven to plain thievery, violent or secret. Yet if we will compare together these two naughts, we shall find covetousness, the worse of the twain. For, first, it is the "root of all evil," 1 Tim. vi. 10: for that there is no evil fruit but will grow of it. Judas sold Christ for it: and many thousand daily sell their bodies and souls to sin, and hell for it; and would sell Christ, if he were in their hands: whereas wise men, and lawyers count the prodigal rather vain, or at the worst, but half mad, and not capable of governing his own goods, than mischievous. Secondly, covetousness is by the apostle called "idolatry," Col. iii. 5, not in the common condition of all sins, in which men either in affection, or effect, esteem of transitory vanities above God, and despise him, in comparison of them; but, especially, for that they put more confidence in their riches, for their safety, and welfare, than they do in God's providence; and by them promise themselves all abundance of happiness. This madness befalls not the but half-mad prodigals. Thirdly, the covetous doth good to none, nor to himself neither, many times; wanting as well the things he hath, as the things he hath not;* "God not giving him power to eat of, and use his riches." Eccl. iv. 8. Whereas, the prodigal doth good to many, though not well. Fourthly, covetousness is a base, and beggar-like vice: prodigality a worshipful, honourable, and kingly sin. Fifthly, poverty, and want, the fruits of prodigality, prove, ofttimes, good schoolmasters to the ding-thrift, for his bettering; as we see it fell out with the prodigal son: but the effects of covetousness, which are usually riches, and plenty, harden the hold-fast; causing him to bless himself the more, in his wicked way. Luke xv. 13. The riot of the prodigal draws him dry; but the gettings of the other serve to feed his disease, which causeth him, dropsy-like, the more he hath, to desire the more.† Add we unto all these, that whereas age is some remedy against other vices, specially against prodigality, which grows old, and decays with the person, in whom it is; covetousness then grows young: so as they who are but thrifty in youth, are usually covetous in age.‡ And though it seem, and, indeed, be unreasonable, that the less way men have to go, they

* Seneca. † Polybius. ‡ Jerome.

should be careful for the more viandour, and provision for their journey;* yet there are divers colourable occasions, though no just causes of this malady. As first, age being impotent, and unable to sustain itself, is occasioned the more carefully to seek, and get riches, as a staff to lean on. But for this, we shall never see any, more greedy, than such, as have more than enough for many ages, their abundance no more quenching their lust, than fuel doth the flame.† Secondly, the aged are oft charged with families, and friends, for whom thay are to provide; from which burden youth is free: for "children are not to lay up for the parents, but parents for the children." 2 Cor. xii. 14. But for this also; we see, that "a man, though he be alone, and have no second, neither child, nor brother, puts no end of labour to get, nor is ever satisfied with riches." Eccl. iv. 8. I have not in my life observed any more given to covetousness, than such as have not, nor are like to have children to leave their goods to. Thirdly, the other lusts of prodigal youth languishing in age, the heart, not being set upon God, and true goodness, which alone could fill, and satisfy it, finds only the lust of coveting riches a fit guest to harbour in it; wherewith the flesh maintains itself, that it fall not wholly into decay. So Simonides, being accused of covetousness, answered, that, whereas, the delight of all other pleasures was gone, he nourished his age with that alone profitable pleasure.‡ And, lastly, what is worst of all, though God have set religion and covetousness at such variance, that they cannot possibly reign in one person: "none can serve God, and mammon:" and again, "he that loveth this world, the love of God dwelleth not in him:" yet we see it, that religion working in persons a loathing of excess in worldly vanities, their flesh so works with it, as it disposes very many to such a wariness, as between which, and plain covetousness, there is too near affinity. Yea, how many have I known, who having passed the danger of the highway ground, and understood the word of God preached, and professed the same: and of the stony ground too, in undergoing some troubles, and persecutions for the same: yet nourishing in themselves too much love and care of worldly riches, have had all their goodness choked before

* Cicero. † Gregory. ‡ Plutarch.

the harvest, by those dangerous thorns! Matt. xiii. 19. Against this, so dangerous, deceitful, and close-cleaving evil, we are, first, to get into our hearts faith in God's providence, as well, and as much, for the good things of the life present, so far forth as they are good indeed, as of that to come. 1 Tim. iv. 8. He that dares not, in the use of good means, trust God for this life, does not indeed trust him for life everlasting, how oft soever he say over his creed. Such a man mocks with God, in making a show of trusting him with that, which in truth he profanely despiseth: whereas, for worldly good things which he desires in earnest, he will trust God no further than he sees him. Though the Lord's love show forth itself more in heavenly, than in earthly things; yet his truth binds him alike to performance, as he hath promised: upon which, he that dares not rest for the lesser, makes but a show of resting for the greater. Secondly, we must get contentation with that which we have, seeing God hath said to us, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," Heb. xiii. 5: esteeming, and saying with ourselves, that, this which we enjoy with a good conscience, and by means lawful, diligently used, is our allotment from God, by the sanctified use whereof, he will provide competently for our temporal state, and further our eternal. Thirdly, considering, how uncertain means of our good, even for this life, all earthly things are; and how many times they become the very snare thereof, as in the case of Naboth, 1 Kings xxi. 1—3; and how always the coveting of them deprives of the hope of a better: for "the covetous is an idolater, and hath no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God," Eph. v. 5, it is both sin, and folly, inordinately to affect the getting, or keeping of them. But, as the Pharisees being covetous, mocked at Christ, when they heard him speak against their joining the serving the "mammon of unrighteousness," with the serving of God, Luke xvi. 14: so men, in all ages, becoming rich by covetousness, and proud by riches; are ready to mock at whatsoever God or man can say against their gainful wickedness.

Considering how many poor people want, and of those not a few, the living members of Christ Jesus; we ought to make great conscience either of spending prodigally, or

sparing covetously anything less, or more, wherewith we might comfort them, and show them mercy: how much more, of that, whereby, we should deal justly with them in giving them their due? which should first be done.

CHAPTER XXXII.

OF HEALTH AND PHYSIC.

HEALTH is the greatest bodily blessing, which God bestows upon any in this life, yet is it one of the least regarded: partly, by reason of its commonness to all sorts of people, poor and rich, fools and wise, the vilest and most excellent otherwise: partly, for that it is a natural good thing, which we bring, for the most part, into the world with us, and so often preserve, without any sensible change, and accordingly, we see, that no man is the more honoured for his health, which can scarce be said of any other good thing whatsoever. The benefit of this most sweet sauce of all other goods is scarcely discerned by them that enjoy it, till sickness come: for then only Orpheus's song, but much more our own experience, teacheth us, that nothing is available to men without health:* neither riches, nor honour, nor the greatest delights for belly, or back, which the earth can afford. This blessing therefore, where it is, may be set alone against many other wants: and God acknowledged to deal graciously with us in bestowing it, though with the want of many other outward good things: which, though others enjoy, yet without it, they want the comfortable use of them; and have less joy of their lives by far, than we by it, without them.

The best rule in physic is to preserve health by the use of things wholesome, and eschewing what is noxious, and hurtful, either in matter, or manner, or measure: and that betimes, and before distempers have taken too deep root, or that the strength of nature be too much impaired by the inordinate appetites and licentiousness of unadvised youth. We say in the proverb, "At forty years every man is either a fool, or a physician." But, because most are fools so long before, and that in their best years; it is too late for them

* Plutarch.

to become physicians at this age, and the after years are constrained to bear the manifold infirmities and diseases which are owing to inordinate youth. And a happy thing it were, considering how few young folks will regard or believe these things till they be taught them by miserable experience, that wise parents and governors would so show their care over their children, pupils, and servants, that, where they cannot dissuade the affection, they might yet prevent the using of those unwholesome and hurtful youth-banes, unto which inordinate appetite carries young folk headlong.

I have marvelled oft at the averseness of many, specially of the meaner sort, from physic, in time of sickness: but more at their unreasonable choice of physicians, when they use it. How ordinary a thing is it with a number, that if but their horse or cow be sick, or but in danger, they will let them blood, or get them a mash, or run to a leech for them! who yet for themselves, or their nearest friends will neither seek, nor willingly be persuaded to use the counsel or help of a physician. The reasons, hereof, I conceive to be, either, for that men are prone, and ready to persuade themselves, and to be persuaded by their friends, that they shall do well enough without such helps, and that many times out of a superstitious presumption of God's special help, where man's is neglected: or, on the contrary, when they are heartless, and despair of good thereby. But yet more strange is the choice which many make, when they use means. For though in all other courses, men seek for such, as are most skilful; yet in this they are not only more ready to believe any that professeth himself a physician, than of any other faculty;* but also choose rather to trust their bodies and lives in the hands of ignorant empirics, men or women, than of the most expert, and learned physicians that are. Which I speak not, as esteeming the counsel or help of the meanest to be neglected, specially where either the more skilful cannot well be come by, or that the danger is not great, but for that all things are to be done reasonably, and for the best advantaging and likelihood of good, that may be. The causes of this are on the empirics' part, that they are more offi-

* Pliny.

cious about their patients; the other being many times supercilious, and neglective of meaner persons: secondly, that they are more bold boasters of their own doings, than the other, whose learning makes them modest: thirdly, their affording their counsel and pains at a cheaper rate than the other do, who, very likely, and as experience teacheth in other countries, if they would descend to that rule of equity in other cases, a pennyworth for a penny, would find, that lighter gains coming thicker, would make heavier purses. Fourthly, their administering of medicines usually less offensive, and loathsome unto nature, which, it may be, the other's skill, and care, if custom made not men less compassionate than they should be, might much correct: though it cannot be denied, that by God's providence, and for man's sin, the most wholesome things either naturally or morally, are bitter and unpleasing. On the patient's part this arises commonly; 1. from the suspicion, lest they being mean and plain persons should either be overreached, or neglected by the learned; 2. from envy, which the learned's arrogancy also often occasions; 3. from an ambitious desire in them, to advance those of their own order; as of old, the citizens of Rome would have their chief officers, even the Consuls, and Dictators, created and chosen out of their rank.* And lastly, for that, if any cure be, or seem to be wrought by them, which want art, men are therein ready to conceive of a special divine assistance, and helping hand of God.

One special use of a skilful artist, is to discern aright of the variety of circumstances that fall in. Simple men and women have many times the same medicines, or simples, at least, with the most skilful doctors: but wanting art, and skill to temper and apply them, according to the diversity of the estates of patients, and variety of accidents within and without the sick, they either profit not; or hurt one way, what they profit another. To which purpose it was wittily answered of the physician, who having prescribed a medicine to his patient, and thereby cured him; and being asked by him afterwards, why the same medicine, which the same person, falling into the same disease again, took himself, did not avail him, as before, that the reason was,

* Livy.

because he (the physician) gave it him not. Neither is the use greater of the skilful in this consideration, than of the experienced.

Physicians, saith one, and truly, have this advantage above them of other professions, that the sun beholds their cures, and the earth covers their failings.* They that die under their hands, or by their default, are past complaining of them: they that recover and survive, though, sometimes, by the benefit of nature alone, under God's providence, will repute, and report them the means of their recovery. Which consideration makes not the honest, and conscionable the more secure; but the more careful of their account to be given unto God, from whose eyes nothing is covered.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

OF AFFLICTIONS.

All afflictions are for sin, as the deserving cause: for living man mourneth for the punishment of his sin. Lam. iii. 39, 40. Whereupon the prophet tells the Jews, that their own wickedness should correct them. Jer. ii. 19. Neither doth God punish, but where man sins, saith one. Now to set these two together orderly, is the property of a wise man, Jer. ix. 12: and accordingly in our afflictions, to mourn for our sins, which we then rightly do, when out of the clear sight of their odiousness in God's account, we more vehemently desire the pardon of them, than the removing of the bodily punishment: as who having understanding in him, would not rather have the bodily sore healed, than the plaster, though biting, taken from it? And withal, when we acknowledge, that our afflictions are infinitely less, than our sins, which they that do not, neither know God's justice, nor their own demerits as they ought. Neither yet is it sufficient, that in such cases, we confess our sin, and how we have walked contrary unto God, Lev. xxvi. 20; but we must withal confess our misery, and that God hath walked contrary unto us, and brought our present afflictions upon us. In confessing our sins we shame ourselves, and declare our naughtiness: but in acknowledging

* Antoninus.

ourselves justly punished for them; we honour God, as a wise, powerful, and just Judge. Josh. vii. 19.

Notwithstanding there be always the desert of sin procuring punishment: yet God doth not always principally aim at that; but sometimes, that his power may be seen, as in the man born blind, John ix. 1—3: sometimes, for the honour of his holy name, having been blasphemed of his enemies, by the sins of his servants, as it was by David's adultery, and other mischiefs following thereupon: 2 Sam. xii. 13, 14, sometimes, for man's salvation, as we see in the sufferings of Christ: sometimes, for the confirmation of others, by testimony given to the truth,* as in the case of Stephen, whose sufferings, saith one, exhort to the confession thereof: † sometimes, for the trial of our faith, James i. 3, seeing without afflictions neither others know us, nor we ourselves,‡ and for the shaming of the devil therein, as in the case of Job: sometimes, to draw men nearer to himself by humiliation, and repentance, which is a general end: sometimes, to wean us from the love of the world, unto which we are too much addicted, notwithstanding all the sorrows which we do find in it; and like foolish travellers, love our way, though troublesome, instead of our country: § sometimes, to prevent some sin ready to break out in us; as physicians let blood to prevent sickness: lastly, to make the glory which shall be showed, and whereof our afflictions are not worthy, the more glorious, 2 Cor. xii. 7—9; as the sun is, when the clouds are driven away, wherewith, for a time, it hath been darkened.‖ Now, as it were to be wished, that we could always certainly know the Lord's particular ends in afflicting us, as we may gather much ordinarily, by the knowledge of his Word, observation of his dealing towards ourselves, and others, and due examination of our estate, and ways in his sight; so it is most necessary for all his people, ever to hold this general conclusion; that in all their afflictions the justice and mercy of God meet together; and that he begins in justice, and will end in mercy, with them.

God hath, in a peculiar manner, entailed afflictions to the sincere profession of the gospel, above that of the law

* Melancthon. † Ignatius. ‡ Seneca.
§ Gregory Nazianzen. ‖ Ibid.

before Christ. The law was given by Moses, whose ministry began with killing the Egyptian, that oppressed the Israelite; and was prosecuted with leading the people out of Egypt, through the sea, and wilderness, with great might, and a strong hand; and lastly, was finished with bloody victory over Sihon, and Og the kings of Canaan. But Christ's dispensation was all of another kind: his birth mean; his life sorrowful; and his death shameful. And albeit the love of God towards his people be always the same in itself, yet is the manifestation thereof very diverse. Before Christ's coming in the flesh, in whom the grace of God appeared, God showed his love more fully in earthly blessings, and peace; and more sparingly in spiritual, and heavenly: but now, on the other side, he dealeth forth temporal blessings more sparingly; and spiritual with a fuller hand. It is not improbably gathered, that, after the destruction of the dragon, and beast, and recalling of the Jews after their long divorce from the Lord, the blessings of both kinds shall meet together, and the Church enjoy, for a time, a very graceful state upon earth both in regard of spiritual, and bodily good things.

In the meanwhile, many would fain have their worldly advantage, and the obedience of the gospel to agree together, further than they will. And when they cannot frame the world and their worldly conveniency to the gospel; they will fashion the gospel to the world, and to their carnal courses in it. Pity it is, that such men were not of the Lord's council, when he first contrived, and preached his gospel; that they might have helped him in some such discreet, and middle course, as might have served the turn both for heaven, and earth. But let the world, in its foolish wisdom, say and do what it will, or can; "the way is narrow, which leads unto life," Matt. vii. 13, 14: and considering man's naughtiness, it is neither fit, nor hardly possible, that it should be broader.

All the afflictions which Christians suffer are not afflictions of Christ: nor all the crosses which they take up, the crosses of Christ. The afflictions of Christ may be set in three ranks. The first, and those most properly so called, are when men for Christ's cause, hate, revile, and persecute us. The second, when we suffer evils, which we

might be free from, and escape, if we dared deny in word, or deed any part of Christ's truth. The third, and last sort are, such as befall us in the course of godliness, though human, and as they do all other men; as bodily sickness, death of friends, crosses, and losses by sea, and land, and the like. If we be members of Christ our such afflictions are the afflictions of Christ; else the mercy showed, and good done to such were not done to Christ. But now, if he that in his person is a true Christian, suffer for evil doing, he takes not up the cross of Christ, but of the devil therein; and if he put himself upon needless danger, and difficulties, he takes not up Christ's cross, but his own herein: and so hath his amends in his own hands. Yet may even afflictions so coming, by our true repentance, be sanctified unto us, and we please God in their use, though not in their cause.

Both good conscience and wisdom must be used in applying such scriptures, as speak of the afflictions of Christians for well-doing: neither is all that can be said out of every text thereabout, to be applied to all times. For howsoever hardly at any time, or in any place, things go so well, especially in our days, which even they, who are none of the best themselves, will confess, yea complain to be extremely evil, but that truth goes with a scratched face, less, or more; yet the differences of times and state of things must be observed, and put this way. Yea further, though the times in general should be very evil; yet for a person, who himself is well furnished with earthly good things, well fed, and glad, and in outward peace, to dwell much upon the afflictions of Christians, specially with application to the present state of things, is not to hold decorum, but hath an appearance more orator, than preacher-like.

We are never simply to desire crosses, because they are natural evils: nor to abhor from them, because we know they work together with our election, calling, justification, and sanctification, for our good, Rom. viii. 30: not as causes thereof, as the forenamed are, for the effects of sin cannot be the causes of righteousness or happiness; nor yet as means properly, as are the word, sacraments, prayer, and examples of good men: but only as occasions capable

of sanctification to our use, which sins properly are not, as having no good in them, as such; whereas afflictions have a moral good in them, as they are of God, and by him inflicted. Though to speak of crosses most properly, God sanctifies us to them, in giving us grace to make a right use of them. And considering, how it is both good for us to be afflicted, and that God hath promised, that "no good thing shall be lacking to them that fear him," Psa. xxxiv. 9; cxix. 71; we are thus to make account; that God afflicts us, as he doth, not only in justice for sin, but in faithfulness also; that is, both in mercy, and in truth of promise: and must accordingly confess with the man of God; "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are righteous; and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me," Psa. cxix. 75: and so must learn to take our several crosses at God's hands, not only patiently, but thankfully. We have cause to thank ourselves, and our sins, that wholesome things both for body and soul are for the most part bitter and grievous to our nature: and to thank God, that makes afflictions bitter-sweets, by turning deserved curses into fatherly corrections to us.

It is commonly received for truth, that in all adversity the greatest misery is, sometimes to have been happy.* But we must here use a distinction. If we only respect the time in which we are in misery, apart from the former time, we are both more sensible of our present misery, by remembering our former happiness,† and also more tender, and delicate, and so less able to bear it. But if we consider our whole life together; then the less time we are afflicted, the less our afflictions are, in that respect, and so must be minded of us. It is not nothing, that God hath given us to pass over some part of our days in peace and with comfort: neither must we be so unthankful, as to account it no benefit, because it is past: but we must, contrariwise, something quiet ourselves in our present affliction with the remembrance of God's goodness in our former peace; as did our "example of patience," James v. 11, who in the extremity of his present distress said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" Job ii. 10. Reason teacheth this, ex-

* Boethius. † Keckerman.

cept in a case, when God lifts up a man on high, that he may the more violently throw him down, how much more, faith, which persuades the godly man's heart, that the Lord loves him as well, and as much, in his after afflicted estate, as he did before in his prosperous; as the goldsmith esteems his gold as much, though melting in the furnace, as glittering in the shop; and that the same God will both give patience, and strength of faith, according to the trial, and increase of strength if he increase the affliction; as also full deliverance in due time. "He will redeem Israel from all his trouble." Psa. xxv. 22.

As even good men perform their whole duty to God, with some corruption mingled among: so God promiseth, and performeth accordingly, the good things of this life, with exception of the cross, and tribulation. If we could amend the one, God would leave out the other. Mark x. 30.

The Lord who tried Abraham in his son Isaac, whom he loved; and the rich young man in his riches which he loved, knows well in what vein to strike a man, that the blood may follow. The more we love any earthly thing, we are the more in danger to be crossed in, or about it. Not that God envies our delights, as one man often envies another's: but either because we do, or lest we should surfeit in affections towards it.

Most men are moved too much with their own miseries in this world, melting in them, as wax in the sun, so as they are unapt to hold any impression either of faith, or reason: but are too little moved with other men's calamities, not affording them so much as a compassionate affection. Yet may, and doth the contrary extreme of over pitying others also, prevail with some. Against both which it is good to consider, that either we, and they reap spiritual benefit by our afflictions, or no. If the former; that may, and ought to moderate the grief: if not; there is cause of greater grief for after greater afflictions to come upon us and them.

A man may much increase, or lessen a cross by the course, which he suffers his mind to run in it; seeing all crosses have some conveniences joined with them, as all commodities have some discommodities. If a man set his

thoughts a work upon the inconveniences, and discommodities alone, which are in it, he shall heap sorrow upon sorrow. But if, on the contrary, he draw into consideration such conveniences, as usually fall in with their contraries; he shall always find some matter of ease: and sometimes, that "meat comes out of the eater," Judges xiv. 14, and that, which at first seemed a cross, is rather a benefit. It is a most dangerous thing for any to deem his afflictions extraordinary; lest by so doing, he prejudice himself against ordinary comforts, which we should with readiness and thankfulness embrace, and not look for angels from heaven to comfort us, or for manna from heaven to feed us.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

OF INJURIES.

An injury, say the lawyers, is whatever is not done justly.* In one and the same act may be found both sin against God, and injury against man. And therefore in cases of wrong done either by violence or deceit, the offender, under the law, was bound both to make restitution to the wronged, and also to bring his trespass offering to the priest, to make an atonement for him before the Lord. Lev. vi. 5—7. Sometimes, the sin is taken away, and the injury remains; as when the person which hath wronged another, truly repents, but is not able to make satisfaction. Sometimes, on the other side, the injury is taken away, and the sin remains; viz. when the offender makes satisfaction by compulsion, or for shame, but repents not before God. Sometimes, both are taken away, and sometimes, neither; as both or neither satisfaction to men, and repentance towards God is performed.

Between the injuring and offending of a man there is this difference; that we may injure him that is altogether ignorant of it, but can offend only him that takes knowledge of some evil in truth, or appearance, done by us, whether with injury, or not.

The more power any hath to do hurt, without worldly prejudice to himself therein, the more careful had he need be, that he take not to himself any lawless liberty that

way; remembering always that he hath also a "Master in heaven," Col. iv. 1; and that "He who is higher than the highest regardeth," Eccl. v. 8; who also may with more right and reason destroy him for ever, than he, how great soever, do the least hurt to the silliest worm, that crawls upon the face of the earth.

They, who use injurious dealings themselves, hate them in others and them that offer them;* as do they also who take knowledge of them. For whom men fear, they hate. Now there is cause for all to fear him, to his power, that hurts any; seeing in wronging one, he threatens all that he hath power to hurt. Yet, if we will look upon things a little spiritually, such persons are more to be pitied, than either hated or feared; as being, though cruel to others, yet more to themselves, hurting others in their bodies, and bodily states; themselves in their hearts,† and consciences before the Lord, which is far the greatest damage. And upon this ground it was, that the ancient father desired Scapula, that he would pity himself, if he would not pity the Christians, whom he cruelly persecuted, seeing the most hurt came to himself thereby.‡ When, therefore, we thus suffer any heinous injuries of any kind by any, we must pray the Lord both to deliver us out of their hands, and them out of the devil's, whose instruments they are, in so doing.

For any one man, whosoever, to offer injury to any other whomsoever, is unnatural and inhuman, but especially odious in these four sorts of persons: The first is magistrates, and men in authority, whom God hath, therefore, furnished therewith, that they might prevent, and redress injuries by others, and "execute wrath upon evil doers," Rom. xiii. 4: which if they become themselves, they transform the image of the Lord's power and justice, which they sustain, into the image of God's enemy, Satan, whom, therein, they resemble; and become, after a sort, wickednesses in high places, as the devils are. The second, are friends, whose office it is by help, counsel, riches, or otherwise, to succour their wronged friends;§ and if no other way, at least, by condoling with them, and comforting them. A man that hath friends should show himself

* Seneca. † Austin. ‡ Tertullian. § Terence.

friendly, saith the wise man, Prov. xviii. 24, and for such an one to show himself enemy like, is very grievous; as we may see in Job's and David's case. Now, if it be here demanded, whether the injuries offered by friends, or by others, be less tolerable, answer must be made with distinction; that some injuries are such, and so notorious, as cannot stand with a true friendly heart, but do plainly discover an evil, and enimious affection: and of these, by false friends David, and worthily, complains, as more grievous than by strangers, Psa. lv. 12—14. Some again, are such, as may escape him that truly loveth, through negligence, rashness, or other infirmity. Such the heat of love should digest. And they, who, in this kind will bear more at the hands of others, than of friends, are unworthy of them. A third sort are men religious, whose professed piety towards God promiseth honest dealing with men: as on the contrary, Abraham looked for all injurious dealing in that place, where the fear of God was not. Gen. xx. 11. The fourth, and last, are men themselves oppressed by others, specially lying under the injuries of the times. When one poor man oppresseth another, "it is like a sweeping rain, which leaveth no food." Prov. xxviii. 3. Yet is it found, by certain experience, that it oft rains from this coast, and that the poor by oppressing one another, teach the rich to oppress both; and this, not only in bodily things, but in spiritual also: none being found more injurious, and unmerciful, than are some, out of the favours of the times themselves, to others, that are a little more in their disgrace than they. None of the heathens were so cruelly bent against the Christians as the Jews, though themselves but scattered amongst the heathens, to be tolerated by them. Such should think of the brethren of Joseph, who being themselves in danger to be violently oppressed, remembered, and bewailed the violence and wrong which they had formerly offered to their brother Joseph. Gen. xlii. 9.

There are two things causing inordinate stirring and indignation at injuries offered: the one natural, the other moral. The natural is the abundance of hot choler boiling in their veins, by which the blood and spirits are attenuated, and so apt to be inordinately stirred, and inflamed, upon appre-

hension of a wrong done. This cause may something be helped, by natural means and medicines; and the effect, by true wisdom and government, which represseth all inordinate motions in the mind. The moral cause is pride and self-love: for men having themselves in high estimation, make account, that if they be a little wronged, some great and heinous offence is committed, and that, at which there is just cause of high indignation. The injury, to such, seems great, because they seem great to themselves: whereas to him that is little and lowly in his own eyes, injuries and wrongs seem less; specially, if he set this low price and valuation upon himself, in conscience of his sins against God, as it was with David. 2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11. What strange thing is it, if an earthen pot get a crack? or if a silly worm be trodden upon? or that he, who is little, be little set by?

It is wisdom, in cases, not to seem to take knowledge of an injury; as, either, when it is small, and scarce worthy the minding; and such the stately gravity of some persons make many to be, which to others seem intolerable; witness Cato, who being asked pardon of him that had given him a bob on the mouth, answered, that there was no injury done, and so no pardon needful:* or when the greatness, and malice withal, of the injurious is such, as that to expostulate a wrong is to provoke to the doubling of it; to which purpose his answer fitted well, that said, "he had grown old in a tyrant's court, by thanking men, when he had received an injury from them." Sometimes, again, it is wisdom to let persons know, that we account ourselves ill used by them, and that chiefly, when our expostulation is like to prove their warning, by working either fear or shame in them.

If the commendation given of Cæsar had not been by him, who was too good a courtier, that he was wont to orget nothing but injuries;† he, though a pagan, might therein have been a mirror to all Christians; considering the mischievousness of our corrupt nature this way, which is apter to remember a wrong done, than anything else, specially than a benefit; because, as one saith, we account thanks a burden and revenge an ease.‡ In regard

* Seneca. † Cicero. ‡ Tacitus.

whereof it was not without cause, that Christ our Lord in our directory of prayer, which we must daily use, re-enforceth nothing but the condition of the fifth petition: "as we forgive them that trespass against us;" the petition, being, "forgive us our trespasses;" adding therein, that "if we forgive not them, that trespass against us, neither will our heavenly Father forgive us." Matt. vi. 12. And this exhortation, saith one, if we be not more hard than iron and steel, cannot but soften us, and make us appeasable, and ready to remit offences,* considering how many, and great our offences are against the Lord; for which he both so justly might, and so easily could, take revengement upon us. And since vengeance is the Lord's, and that he will repay, Rom. xii. 19, we must beware we take it not further into our hands, than God gives it us: lest meddling with edged-tools, in God's shop, we surely cut ourselves deep, howsoever they escape, against whom we use them. And, besides, the conscience of offending God by revenge, in wish, word, or deed, we may take instances of inducement to forgiveness, from circumstances of all the persons that injure us. If it be a meaner person than ourselves that wrong us, let us forgive him, in pity of his weakness: if our superior, let us pity, and forgive ourselves:† the former in charity; the latter in wisdom. Is he a malicious and unmerited enemy? why should we marvel, if he do his kind? Have we hurt him before? he but gives us our due, and why should we not take it at his hands? Is he a good man? let us be ready to forgive him, whom God forgives. Is he wicked? Alas! we may well forgive him, considering how fearful vengeance, if he repent not, God will take on him for that and other his sins.

Many who think it devilish, as indeed it is, to offer an injury, think it but manly to requite it. But it is, saith one, evil as well to requite, as to offer; since God forbids both.‡ And there is, saith another, only this difference between them, that he who offers the injury, is before in mischief, and he that requites it, comes after therein, as fast as he can.§ With which two join a third witness, saying, that to render evil for evil, is to make two devils for one.‖

* Calvin. † Seneca. ‡ Lactantius. § Tertullian. ‖ Calvin.

Not to be revenged for an injury done is not always to forgive it. For this may be through want of power, or of courage, or in a kind of haughtiness of mind, when a man esteems himself above the wrong done, or scorns to soil his fingers with his adversary. Neither yet is it sufficient, though it be a great thing that we wish him no hurt who hath wronged us; but we ought, further, also to keep our hearts, that they rejoice not at his fall, or stumbling, by any other means, lest the Lord see, and it displease Him, and he turn his wrath from him, upon us. Prov. xxiv. 18. All the other ways we may be accessary before; this way, after the fact. Notwithstanding, we may, and have cause to be glad, if the injurious and oppressors be restrained by some work of God's overruling providence, that the fox being chained up may no more worry the lambs; but this is not to rejoice for his hurt but for his good. Lastly, as God forgives injuries against him, which all sins are, if for the same he hate not the person so sinning, though he both be angry at him, and correct him, and therein provide for the repairing of the honour of his majesty impeached by him: so may men forgive injuries done against them, 2 Sam. xii. 13, in spiritual sense, and holy manner; if therefore they hate not, nor wish hurt to the person that hath wronged them; though in cases, they provide for his due correction, and also for the repairing the damage sustained by him in their body, goods, or good name, by lawful means.

CHAPTER XXXV.

OF PATIENCE.

It is our sinful condition that makes us subject to crosses, our human, that makes us sensible of them; without which sense of them we were no more patient in bearing them, than the stone is patient, upon which the weight of the wall lieth. But in the bearing of such evils as are brought upon us, or befall us, with equanimity and moderation, true patience is seen.* The grace itself must be in us, even without crosses, and we by it in heart

* Lactantius.

martyrs, without fire, or sword:* but so cannot the use of it be; no more than there is use of a salve, where there is no sore. And thereupon the apostle saith that, "affliction worketh patience," Rom. v. 3, that is, occasions the exercise and increase of it. And hence it is, that men are most deceived in the measure of this grace, and esteem their inches, ells, till by trial of evils, they find the contrary. But patience tried by afflictions, and found firm and good, gives, above other graces, experimental assurance of God's love. Whereupon the apostle, in the place forenamed, gives it alone the honour of working experience; and no marvel, seeing by it God gives a poor and feeble creature such experience of his powerful grace and goodness, for the bearing and bearing out of those crosses and miseries, both inward and outward; which, without this staff of supportance, were intolerable. Neither is the work of God's goodness lost in them, to whom he imparts this grace; seeing by it, if by any other, they show forth the virtues of God, and honour him in so many of his attributes, in the exercising of it. As first, of his will, both commanding, and approving it: as Christ tells the church and angel at Ephesus: "I know thy works, and labour, and patience." Rev. ii. 1. Secondly, of his justice, as acknowledging really, that all the afflictions, which they suffer, are less, without comparison, than their sins deserve. Thirdly, of his power, and that both over them, with which they struggle not, but making a virtue of necessity, quietly bear what he lays upon them;† and also in them, in sustaining them, that they faint not under their burden. Fourthly, of his wisdom, in effectual acknowledgment, that he hath his good and holy ends of his so dealing with them, though ofttimes not so particularly known to them. Lastly, of his goodness, in dealing with them in their chastisements, as with sons, for their profit, and that they might be partakers of his holiness, Heb. xii. 10: without which last, all the rest, how honourable soever to God, are uncomfortable unto man. Upon this goodness of God, we do in our afflictions specially exercise the two main graces of faith and hope. Faith, persuading our hearts, that God loves us as well in our greatest afflictions, as out of them, and will

* Gregory. † Chrysostom.

do us nothing but good by them, is as the foundation for this bulwark of patience. Hope assureth us of happy issue out of them all; which, if we wanted, what would it avail us though we had the strength of men and angels to bear miseries?

Some Christians have said, that patience is a miserable remedy. But how much better said the heathen Bias, that he only is miserable that wants patience, for the bearing of his misfortunes:* as indeed, he is in a miserable case, considering unto how many calamities all mortal men are subject; against which they can neither promise themselves beforehand, nor find in time, other sufficient remedy, than this of patience; which is a salve for all sores:† and the same also so approved, that though it make not miseries cease to be miseries, yet it keeps the person that hath it, and suffers them, from being miserable. Yea, as deadly poisons may be, and are so mixed, and tempered, as they become, in cases, more wholesome, than meat; so do calamities, deadly in themselves, tempered with patience become better than their contrary delights. Sickness, with this, is better than health without it; and poverty so tempered, than riches otherwise: and so all the works of God's justice, unto which the faithful are liable, are better to them, than any work of his mercy to others. Lastly, so absolutely necessary is this grace, and the use of it, for all Christians, as that the apostle tells the believing Hebrews, and other believers in them, that "they had need of patience, that having done the will of God, they might receive the promise," Heb. x. 36: with which accords another's exhortation, that patience may have its perfect work in the saints, that they may be perfect, and entire, lacking nothing, James i. 4. A man would think in reason, that he who hath done the will of God, and been careful in all things to keep a good conscience towards God, and men, should have nothing lacking, for the receiving of the promised reward. But the wisdom of God tells us, that we must first do our duty in all things; and then afterwards, suffer evil with patience, before we receive the reward promised. In which our patient suffering for, or in the way of righteousness, we

* Laertius. † Seneca.

please God more, if it may be, than in our former well-doing; as Christ our Lord performed the greatest work of his obedience unto his Father, and of our redemption therein, by his innocent, and patient suffering of death.

Of all manner of crosses none are so hard to bear by God's servants, without despair, as those, wherein the Lord seems, to their sense and reason, to be their enemy, by reason of some strange and unusual working against them; as we have Job for an example, Job xix. 6—13. Nor any so hardly borne by them, without inordinate stirring, and spurning again, as those, in which a man must be a mere patient, using, as they call it, that passive patience; and may, or can say, or do nothing in defending himself, or offending an adversary. A blow, or wound received in fight, or action, is scarce perceived: but if a man must sit still, and suffer himself to be bobbed on the mouth; or, as the Prophet saith, must "give his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that pluck off the hair," Isa. l. 6, or must be cooped up alone in a dungeon, or prison, where none may come at him, this goes near him, and tries his patience, and how he hath hearkened to "the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, saying, In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." Isa. xxx. 15. Where men's injuries are joined, and concur with God's providence in a cross, there the flesh and fleshly passions take more liberty. I have known some, who have attained to a good measure of patient bearing of calamities and crosses by other ordinary hand of God's providence; and yet have been most impatient of any prejudice, or damage by men's injurious dealing. And this may seem not to want reason. To be stirred against God for a cross, is devilish; against unreasonable creatures, brutish; but hath a show of manliness, for a man to be stirred against a man that injures him. But, be the show what it will, the truth of the ground for the most part is, that pride causeth this swelling of the heart against him, who is deemed to injure us, specially if we conceive it to be out of contempt; whereof all men are impatient. Against the pang of impatience this way, it is best we labour, not to overvalue ourselves; nor easily to think that others despise us; and, as we have Job for a

pattern of patience, so to follow his steps, who, looking through the violence and wrongs of men, the Sabeans and Chaldeans, beheld, by the eye of faith, which sees afar off, God's providence, as the soul of the world's body, and ruling all things in it; and thence took instruction for quiet and patient submission unto the Lord; seeing, and saying in all the outrageous practices against him by the devil, and wicked men; that God who had given, had taken away. Job i. 21.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

OF PEACE.

THE Hebrews by comprehending under the name of peace, all, both safety and prosperity, whether bodily, or spiritual, do show therein how both pleasant and profitable a thing peace is, for all persons and societies. And though to strive, contend, yea, and wage war also, be in cases, and at times, not only lawful, but also necessary; yet are they never so much as tolerable for themselves, but only for peace, as the lancing of the wound is for the curing of it.

From "peace with God, through the forgiveness of sins, by faith," Rom. v. 1, and a good conscience, ariseth peace with a man's self; with the angels; with all men, after a sort, yea with all creatures in the world. Such a one is "in league with the stones of the field, and at peace with the beasts of the field," saith Eliphaz. Job v. 23. Yea "his very enemies," saith the wise man, "are at peace with him." Prov. xvi. 7. I add, that though he be burnt in the fire, drowned in the water, or otherwise killed, yet that fire, water, and other instrument of his bodily destruction, and therewith, all other creatures, are in a kind of secret league with him, and do even in killing him bodily, work for his spiritual and eternal good. Rom. viii. 28. And if they which are at peace with a king have his subjects at peace with them; how much more shall God's servants, and people, have all the creatures in heaven and earth at peace with them, for their true good, by the favour of him their absolute King and Lord.

God, to show how peaceable man should be, hath denied

him such instruments of offence, and natural weapons, as many other creatures are furnished withal; of which some have horns, some hoofs, some paws, some tusks, some talons: but, alas, how hath sin armed man with hatred and malice; and they with weapons of violence and destruction! so as more men are destroyed by men, than by all other creatures.

When the Lord would show himself to Elijah, he did it not in the great and strong wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire; but "in the still small voice, which came after them." 1 Kings xix. 11—13. And when he would have a temple built to dwell in, he would not have David build it, because his hands were full of blood, though of God's enemies, but Solomon the king of peace. 2 Sam. vii. 5—13. In the building of which, there was "neither hammer, nor axe, nor tool of iron heard in the house." 1 Kings vi. 7. As the spirit of a man doth not quicken any member of the body, but as it is united to it; so neither doth the Spirit of God any member of the Church, but being united in the bond of peace.*

God would have Christians, if it be possible, and "as much as in them lieth, to have peace with all men." Rom. xii. 18. But in some cases, and specially, where this cannot be done without sin, on their part; it lieth not in them to have peace, but in the other, which would put upon them the necessity of sinning. And in such a case, they must rather want peace with men, which is a cross, than with God, which is a greater cross, and a sin also. The apostle that bids follow peace with all men, adds in the same place, "and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. xii. 14. Such may be the case, as a man may see God without peace with men, because it may be their fault, and not his; so can he not possibly without holiness, of which no man fails but by his own fault and sin. The contention which makes us nearer God is better than the peace that separates us from him.†

They are not most unpeaceable always, who dissent most from others, whether in opinion, or practice: but they who either affect differences, or carry them turbulently, whether small, or great, when they fall in. A fierce horse may be

* Austin. † Gregory Nazianzen.

so whistled, or yoked, as he may draw in the same wagon quietly with others, either gentle, or headstrong; so may a violent and turbulent person go on in the same course quietly a long time, because it pleases him, or because he is strongly yoked, though without all true love of, or earnest pursuit after, peace. But the Lord would have us not only to be held in peace by others, and to hold peace with others, when we have it, and to embrace it when it is offered; "but to pursue and follow after it," Psa. xxxiv. 14, even when it seems to fly from us.* Many cry aloud for peace, and against peace-breakers: and can speak very glorious things in commendation of so profitable and pleasant a good, whereby to persuade others to it. But what is this peace, unto which not a few of those good orators so earnestly and eloquently persuade? Surely, too often nothing else but either a cursed consent in evil, or servile subjection to their, or their master's wills and lusts, without regard either of equity or reason. They would willingly have peace; that is, they would do what they list, and have others do the same their lists also, how unreasonable soever. But this, saith one, is not to follow peace, but to command it.† The devil himself would have such peace, and hath with his; "when the strong man armed keeps his house, all things that he hath are in peace," Luke xi. 21; and upon condition that he might rule in and over them after his wicked will. But to follow after peace aright is clean another, and the same an excellent thing; requiring at the least these three particular virtues. First, a truly affectioned heart unto it, in conscience of God, and love to men, out of a due valuation of its excellency; as Elisha loving and reverencing his master Elijah, would follow after him, and not leave him. The second is, to deal justly, and equally with all men, without wronging any. It is double injury to beat men causelessly till they cry, and then to beat them for crying. Thus many breed strife by injury and oppression, and then cry out against it; as Athaliah cried out of treason. There are two friends, saith the father, "righteousness and peace," Psa. lxxxv. 10; he that will have the one, must do the other. All would have peace; but all will not do righteousness. But he that puts the one away, and

* Calvin. † Hugo Grotius.

loves not the friend of peace; peace loves not him, nor will come at him.* A third thing, is forbearance of others, what may be, though in our own wrong. For considering how ready all sorts of men are to wrong one another, and withal how apt to think themselves wronged, when they are not, yea oftentimes, when they themselves do the wrong: except we mingle with the former two, such moderation and Christian forbearance, as to bear, and tolerate for peace sake, persons and things not intolerable, we follow strife in effect; whatsoever we either pretend, or intend otherwise. 1 Cor. vi. 1—8; Eph. iv. 31.

It is ill when good men have not peace and unity amongst themselves; and as ill, yea worse, when there is peace amongst wicked and godless persons;† seeing, thereby, their strength in evil is increased. It is better the work of God go on weakly, as it doth, when peace among the good is wanting; than the devil's work strongly, as it doth, in the conspiracy of wicked men. Psa. xxxviii. 12. It is therefore a special work of God's good and powerful providence to cast a bone amongst such, and to set them one against another, that a "fire may come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem: and from the men of Shechem, and devour Abimelech," Judges ix. 20: by which God makes one of them the other's executioner in his just judgment; and therewith provides many times for the peace of his people, whose utter ruin, otherwise, their accord in evil and violence against them would endanger.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

OF SOCIETY AND FRIENDSHIP.

God hath made man a sociable creature; and hath not only ordained several societies, in which persons are to unite themselves for their mutual welfare; but withal so dispensed his blessings, as that no man is so barren, but hath something wherewith to profit others: nor any so furnished, but that he stands need of others to supply his wants. "The head cannot say to the foot," much less the foot to the head, "I have no need of thee." 1 Cor. xii.

*Austin. † Ibid.

15—17. And the less need thou, by reason of thine abundance of bodily or spiritual endowments, hast of others, the more need they have of thee and thy plenty. To which purpose tended his saying, who having many servants, some better, and some worse, and being moved by one to disburden himself of such as were unprofitable, and to keep the rest, answered; that he stood need of the better; and the worse, of him. "The king himself is served by the field," Eccl. v. 9; and stands need of the husbandman, and so doth he of many, of far meaner condition.

Some wrong human societies by being too divine; many more, and much more, by being too bestial. By the former I understand such as, in the profession of devotion towards God, swallow up and dissolve such natural and civil bonds, as wherein God hath tied them unto men, by choosing solitary and monastical lives. All Christians ought to "have their conversation in heaven," Phil. iii. 20, and "to use this world, as though they used it not," 1 Cor. vii. 31; and herein such as are called to the holy ministry, ought to be ensamples to others, and to go before them; but not to hide themselves in holes from them, as melancholic monks do. So for others; the lesser helps and provocations of grace they can have from them, with whom they are occasioned to converse, they are to be the more frequent with God in the personal exercises of piety: but so as they take heed that they wrong not father and mother by their Corban: nor make a special calling of the common works of all Christians. Others are grown more out of kind, who take greater delight in the following, and fellowship of horses and hawks and dogs, than in men's company. Such have drunk deep of the cup of Circe, by which she is said to have transformed men into beasts. That which was Nebuchadnezzar's punishment, they make their chief pleasure.

As God hath established fellowships and communities of men to procure their mutual good, and to fence them the better, on every side, against evil; so sin and wickedness being the greatest and only absolute evil, Christians are most bound by virtue of their association, to help, and assist, within the bounds of the callings in which God hath set them, their brethren, and associates against it: according to that of the philosopher; he that bears with the vices

of his friend makes them his own.* Hence all Israel was punished, and is said to have sinned, for not preventing, or reforming one Achan's transgression. Josh. vii. 1, &c. The sin of another, how near soever unto me, cannot defile me, because he doth it; for then that which neither goes into a man, nor comes out of him might defile him: but when either I do something for the furthering of it, which I should not do; or neglect something which I should perform in my place for the preventing or reforming of it, by these means I become accessary either before, or after the fact; and not otherwise.

Although it is to be desired, and that, unto which we are bound, as humanity, and our special places and occasions will permit, that we converse only with such as either may make us better, which is wisdom; or which we are like to make better, which is charity: yet will a good and wise man make good use of all companies. Amongst the good he will learn to love goodness the more; amongst the evil, and most amongst the worst, the more to hate evil. But yet, notwithstanding, there is a difference. In evil company we see what to avoid, which is good: but in good, what to follow, which is better. Besides, there is danger, if, of no worse thing, lest the edge of our zeal against evil should be taken off, if we be occasioned continually to be grating against it. The Spirit of grace and goodness had need to be strong in him, that is not tired with continual strugglings and strivings with the malice of others. He that, at the first, with "righteous Lot vexeth his righteous soul daily with the wicked deeds of them with whom he liveth," 2 Pet. ii. 7, yet will, in time, be in danger to be vexed daily, less and less, with them, as things growing by custom more familiar to him. Also there is a second danger, lest living amongst fools, or wicked persons, we content ourselves with the little model of goodness or wisdom which we have; because we are somebody in comparison of them, as he that hath but half an eye, is a king amongst them that are blind: whereas amongst the wise and good, we have still matter of imitation, and provocation to aspire unto greater perfection in goodness. I conclude with that of the father: If men good and bad be

* Seneca.

joined together in special bond of society, they either quickly part, or usually become alike. Friendship either takes, or makes men alike.*

Much acquaintance shows either great employment in the world, which puts men necessarily upon the acquaintance of many; or great ability and endowments, which draw the acquaintance of many to a man, for their benefit; or an ambitious heart, which seeks to be known and acknowledged by many; or an idle head, that hath little else to do, but to occupy itself in seeking or getting friends.

As many who, if they walked alone, would, by reason of their richer apparel, be thought men of better estate than they are; and others meaner than they are, by reason of their russet coats; who yet both are discerned of what condition and rank they be, by their companions and comforts: so the virtuous, or virtuous dispositions of men, are much discovered by the company which they affect, and with which they sort with most gladness and content: for like will to like, whether good or evil.

There is a difference between love, good-will, and friendship.† We may love other things besides men: bear good-will to the persons that know us not: but we have friendship only with men, and that with mutual consent, arising from mutual love, and good-will, for our mutual good. Now, though divers other contracts be more strait in several relations, yet is there in this of friendship a kind of inwardness, arising from conformity of judgment, and affections, the conjunction of the mind being the nearest kindred,‡ by which persons are more straitly tied together than any other way. "There is a friend," saith Solomon, "that sticketh closer than a brother," Prov. xviii. 24: and Moses, passing from brother to child, and from child to wife, placeth her as near as the man's bosom; but a friend nearer, as reckoning him as his own soul. Deut. xiii. 6. Such a friend Jonathan was, whose love to David "passed the love of women." 2 Sam. i. 26. Him whom we are to take so near unto us, so constantly to keep, and so freely to communicate withal, we must not lightly make choice of; nor as the manner of many is, by meeting together at a feast; or playing a game at bowls, or tables; or lodging

* Chrysostom. † Danæus. ‡ Seneca.

in one inn:* but either after long experience, and having, as the proverb is, "eaten a bushel of salt together;" or upon some singular and extraordinary motive, or trial. And as Christ "committed not himself to the Jews, because he knew their hearts," John ii. 14; so neither are we easily to commit ourselves to men, because we know not their hearts. We are wisely to judge before, but freely to credit after, the knot of friendship is tied: yet so as we try the wisdom, secrecy, and faithfulness of our friends in smaller matters, before we trust them in greater;† as men use to try, whether their vessels will hold water, or no, before they put wine in to them.‡ And, albeit, that Christian love, "which is the bond of perfection, and first fruits of the Spirit," Col. iii. 14, be due to all Christians from all; yet are not all fit friends for all, of that fellowship. Gal. v. 12. David, notwithstanding the many worthies in his kingdom, had specially "Hushai, the king's friend," 1 Chron. xxvii. 33: and so had our Lord, whilst he lived upon earth, specially John, among all the twelve, "the disciple whom he loved." John xiii. 23. This special affection to one above the rest in Christ, was holy, yet human.

Many complain of the perfidiousness of friends, and how vilely they have been used by them, whom they have trusted; and not without cause; it being as vile, as common, to deceive him, whom we could not have deceived, if he had not trusted us.§ But if all things be rightly weighed, the most have most cause to complain of themselves, for making no better choice. He is but rightly served, in all men's judgments, that hath his broth running out, which he puts into a riven dish. And first, "God is love," 1 John iv. 16; and no marvel then, if there be no firmness in that love, which is not founded in God, and goodness. As, on the other side, if a man be deceived by such a friend as he trusts, upon the show of pity and goodness which he makes; he hath comfort with God, unto whom he had respect in trusting him. Men that trust others upon the testimony and commendation of any, and are deceived by them, use to complain to them, for whose cause they trusted them. He that looks, in his league of friendship, to the appearance of godliness and virtue which the other

* Plutarch. † Seneca. ‡ Plutarch. § Seneca.

makes, takes his friend, after a sort, upon God's word and testimony; and if he happen to be deceived by him, may complain, and moan himself to God; as David complained of Ahithophel, the traitor, "with whom he had taken sweet counsel, and walked into the house of God, as a friend." Psa. lv. 14. But, on the contrary, he that leagues himself with a vain and godless person, especially with respect and liking to any vanity, or lewd quality in him; if he be deceived by him afterwards, as like enough he will be, may go to the devil to complain, upon whose word, in effect, he took him.

Some do discover their pride and ambition by affecting acquaintance and society with their superiors, thereby, either to become, or to seem greater than they are. So do others not a little, if not more, betray their pride, by affected sorting with much meaner persons than themselves, that they may have honour, and respect from them, and domineer amongst them; which, in truth, though under an appearance of humility, shows the prouder mind. It was swelling pride in Cæsar, that he rather desired to be the first in the least village of Italy, than the second in Rome itself.

He that will thoroughly reform, and correct his faults, had need either of singular circumspection, and jealousy over himself, and his ways, for the finding out of his own failings; or of faithful friends who will seriously admonish him; in which duty, Christian friendship is specially differenced from all other; or else of bitter enemies, who will not spare, nor fail to cast his faults in his teeth, that so he may make a medicine of their malice, as physicians make treacle of venomous serpents. And as Jason had his imposthume opened, and so healed by his enemy's sword, in the wars,* which his friends the physicians could not cure; so we receive sometimes, that good by our enemies' reproaches, which our friends either cannot, or will not afford us, by their loving and faithful advertisements. A wise man makes better use of his enemies, than a fool of his friends.

To him that knows the use of true friendship, no earthly thing is more delightful, than the sweet society of

* Plutarch.

wise, and honest friends, whether for recreation after study, or labour; or communication in a prosperous state; or comfort in an afflicted. He that so esteems not this benefit, is unworthy of it. Yet, for myself, though I have ever thus valued truly loving friends; notwithstanding, considering unto how many dangers and calamities mine afflicted state hath been exposed, I have counted it a benefit, that I have not had many such, as were in danger to take excessive sorrow for my misery that hath, or could befall me.

Some friends, in this respect, have a very ill and unfriendly fashion. If any good come to them, they conceal it from their friends; if any hurt, they hasten to fill their ears with that, to the utmost. Such are more perversely childish than children. For as they will straight complain to their mothers, of any hurt that befalls them; so, on the other side, if any good come to them, though it be but an apple or nut, they will as readily run and acquaint them with it also. Such persons are commonly lovers of themselves, envious and unthankful. We, on the contrary, should rather hasten, and desire to manifest to our friends matter of gladness, when good befalls us, than of sorrow, in our crosses: and show, therein, both our love towards them, in procuring their rejoicing with us, and also our wisdom, and strength of faith, and patience, in the silent swallowing of our sorrows, without grieving our friends more than needs must. So we read of "the woman, that had lost her piece; she lighted the candle, swept the house, and sought it diligently;" and all this she did alone: but "when she had found it," then "she called in her friends and neighbours to rejoice with her." Luke xv. 8. It is best mourning alone, and best rejoicing with company.

Some friends are rather to be used than trusted; namely, such as are more able, than entire, or free-hearted. Some again are rather to be trusted, than used, save in case of necessity, and then also sparingly; and those are such, as whose truly loving affections exceed their ability. And in these considerations, the proverb ofttimes fitteth: "Rich men's purses, and poor men's hearts."

Wealth maketh many friends, and poverty trieth them; as the wind shows which clouds have rain in them, and

which not. And so, though the rich have the more friends, yet the poor's better appear to be faithful, in giving testimony that they love their friends for God, and the persons themselves: which to know is not a small privilege, that poor men have above others, who can hardly discern whether their persons or riches be loved.* "A friend," saith the wise man, "loveth at all times: and a brother is born for adversity." Prov. xvii. 17. He saith not, a friend is born for prosperity, though it be one end of friendship, that we might have with whom to communicate, and rejoice in a prosperous state of things; but for adversity, this being the more principal end, specially in our sinful and sorrowful state, for which God hath linked men together in all societies; which the wiser sort of the heathen have seen by the dim light of nature, and that it appertains, specially, to the office of a true friend to ease his friend's grief by speech, to afford him counsel in doubtful cases, to drive away sadness by his cheerfulness, and to refresh him with his very presence.†

And for such persons in societies, as, in effect, make account, that they are only for other men's prosperity, and not for their afflicted state; and that others are for their help and benefit, and they, for their own: these are the very moths and caterpillars of family, church, and commonwealth; and so far from deserving the fellowship of men, as they are scarce worthy of the flocks and herds of beasts: of which, divers are helpful to their fellow, as they are able, and the other need.

As none can sin against the Holy Ghost, and irremissibly, but they, whom God hath received into some degree of fellowship with him, at least, in the knowledge of the truth: so there is no so great enmity amongst any others as amongst them, who of friends become enemies. "A brother offended is harder to be won, than a strong city," Prov. xviii. 19: and such contentions are like the bars of a castle. A twine thread, if it be broken, is more easily knit together than a cable.‡ And the hard adamant, if it happen to be beaten in pieces with the hammer, flies into such small dust, as is scarce discernible.§ And no marvel, if, where men look for love, and kindness, they find, in truth

* Gregory. † Seneca. ‡ Cartwright. § Pliny.

or supposition, the contrary, and that which agrees not with a friendly affection; that there they conceive most indignation, and greatest matter of alienation. It is therefore requisite, that "a friend show himself friendly," Prov. xviii. 24, for the preserving inviolated that bond of amity with his friend; and avoid all make-bates,* persons or things. And of this sort, not only greater unkindnesses use to be, but even smaller also, if they be frequent: as men consume their states, many times, by small, if daily, losses, and misspendings. And if it so come to pass, that our friends become, or appear so ill, as that in their friendship there is more hurt, or danger, than in their hatred,† it is yet better we untwine, than break the cord of former friendship:‡ save where some extraordinary unworthiness suddenly breaks out, and which urgeth present renunciation. Lastly, when we are necessarily pressed either to the one or other, let us rather do it with sorrow than anger: and withal, have in us a disposition to reassume our old course of kindness, if there appear cause afterwards; as the storks, when the winter is over, do affect their former nests.§

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

OF CREDIT AND GOOD NAME.

CREDIT and good name, with men, so follow virtue, and good deserts, like the shadow the body, as it remains notwithstanding God's good gift, sundry ways. First, in bestowing upon men virtue and goodness to deserve it; for which also the gifts of God are to be the more welcome.‖ Secondly, in guiding them to manifest, and improve their endowments to the advantage of their good name, not as stage-players, but as good stewards of the gift of God that way. Thirdly, by moving the hearts of other men to have them in due respect and estimation: to which purpose it is said of Joseph, and others, though of most singular desert in regard of men, that "God gave them favour in their eyes." Gen. xxxix. 4.

Many, rather desire a great name, than a good; and, therefore, rather enterprise great, than good matters.

* Promoters, or occasions of quarrels. † Isidorus.
‡ Cicero. § Pliny. ‖ Austin.

Some, matters greatly great; as they "in the East, who to get them a name, would build a tower, whose top should reach heaven." Gen. xi. 4. Such also was the level of the huge and high pyramids built by the Egyptian kings. Some, things greatly strange, though mean, as Parmeno in his artificial imitation of the grunting of a sow.* Some, greatly dangerous; as those Funambuli,† who rather will venture their necks, than want a name. Some again, things, if not otherwise, yet greatly odious; as Herostratus, in burning the temple of Diana, in Ephesus, with wild fire. And so Pilate is famous for crucifying Christ; and Judas for betraying him: so is Jeroboam known by this brand, "he that made Israel to sin." But a great name so got, and left to posterity, is like to the great stink of a lamp or candle, when it is gone out: whereas "the memorial of the righteous is blessed," Prov. x. 7; and like "the smell of the costly ointment of spikenard, wherewith Mary anointed our Lord's feet: the sweet scent whereof filled the whole house." John xii. 3. And this good name of the godly, and virtuous, living amongst good men upon earth, when they are dead, is a kind of pledge of their souls living for ever with God in heaven. This none neglect, but they, who mean to do nothing to deserve it; nor despise, but with endangering their own hardening in evil, both against the fear of God, and shame of the world.

This "good name is rather to be chosen than great riches," Prov. xxii. 1, saith he, who could well discern what was best. Which shows, both that he, who impairs another's credit by slander is worse than a thief, and steals a more precious thing; as also that he, who seeks, and gets it to himself undeservedly, is as well to answer to God for his undeserved credit with men, as is a thief for his stolen goods.

This credit, and good name we may desire, as a good, pleasing, natural thing, and for our more comfortable living amongst men: and so David prayed sundry times in one Psalm, that God would "turn away reproach from him, which he so feared." Psa. cxix. 39. But this good name, and note with men, we are specially to desire, to

* Plutarch. † Rope-dancers.

honour God withal, and to further and prefer goodness with others: as otherwise, so chiefly, by the good regard, and respect, wherein they have us, to advantage the example, and other provocations of virtue, and godliness proceeding from us, for more ready imitation by, and better acceptance with them. And them, who thus labour to honour God with the honour, and respect, which he vouchsafes them from others, he will surely honour with men, so far as is meet, and with himself for ever. Whereas, the vainglorious and ambitious, that either seek honour above their desert, or only thereby to advance themselves, and theirs, above other men, they lift up themselves against God, and climb higher, than that the bough will bear them: and God, first or last, will throw them down into perdition.

And whereas God would have us seek good name and fame by well doing; if any seek it by evil, as in evil times and companies too many do, (as Austin confesseth of himself, that in the days of his vanity, he oft did evil, not only in lust of the thing, but for praise by it, amongst his consorts; and sometimes also slandered himself with the evils, which he had not done, lest seeming more chaste he should be more contemptible than the rest;)* such do no better than set the devil in God's place, and "glory in their shame, whose end, without repentance, is damnation." Phil. iii. 18, 19. For God will keep his place in heaven, and from him shall men at length, and for ever, receive praise for well doing, and not from the devil for evil. Neither yet is credit always gotten with men, by following it, no more than a man's shadow is: but he that seeks to honour God in his main intention, God will cause some sprinkling of his own praise to reach unto him; and covering his sins from his divine eyes, will so far, as it is meet, cover them from the eyes of men also; and therewith, as it were, commend his virtues to their acceptation: specially, if withal, such a man join with his zealous heart towards God, good thoughts, and speeches of other men, and good doings unto them. God will provide, that others shall "mete the like measure to him again, in thinking, and speaking well of him." Matt. vii. 2.

* Austin.

As the whiteness of the Ethiopian's teeth is the more remarkable by reason of the blackness of his whole body: so are the few virtuous doings of some persons the more noted, and they the more famous for the same, by reason of their contrary course in evil. Things either rare in themselves, or not expected from such or such persons, are most observed: so are the commendable actions, in them, whose ordinary course in evil gives men little cause to look for better. And, by this means, it comes to pass, that divers, specially great men, who have many trumpeters of their few virtues, and scarce any, that dare so much as see their vices, get often times a greater name of just, merciful and pious, for some one, or a few works of those kinds, like the Ethiopian's teeth, though in a course of injustice and impiety, than many others do by the constant practice of those, and other virtues.

Seeing honour and respect is in the hand of the honouring and not of the honoured; * we are for the right valuation of men's credits in the world, to have special regard to the persons that honour others, whether by praising them, or otherwise. For fools will praise men lightly and at venture: flatterers, having *linguas venales*, for their own advantage: vain and lewd persons, such as are like themselves, in praising of whom, they praise themselves by reflection: but to be praised by them, who themselves are praiseworthy, is both a reward of virtue, and a blessing of God. But above all things, we must remember, that whatsoever either we think or speak of ourselves, or others of us, only "he, whom the Lord commendeth, is approved," 2 Cor. x. 18: without, or against whom, he that would be commended of men, shall not be defended of men, when God judgeth him; nor delivered by men, when God condemneth him.† And what doth it advantage him, that runs a race, that the standers by approve of his running, if the agonothetes, or judges of the course disallow him? And what will it avail any, if all men, and angels should extol him never so highly, and even clap their hands at him, in admiration of his excellence, if God the judge of all, and by whose sentence he is eternally happy, or miserable, should

* Cicero. † Austin.

condemn him, and cast him off, as unworthy? Let our main care then be, "that we may always be accepted of God," 2 Cor. v. 11, 12: and for acceptance with men, let us not neglect it, for that were desperateness; nor yet set our minds too much upon it, lest to procure or keep it, we lose favour in a better place. Let us rather fear, with the apostle, "lest any think of us above that which indeed there is cause," 2 Cor. xii. 6; and if we be approved, or happen to be praised by any, let us with the godly father, considering both our wants, and other things amiss, take, thereby, occasion of blushing in ourselves:* and, with another, of begging at God's hands, that he, would make us answerable to the good, that any think, or speak of us.†

CHAPTER XXXIX.

OF CONTEMPT AND CONTUMELY.

CONTUMELY hath a sting, as the saying is, and is hard to be borne either by wise or good men,‡ how mean otherwise soever. Even the worm being trodden upon will turn again: neither can any esteem, either so highly of another or so meanly of himself, as to think he deserves to be contemned by him. And therefore Jonathan, though both wise, godly and humble-minded, being reviled by king Saul, his father, scarce kept himself within the bounds of due respect either to a father or king. 1 Sam. xx. 30—34. Many, saith one, can better endure painful stripes, than contumelious words.§ And hence it is, that poverty is more grievous unto many than other ordinary crosses, because it brings with it more contempt in the eyes of others. Now, although the fear of God in a person, should, in all equity, procure him honour, and respect from all: yet as the philosopher advised, in his time, "Wouldst thou take up the study of wisdom, prepare thyself to become a laughingstock to many,"‖ &c. So in ours, and all ages, must God's most faithful servants much more arm themselves against contemptuous and

* Ignatius. † Greenham. ‡ Cicero.
§ Ambrose. ‖ Epictetus.

contumelious carriages by many, if against any other temptation: following therein the holy apostle, who "approved himself to God in honour and dishonour," 2 Cor. vi. 8; yea the Son himself, "the author, and finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before him, not only endured the cross, but also despised the shame." Heb. xii. 2, 3. And this the more carefully we must do, because the devil will never fail to stir up his cruel instruments to ply the servants of God, with the most sharp and biting rods of contempt and vility, in the midst of their other most grievous afflictions; as is to be seen in Christ our Lord, Matt. xxvii. 43, and David his type, 2 Sam. xvi. 6, 7, 8: that, they finding themselves despised in those their calamities, which should move compassion towards them in all men's eyes, might even be broken in their hearts, and so, through despair, fall from their stedfastness; as many do, not being sufficiently rooted in God's promises by faith, whereby, to bear this sore-pressing temptation.

Many buy at a dear rate the use of a few contemptuous speeches, and that, not only at the hands of superiors, and equals, but ofttimes, of meaner persons, than themselves; with whom they lose more love and respect by one contumelious passion, than they can recover by many friendly actions. Yea men, so impatient are all of contempt, are better satisfied and contented with a respectful denial of a benefit, than with a contumelious grant of it; yea, I add further, with a plain injury of some kind, than with a favour so sauced; because in some injuries, persons are thought worthy to be minded, though not for good towards them; in the other case, worthy to be despised, even by them from whom they receive good.

"He that despiseth the poor," either such in estate, or naturally impotent in mind or in body, "despiseth God that made him so," Prov. xvii. 5: at which he is always as truly displeased in a measure, as he was at the "children, upon whom he sent a she-bear to tear them in pieces, for mocking at the prophet's bald head," 2 Kings ii. 24, though he do not so visibly manifest his anger. He that despiseth a man for the grace of God appearing in him, which is too frequent in ours, and all evil days, despiseth and almost despiteth the very Spirit of God which made him so. But

he that despiseth a wicked, and vile person, in lieu of his vileness, despises the devil and sin, that made him so. And albeit the followers of Christ should not come near a proud, or disdainful spirit; yet ought they to get, and maintain in themselves a kind of spiritual highness of mind, by which, villany, and a vile person for it, may be "contemptible in their eyes," Psa. xv. 4: and vices, as said one, not only odious, but ridiculous.*

Some have gotten the fox's cunning, in scorning the grapes for their sourness, which for their height he could not reach to; affecting the contempt of that good, which they want and cannot obtain, that so they may seem to want it, upon judgment, as a thing not worthy the having; and not of impotency. So some contemn learning, others policy, others, other things, as unworthy their having; which they are indeed unworthy to have, and unable to attain to. Others partially say, with Solomon's buyer, that things are naught, Prov. xx. 14, when they would have them easily and for nought: thus Lot said of Zoar, which he would have God spare for his cause, "Is it not a little one?" Gen. xix. 20. Lastly, there are, who, in a cruel craft, use to vilify, and debase, what they can, such persons and things, as they either have oppressed unjustly or mean to oppress. Thus Saul purposing to oppress David, still terms him, in contempt, "the son of Ishai,"† 1 Sam. xx. 30. So did the Ephraimites term the Gileadites for like purpose, "fugitives of Ephraim amongst the Ephraimites, and amongst the Manassites," Judg. xii. 4: the Jews and others, Christ, a Samaritan and Galilean: and wicked men now, the faithful servants of Christ, Lutherans, Huguenots, Calvinists, and by other more contemptible names, that so they may make themselves, and others the better believe, that it matters not, what is done to, or becomes of so vile and unworthy persons. But men are men, though they be sewed in bears' skins, that dogs might worry them: and the contempt cast upon the Lord's servants, by those carnal and crafty enemies, neither makes the oppressed by them, less precious in God's sight, nor their oppressions less odious. Men, on the contrary, when they have in hand anything hard, or grievous to another, should bethink themselves of what is good, and commendable in the person,

* Seneca. † For Jesse.

that, thereby, they may breed in their hearts due respect of him, and not wrong him: if the grace of God, though in never so great weakness, that we wrong not it: if the image of his authority, wisdom or other honourable attribute, that we wrong not it: if nothing else, yet that he is a man, and so deserves all human respect to be given unto him, as the apostle bids, "honour all men." 1 Pet. ii. 17.

Men say, familiarity breeds contempt; whereupon many fearing to be contemned by others, dispose themselves to contemn others by a supercilious, and overly behaviour. But as there is a mean in familiarity, as in all other things, so they most fear contempt by it, who have least worth in them to free themselves therefrom: and therefore in jealousy, and consciousness of their own wants, take up a theatrical, and affected strangeness, and stateliness, specially towards their inferiors, and equals. Such are like the ass in the lion's skin; but, by braying when they should roar, are discovered, and become more ridiculous, than if they had always showed their asses' ears.

Considering how grievous a thing and hard to be borne, contempt is, it is wisdom in a man, not easily to think himself despised by others, and that, even for his own peace. But if an injury be offered, rather, if it may be, to impute it to unadvisedness, or negligence, or almost to any other original, in the offerer, than to contempt. Besides, an aptness to conceive a contempt shows a mind uncharitable, discontented, and usually proud withal, as looking too much for respect. Lastly, he that judgeth himself despised by another, specially being troubled at it, honoureth him therein: since it cannot be, but that he desires to be respected of him, with whose contemptuous carriage towards him he is troubled.*

CHAPTER XL.

OF ENVY.

Envy is a grief conceived at the good of another;† specially, by him that wants it himself:‡ whereof the highest degree is, so to envy it to him, as we desire it ourselves.§

* Seneca. † Plutarch. ‡ Cyprian. § Scaliger.

It is a very shameful affection, and which no man will own, how many soever use it. Some will confess and profess, upon occasion, that they hate, or fear, or scorn others; but none that they envy any.* And no marvel; for though many deserve to be hated, feared and despised, yet none, to be envied. Good and wise men are to be honoured in, and for all the good things that God hath given them; foolish and corrupt to be pitied in their greatest jollity, considering what their end shall be. And though there be cause to grieve, in a sort, at the prosperity and power of unworthy persons; yet this is not because those things, good in themselves, are good to them; but because they abuse them to their own and others' hurt.

It is like a fire,† ascending upwards, still aiming at that which is above it: for though superiors often grudge at the good of inferiors, yet rather this is indignation than envy. Or rather it is like smoke, not only in the former respect, but also for that, as smoke is greatest at first, and before the fire burn clear, but after the flame bursts out, vanisheth away: so is envy greatest in the first rising of any‡ in virtue or honour or other eminent good; but, by continuance of time and virtue in the envied, is tired out, and gives over.

He that envieth, maketh another man's virtue, his vice, as Bernard confesseth of himself;§ and another man's happiness, his torment:‖ whereas, he that rejoiceth at the prosperity of another, even thereby, if no other way, is partaker of the same.¶ Yet were this vice the more tolerable, if, besides men, ourselves, and others, we in it did not so directly wrong the Lord; and that, which is worst, even, in his goodness, which it not only perverts, as other vices do, but abolishes, as much as it can. It is, and worthily, accounted in some, horrible impiety, to complain of God, that he made the world no better: but what is it than to quarrel with him for making it so good? as in truth, an envious person doth, saying unto God, in effect, Why hast thou bestowed this virtue, this knowledge, this honour, these riches, or the like good upon this man, or woman? So the "first labourers in the vineyard said of

* Plutarch. † Politian. ‡ Plutarch.
§ Bernard. ‖ Politian. ¶ Chrysostom.

the last, to him which hired them; Why givest thou so much unto them? Matt. xx. 10—12. How injurious soever, notwithstanding, this cankerworm is both to God and men; yet is it, in this point, most just, that it punisheth and tormenteth, with no small torment, him in whom it beareth sway, consuming his heart, as rust doth the iron, whereon it groweth,* and "rotting his very bones," Prov. xiv. 30, while he liveth.

The good gifts of God, as riches, honour, wit, learning, &c., in any eminency often endanger their owners by puffing them up with pride in themselves: and if they have the grace, and modesty to use them aright, yet are they dangerous to others, becoming often fuel to kindle their fire of envy withal. And so it fell out between Joseph and his brethren, David and king Saul, and many more; verifying that of the wise man—"Every perfection of work is the envy of a man from his neighbour." Eccl. iv. 4. By means whereof it also hurts its owner, many times, by a kind of unnatural rebound, as it were, from the envious; and that so violent, as none, but God in heaven, "can stand against it." Prov. xxvii. 4. Not Adam in paradise against the devil's envy; nor David against Saul's; nor Christ against the Pharisees.' And in this regard, a mediocrity in any good is the more thankfully to be accepted from God; considering unto what danger this way, all eminency exposeth a man. The highest trees are soonest and sorest shaken with tempests.

The best remedy for preventing envy by others, is to carry a low sail in the most prosperous gale that can blow: and to ascribe the good a man hath rather to any other cause, than to himself, or his own wit, industry, or worth any way. Therein he least disparageth others that want it, and so frees himself best from their envy at him.

CHAPTER XLI.

OF SLANDER.

He is a slanderer, who wrongs his neighbour's credit, either by unjust raising or upholding an evil report against

* Basil.

him.* Of which two, viz., the raising, or receiving a false report, seeing that if there were no receivers, there would be no thieves, one of good skill in discerning, doubteth whether is more damnable. We must then get amongst others, this mark of him that shall sojourn in the Lord's tabernacle, and dwell in his holy mountain, that we neither raise, nor take, or hold up a reproach against our neighbour. Psa. xv. 1—5. Though the north wind be not always to be wished, because it driveth away rain, yet is an "angry countenance to drive away a backbiting tongue." Prov. xxv. 23. As a man may be wounded in his body with the sword taken out of his own hand; so may he in his credit, by the injurious relation of the very thing, which his hand hath done, or tongue spoken. And the same also, sometimes, being good in itself, and either wrested to some other sense than he intended; as were the words of Christ by false witnesses, Mark xiv. 58, 59: or craftily made an opportunity whereupon to build some false, but colourable insinuation of evil; as was David's being at Nob with the High-priest, by Doeg, 2 Sam. xxi. 1; xxii. 9. Sometimes, also being evil; as when men without just and necessary occasion blaze abroad the faults of others; either in idleness, for want of other talk; or of hatred, by way of revenge; or in flattery, to please other men; or in envy, as grudging at their good name. And it may well be thought, that persons oftener calumniate others of love to themselves, than of hatred to them; thinking therein to build their own credit, upon the ruins of other men's; which is, as if one, to make his own garment seem the fairer, should cast mire upon his neighbour's.

Some slanders are such as confute themselves in the eyes of all reasonable men, as either being so great, or so senseless, as are incredible;† or when the known quality of the person accused, fastens a slander upon the accusation; as did Plato's with Diogenes, when he heard one accuse him of evil. Some also there are, which turn to the advantage of the slandered's credit afterwards, namely such, as a little time will plainly manifest to have been false, and feigned. For then they, who before have

* Bernard. † Hubert.

wronged them, through credulity, will hold themselves their debtors for amends afterwards; which also it may come to pass they may make them, by not believing some ill, though just, report of them, in after time.

Slanderers of any others may rightliest be called devilish, seeing the devil hath his name of slandering.* He sometimes slanders God to men; as to Eve, of envy, in the beginning, Gen. iii. 1—6: sometimes, men to God; as Job of hypocrisy, Job i. 9—12; and, continually, man to man, by his venomous instruments thus anatomised in their parts, by the apostle. "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongue they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." Rom. iii. 13. And truly it may be, he should not much miss the mark, that affirmed, slanders and false reports to have raised as great, and many quarrels amongst equals; conspiracies, from inferiors; and from superiors, violent oppressions: as all injuries in truth offered, or other provocations whatsoever.

Men commonly with one stroke wound, or kill but one, whereas a slanderous blow reacheth to many. He wounds himself with his own slanderous tongue; his mouth making his flesh to sin: he wounds him in the ear, to whom he slandereth, specially if credulous, as the most are, in receiving false reports. And as for him, whom he slandereth, he wounds him in his good name, though him only by suffering evil, the former two as workers of it,† and withal, often makes way by so doing for further wrong to be offered him, either by himself or others. Thus Maximinus the tyrant set a-work certain vile persons to accuse the Christians of heinous evils, that so he might persecute them with more show of reason;‡ like as men, when they would have their dogs killed, give out, that they are mad.

David never complains of the sharpness of the swords of the Philistines, or other enemies; but of the sharp swords of the tongue of slanderers, he oft, and piteously complains in the book of the Psalms, as piercing deeper than the former. Psa. 3, 57, 58, 64, &c. And yet, for fence

* Taffin. † Herodotus. ‡ Eusebius.

against those sharp swords, God hath put into the hands of his innocent servants two bucklers; the one inward, viz. a conscience, upon due knowledge, and examination, excusing before God, and this is of proof: the other, such a conversation before men, as may ward our credit and good name from being wounded in the eyes of such as know us, and are equally minded, and such, as are not apt either greedily to devour, or lightly to admit slanders, and vituperies raised against us.* Yet, if the devil could by the serpent's slanders impeach the credit of God himself with our first parents, in their state of innocency, no marvel, if his serpentlike instruments can prevail with sinful men and women this way, even against God's faithful servants. We must therefore prevent slanders what we can; bear what we cannot avoid; and always be mindful by earnest prayer, as well to commend our good name to God, that he may take charge of it, as our persons and estates.

Better never accused, than quit, though after the clearest, and most honourable manner, that may be; seeing after a bold slander something ever will stick behind, by which the ignorant of the truth will be abused, and adversaries take advantage to upbraid. But how great soever matter of grief or shame unjust slander causeth; yet he that is "reproached for well-doing, hath the spirit of glory resting upon him," 2 Pet. iv. 14, and being innocent, may say, that the evil is not against him, but against another, whom the slanderer takes him to be.† The advised consideration partly of the cause, and partly of the end, which the Lord will make, abundantly sweetens all the sourness of the reproaches which he suffers: and such a one may know himself to have attained to the highest pitch of Christianity, and conformity with Christ, when for well-doing he is ill dealt with. It is kingly, saith one, say we, Christian-like, to do well, and to be ill spoken of.‡ Yet is it not enough, that when we are slandered, we be from under the desert of it directly; but we must withal consider, whether we have not drawn it upon ourselves deservedly, in regard of God, by slandering others, and that so God pays us home in our kind: or by some

* Calvin. † Chrysostom. ‡ Antisthenes.

other scandalous sin, which the Lord will punish in us by slanderous tongues; as he did David by Shimei: or whether we have not given vehement occasion of men's suspecting us; and so accusing ourselves, as one saith, of suspicion, what marvel, if others think, and speak evil of us?

CHAPTER XLII.

OF FLATTERY.

THE reproof by Diogenes is not more known, than just, upon flatterers; that as tyrants are the worst of all wild beasts, so are they, of all tame.* And yet there is, and the same very common, a worse beast, than either of them severally—to wit, a monster gendered of them both. Men flatter their superiors, or others able to oppose them; to the intent they may tyrannize over their inferiors the more freely, without danger, or fear, and so, become both flatterers and tyrants.

A man needs no other flatterer than his own partial heart to infatuate him. Notwithstanding, though few would rather buy a false, than a true glass to see their faces in, yet how few are there so truly hating their own vices, as that they had not rather seek, or at least, entertain such friends, as may rather cover their faults by flatteries, than cure them by faithful reproofs. And this benefit, men of a poor and despised condition may set against divers miseries incident thereunto, that they are thereby out of danger of being much flattered. Every one will be bold to call a poor man, fool, or knave, and to speak of and to him all the ill which he knows, and more also. Whereas the rich and mighty in the world are, for the most part, soothed up to their destruction; as the fat ox is clawed† by the same hand that strikes him down. And this is just from God upon the most of them, because they desire rather to be pleased by flatteries, than bettered by hearing the truth. Few coming near David's order, will say as he did, "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness: let him reprove me, it shall be a precious oil."

* Plutarch. † Scratched.

Psa. cxli. 5. Where yet the excuse is not nothing, which the philosopher makes; that as worms soonest breed in soft and sweet woods, so gentle and noble spirits do most easily admit flatteries.*

He that reads the epistles dedicatory of learned men's books in all faculties, divinity not excepted, if either he knew not the contrary, by experience, or suspected not, how easily ambition, the canker of learning, and mother of flattery, might grow in learned men's breasts, would soon be brought to think, that almost all the great men in the world were so good, so virtuous, so religious, such, and so wise, and worthy patriots, as nothing more could be wished or hoped for. But how oft, God and men know, whilst they labour to honour many of them unjustly, do they most justly shame themselves, in proclaiming those things of their benefactors to the world, with all confidence, which a modest man that knows the persons, cannot read without blushing; and giving men just cause to suspect, as Lactantius speaks of a philosopher in Bithynia, writing against Christians, and pouring out himself into the praises of persecuting princes, that ofttimes they write their books rather to flatter in their prefaces, than for other matters prosecuted in the treatises themselves.†

Flattery is in all cases and persons a base sin, and which will make one man, dog-like, to fawn upon another, for a morsel of bread. Prov. xxviii. 21. But in the ministers of God's holy Word, above all other men, it is most pernicious. For whereas in other cases a man makes himself a claw-back;‡ in this he makes God himself, in whose name he speaks, no better, what in him lies: besides, that he turns into deadly poison the only sovereign medicine of the soul. This made the apostle "take God to witness, that he never used flattering words," 1 Thess. ii. 5; and to protest against others, that they in doing it, "served not the Lord Jesus, but their own bellies." Rom. xvi. 18. Such are not to be accounted the servants of Christ, whom they make their stales;§ nor yet of their flattered lords and masters, how loud soever they profess themselves their obedient ser-

* Plutarch. † Lactantius. ‡ A flatterer or sycophant. § Decoys.

vants; but they have a base master, whom they serve, and are ashamed to own, their belly, and the devil in it. It is not for nothing that the prophets, and apostles have so thundered against the flatterers of the mighty, who both look so much for it, as that they think themselves half maligned, and envied, if they be but sparingly flattered,* and yet are so deeply endangered by it. Here notwithstanding, we must beware, that to avoid the note of flatterers we become not railers, affecting to "speak evil of dignities," Jude 8, either in pride, as many scorn to flatter, that is, love to revile, or out of discontentment in ourselves, or to nourish it in others.

CHAPTER XLIII.

OF SUSPICION.

SUSPICION, as it is commonly taken is, as it were, a looking under a hidden thing, with an inclination to judge it evil and amiss. It sets the person suspected in a kind of middle state, but something bended the worse way, and neither quit because he is suspected; nor condemned, because he is but suspected.†

He that should deal by all persons and things, as Cæsar did by his wife, whom he put away, because she was suspected of uncleanness,‡ though solemnly cleared in judgment; should leave himself neither friend, nor wit, nor honesty neither: for all these, and whatsoever else he hath that good is, are subject to unjust suspicion, by others. Suspicion indeed, how unjust soever is a blemish, and so may justly occasion refusal, where there is free liberty, but not rejection in way of punishment; this is to right a former wrong, by a second greater.

Some suspect all men, and some none: both are in fault; the former in the most sinful fault, the latter in the most honest, but more dangerous to themselves. And yet even for that, there want not, who by causeless suspicion teach their servants, friends, yea wives, and children also, to deceive them.§ For many respecting

* Seneca.
† Ibid.
‡ Suetonius.
§ Seneca.

more their credit with men, than a good conscience before God, by being suspected, though causelessly, grow desperate; yea think themselves half privileged to deceive them that suspect them; seeing that by so doing, they but become that, which they are deemed to be before. It is best therefore, first not to suspect without good cause; next, not to betray our suspicion, except we have great hope to overawe thereby the suspected person.

There are many, unreasonably though not altogether unoccasioned, transported from the one of the extremes formerly mentioned to the other: who being at first credulous, and light of belief, and thereby oft deceived, at length come to trust none; but would burn, as they say, their shirt, if they thought it knew their secrets: and therefore set it down for a rule, to have all men in jealousy. Such overwise men are like the fool, that because the sieve deceived him, and let his drink run out, would not trust his dish with it afterwards. Howsoever things fall out, it is best to keep our bias always on the right side; and to incline still to a better, rather than to a worse opinion of men, than they deserve. For though it be best of all, to judge of others just as they are: yet seeing, that is always hard and sometimes impossible, we shall less offend God in judging of men too well, though sometimes to our own damage, than too ill, with certain injury to them, and sin in ourselves, in the violation of the law of charity, which "is not suspicious." 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

The general cause of suspicion is the want of this true love, whose property is to believe all things, and to hope all things, which with reason, can be believed, or hoped for; and so men are in danger to presume of, and promise to themselves more good of their wives and children and friends, whom they entirely love, than there is cause; rather than otherwise. Notwithstanding, a very inordinate, and doating affection also breeds causeless jealousy. Another general cause of suspicion is the knowledge and consciousness which persons have of their own inability, and weakness any way. Of beasts and birds, hares and doves, and such impotent, and unarmed creatures; and of men and women; the childish, weak, silly and decrepit are most given to suspicion, as being most subject

to be circumvented or oppressed. So it hath been observed, how the Scythians, and other barbarous nations have laboured to supply their defects of wisdom for prevention of hurt from enemies, by excess of suspicion.* It is true, that this disease sometimes befalls very wise men; but this ariseth from another and worse cause, to wit, an evil conscience. Men muse as they use, and suspect others by themselves; as is common with all lewd persons. He that is good himself, doth not easily suspect another to be evil: nor the evil, that another is good.† Besides, an evil conscience accusing men and women, that they in truth deserve not love, nor respect, nor credit, easily persuades them, that they are not loved, nor respected, nor credited by others. Lastly, it is often a punishment from God, that as a man in debt, suspects that every bush which he sees, is a serjeant to arrest him; so they which are without true grace, and assurance of the pardon of their sins from him, should be suspicious, that every one would deceive, or hurt them otherwise. It was God's curse upon Cain, when he had killed his brother Abel, to suspect and fear that every one that he met with, would kill him. Gen. iv. 8. Notwithstanding all these things; sometimes God sends a spirit of jealousy upon interested persons, Numb. v. 12, &c., for the discovery of evils in others formerly hidden; which out of probable suspicion come to be searched into, and by searching are found out. And always we must strive for that discretion and wisdom, as not to take our marks amiss, by censuring any rashly, as Eli did Hannah for drunkenness, because her lips went, and her voice was not heard: nor yet to be so fondly charitable, as not to see the spots of men's leprosy breaking out in their foreheads.

We are not only by innocency to prevent just blame; but withal, by Christian care, and wisdom, to provide that we hurt not our good name by coming under colourable suspicion of evil. We provide things honest before God by preserving innocency; but before men, by giving no probable cause of their suspecting us. And so doing, if yet God by his providence, so ordered, that we come under it; we must bear it patiently, as a burden laid upon us by him, either to prove us; as it was not the least trial upon

* Bodinus. † Chrysostom.

Job, to be suspected by his friends and others of hypocrisy: or, it may be, to warn us to take heed of some sin, of which we are in danger, though not guilty of: it may be, for our present peace and safety, as it happened to David, by being suspected of the lords of the Philistines; or, it may be, for their just punishment, by whom we are unjustly suspected; as in the same David's case, in being suspected by king Saul of affecting the kingdom, to his own great harm in wanting him, and the worthies with him in the battle with the Philistines.

CHAPTER XLIV.

OF APPEARANCES.

It is the royal prerogative of God's infinite wisdom to judge of persons and things, as in truth, they are. It is men's, yea angels' imperfect condition, in comparison, under which God hath humbled them, to judge of one and other, according to outward appearances; leaving to him alone and the persons themselves, the hidden things of the heart. To appear evil to a righteous judgment, is always evil, whether the person be evil, or good: if evil, his evil appearance is but his inward evil manifested to be, as it is, and his inside turned outward: if good, he slanders himself in appearing evil. He that makes an ill show, we may well account evil and corrupt, ordinarily; seeing all, save in the case of some special temptation, desire to seem, as good, as they are, and to put the fairest side outward.

He that is once well known to me for good and virtuous, I will always esteem so, except I come to take certain knowledge of his after declining to evil. So, on the contrary, if I have once rightly and certainly branded a man for evil, I shall not easily come to think good of him, except his after repentance as plainly appear to me. The reason is, because bare time makes none of evil, good; or of good, evil; but only confirms men in that which they are, whether the one, or other.

Although it be not, simply, a sufficient warrant for our answerable judgment of, or carriage toward persons, or things, that they appear good or evil unto us, because we

often err in our judgments about them, through ignorance, negligence, or partiality: yet is it a certain rule, that we must never proceed, either in judgment, or practice against appearances: for in so doing, we condemn ourselves in the thing, which we approve, if it appear good, and yet we condemn it; so do we also in the thing which we condemn, by holding any course of approbation towards that, which seems evil unto us. Notwithstanding, such is the force of outward appearances, as that, in cases, they bind us in conscience, both for judgment, and practice, to that which indeed is not true, nor due; but wherein we are altogether deceived. As when we receive a matter for truth, which yet indeed is not so, upon the clear testimony of two, or three witnesses worthy of credit, so far as we can discern; or when we esteem an hypocrite cunningly dissembling, for good and godly, as did Philip, Simon Magus, Acts viii. 13. It is a fortunate sin to suspect him, without apparent cause, that dissembles: and an unfortunate virtue to be deceived in him.

The appearance of evil, by the apostle's prescript, is to be abstained from. 1 Thess. v. 22. Which yet we must not understand absolutely of whatsoever seems evil unto others; for then we should abstain from all, or the most good; whereof there is little, but some, or other misdeem it. But the meaning is properly, that, in prophesying, of which the apostle speaks, as we are to hold that which is good, and proved so to be; so if anything be delivered, of which we have a sinister suspicion, as fearing that some poison cleaveth to it, though not plainly so discerned by us, we withhold our assent, till by faith we can receive it.* And in the general, that, if a thing appear amiss, and evil unto others, especially unto weaker brethren, though it be not such of itself, yet we forbear it; except either conscience of duty simply bind us unto it, or that some greater conveniency appear in doing it, than is the inconveniency of, or to others, in misconceiving of us, and our doings.

If it be a good thing to appear good, how much more to be so indeed? It is also the readiest way, and most compendious for any to appear, and be thought wise, virtuous

* Calvin.

or godly, to be, in truth, such. For God will both, so far, as it stands with his glory, and the person's good, give occasion of manifestation of that good which is; and also provide, that others may accordingly take knowledge of it. And though many things be secret in the mean while; yet, when the Lord shall come, he will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every one have praise of God. 1 Cor. iv. 5.

The Lord bestoweth his graces upon men not only for their own good, but for the good of others also: and that, as otherwise, so for the manifesting, and showing forth the virtues of him, who hath "called them out of darkness, into his marvellous light." 1 Pet. ii. 9. Who must therefore provide carefully, both to be, as they appear, for their own comfort; and to appear, as they are, to the glory of God, and good of men. Yet so as their first, and greatest care herein be, that their appearances be not above their existences, and that they make show of no more than they have. As in the outward estate, it is the highway to poverty, or worse, for a man's expenses to exceed his receipts; and his layings out his comings in: so in the spiritual course, to overstrain in outward manifestions is a way tending to all impudent, and desperate hypocrisy, under a form of godliness, without the power thereof. And for other gifts, as knowledge, wisdom, learning, eloquence, or the like; he that in the manifestation of them will strain above his reach, may easily crack his credit, and make himself ridiculous to others; like the stage-player, who with too much wiping of his borrowed beard pulls it from his face, and so betrays his bare chin. And though a forth-putting man play his part so well, as many do, that he not only satisfy, but draw into admiration his simple spectators, who cannot discern between shadow, and body; yet shall he hardly, or not at all, escape the censure of vain-glorious and arrogant, by more judicious men.

We are often angry, and offended at others, for wronging us, by conceiving a worse opinion of us, than we deserve: whereas, in right, we should be angry at ourselves, for giving them occasion so to judge, by our ill, and suspicious appearances. For, albeit thereby, he, whose heart, and

way is upright in God's sight, lose not his comfort with him, who sees the heart: yet by his misappearances made in word, or deed, he may justly forfeit his credit with men; to whom it appertains to judge of the tree by the fruit, or leaves, or any other outward mark, or note, rather than by the sap. Cunning naughtiness hath often more credit in the world, than unadvised honesty.

CHAPTER XLV.

OF OFFENCES.

"It must needs be," considering man's frailty, Satan's malice, and God's providence, "that offences come," saith Christ our Lord: "but woe be to the person by whom they come." Matt. xviii. 6, 7. Woe be to him, first, that gives offence; next, to him that takes it, where he should not: as the same our Lord teacheth elsewhere, saying, "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me," Matt. xi. 6; that is, who takes not occasion of stumbling, to hinder himself in the way of godliness, either at my person or doctrine, or works or followers; or at the persecutions and contradictions raised against me and mine, by mine and their adversaries. And considering how many such like stumbling stones are in the narrow way of Christ, which leads unto life; he is a happy man indeed, that hath either power to remove them, or wisdom to decline from them, or nimbleness of grace to leap over them.

Offence may be given, where none is taken; as in such evil actions, as whereby others may or might be, but are not provoked to evil, and so Peter was an offence, or scandal to Christ, Matt. xvi. 23: or offence may be taken, where none is given; and so Christ, and the gospel were "a stone of stumbling," and "rock of offence to both the houses of Israel," Isa. viii. 15; 1 Pet. ii. 8; and so are many good and lawful things, yea necessary also, to many now. Offence also may both be given and taken in the same action, and that either in things simply evil; as when one provokes, and another is provoked to evil, by false doctrine, corrupt counsel, ill example, or the like; or in things of indifferent

nature, but unseasonably used, to the effectual hindrance of others, in the way of godliness. In such cases, as I last mentioned, offence is given through want of charity; and taken through want, or weakness of faith in the particular. Rom. xiv. 1.

God would have us walk in faith towards him, and love towards men, 1 Cor. xiii. 5—7; that so doing we may neither offend God nor men. But these two, which the Lord hath joined together, Satan would not only disjoin in many, but so oppose, as either may oppress or destroy other. Hence some are so strong in faith and zealous for faithfulness towards God, as they are lifted up above charity towards men; not considering how they ought to receive the weak, Rom. xiv. 1, and bear and forbear them, yea apply unto them in many things, and drive according to their pace, as fearing to offend one of those little ones. And though we may do nothing simply evil to please men; for that were to prefer them before God, nor betray the truth to gratify them; so better scandal arise, than truth forsaken;* yet are we not only to do or leave undone things of indifferent nature, wherein we have liberty, for the preventing of offence, and so to depart from our own right: but withal, both to do divers things, which, out of the case of offence, were sin, as Paul circumcised Timothy, Matt. xvii. 26; John xvi. 1; Matt. ix. 11; and for a time also to forbear both the publishing and practising of some truth, to the which, in time, we do owe testimony both ways. Others, on the contrary, are so full of charity, towards men, and fear of offending them, as that for, and sometimes under pretence thereof, they will both adventure to do many things, which God plainly enough forbids, and neglect the practice of other things commanded them, and all Christ's disciples, in his gospel. Many pretend the weakness of others, where, in truth, they show their own weakness; others, that they would do such and such things, to which indeed both conscience of God, and duty to men binds them, but for offence. And what is this offence many times? Surely often nothing else but the waspishness of some peevish and imperious persons carried against others with hatred, or contempt, or envy, or divers of those pas-

* Austin. Bernard.

sions. But this is not to respect the weak in faith, but the strong in passion.

To be offended at good things in men, which is the property of an evil mind, is to be offended at God in men:* to be offended at things indifferent, is to be offended, as it were, at men in men: but to be offended at evil, in men, in due manner and measure, is to be offended at the devil in men. In this last case no man should think much at due opposition and reproof, seeing it is not properly against him, but against Satan in him.

Readiness to take offence, and exception at and against other men in their failings, shows either weakness of understanding in the offended, when they discern not either of men's temptations, under which they lie, or what they may and ought to bear in their brethren: or it shows pride which makes men either out of envy apt to bark at others upon every small occasion, or to despise them in their wants and weaknesses, through over-valuation of their own excellency; whereas, on the contrary, they should support them, that they sink not under the burden of their infirmities: or else it comes from hypocrisy, out of which many seek to cover both from other men's eyes and from their own also, their proper beam-like corruptions by quarrelling at the motes in their brother's eye. I never knew any more forward to take offence, than such as were most apt to give it; nor any more hardly brought to bear with failings at the hands of others, than such as stood in greatest need to have both God and men to bear with no small things amiss in themselves. "Oh! hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye: and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." Matt. vii. 3.

None should plead his own offence against a thing, but, his reason; nor say this should not be done, because it offends me; but it offends me, because it should not be done, being contrary to the word of God. To say to another, do not this because it offends God, shows love to God: and, do not this, because it offends others, love to men: but to say, do it not, because it offends me, without rendering further reason against it, is from plain self-love;

* Tertullian.

and is an absurd and insolent request, and motion. All should take care not to offend one another; but none should look much not to be offended by others; for that is to nourish weakness in himself, and to provide trouble and disquietness for himself beforehand.

CHAPTER XLVI.

OF TEMPTATIONS.

God tempts a man, and Satan tempts him, and one man tempts another. God's temptations are, as he is, good and for good: and no other thing, but so many trials of the faith, patience, love, wisdom and obedience of his creatures; not that he might know them, for "he understands the thoughts afar off," Psa. cxxxix. 2; but that they might have use and make manifestation of the grace of the heart in outward acts, that others might know them, and they, themselves: or that, by accident, as they speak, the contrary vices of unbelief, impatience and the like might be discovered where they lie hid, which is good also. It is good, on God's part, and for his church, that men's naughtiness, where it is, should in its time, be discovered. Where also we gather it to be our Saviour's meaning to teach his disciples, and us all, in them, to pray against temptations, Matt. vi. 13, as they are provocations unto sin; but not, as they are moderate trials of faith: and therewith, that our heavenly Father would so sweeten the bitterness of them with the sprinklings of the sense of his love in Christ, as that they may not be excessive or intolerable. Satan's temptations, on the contrary, are as he is, evil, and for evil and sin: either outwardly by fitting of objects or stirring up of instruments or providing of furtherances of evil of all sorts: or in regard of the heart and soul, by suggestion of evil thereto, together with the so disposing and stirring up of the humours of the body, as that they may be ready instruments for the mind's inordinate passions. And albeit he cannot compel either the understanding to assent, or the will to consent, or the affections to liking, and so, not the body to the acting of evil; yet being a spirit, he is undoubtedly able to unite himself in his suggestions with

our spirits, after an unknown manner; and the same also very persuasive, specially with such, as upon whom he is by the Lord in anger let loose, for the punishment of former sins by latter. So we read that "Satan filled the heart of Ananias," Acts v. 3: "entered into the heart of Judas," Luke, xxii. 3: "works in the children of disobedience," Eph. ii. 2: and "blinds the mind of the unbelievers," 2 Cor. iv. 4. Notwithstanding all which his both power and malice, seeing he can do nothing to hurt, but by the permission of God, and power which he hath from him,* and that justly given, though, on his part, unjustly used; we are still to remember the good counsel by one given us, which is, never to fear the power of the devil more than the offence of God.† This were to fear the executioner more than the judge.

Though a man cannot be drawn away, but by his own concupiscence, yet may he be tempted otherwise, James i. 14, and be compelled to suffer temptations, which is human; and devilish only to be overcome of them,‡ by assent, consent, or liking: and where none of these three is, there is the devil's sin, and but man's cross, as one saith, in the temptation. If the thought of evil arising in the heart be such, as unto which not so much as our affections do incline, but that, on the contrary, we wholly abhor from it, in the very first rising, we may gather it to be rather by suggestion from Satan, than of our own concupiscence. And as it is not in our power to avoid the outward presentations of evil, by wicked men, to our eye, or ear; but we are compelled often to see, and hear their unlawful works, and words, as did Lot, the Sodomites, 2 Pet. ii. 7, 8: so neither seemeth it to be in our power to avoid the bare thoughts of evil, which are not always evil thoughts, by Satan's suggestions: but that he being a spirit, and spiritual wickedness, can present them to our spirits more effectually, than can any man object and offer outward, and corporeal provocation to our outward, and bodily senses.

As Christ our Lord, after the glorious testimony given of him by his Father from heaven, and by the Holy Ghost sitting upon him in the form of a dove, and by John, the Baptist both in word, and deed; "was immediately led

* Ambrose. † Gregory. ‡ Ibid.

into the wilderness, by the spirit, to be tempted of the devil:" Matt. iii. 1, 16, 17; iv. 1: so must Christians make account, after the special testimonies of God's love received, of some singular combat of temptation, for their trial; wherein, if they overcome, the love of God is thereby, as it were, sealed up unto their hearts. Holy men therefore prospering in virtue must exult, and count it all joy, when they fall into divers temptations, and are exercised in them by the divine providence,* for the trial of their faith, James i. 2: and therewith of God's gracious power, which is perfected in their weakness, 2 Cor. xii. 9, this way.

There are none of God's servants, but in the case of temptation have reaped the fruit of his singular providence towards them; sometimes, in preventing such temptations, as if they had come upon them in their full strength, would have been most like, if not clean to have overthrown them, yet to have caused their grievous fall; by which, they have, through God's providence sitting at the stern, glided, as a ship by the side of a rock: sometimes, in guiding them even in the very midst of temptations compassing them about, like so many sands: and sometimes, by helping and hauling them off, even when they have stuck fast, and been ready to sink in them. Many have been the bodily dangers known, and not known, which, by God's good providence, we have escaped: but how many more those that are spiritual, in which we had been utterly swallowed up, a thousand times, if his gracious hand from heaven had not relieved us? Now, besides those common to all, every person hath his special temptations, arising either from his temper of body or sex or age or education or custom or state or calling or company or other occasion, against which he must watch most carefully, as men used to watch in the gates of a city besieged, and in such other places, as in which the enemy is likest to make his assault; in which, if we quit ourselves as men, and stand fast, we shall have our part in his comforts, who said, "I was upright with him, and I kept myself from mine iniquity." Psa. xviii. 23.

Some have thought it a wise, Christian course in the confession of our secret sins, residing in the heart, unto God, not to use the outward voice, for fear of acquainting Satan with them thereby, and so of advantaging him to tempt us,

* Gregory.

by applying himself to that, wherein he seeth us likeliest to sin.* As it is certain that he knows not our hearts at all, as God doth, by immediate insight, but gathers them by the motions and manifestations of the body;† so, considering, that he himself is the original of all evil, mediately or immediately, it is like, he is, for the most part, acquainted with his own work in men. And so it is good wisdom in us, to prefer the best manner of acknowledging our sins to God, for the advantaging of our repentance, before the fear of discovering our corruptions to the devil.

Christ our Lord teaching us to pray, that God would "not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one," Matt. vi. 13, would warn us not to lead ourselves into temptations, nor to deliver our souls into Satan's hands; which yet we do by affecting familiarity with wicked men, which are, as it were, his brokers, by omitting duties of religion publicly or privately, or doing them unfruitfully; by neglecting our special callings and doing nothing, and thereby giving him opportunity to tempt us to do evil; and lastly, by opening too wide the windows of our outward senses towards alluring objects. By these means we not only tempt God to leave us, but the devil, after a sort, to tempt us. Prov. xxiii. 26—35. We have a promise, that "if we resist him, he will fly from us," James iv. 7; but that is, when he assaults us, and not when we challenge him, as it were, with his own weapons, wherewith he hath foiled so many. He that thus puts himself within the reach of his paws, shall hardly escape being torn in pieces by him. Let us commit ourselves unto God's safe keeping in all our ways, Psa. xc. 11; but not come in Satan's way, lest we advantage his malice, and put ourselves out of God's protection.

As the sailor's skill is seen in carrying his ship through a storm; so is the strength of faith in vanquishing dangerous temptations. Yet must we not measure the state of a man too much by that which befalls him in some, or other such dangerous trial. There are few so evil but have at times their temptations, that I may so speak, to some particular good, by which they are carried less or more that way: and few or none so good, but, on the contrary, have

* Hugo Grotius. † Austin.

temptations to evil, in which, at times, something human befalls them. Now to judge of men's persons according to some such few particulars, contrary to their general course, were partiality. The wicked fall not into evil, but lie grovelling in evil. The godly fall sometimes by occasion; but "God is faithful, who with the temptation maketh a way for him to escape," 1 Cor. x. 13, by their renewal of repentance, and victory of faith. And though in those their wrestlings they get a wrench, and limp afterwards, as Jacob did; yet they have power, and prevail, and go on, as he did, in their way.

CHAPTER XLVII.

OF CONSCIENCE.

EVERY man's conscience is, as it were, a second God within him, both to judge of his actions within, and without him, and also of his person, and personal state, and whether in it, he be accepted of God, or not. And surely, a great good work of God it is, that he hath created, and set such an overseer as this conscience is, in the soul of man, by which, if he do anything amiss, he is checked in secret, that so by repentance he may find mercy at God's hands.* And how good is it, saith one, that this worm should be felt, whilst it may be killed; and gnaw for a time, that it may be choked for ever.† As, on the contrary, if a man do the thing which good is, the conscience gives testimony of God's acceptance, and therewith boldness before him, 1 John iii. 20, 21; making him cheerful even in the sorrows of the world, quiet in its turmoil, and happy in all extremity of torments; and withal satisfying him with the testimony from within himself, against men's unjust accusations.‡ This conscience makes a man either a conqueror over the whole world, or a craven;§ and ready, specially in danger, and being wakened, to thrust his head in a hole.

But now the comforts are not greater in having this good conscience, than are the dangers in mistaking it. Many do craftily pretend it without cause, merely for their credits

* Perkins. † Bernard. ‡ Seneca. § Politian.

before men, whose hearts condemn them before God; and whom "God, who is greater, will condemn" much more. 1 John iii. 20. Many more are securely presumptuous; and being ready to believe that, which they wish true, are bold upon their good conscience so deemed; not because they know, and try themselves, and their ways before the Lord, by his Word, as they ought, but because they know not, nor will know and examine them. And this is the vulgar conscience of ignorant persons, that are free from those grosser sins, which the light of nature condemns: and of some others also not without understanding, being of bold spirits, and stout hearts, and which will not easily be in fault, either before the world, or God himself. There are besides these, whose "consciences are benumbed, and seared with an hot iron," 1 Tim. iv. 2; who by practising at first, and continuing after, in sins against their natural conscience, have obtained from the Lord this miserable privilege, and seal of their condemnation, that their minds should be void of understanding, and hearts of sense and feeling, even of heinous sins, in time. "Better," said the godly martyr, "sit in the stocks of this world, than of an ill, or accusing conscience."* And, yet, better a conscience accusing, if not desperately, than benumbed, and without feeling. The dead flesh must be eaten out of the wound, and soreness come before soundness: so must a benumbed conscience become accusing, before it can become excusing aright.

The larger conscience the better, if rightly informed. To know that to be lawful for me, which indeed is lawful, is the perfection of understanding, and strength of faith: as, on the other side, to be ignorant of it, is to be weak both "in knowledge, and faith." Rom. xiv. 1. But we must here put a difference between the conscience itself, and the use of it: for the largest use of conscience is not always best, though the judgment be. Some things are so commanded, as they absolutely bind conscience, as to love God and our neighbour, &c. Some things again are so commanded in the general, as for example, the obedience of the magistrate, keeping peace with all men, and the like; as, yet, they have this particular exception, if we can with-

* Philpot.

out sinning on our parts: for we must not do evil that we may do good. But yet in these cases we are to be as large as we can, and to go as far as possibly we can see it lawful, in conscience of the commandment of God. Other things are in their kind indifferent, and such as we perform for our profit, pleasure, credit, or other worldly commodity. In these we are to use less liberty of conscience, and to take heed that we give not the devil advantage, by some blast of temptation, or other, to blow us into the ditch, if we go too near the side of it. And in observing this difference, we have a conscionable use of our conscience.

It is a great question, whether an erroneous conscience be to be followed, or no: and as ill resolved by many affirmatively, after much dispute. Not to follow it is evil, and to do, or leave undone that, wherein, the man so doing, or not doing, condemns himself, and, therein, hath God also condemning him: to follow it, is for the blind to follow the blind, the blind person his blind conscience, into the ditch, and to have God condemning him in his Word, though he justify himself. Besides then the violation of the conscience, which is always evil, and a by-path on the left hand; and the following it, in evil, as a by-path on the right, which is sometimes worse, than the former, as in sins against the light of nature; there is a third, and middle way, safe and good; and that is, the informing of the conscience better by God's Word, and following it accordingly, unto which also every person is bound, for the duties of his general and special calling. It is the first duty of a man to inform his conscience aright; and then to follow the direction which it gives.

A good conscience is as the ship, in which faith saileth to heaven; and which, they that put away, "make shipwreck of faith." 1 Tim. i. 19. We must therefore, first get a good "conscience by the sprinkling of the heart," Heb. x. 22; with the blood of Christ from the guilt of sin, and with his Spirit from the filth thereof: and having got it, must keep the same with all care, and tenderness, specially by eschewing "presumptuous sins, in which is much transgression," Psa. xix. 13, and by which the consciences wasted and consumed, as iron by the rust. We offend too much, alas, through ignorance, and infirmity: let us not

add to provoke the Lord by sins against conscience; in which we sin against a double voice of God, first speaking in his law, and, secondly, in our own hearts. Where this is, no marvel though the voice of faith, and witness of God's Spirit cease; and that the conscience so violated excuse not, but accuse.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

OF PRAYER.

No Christian exercise hath so many counterfeits as prayer; which, whilst all would seem to practise, few in truth, and experimentally know. We may say prayers, and sing prayers, and read prayers, and hear prayers, and yet not pray indeed. Yea, we may out of a kind of natural instinct, by reason of the indissoluble relation between the creature and Creator, be carried towards God, so far as to appeal unto him, or heartily wish good from him, wherein, as one saith, the soul gives testimony to God;* and yet be far from praying aright; that is, from making known our requests to God, according to his will, with faith in his love, and the feeling of our own wants, in our hearts. Phil. iv. 6; 1 John v. 14; 1 Kings viii. 47, 52. And the reason why this true prayer is not every man's work, is, because God must first work it in men's hearts, by "pouring upon them the Spirit of grace, and supplication," Zech. xii. 10, thereby to teach them both "what to pray, as they ought," Rom. viii. 26, for matter; and how, for manner: and without the hand-leading of which Spirit we dare not in truth approach unto God;† but do, by reason of the guilt of sin, fly from his presence, as Adam did, how nigh unto him soever we seem to draw.

Where, with the apostle, I speak of making our requests known to God; my meaning is not, that we pray to the intent to inform God, but ourselves, both what our wants are, which we desire supply of, and from whom also we expect it: nor yet to move God to do that which before he purposed not, as one man is moved by the importunity of another; but to move ourselves, and make our own hearts

* Tertullian. † Calvin.

believe* the performance of that which God before both purposed, and promised: for therefore David found in his heart to pray unto God to establish his house, because God had revealed unto him, that he would build his house. 2 Sam. vii. 16, &c. And if we look for this honour at our children's hands, that they should ask of us such things as they want, and as we purpose to bestow upon them: how much more is it agreeable to our duty, and God's right, that we by prayer beg at his hands all good things both purposed, and promised by him aforehand.

By this all things are sanctified to our use, which are sanctified in themselves by the Word of God; by it we have spiritual right to our daily bread, 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5; in what abundance, and by what natural, or civil right soever we possess it before; by it we obtain many good things of all sorts, at God's hands, unto which we could attain by no art or industry or other help: as the favourites of kings get more by begging, than any other can do by any other faculty. Besides, as by conversing with men, we do by little and little, learn their manners, and have bred between them and us a certain mutual affection: so by our conversing with God in prayer, we learn the manners of heaven, and feel increase both of love in us to God, and of God to us.† Lastly, by prayer we obtain with the good things prayed for, the confirmation of our faith in God's goodness towards us, whereof he giveth us testimony in hearing and granting our requests, put up unto his Majesty. And in this respect, a good thing received by prayer hath a double good in it.

God is to be invocated not only with the heart, and with the tongue, but, as one speaks, with the hand also;‡ as "Asa and the men of Judah prayed to God, and fought with their enemies." 2 Chron. xiii. 14. And for us to ask anything at the hands of the Lord, which withal we do not offer ourselves ready instruments to effect, and bring to pass; is to tempt God's power, and to abuse his goodness. To pray for that which we desire not, is to mock with his Majesty, as Austin confesseth of himself, that in his youth he begged of God chastity and continence, but was afraid, lest he should be heard too soon of him.§ All

* Austin. † Taffin. ‡ Seneca. § Austin.

things live by heat: and the life of prayer stands in the heat of earnest and fervent desire. And how should we make account, that God should hear us, if we hear not ourselves? or look that God should be mindful of us, if we ourselves mind not, with intention of thought and desire what we ask of him?"* I, saith the father, prayed, when I was little, with no little affection, that I might not be beaten in the school.† But how many grown men pray but with little, if any, affection, that they may not be beaten in hell! Our prayers must be earnest, as well for small things, as great; temporal, as eternal; but with difference of degrees of earnestness, according to the degrees of goodness, or the necessity of the thing prayed for. But as for faith, our very degree should be the same, whatsoever the thing be, which we pray for, according to God's will: seeing the truth of his promise, upon which our faith resteth, is the same in all things small and great, and always infallible. We ought as well and as much to believe a small thing, as a great, if God have promised it, and as he hath promised, because his truth and power are as great in performing all things, though with different degrees of his love. He hath not absolutely promised temporal good things in the particulars, and so sometimes denies them in love to his children, as seeing them unfitting for them; and sometimes again he grants the desires of his enemies in wrath, and indignation; as he did of the rebellious Israelites desiring quails. Besides, if the Lord should not sometimes grant unto his that ask them, the good things of this life, even plenteously, men would think they belonged not to him. Psa. lxxviii. 24. If he should grant them to all, and always, it would be thought, that for them, and them alone, he were to be served; and so in serving him men should not be godly, but covetous.‡ But above all things, we must take heed we ask nothing evil of God; for that were to transform, and turn him, what in us lies, into Satan himself.

Whosoever, saith one, will bring his enterprises to good effect, must begin with prayer to God, and end with praising him.§ And he that begins not his work in that manner, specially being of any difficulty or weight, is in

* Cyprian. † Austin. ‡ Ibid. § Gregory Nazianzen.

danger, if it succeed, rather to end in his own praises, than in God's: and if it succeed not, he may thank his own profaneness in passing by God. And as we are to pray upon all occasions, so specially in the time of trouble; as children are always running to their fathers, but chiefly, when they get hurt or fear danger. Then even hypocrites are forced to God; and this, partly, out of a natural desire of relief, and partly, by natural persuasion of the power, and goodness of the Creator, by which he is able, and willing to help his distressed creature: and so Jonah's mariners in the extremity of the storm, "went every one to his god." Jonah i. 5. But as God is a sanctuary to fly unto for his faithful servants, in the time of need, whither he leads them by his Holy Spirit given them: so it is not faith, but impudence, for hypocrites, and such as in their quiet and prosperous estate, have not hearkened to God, speaking to them in his Word, and works, to press upon him in their affliction, for help, and succour, without true, and unfeigned repentance, and sorrow, as well, yea more, for sin than punishment, accompanying it. And "though they call upon him, he will not answer: though they seek him early, they shall not find him." Prov. i. 28. And if "he that stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, shall cry himself, and not be heard," Prov. xxi. 27, how much more he that stops his ears against the Lord calling and crying unto him in his Word! The prayers of such are abominable, and sin. Prov. xxviii. 9; Psa. cix. 7. And how miserable must his state needs be, unto whom that becomes sin, by which the godly obtain remedy against sin, and all other miseries!

A readiness to pray earnestly to God for good things, and the same improved accordingly, is a kind of pawn from heaven to him that hath it, that he shall receive the good things prayed for: both because all true prayer is by "the teaching of the Spirit of God, which searcheth the mind of God," Rom. viii. 26; 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11, and so acquaints him therewith, in whom it dwells: and also because such a disposition hath faith not only joined with it as a companion, but as the very parent of it;

which faith on man's part, ever presupposeth a promise on God's.

From the use, and fruit of this heavenly grace of prayer nothing can keep him, that keeps himself in the favour of God; though many things can from other exercises of religion. Not want of fellowship of men, nor solitariness of place, nor depth of dungeon, nor darkness of the night, nor thickness of walls neither: but his devout prayers will find way of ascending unto God.* Blessed be his name who hath provided for his poor servants in their most doleful, and desolate estate, this ready means of Divine comfort, whereof they, in whom his Spirit dwells, cannot possibly be deprived!

Prayer in secret, and by him that is alone with God, hath these advantages above that which is public, and in the church: first, that it is less in danger of the taint of hypocrisy. The proud Pharisee, as well as the humble Publican goes to the temple to pray: and "the hypocrites love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men," Luke xviii. 10; Matt. vi. 5. He that prays in secret, doth it to be seen of God. Secondly, in private, a Christian may descend to such particulars, as in public, or before others, he will not, nor ought to mention. Thirdly, he may in private, use such expressions, and outward manifestations, for the better passage of his heart's affection, specially being perplexed with sorrow or fear, as before others were unseemly, and immodest. "In that day of the great mourning in Jerusalem, when they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him in bitterness; every house and family shall mourn apart, and their wives apart." Zech. xii. 11, &c. On the other side, public prayer wants not its prerogatives: as first, that it is performed in the order, and ordinance of the Church, which the other is not. Secondly, that in the church and congregation, many agreeing touching a thing to be asked, have a special promise, that it shall be done for them of their Father in heaven, Matt. xviii. 19; upon whom they set, by their prayers, as it were, in a troop.†

* Cyril. † Tertullian.

Lastly, in our public prayers, and praises of God, we do give testimony of his providence in governing the world, and all our affairs; and that he is present with his Church, and hears their requests; for the convincing of atheists, and epicures; and confirmation of others in believing undoubtedly his care over his people and servants.

CHAPTER XLIX.

OF OATHS AND LOTS.

THERE is great affinity between an oath and a lot. Both the one and the other serve to "end controversies, and cause contentions to cease," Heb. vi. 16; Prov. xviii. 18, not easily or conveniently otherwise to be decided. In both, men as it were, renounce themselves, and all other creatures; and appeal to God's special providence. In an oath we appeal to God, 2 Cor. i. 23, as a wise and righteous witness and judge, knowing what is truth, and hating and punishing falsehood and lies. In a lot we appeal to God, as to an absolute Lord, for the disposing of persons and things, by his more singular work of providence, Prov. xvi. 33: unto which alone he that casts the lot, refers himself, if he mock not both God and man; wholly renouncing his own wit and skill every way, for the furthering of this chance, event, or lot, rather than that. Some may be, and are too scrupulous in both. But a thousand times more are too profanely prodigal of the one and other.

In an oath we desire God, as the searcher of hearts, and patron of truth to testify with us, that we deceive not: and withal, to take vengeance on us, if we do deceive.* It is a part of God's worship, though much used civilly, as civil things are religiously: in which we make clear and solemn confession of God's presence, wisdom, truth, justice, and omnipotency. There is in it no shadow of any shadow, or type: and therefore no colour, why it should not be moral and perpetual, and as lawful for us now, as for the Church before Christ.

It must be taken "in truth, in wisdom and in right-

* Chemnitius.

eousness." Jer. iv. 2. In truth of thing, and so the same known to him that takes it, in an oath assertory: and, with firm purpose of heart, in an oath promissory. There are, saith one, three bonds or degrees of confirmation of truth. First, a bare affirmation: secondly, an assertion: thirdly, an oath.* In the first of the three we only give our word, as they say, by yea or nay: "and whatsoever is above this, (to wit, in ordinary communication,) is of evil." Matt. v. 37. When our bare word will not be taken, and the weight of the matter requires it, we do pawn our best jewels, as our truth, faith, and verity, in an asseveration; as Christ our Lord confirmed divers his weighty sayings with a doubled amen. But now, if men will not accept of our pledge neither, we procure God for our surety in an oath; unto whose justice we also enter counter-bond, for punishment by him, if we deceive. And an oath being the strongest bond of truth that is, and so avowed by God himself, who, when he would confirm unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, when he had no stronger bond, interposed an oath, and sware: and when he had no greater to swear by, sware by himself, Heb. vi. 12—17; it followeth, that they, who are either without conscience what they swear, or can dispense, or be dispensed with in their consciences having sworn, though "to their own hindrance," Psa. xv. 4, are both impious towards God, and treacherous to men; and such as do really outlaw themselves from all human societies; as neither deserving credit with them, nor fellowship amongst them. Secondly, we must swear in judgment, with prudent consideration of the thing, together with the circumstances, to which we so straitly bind ourselves: as in an oath promissory, first, that it be possible unto us; else we mock both men to whom, and God by whom, we swear: secondly, that the thing be lawful which we tie ourselves unto. To bind ourselves to that which is evil by an oath, is to make sure work to do evil. Lastly, the matter must be of some weight, and such as becomes the majesty of God, whom we thus far interest in it. Now what Christian heart, any way tender of God's glory, bleeds not at the world's impiety this way? which fears not to call the

* Perkins.

glorious majesty of God, to witness, upon such trifling occasions, as for which no wise man but would be ashamed to call his meanest neighbour, yea or servant either? Lastly, we must swear in righteousness, that is, both according to his meaning, being made known unto us, to whom, and for whose satisfaction we swear;* as also for warrantable, and good ends, as the glory of God, our own and others' good, his satisfaction to whom we swear; and for the ending, and not the beginning of strife,† else we prostitute God's name either to our own, or other men's lusts.

Common and light swearing argues such a degree of irreverence of God's majesty, as we may truly, and boldly say, that the heart of a common and customary swearer is void of all grace, and true fear of God. And in weighing with myself with admiration and horror, the customary swearing amongst so many, considering that there is nothing in it, as in other sins, either profitable or pleasant or of credit in the world, or that brings either reasonable or sensual good; I have made account, that, besides imitation of one another, and custom, which makes it half natural to some, and a conscience guilty of want of credit in others, which moves many to swear that they may be believed, and want of wit in not a few, who strive, by accessory oaths, to supply their defect of matter or other inability of speech, there is in this swearing-vein a deeper mystery of mischief, than ordinary: and that indeed men take it up, specially, in the devil's intention, who sets them a-work, and not a little in their own, in direct opposition of God, and because he in his law hath so severely prohibited it. If God had not in his Word so expressly and severely forbidden it, as he hath done, certainly there would not be the least part of it used, that is. Graceless men seem therein, to affect a professed contempt of God; and withal, an opinion from men, that they fear nothing, neither God, nor devil, as they say. But God will make them feel, that fear not the "guilt of taking his glorious name in vain," Exod. xx. 7, which all creatures ought to honour and reverence.

This sin being directly against God's majesty, he reserves,

* Bernard. † Cicero.

by his providence, the punishment of it ordinarily to himself; spiritually, by hardness of heart and impenitence, in this life, usually to the end thereof: and both bodily and ghostly, by hell-fire for ever. Where it is also like, that the devils and damned men do and will swear and curse in their utter rejection from God, and intolerable torment; and so make their sin and course of blaspheming as endless as their punishment for it.

CHAPTER L.

OF ZEAL.

ZEAL is by some well defined the heat, and intention of all affections; and not either any one simple affection, or composition of divers; I add, of the understanding also. So men meditate zealously, and love zealously, and hate zealously, and rejoice zealously, and mourn zealously, and with great intention of heart. The like is to be said of all the rest of the affections. As nothing lives without natural heat; so neither lives he the life of Christ indeed, who is destitute of Christian zeal to warm him in his affections and actions, specially in matter of God's worship and service; in which whether wrong or right, lukewarmness is odious and loathsome. "The Lord will spue out of his mouth the lukewarm," Rev. iii. 16, whether wine or water.

Worldly-wise men despise zeal, as prejudicial to wisdom and discretion. So Festus judged Paul, mad; and Michal accounted David, as one of the fools, for the singular zeal of God which they manifested. But even this "foolishness of God is wiser than men." 1 Cor. i. 25. Yet is it certain, that men of great knowledge and judgment do seldom make that manifestation of zeal, which weaker persons do. The former have their spirits most in their brains, and are exercised specially in the disquisition and discerning of truth from falsehood, and of good from evil: the latter have them most in their hearts, and accordingly give themselves to the affectionate pursuit of that, which they conceive to be true, and good; and alike to the avoiding, and impugning of the contrary.

Some deceive others by the pretence of zeal, which they put on for their advantage, as stage-players do visors, till their part be played. And thus Ishmael deceived the forty men of Samaria, Jer. xli. 6, with his crocodile tears. Also there are not a few, who deceive both others, and themselves, by seeming to both, either to have the zeal of God, which they wholly want, or much more, than they have. And of this number was Jehu, how loud soever he cried to Jehonadab, "Behold the zeal, which I have for the house of the Lord," 2 Kings x. 16: whereas in truth, that, which most set him a-work, was zeal for his own house; though it may be, he thought not so. Besides craftiness in this Jehu's zeal, there are two other properties: the one suspicious, where it is found; and the other odious. The former is a furious march against evil, without an answerable pursuit of, and affection unto the contrary good. Many are vehemently carried against anti-christian devices in truth, or so appearing unto them; in whom yet appears little love and affection to that which is of Christ in their own judgment. Such are rather carried by their own flesh, than led by the Spirit of God. The other is cruelty. To be aright and truly zealous cannot but be good; seeing so many, and those wise men, desire, at times, to seem so, though they be not.

True zeal must be for God, and from God, and according to God: and having God both for beginning and end, and rule of direction, it cannot but itself be good and godly. It must be for the Lord, and for the furtherance of his glory in the obedience of his will, and in man's salvation; and not for our own, or other men's, by purposes. And if it so fall out, that by one and the same thing God's cause, and our own profit, credit, or other worldly advantage be promoted; we had need keep a jealous eye over ourselves, that we serve not our turn on God, by making his ends, as it were, a bridge to our own, as Jehu did. Secondly, as the fire of the altar came from heaven; so must our coal of zeal be fetched thence, as being the work of God's Spirit in our hearts, in the use of prayer, meditation upon the Word of God read and heard, the examples of others godly, as it were, riding in the fiery chariot of Elijah, and the like holy means; by which this Divine fire is kindled, and

nourished in men's breasts. Thirdly, it must be according to God, both for the quality of the matter, and quantity of the intention of affection. For the former, "it is good always," even then, and then only, "to be zealous in a good matter," Gal. iv. 18; and that neither lightly presumed, nor partially conceited so to be, but certainly known; else we burn not sweet incense with holy fire, but dirt and dung instead thereof. Our zeal also must be apportioned to the object, and that not only considered in itself, but also in the circumstances attending upon it: in regard whereof, things not always the most good, or evil in themselves, may justly deserve at our hands, a great bent either of love to them, or hatred against them. And amongst other circumstances we must be careful so far to have respect to that of persons, as to hate evil most in them whose persons we most love; and so in our wives, children, and friends, more than in strangers; and in ourselves most of all. And he that hath not learned to bear things amiss in others, which he will not bear in himself, hath either too much fleshly zeal, or too little spiritual, or both: which two, often lodge in one breast: by which it comes to pass, that many are earnest to "pluck the mote out of their brother's eye, that perceive not the beam in their own." Matt. vii. 3. Notwithstanding, as it doth not detract either from the dignity, or necessity of natural heat in our bodies, that there is found in some, an aguish and unnatural heat far greater than the natural: so neither, in truth, and just valuation of things, doth it derogate from the excellency and necessity of the heat of true zeal, and life of grace in the godly, consisting therein, that many are zealous amiss, whether knowing, and so deceiving others; or not knowing, and so deceiving themselves, "of what spirit they are," Luke ix. 55.

CHAPTER LI.

OF HYPOCRISY.

HYPOCRITES have their names from stage-players,* as rather playing than working that which is good and virtuous;

* Chrysostom.

and the same, only upon the stage, and to please lookers on. And as amongst stage-players the same persons act divers parts, at divers times, and those very different one from another; so is it with the actions of hypocrites. They hold no correspondence one with another; but some of them cover, and others discover their master's shame; as Noah's sons did their father's. And as such persons are never constant, for none can long play the counterfeit untired;* so neither are they free in any one kind of good; but have a goodness rather like the water in a dead pit, forced out at times with buckets; than of a living spring, which sends out its streams freely and constantly. Yea further, as Jacob, though for his father's blessing he covered his hands and neck very cunningly, was betrayed by his tongue and voice: so, hardly can a counterfeit carry his matters so close, but that ofttimes, even in one and the same work, there will be found a jar of the parts one with another; so as either the tongue will check the hands, or the hands the tongue, or both mutually; to the showing and shaming of all.

When great hypocrites and deep dissemblers are left of God to fall into any gross or scandalous evil, they seldom or never recover their former show of religion: neither, as one saith, will the lamb's-skin, which the wolf wears, being once shorn, ever grow again: but God in judgment leaving them in some special temptation to gross wickedness, in which they lose their credit in the world, which alone they sought, and so break the hedge which formerly restrained them, doth punish their former close dissimulation with after open profaneness. Young hypocrites commonly prove old atheists.

It may well be said, as it is in the proverb, that, Hypocrisy is spun with a fine thread: considering how hypocrites deceive, and overreach others, and ofttimes, weaker persons those, that are wiser than they; how much more, considering, how thereby they deceive themselves. In which latter there is a transgression and evil both in deceiving, and being deceived. For albeit a man may often without sin be deceived by another, yet never so by himself: seeing the spirit of a man may, if it do not always, know the things

* Seneca.

of a man. 1 Cor. ii. 11. This self-deceivableness ariseth in men either from presumption, when they think they need not; or from sloth, that they will not take the pains; or from an evil conscience, that they dare not try and examine themselves, and their works and estates with God, as they ought. Besides hypocrites by false appearances getting credit with others, come to esteem themselves better than they are, because others esteem them so.*

This hypocrisy is indeed not only a base, but a foolish evil. Base in dissembling the evil, which it hath, and is ashamed of: and in counterfeiting the good, which it hath not, and is ashamed to seem to want. And therefore notably proud people, scorning, as they used to boast, to dissemble, seldom come under this coat; but do usually appear to men, as void of grace and goodness, as they are before God. Foolish it is, if in nothing else, yet in covering from men that evil, which God seeth, and hateth, and will punish with infinitely greater both loss and shame and torment, than any, or all men will, or can: and not only the evil dissembled, but therewith the dissimulation also, which men legally do not. Great must the hypocrite's portion be in God's plagues: with whom, as the principal, the apparently evil, as but an accessary, hath "his portion appointed." Matt. xxiv. 51.

It is one thing to do a work in hypocrisy, which only hypocrites do; and another thing to do it with hypocrisy, which is still ready, alas, to mingle itself with the work of God's grace in all our best actions; as Tobiah, and the rest of the heathen would have mingled themselves with the Lord's people in the building of his temple. The same may be said of unbelief, indevotion, and the like corruptions.

It is no marvel, that atheists and epicures judge all that make show of piety and godliness, specially above the size and custom of the times conceited, fantastical and very hypocrites; seeing they measure others by themselves. And knowing, that if they should make the semblance of godliness, which the others do, it should be no better in them than hypocrisy, and fancy; they conclude the same roundly upon others, from their own premises. And of

* Gregory.

this they are also desirous to persuade both themselves, and others: themselves, for a kind of envious comfort in evil, that others are as ill as they, and for their own hardening out of that imagination: others, for their miserable credit, when they are not thought lewd alone. They being themselves Sadducees, would fain think others, and have them thought Pharisees by others. A tang* of this also is to be found even in them who are not void of all goodness, towards such as a little overstep them in the ways of godliness.

Though hypocrisy be in itself a very odious thing, and so evil as it corrupts all good in him, in whom it reigns; making both his works of devotion and of mercy abominable to the Lord: yet considering how little true good is in the world; it were well, for others, at least, that there were more hypocrisy in many, than there is. Which would help both to repress in them many gross enormities, for shame, and to keep credit with men; which now, shamelessly, they practise: and also provoke them to many outward good works, for the good of others at the least, which now they wholly, and boldly neglect in professed godliness and dishonesty.

Besides, hypocrisy yields, though it intend it not, a full and loud testimony to true virtue and godliness; seeing no man, ordinarily, desires to seem but good. Now if it be a thing so desirable, even by their testimony, who want goodness, to appear good; how much more to be so indeed. What is the empty shadow to the solid body? To shut up this head: as the shadow follows the body, so doth the name and fame of good, true goodness, with equally-minded men. And instead of a thousand compasses of device which men fetch about to obtain the name of good and virtuous, this one short, and right on way, of being good indeed would serve the turn for the procuring it from all indifferent and wise judges. The most compendious way to this honour is, that in truth a man be, as he would be accounted,† saith the heathen: how much more ought Christians, who are persuaded of God's providence in ordering this, and all his other blessings upon themselves, and others, thus both to say, and think, and proceed accordingly!

* Rank taste. † Cicero.

And look what recompense of honour or other reward, this plain and homely uprightness, which of all other virtues, *laudatur et alget*, is denied from men, God who seeth and loveth it, will plenteously supply. "Blessed are the perfect in way: who walk in the law of Jehovah," Psa. cxix. 1. To choose the right way of God's law first, and then to walk uprightly in it, is to be guided by God's own Spirit to heaven.

CHAPTER LII.

OF SIN, AND PUNISHMENT FROM GOD.

WHATSOEVER swerveth from the law of God, written in the table of the heart, or of stone, whether in our nature, or actions, either in the not being of that which should be, or being of that which should not be, which two are always joined together in original sin, and often in actual, is sin, and evil: yea, the greatest; yea, the only evil indeed. Sin is worse than the devil, as having made him evil, whom God made good: yea, than all punishments, yea, than hell itself, which God prepared, and made, and is therefore good, to punish sin and sinners by. Matt. xxv. 41. And accordingly, it was godlily said of one, that if sin and hell were set before him, the one on the one side, and the other on the other; and that he must needs go through the one of them; he would rather enter upon hell, than sin.* But blessed be God, who will assuredly keep them from hell, whose hearts are so set to keep themselves from sin, by his grace.

This sin is incident only to reasonable creatures: God the Creator being above sin; and unreasonable creatures, beneath it. For the disorders in brute beasts, they are not sin in them, to whom there is no law; but punishments of man's sin against God, who hath "subjected them to vanity," Rom. viii. 20, thereby to testify how greatly he is offended at man's, for whom at first he made them, and all other creatures in a more excellent state.† The case of children is otherwise, as being reasonable creatures, made after God's image in Adam, and having the law written in their

* Anselmus. † Beza.

hearts, as a subject capable both of good, and evil, which brutes are not.

Although sin be only in reasonable creatures, yet is it a most unreasonable thing; otherwise it were not sin, save as it crosses true reason, either by lust against reason, or show of reason against truth. So for particular enormities; the more unreasonable, the more sinful: as lusts against nature; adultery in a married person; pride in a mean; prodigality in a needy; covetousness in him that abounds in riches; profaneness in a preacher; and so of all other vices.

All sins, save that first of Adam, and man's very last, are both sins in themselves, and effects of former sin, and causes of latter: and that not only by God's just, though severe judgment, in punishing one by another; but oftimes also by a kind of natural, and necessary coherence and affinity. Sometimes one sin brings on another by provoking unto it, as rash anger unto strife, Prov. xv. 18; sometimes, to back it, as Peter's denying of Christ did his after forswearing him, Matt. xxvi. 70—74; sometimes, to conceal it, as all other evils draw on lying, and theft, and murder, many times; sometimes, to maintain it, as pride doth covetousness and oppression; and sometimes, to countenance it, that it be not disgraced, as Herod's rash oath drew after it the beheading of John the Baptist. Matt. xiv. 7—10. And of these commonly a lesser draws on a greater, as lesser sticks set the greater on fire. So also by those degrees of iniquity do men proceed in one and the same particular enormity: in which, as in a chain drawing from heaven to hell, each link moveth his next, from the one, and smaller end, to the other greater. First, there is in a man concupiscence, by which he is drawn away from God, James i. 14, unto whom he ought to cleave with the whole heart. And having once let go his hold on him, the true and unchangeable good; he is forthwith seized by some appearing and counterfeit good, and thereby enticed; as the bird by falling on the ground is taken in the snare, from which, whilst she held aloft, she was free. Upon this inveigled affection, and deceived judgment thereby, comes consent of will to have or do the thing which is evil, called by the apostle the conception of lust: which that it may bring forth sin in outward act and ex-

ecution, wants nothing but opportunity. This sin perfected by a continued course therein without repentance, brings forth death unavoidably. He therefore that begins to do evil, or to forsake that which is good, in the affection of his heart, is like him that puts his feet into a pit, and lets the hold of his hands go; and without God's gracious hand catching hold of him, can never stay, till he come to the bottom of the pit of perdition. And no marvel of this progress in evil, seeing every sin, how small soever in degree, hath joined with it the contempt of God. As therefore the safest way against the flame is to quench the spark, by which it may be kindled; so against this fire of hell, to quench betimes the spark of concupiscence and lust. This is done, partly, by withdrawing from it the occasions, and incitements of, and unto sin, which are as fuel for nourishing it; as, if it be the lust of anger and revenge, not to give ear to words of provocation, Eccl. vii. 21, but to be as a deaf man that hears not, Psa. xxxviii. 13; if of uncleanness, not to look upon a maid, Job xxxi. 1; if of drunkenness, or excess that way, not to look upon the wine, when it is red, Prov. xxiii. 31, &c. The second help is by smothering the corruption in the beginning; which as fire, if it have no vent, goes out; but getting passage, breaks out into a flame. Lastly, as water, fire's contrary, quencheth it; so do the spiritual means of grace, as prayer, meditation upon God's Word, and the like, quench by degrees, the sparks of sin, and fire of hell.

The greatness of the sin is not always to be esteemed by the thing done. For, as much crookedness may be found in a small line; so may a great evil be committed in a small matter. Hereupon, he that but "gathered sticks on the Sabbath with a high hand," viz., in contempt of Moses, and of God in him, was to be "stoned to death without mercy," Numb. xv. 33—36. The sin is also greater, as the temptation or occasion is less; and therefore the rich man, that having many sheep of his own took his poor neighbour's lamb to entertain his stranger withal, 2 Sam. xii. 25, was adjudged worthy of death; whether we take the words, as they seemed to David, or as Nathan meant them. Likewise, the forecasting of evil exceedingly aggravates it; as with him who "devised mischief upon

his bed," Psa. xxxvi. 4, and after, set himself in a way to practise it: others are overtaken by sin, but such overtake sin, Gal. vi. 1. So doth it not a little, if men sin, that they may sin; as it seems many swear, that they may swear: and as Austin confesseth of himself, that being a boy, he stole apples, and cast them away, when he had done. He stole, that he might steal. Lastly, sin becomes more sinful, if it have scandal, and offence of men, or other damage joined with it. Yet even for the least sin; if any sin by any, being against God's infinite majesty, may be accounted little, if God should press the same upon the conscience, and suffer Satan to urge it to the full, it would be a burden intolerable, and such as neither the heavens could bear; for the angels that sinned were cast from thence: nor paradise; for Adam for transgression was driven from thence: nor the earth; for that swallowed up Dathan and Abiram for their sins: neither could any men or angels undergo it, without being borne down into the bottom of hell by it; and there only it rests, as in its proper centre. Happy are they, who in the sense and feeling of the intolerable burden thereof, come to Christ by faith, that he may ease them! Matt. xi. 28.

The sin against the Holy Ghost, which shall never be forgiven in this world, or the world to come, is not only committed by them who have sometimes professed the gospel; but by others also, though never coming so far, but being convinced of the truth thereof, do maliciously hate, blaspheme and persecute it, and, therein, sin against the work of the Holy Ghost in their own hearts. And this Christ insinuates against the Scribes and Pharisees, Matt. xii. 31, 32, who yet never came to profess Christianity. The reason of the irremissibleness of this sin is not any defect either in the mercy of God or merits of Christ; as though the evil in it were greater, than the good in them; but for that God hath set those bounds of his grace and mercy, that he will never vouchsafe faith and repentance to that person, who once so despiteth his Spirit, in that, its holy work. And considering how oft the Scriptures speak of this sin, not only for warning of persons in themselves, but also for direction touching others so sinning; it is to be feared, that the same is more ordinary,

where the gospel is preached, than the most make account of; and that many maliciously hating and persecuting, specially after some singular profession made and forsaken, true and conscionable gospellers, would do the same by the gospel itself, if they were not restrained by fear of men, and shame of the times. Matt. xii. 31; Mark iii. 28; 1 John v. 16; Heb. vi. 5, x. 29; 2 Pet. ii. 20; Jude 13.

The Lord often punisheth men in the same kind, wherein they have sinned, and causeth to be meted unto them with the measure, wherewith they mete to others. Matt. vii. 2. Thus he drowned Pharaoh in the sea, who had formerly drowned the Israelitish infants, Exod. i. 22, xiv. 23: and served king Adoni-bezek, as he had served other kings before. Judges i. 6, 7. And this God doth to make his justice the more conspicuous; and that men's punishments may be as glasses, wherein their sins may be seen more clearly, if not for their repentance, yet for the warning of others.

When I seriously weigh and consider the fearful and grievous punishments, which God so good and gracious hath partly executed, in this life; as upon the old world; Sodom and Gomorrah; Korah and his company; and the like: and partly threatened; as in the end of this life, in the soul; so in the end of the world, both in soul and body; and the same for measure, intolerable; and endless in continuance: Lord, think I, what sin can procure such punishment? But when, on the contrary, I consider the horrible contempt of God and his Word, even in them to whom it is daily and diligently offered: Lord, think I, what punishment can be sufficient for such sin? What is it then? Man is fearfully wicked in sinning: and God fearfully just in punishing, where, by faith and repentance, mercy is not obtained. "My flesh trembleth for dread of thee: and I fear for thy judgments." Psa. cxix. 120.

CHAPTER LIII.

OF REWARDS, AND PUNISHMENTS BY MEN.

MEN that are able and ready accordingly to reward the virtues of good men, and well-deserving, do therein not only give them, and God in them, their due; but do give

others encouragement also to apply themselves to virtuous courses, which find so good acceptance, and reward at men's hands, specially at theirs who are of place, and ability in the world. Whereas, on the contrary, for such to favour wicked and lewd persons, is really to invite, and persuade men to evil, and little better than plainly to hire both them and others to do naughtily. The former in that, their approbation, and remuneration of goodness and virtue, bear the image of God, who plenteously rewards the well-doers: the latter plainly resemble the devil, who offered Christ the glory of the kingdoms of the earth, if he would fall down and worship him. Matt. iv. 9.

It is a known, and approved saying, that by rewards and punishments societies are preserved.* And of these two, though occasion of rewards be more to be desired, yet the execution of punishments is more diligently to be looked unto, for the preserving of human societies. The reason is; because, whereas virtue, as the philosopher said, rewards itself, or more truly, if it be true, expects its reward from God; vice and villany, on the contrary, can be restrained in the most, and worst, only by the fear of punishment.† Neither serve human laws to make men good, but to keep them from such outrages, and extremities of evil, as into which otherwise they were in danger to break. The special use of the law of God itself, where, by his Spirit, he puts it not in men's mind, and writes it not in their hearts, is to restrain lawless persons, as murderers, whoremongers, and the like, 1 Tim. i. 9, 10; how much more of men's.

There is then a merciful cruelty, when men save, by severity, the persons themselves that are punished, and others also; the punishment reaching to one, or a few: and the fear and warning to many. There is, on the other side, a cruel mercy, when men by sparing, spoil both the persons offending and others, who by their impunity take boldness to offend. This foolish pity spoils the city, if the magistrate use it: so doth the fond love of parents, the family. This love, Solomon respecting the effect more than the affection calls "hatred," saying: "He that spareth the rod hateth his son." Prov. xiii. 24. Notwithstanding

* Cicero. † Bodinus.

this, and that God hath left power and charge also of punishments in all societies, family, church and commonwealth, which they that exercise, bear the image of God's justice, and holiness; the honour whereof they are to preserve, and to breed, and continue in them over whom they are set, a reverend awe of their authority for their good: yet considering both man's frailty, and proneness to offend; and misery in suffering for offences: all in authority should still incline to the more favourable part, and rather to come short, than to exceed measure in punishing even where the offence is evident; and where it is doubtful, to forbear, at any hand. He that punisheth another, whether as judge or executioner either, must know legally, that he hath done evil, and deserved it: otherwise the authority of the whole world cannot bear him out, from being a murderer before God. The law which saith, "Thou shalt not murder," forbids specially violence in judgment. Besides, punishments must be administered with sorrow and commiseration; as rewards with joy and gladness. It is pity men should deserve punishments; and deserving them, pity but they should have them: yet are we to pity them in their misery also; which he that doth, remembers himself to be a man. Lastly, it is worthy the observing, which one hath, that in all punishments respect is to be had to things to come, rather than past.* For howsoever the punishment be just only in lieu of the offence committed; yet is it profitable only, because it tends to prevent after offences, either in the person punished, or in others warned by it. And hereupon another, would not have a wise man punish, because an offence is committed, but lest it should be committed afterwards: of which the former renders this reason, that things past cannot be recalled; but things to come may be prevented.†

Temporary torments, specially those more great, are grievous to conceive of; how much more to undergo: yet will the sad and serious consideration of those that are eternal eat them up, as it were, and make them seem nothing in comparison. Whereupon it was, that Polycarpus told the proconsul, who threatened to burn him, if

* Seneca. † Plutarch.

he did not renounce Christ: "Thou threatenest me with the fire, which would burn for a time, but presently after should be extinguished: because thou art ignorant of the fire of the judgment to come, prepared for the eternal punishment of the wicked."* "Fear not them," then, "which kill the body; but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Matt. x. 28.

CHAPTER LIV.

OF THE AFFECTIONS OF THE MIND.

Our affections, as love, sorrow, fear, and the rest, are common to us with brute beasts; which therefore the understanding must order, that they be not brutish; and with them, the will, for its yielding of consent to their motions or withholding it from them. But as the little sticks set the greater wood a-burning: so do they most what set the understanding and will a-working in sensual objects. For example. One sees a naturally pleasing good thing, but belonging to another, or not to him; as Achan's wedge of gold: his affection of love and appetite is inordinately carried unto it, and is ready to solicit the will to consent to the getting, and enjoying of it. But now, if the understanding do its duty, it steps in, represseth the affection, and restraineth the will, by discerning and discovering, that the good thing desired is another's, and therefore not to be desired, or had by him. But as the fumes arising from a corrupt stomach darken and dim the bodily eyes: so in sensual persons the understanding is commonly, besides its own inherent blindness, so corrupted with partial and brutish affections, as that it neglecteth all due search, and disquisition; and unadvisedly judgeth that good, which is pleasing to appetite, and sense: and so being swayed, and led by the affections, as a foolish wagoner by his horses, draws with it the will's consent; which obtained, the evil is done in God's account, and wants only opportunity for outward effect.

Although the seat of the affections be the soul, whose

* Eusebius.

motions they are, and not the body's; yet do they more or less vehemently and efficaciously act, and exercise themselves, as the blood, and spirits, the soul's immediate instruments, are more or less fitted to their hand. Hence is it, that anger in the heart moved by some occasion, is so vehement in a choleric body; sorrow, or fear in a melancholic; and so for the rest.

These our affections are either merely natural in us; or sanctified by grace; or morally corrupt and inordinate. Nature, and so natural affection, is content with a little: corruption not with a great deal: as the thirst, which is natural, is quenched with a draught, or two; but that which is unnatural and aguish, not with a whole vessel of drink. This and the reason of it he lays down wittily, that saith, natural desires are finite, but those arising from false opinion have no limits: as he that goes his right way, hath some end of his journey; he that wanders, none.* And as for sanctified affections, they, alas, are too feeble in us: and as Jehu was known by his furious marching; so may they be, by their soft and lazy pace: neither, if they were excessive, were they sanctified, that is, directed by grace, and good reason: nor are they easily so, if they be anything vehement; but have commonly too much flesh mingled with them. And no marvel: for setting our "affections above, where Christ is," Col. iii. 2, and whither the Spirit of grace advanceth them, we climb up the hill, and withal draw after us the clog of our flesh, lusting the contrary way, Gal. v. 17: whereas sensual men led by their lusts, go down the hill, and are carried headlong to evil. Besides, sensual objects are present to the outward senses, by which the affections are moved: but things spiritual are seen afar off, 2 Pet. i. 9, as needing the direction and discourse of faith for provoking of affection unto them; which makes their work in this case more weak and slow. Yet being created faculties, they are the greater the better, if rightly ordered. And so it is not improbably said by some, that Christ had the greatest fear, sorrow, anger, &c. upon him, that ever man had, or could have. But as the stronger the horses in the wagon

* Seneca.

are, though the better, yet the more dangerous; so are those horses of the soul in us, lest by misguidance they overthrow all.*

And as for violent, and inordinate affections; the person, in whom they are found, how wise, or well meaning soever otherwise, or howsoever bent upon some good course, is no more to be trusted to; than the chariot drawn by unbroken horses, going, for the present, quietly on, and in a good way, but which will quickly take a toy, and endanger the overthrow of all.

As in a tempestuous sea, the waves, in the same place, are sometimes lifted up; and the depths, at other times, disclosed: so in an unmortified, and passionate heart, one unlawful, and inordinate passion often breaks into the contrary, as evil, and inordinate, as it: as did Amnon's inordinate love to his sister Tamar into as excessive hatred. 2 Sam. xiii. 2. So some of extremely prodigal, become extremely covetous; of credulous, suspicious; of mad-merry, sad without measure. The cause is, for that such persons are not led by the lore of reason, or conscience; but carried headlong by pangs of passion; and withal driven by the devil, and so must needs go, and run to; though up and down the same way; and forward and backward, after his will.

As in a fish-pond some one great pike devours both the lesser fish of other kinds, and of its own also; so in divers, some one affection is so predominate, as it eats up not only reason and conscience, but with them, almost all other affections. Many are so soured with discontentment and sorrow, that they appear to have place left for nothing else in their heart: some are set upon so merry a pin, as if they had the image of laughter which Lycurgus set up for the Lacedemonians ever before them. Others again are so overgrown with anger, as they seem to have no blood but choler running in their veins. If any danger be coming towards them, which all reason would teach them to fear specially, they will pick a quarrel at something in or about it, to set anger, and indignation a-work. If God send grievous crosses upon them, and thereby call them to mourning; it shall go hard but they will find what to be

* Plato. † Lactantius.

angry at, in some person, or other, to turn the stream that way.

It is some disparagement ordinarily to the government of a wise man, specially in their eyes who have no share in the motive, to make great manifestation of affection, one or other: and therefore Joseph when he would make himself known affectionately to his brethren, commanded all the Egyptians out of the place. Gen. xlv. 1. So Zechariah foretelling the extreme mourning, which shall be by the families in Jerusalem, when God shall pour upon them the Spirit of grace, shows, that every family shall mourn apart, and their wives apart. Zech. xii. 10. Yet are there cases, in which it stands as well with wisdom to manifest great affections, as with grace or nature to have them. And this David prudently considered, and practised, at Abner's funeral. 2 Sam. iii. 31.

We should order our affections before we have any special provocations; and set down with ourselves, what may be, beforehand, that if such or such a thing come to pass, we will allow it such and such a measure of its compatible affection, and no more: that as fierce dogs, though provoked by other men's voices, yet are quieted by their master's voice, to which they are used; so the fierce motions of the mind may be, by reason's voice, with which they are formerly acquainted, for that purpose, made still, and quiet.*

These motions and affections are well ordered, when they rise and fall according to the variety, and weight of objects.† To be greatly affected with small occurrences, is womanlike weakness: little, with great matters, stoical blockishness. And methinks, he that hath a life to lose and considers it well, should not easily come to fear excessively the loss of his goods: nor he the loss of his bodily life, who hath a soul to lose, or save for ever. And therefore Christ our Lord bids, "Fear not him that can kill the body," and then hath shot his sting, and can hurt no more; but "fear him, who can cast both body and soul into hell." Matt. x. 28.

As physicians fearing a man's over bleeding at the nose, open a vein in the arm, thereby to turn the course of the

* Plutarch. † Lactantius.

blood another way: so we, finding one affection, or other inordinate in us, and like to overflow; if we cannot so rule and repress it, as is meet, by good reason, shall do well to set some other affection a-working, by some moving and lawful object; that so the stream being turned another way, we may disappoint the passion, which we cannot so well order. For example: If a man find himself in danger of exorbitancy in anger, it is good for him to set a-foot sorrow, or fear, by some such lawful object, as God offers him: and so for other passions of the mind. Or if the stream of the affection happen to run so strong, as that we cannot well turn it another way; it is wisdom to get it upon some such object in the same way, as wherein it may freely take its scope: as the horse that cannot be stayed, yet may be guided into such a way, as in which there is no great danger, how fast soever he runs; which may also be so heavy, as will keep him from running fast in it.

Thus, if sorrow, fear or anger be like to work inordinately in us, let us set them upon our sins; and so the danger of all excess will soon be over, for the most part. And, indeed, it is no small point of Christian wisdom, for a man to provide fit matter for his affections especially predominant in him, to be exercised in. "Is any among you afflicted?" saith the apostle, "let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms." James v. 13. And by this means he shall neither lose his own advantage for good; nor further Satan's for evil, by any passion or affection in him.

CHAPTER LV.

OF FEAR.

FEAR hath only evil for the object; either evil in itself, as is sin; or to him that feareth; as are the effects thereof, temporal, or eternal punishment, and the anger of God inflicting them. It is a base affection, and the cognizance of the creature's infirmity, showing him to be subject to evil; from the fear whereof only the Creator is absolutely free. And so, whereas courage, and stoutness of heart, though none of the best, procure unto men a kind of

respect in the eyes of others; fear, though better used, makes them more contemptible. A lion is more regarded, than many oxen; though one ox be of more use both for labour and meat, and otherwise, than many lions. But God loves rather a good, than a great heart. And in the law, God's sacrifices were to be offered of lambs and kids and doves and pigeons, fearful creatures, and innocent withal; and not of lions and eagles; though they be the kings of beasts and birds.

There is in man, a threefold fear of God, arising from a threefold apprehension of his majesty: the first, is of God, as our glorious Creator, and Governor; and this is natural: the second, as of a just, and angry Lord; which is servile: the third, as of our gracious Father in Christ, called and being filial. All these are found in the true fearers of God in this life; though the middle, least, which "perfect love driveth out," 1 John iv. 18, and in them, the last only reigns. To fear sin more than punishment, which they of the last sort do, is to love God more than ourselves: on the contrary, to fear punishment more than sin, which the second disposition leads to, is to love ourselves more than God; considering, that by sin God is offended, and we by punishment: and that sin in the committing of it seems good to us, and ill to God; and that punishment, in the executing of it, is good in respect of God's justice, though evil to our sense.

The holy fear of God, the Scriptures put many times for the whole service of God, as being a general virtue diffusing itself into all the parts thereof. For we must trust to God with fear, love him with fear, obey him with fear: and in conscience and consideration of his excellency and our own frailty, "work out our salvation with fear and trembling," Phil. ii. 12; that is, do all things tending thereunto, with that affection of heart. And considering our boldness, as king Saul saith of himself, to step aside, to our destruction; it is worthily advertised by the wise man, that "he is blessed, who feareth always," Prov. xxviii. 14: that is, who sets himself in God's sight continually, making him the judge of all his ways and works, out of a serious consideration within himself, unto what sin and misery for sin, he is exposed, poor creature as he is. Besides, this

fear of God, is called the "beginning of wisdom," and that partly, because the true reverence of his majesty in the heart makes a man careful and studious to know and do the things which please him and to avoid the contrary: as also for that God blesseth such an affection with good understanding, and reveals his secrets to them that fear him. Psa. xxv. 14. Whereas, on the other side, a profane heart is commonly punished with a foolish head, and mind void of discerning, specially in particulars, what is good, or evil.

God would have them that hearken unto him, not only safe, but also secure, and quiet from fear of hurt, and evil. Prov. i. 24. For which purpose the Scriptures so oft both exhort them, not to fear, and propound arguments of encouragement unto them, not to exempt their hearts wholly from fear, for that were to exalt them above the condition of mortal and frail men; but so far to bring that unruly passion under the regiment of faith, as that by it a man be not drawn to do anything evil, and unlawful, nor to forbear any requisite good in his place, nor to be divided in his heart, nor to shame himself, nor to discourage others in that which is good. It is wisdom for us so far to fear an evil, as to quicken our careful use of all good means to escape it; or being a cross inevitable, to prepare us the more patiently to bear it, as not coming unlooked for: in which regard, Christ spake to his disciples, beforehand, of their approaching persecutions, that when they came, they should not be offended. John xvi. 2. And further to fear evil, is an evil both of sin and punishment; and that, of unbelief specially, if being hindered by fear we dare not do that, which appertains to our calling, or be driven by it, to do that which becomes not piety.* Otherwise, to be fearful of heart, and yet not to be overcome by it, more commends a man, than if he were without fear. † This fear though it be something excessive, if not extreme, hath this good in it, that it makes a man the more circumspect, and causeth him to call his wits, and other helps, about him, as men in danger use to do. It helps in deliberation and preparation, though it hinder something in execution. But and if it once get dominion over a man

* Calvin. † Chrysostom.

and rule in him, there is no such cruel and tyrant-like master within or without him. It makes him cruel, and a tyrant to others, from whom it may any way be suspected that danger can come unto him; and provokes to the oppression of whatsoever is in his way. Neither yet doth it exercise less tyranny over the fearful himself. It bereaves him of the use of understanding, drives sleep from his eyes which sorrow procures, disables the tongue from speaking, and all the other parts of the body from doing their office, by withdrawing the blood and spirits from them to the affrighted heart. And, whereas, men by serious consideration and thought of things in hand are holpen against most other affections, the objects of fear the more they are minded, and thought upon, are the more terrible. Some have through extremity of fear become grey-headed in a week or two, as one Mr. Baynings of London, as I have heard: and some in one night, as is testified of the Duke of Mantua's kinsman, Franciscus Gonzaga, unto whom, being committed to prison upon suspicion of treason, thought and care, in one night brought grey hair, by subduction of nourishment.* And, if we would further and in another and worse kind, take knowledge of this tyrant's cruelty, in constraining even good men to do evil; we may see Abraham, for fear, denying his wife; David, his reason; Peter his master Christ in his person; and many continually in his truth, less or more. He is a man, that can overcome excessive fear by reason: but a child of God, that can overcome it, by true and sound faith in God's good providence over him.

Some, though lambs amongst lions, yet are lions amongst lambs; fierce and terrible towards their underlings, which cannot or dare not resist them; and like the young ruffian in the poet, that showed his courage in beating a silly woman and poor bond-slave, that durst not strike again.† Such believe not; or forget that they have a Master in heaven, whose terrors if they knew, with the apostle, they durst not, in such sort, be terrible unto others. Col. iv. 1; 2 Cor. v. 11. There are many governors in families and commonwealths; who, if difference arise between them of the last sort and their subjects; or between

* Scaliger. † Terence.

them of the first and their wives, children and servants, will domineer marvellously, and be so stout and stern, as if they were made of iron and steel: whereas, on the contrary, if they have to do with such as stand upon even ground with them, especially such as have a little the higher ground; they show all cowardice, and base fear, suffering them even to play with their noses. Such a one was Rehoboam, who spake roughly to the people under him; but had no courage against the king of Egypt; and so little against Jeroboam, that rebelled against him, as that his own son Abijah taxed him of tenderness, that is, feebleness of heart, after his death. 2 Chron. x. 12, 13. Such another also was Nabal; so evil, that none of his servants or family or others of whom he was secure, might speak to him: but perceiving himself to have been in danger, though it were over, by David, whom, and whose men he had rated and reviled, in his drunken security, at the very hearing of it, his heart died in him, and he became like a stone. 1 Sam. xxv. 37, 38. These lion's paws and roarings amongst the poor beasts are odious in civil administrations; more, in domestic; most of all, in church governments, where they are found; which ought to be specially doctrinal and exemplary. Tit. i. 5, 9. Let us fear, as we ought, the doing of wrong to others, over whom we have advantage: and God will so provide, that we shall not excessively fear hurt from them who have power to hurt us. 1 Pet. v. 1—3.

CHAPTER LVI.

OF ANGER.

ANGER, as fear and sorrow and other affections of averseness, hath only evil, in truth, or appearance, for the object on which it worketh. But whereas fear and sorrow, out of a kind of impotency, withdraw the person fearing or sorrowing, from the evil feared or sorrowed for; anger in strength, and stoutness, as being the strongest of all affections, intends the driving away and dispelling of the evil;* at and against which it riseth. Which, being also, as

* Scaliger.

Chrysippus calls it, and experience confirms, a blind thing; there is nothing so sacred and precious which it will spare; but without difference it flieth, where the wings are not clipt, upon friends as well as foes;* and upon unreasonable creatures, as well as upon men. And so Xerxes in anger beat the sea, and threatened the mountains, if they hindered his passage.† Yea it will not spare the truth itself, if it be against its purpose, Lev. xxiv. 11—14: no, nor God neither, as we may see, not only in furious blasphemers, or piercers of God, as the word imports, but even in the prophet himself, who was angry even to the death at God, for sparing Nineveh. Jonah iv. 4—9. It is therefore rightly called a short fury, as differing from plain madness in nothing, but time.‡ And, in truth, it is pity, that they, in whom it reigns, specially pleasing themselves in its fits, are not chained up like madmen; or that they have either riches or strength or authority or wit or anything else to hurt with. It were good he had no other thing in his power, who is not in his own power; as no angry man is.§

If a wrathful man saw himself in a glass, when his fit is upon him; his eyes burning, his lips fumbling, his face pale, his teeth gnashing, his mouth foaming, and other parts of his body trembling, and shaking;‖ or but some of these deformities: he would, and worthily, loathe himself, and it may be amend things, for after, as some have done. But if the same person saw the face of his soul, in the glass of God's Word, and the deformities thereof, in God's sight, he would much more abhor himself, and start aside, as terrified at the sight of so hideous a monster. This rash anger, whether causeless or immeasurable, where some cause is, hath always evil in it, Matt. ii. 16; though it be never so speedily repressed: upon which if the sun be let go down, and that it lodge all night in the heart, it becomes malice by the morning. Men nourish it in pride, and because they will not give place to other men; not considering, that in so doing, they give place to the devil, Eph. iv. 26, 27, and become like him in malice, wherein he exceeds himself. This anger God so brands, as he

* Plutarch. † Seneca. ‡ Cato.
§ Seneca. ‖ Plato; Seneca; Jerome.

scarce doth any created affection, in forbidding the making of friendship with an angry man, and walking with the furious, for fear of learning his ways, and getting a snare to the soul. Prov. xxii. 24. For though all affections becoming inordinate, are vicious, and that God would have his servants watch diligently against the excesses of sorrow, fear, joy, and the like: yet doth he never give warning of the fellowship of such, as in whom they reign, for fear of learning them: neither is there that danger of smiting by other passions, which is by this.

If Solomon were a wise man and took not his marks amiss, who so oft, and plainly sets out a fool by rash anger and wrath, there are many more fools in the world, than go in the motley coats; and the same no small fools neither; considering how many, specially of them who take a privilege from their greatness, to give scope to their passions, either affect or give way to inordinateness in this kind; as if otherwise they could not sufficiently manifest their wisdom in discerning, and goodness in disliking, and greatness in controlling things amiss in others. But as vain-glorious men desire to show their authority in needless commands; so do fools affect the showing of their wisdom, goodness, and greatness, in needless anger.

The links whereof a chain may be made to tie up this fierce dog, that he do not more hurt, than good in biting, and commit not a greater offence by unadvisedness, and excess, than the person hath done,* which he is set upon; are specially these: First, lowliness of mind, by which he that thinks not himself great, thinks no great hurt done, if he be a little wronged: whereas, on the other side, the high-minded conceives great indignation, that his understanding should be opposed, his authority neglected, his will crossed, his credit impeached, or anything said or done importing any undervaluation of his presumed worth of himself. Christ the Lord teacheth both by example and doctrine, that humility and meekness are inseparable companions. Matt. xi. 29. A second, consideration what is just with God, in regard of our sins, to bring upon us, though by man's unjust provocations and injuries: and this was David's remedy, when Shimei

* Jerome.

reviled him. A third, true love to others, which is not easily nor excessively provoked to anger, 1 Cor. xiii. 5, at such as wrong us; but rather moves to pity them, as the father wished Scapula, a great persecutor of the Christians, that if he would not spare them, he should spare himself, who should have the worst of it.* A fourth, is a little delay and forbearance, either for the inward working or outward uttering of anger, whilst we gather our wits about us; which he that can bring himself to, will often by finding just cause of anger at himself, forbear being angry at others. And to this tended the counsel given unto Cæsar, that he should neither do, nor speak anything in anger, till he had said over the Greek alphabet.† A fifth is, not to take liberty to be a little angry at trifles, for he that useth himself to that, will not keep from extremity in great matters.‡ The last is to avoid occasions of provocation, whether persons or things: which whilst angry folk, for the most part, affect, they gather fuel for the fire, wherewith to burn themselves, hasten to discover their own shame, and make way for the devil's temptations, unto which they give way afterwards.

CHAPTER LVII.

OF HUMILITY AND MEEKNESS.

HUMILITY is that virtue by which we are taught to value according to, and not above the worth, ourselves, and all the good things, which God hath given us. I say, according to the worth; for men may, as one saith, not subject, but abject themselves:§ and sometimes, we see men, specially pressed with great burdens of temptations, in a kind of abjectness of mind, to moulder away, and make their gold little better than dross, by undervaluing God's goodness towards them. Such are unthankful to God, uncomfortable in themselves, and unprofitable unto others, in comparison. Besides, there is an humble hypocrisy, when men so subject themselves to others, specially superiors, as they reverence their vices;‖ or suffer their reason,

* Tertullian. † Seneca. ‡ Plutarch.
§ Seneca. ‖ Gregory.

more, if their faith, and consciences, to be captive to their lusts. And, hence, comes the worshipping of angels, and other points of will-worship, Col. ii. 18; in which the show of wisdom in the inventors and imposers, and of humility in the followers bear sway. Lastly, there is a desperate humility, when out of an evil and accusing conscience, a man knows and judges himself out of God's favour and a vile person. But now the most of this humility hath joined with it no small pride. That of the first kind is very rare: and the infinitely more common and dangerous disease is the overswelling of the heart, through excess of self-love, and presumption. Self-love disposeth a person to think himself, and to desire to be thought of others, to have the excellency, which he hath not. Herewith the mind is easily corrupted, and vain man induced to presume of that goodness in himself, which he wants, and to be lifted up with that, which he hath. Many by stooping lose of their bodily height; but few stoop too low, in conceit of themselves. Yet as Christ Jesus ceased not to be God, though he humbled himself to the taking upon him the form of a servant, Phil. ii. 7: so neither is any man either in truth, or account of God, or good men, the less, but much the more excellent for his lowly appearance to himself or others. Yea, as the same Christ our Lord stepped from the shameful cross to the height of his glory, and exaltation: so he that will make any high building in Christianity, must first think of, and lay this low foundation of humility.*

This lowliness of mind is the mother of meekness, as Christ insinuates, saying, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly," Matt. xi. 29. The humble-minded, if a cross come or injury be offered, bears them moderately, as thinking moderately of himself, yea meanly in regard of his sins, and the misery to which they expose him. The proud through want of consciousness hereof, if he be a little crossed is fierce and violent: *Jove dignas concipit iras.* What? He! A man of his worth so to be used? specially by such a one? And as the boar whets and sharpens his tusks in his own foam; so doth a proud person whet and sharpen his heart, hands, and tongue to indignation and

* Austin.

revenge, in the frothy and foamish imagination of his own worth.

Seeing that in evil days the meek and mild in spirit following Christ's example, who "was as a lamb dumb before the shearer, not opening his mouth," Isa. liii. 7, are in danger not only to be shorn, but to be flayed also; the most in the wisdom and lust of the flesh, think it better to howl with the wolves,* and to bite too, than by departing from evil, Isa. lix. 15, specially by bearing wrongs patiently, to make themselves a prey. But here faith steps in and leads the meek to God's promises, that he "shall inherit the earth," Matt. v. 5: and that "God will arise to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth," Psa. lxxvi. 9: and that he will see and hear, and in due time right the wrongs of meek Moses, though he pass them by, and as a deaf man hears not, Numb. xi. 3; Psa. xxxviii. 13: but for the violent and self-avenger, he puts himself out of God's protection, and goes upon his own hazard.

As the stomach swells either with good meat excessively used, or with wind and ill humours: so there is scarce anything either so good or so evil, but man's corrupt heart takes occasion of priding and puffing up itself by it. The prophet speaks of some, who boasted in evil, Psa. lii. 1: and the apostle of others, whose glorying was in their shame. Phil. iii. 19. If former ages have been bold, ours is impudent this way: in which it is hard to say, whether the pride which persons take in good or in evil be greater. Many shame not to boast of the evils practised by them, which modest men are ashamed to hear of; and some of the evils which they never did, nor dare, nor can do, thereby to get credit with vain persons. If pride, in good, be hateful, it is abominable, in evil: specially when men belie themselves to get matter of glorying in mischief; as Austin confesseth he in his youth had done.† Fools glory in their motley coats, and therein show why they wear them: but worse than mad are they who glory in sin, and are lift up for that, which cast the angels from heaven; Adam out of Paradise; and Nebuchadnezzar out of his kingdom amongst the beasts of the field: and which will cast all into hell, that delight in it.

* Calvin. † Austin.

As wicked men pride themselves in their evils: so are the good in danger to be enamoured of their goodness. And, as he that besiegeth a city, if he can neither obtain it by composition, nor take it by assault, nor constrain it by hunger, will, in the last place, if he can, undermine, and blow it up with gunpowder: so our, and God's enemy, Satan, when he cannot corrupt or destroy God's servants, otherwise attempts, and that oft successfully, the lifting them up with vain conceitedness of themselves, and their own worth. The holy apostle was in danger to be exalted above measure with the number of revelations, for the preventing whereof he needed a messenger of Satan to buffet him. 2 Cor. xii. 7. So God for the keeping and driving of pride from his servants, sometimes brings great afflictions upon them, and humbles them thereby; and sometimes, he doth this, by suffering them to fall into other sins, to remedy that greater sin of pride: as men use to drive out a greater pin with another somewhat smaller. How close doth this corruption cleave unto us, and how dangerous is it withal; for the purging out of which, the Lord useth such a medicine!

There are in this pride many strange touches: some being proud in, and some of their humility. Of the first sort were they, who being vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind, in voluntary humbleness worshipped angels, Col. ii. 18; from a touch of this kind Peter was not free, when he so refractorily refused to suffer Christ to wash his feet.* There is also danger of being proud of not being proud, nor lofty in carriage, apparel, or contempt of inferiors: and of being called rather good-man, than master; and rather master than sir knight. Besides all these, many will go on their tiptoes, though barefoot, being proud of, no man knows what, either within or without them: and none more than they. There want not also amongst the rest, who put out pride to usury, that by forbearing it awhile, and using for it, humble and submissive appearances, they might after receive it with advantage. Of this sort are they, who use to dispraise themselves, that others may the more commend them: † and, who, forsooth, will always come the hindmost, and sit the lowest, that they may be the more solemnly

* Calvin. † Perkins.

preferred to the first place. Others also, their crafts-masters in this trade, will be very submissive to their superiors, which are but a few, that their inferiors, being many, may learn thereby to honour them the more. So Herod showed how desirous he was of honour from his subjects, by the honour which he gave to Cæsar and Agrippa.* Lastly, there are who put on pride, by strutting and looking and speaking stately, and other affected forth-puttings, to free themselves from contempt. Such are like Æsop's ass, in the lion's skin: and have like success with him, in the end.

The proud so loves himself, as none other can endure him. Not God, for to him he is abominable, Prov. xvi. 5: nor humble men, because he is not as they are, and as he should be: nor other prouds, because he is as they are, who would be singular, and have none other like them. And as God hates the proud, so he resists them, James iv. 6: and no marvel, for they in a singular manner resist him. Some sinners are most directly and immediately against themselves; as the slothful, prodigal, &c.; some against other men, as the covetous, slanderer, cruel, &c. But the proud exalts himself most directly against and above God, 2 Thess. ii. 4, whom alone all creatures should exalt and magnify. And he, whom God resists, must needs fall, though the whole world would take his part.

Persons are vulgarly most noted for proud by their apparel. And indeed by it, if either too costly for stuff or affected for fashion or curiously put on, not only the flag of pride, as Augustine called it, is displayed, but the vice nourished. Many say to their fine clothes, in effect, as Saul said to Samuel, "Honour me before the people." And this also they may effect with them that know them not, nor their estates, and may get them more credit with such than they deserve; for which they are to answer to God. But to them that know them, and their condition, they thereby make themselves a by word, and ridiculous for their pride and vanity. A second mark of pride may be taken from men's lofty eyes, stretched-forth necks, Psa. cxxxi. 1, and other the like strutting gestures. A third, contempt of mean persons and things. A fourth, excessive care not to

* Josephus.

be neglected or contemned by others, and trouble if so it fall out. A fifth, continual strivings and janglings with others. A sixth, cruelty in word or deed towards feeble adversaries. A seventh, affectation of singularity, and being unlike to others. Good men in evil days are compelled to be singular in many things, as Lot was in Sodom; but never affect it. An eighth, an aptness to observe, and task others, as proud. Lastly, a readiness to speak of one's own worth, or of his great acceptance with others of worth, Thraso like.

The special remedies against pride are, first, consideration how God forbids, hates, and resists the proud: who will, therefore, have a fall, if not upon earth, into hell. Secondly, meditation upon our sins, and misery for the same. Thirdly, thinking rather what good we have not, than what we have.* Fourthly, that, if in any good thing we go before others, we remember, that it is God that hath differenced us: and that having received it, we should not glory, as if we had not received it. 1 Cor. iv. 7. Fifthly, a serious forecasting with ourselves, that the more our receipts are, the greater our account to the Lord must be: which, if we consider as we ought, will rather make them matter of humiliation unto us, than of arrogancy. Lastly, it will something help to keep the heart down, if we consider, that others are instruments of God's glory, and of good to men, as well as we.†

CHAPTER LVIII.

OF MODESTY.

Modesty adorns other virtues, and good things in a person; as blushing doth a comely countenance.‡ And though many virtues, of which it is a very imperfect one, as some call it; and as others, the keeper of other virtues, be more serviceable; yet none is more graceful, in the eyes of others, than this maiden, and sweet grace, modesty.§ For this, some have thought our Saviour bare that singular affection to the beloved disciple. And what a loadstone it is to draw men's affections, we all find in our own experi

* Austin. † Melancthon. ‡ Cicero. § Ambrose.

ence; as being prone, in matters of comparison and controversy between others, rather to favour the more modest, than the more able, or more worthy either otherwise. Where it is, it covers many faults and inabilities from being seen: and where they do appear, procures, sometimes, excuse, and always, commiseration. It commends a man not only for that which he hath, but often even for that which he hath not. For as some by arrogating to themselves something which they have not, or know not, give others occasion to think them destitute of that which they have, or know indeed; so others' modesty in the things, which they have received, procures unto them oftentimes, the opinion, from other men, of having that which in truth they want. "Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace," which modesty will teach him to do, "is accounted wise." Prov. xvii. 28.

It is an odious thing to see men, deserving little, to arrogate much to themselves: which yet is as usual, as for a windy stomach to swell; and that specially, in vain confidence, and conceit of knowledge: whereas men of understanding indeed, are more modestly minded. The former's brain, by straitness of apprehension, can hold but one thing at once: whereas, men of larger discourse so apprehend this or that reason for, or against a matter, as that at the same instant, other things also offer themselves to their consideration, which may justly occasion modest doubting about it. And as an advised person by the reflection of his understanding, knows his knowledge, so doth he his ignorance; as we see a shadow by the light about it, without which, all would be black darkness. So Menedemus was wont to say, that men coming to study in Athens, were at first wise men; after that, very punies and ignorants: for that, as leather vessels or bags, being empty, are stiff, and hard; but being filled with liquor, are soft and pliable:* so is it with men commonly, as they have less or more knowledge.

This tincture of virtue, as Diogenes calls it, though it be more useful for the young, than old; and for women, than men, for the covering of their infirmities, which through immodest boldness, irrespectiveness, and want of

* Plutarch.

fear of shame and reproof, in which modesty consists,* they proclaim to the world; yet is it necessary for all states, sexes, and persons, at all times; whether alone or in company with others; whether conversing with God or men. The apostle testifies of himself, that he "served God amongst the Ephesians in modesty of mind, and many tears," Acts xx. 19: giving therein an ensample to all, how far they ought to put from them a secure, and impudent heart, and countenance. And though that monster of men, Caligula, accounted it the most commendable thing in his nature, that he was ashamed of nothing:† yet doth both nature and grace teach it to be a most odious thing for a man to have a dog's face, as the proverb is: or as the prophet speaks, "a whore's forehead, that refuses to be ashamed." Jer. iii. 4.

It is pity any should speed so well, by mere boldness, without reason or other defect, as many do: who become thereby of audacious, impudent, having once broken the bounds of modesty,‡ specially to their advantage. Towards men of such foreheads the proverb must be put in practice, "A bold beggar must have a bold nay-sayer." It was the unrighteous judge, that did that for the widow's importunity, Luke xviii. 5, which conscience would have had him done for the goodness of her cause, and poverty of her person. Though to speak, as the thing is; to be overcome by importunity argues not so properly injustice, in what case soever, as impotency of mind to resist.

Peter and John with the other apostles prayed to the Lord "for boldness in the speaking of his word," Acts iv. 29. Many others also pray for boldness, as they did; but forget, that they are not apostles, nor infallibly directed, as they were. Who, if they knew themselves aright, and how prone they are to speak their own word instead of God's, would rather pray for modesty and advisedness, that they rush not upon the rock of error. Besides, they so prayed in regard of the threatenings of unbelievers, with whom they had to do. But amongst brethren, and Christians, let us rather affect the lamb's bleat, than the lion's roar.

* Scaliger. † Suetonius. ‡ Cicero.

CHAPTER LIX.

OF MARRIAGE.

God hath ordained marriage, amongst other good means, for the benefit of man's natural and spiritual life, in an individual society, as the lawyers speak, between one man and one woman: and hath blessed it alone with this prerogative, that by it, in lawful order, our kind should be preserved, and posterity propagated. And though the Lord has sometimes suffered, and that almost unreproved by the prophets, other bodily conjunctions, than between the proper husband and wife, and altogether unpunished by the magistrate: and withal showed the effect of his powerful providence, as still he doth, so far, as for the procreating of children, in that disorder: yet did he never approve of any other, or exempt the same from guilt of sin, in the court of conscience; and seldom from manifest signs of his displeasure; as experience, and the Scriptures teach.

Not only heathen poets, which were more tolerable, but also wanton Christians, have nick-named women, necessary evils;* but with as much shame to men, as wrong to women, and to God's singular ordinance withal. When the Lord amongst all the good creatures which he had made, could find none fit and good enough for the man; he made the woman of a rib of him, and for a help unto him, Gen. ii. 20, 21; neither is she, since the creation, more degenerated than he, from the primitive goodness. Besides, if the woman be a necessary evil, how evil is the man, for whom she is necessary!

Some have said, and that, in their own and others' judgment, both wittily and devoutly, that marriage fills the earth, and virginity heaven: but others have better answered, How should heaven be full, if the earth were empty? I add, that, because Christ hath said, that the children of the regeneration neither marry wives, nor are married, but are like the angels in heaven, Matt. xxii. 3.; many, whilst they would, by preposterous imitation, become like the angels in heaven, have in truth become liker the devils in hell: for

* Menander.

they also neither marry wives, nor are married. But this is, indeed, the very dregs of Popery, to place special piety in things either evil, or indifferent, at the best; as is abstinence from marriage, and the marriage bed; which is no more a virtue, than abstinence from wine, or other pleasing natural things. Both marriage and wine are of God, and good in themselves; either of them may in their abuse, prejudice the natural or spiritual life: neither of them is unlawful, no not for them which simply need them not: which also not to need, argues bodily strength in the one, but a kind of weakness in the other.

The ancient heathen used to place Mercury by Venus, to show what need the affections of marriage have of the rule of reason and wisdom, to order them.* Neither, in truth, is there anything wherein persons more need and less use reason, and true discretion, than in their marriage choice: in which the most are unreasonably transported by one affection or other. And if he moralized well, who made this a reason, why God cast Adam into a heavy sleep, whilst he prepared and made him a wife of one of his ribs, Gen. ii. 21; that the affections ought to sleep about this work, and the reason to wake; how do they miss, whose manner is to have their affections only waking, or working in this business, whilst their reason, and conscience also, are fast asleep! I have always thought, that good men crossed with ill wives, or good wives with ill husbands, are ordinarily least to be pitied of any others in misery; considering how wilfully, and presumptuously, for the most part, they tempt God in their choice. I add, herewithal, that there is no one particular, in which men and women betray, whether their hearts be set upon worldly riches and honours, or sensual pleasures, on the one side; or, on the other side, upon the nourishing and promoting of virtue and godliness, both in themselves and their posterity, than in their choice this way. When the sons of God take for wives the daughters of men, giants are born, Gen. vi. 2; and all monstrous confusion followeth, first in the family, and after in church and commonwealth. But when the sons of God take the daughters of God to wives, and the daughters of God are taken by the sons of God,

* Plutarch.

there is an equal yoke, for the persons themselves to draw in with comfort, and the right course taken for the leaving of a holy seed behind them.

Some marry by their eye, as did those sons of God formerly mentioned, and, therein, follow favour, which is deceitful, and beauty which is a vain thing, Prov. xxxi. 30; others by their fingers, as minding what the woman is worth, in the world's sense:* others by the ear, as specially respecting their wives' title, and high birth; and so, many times, get themselves so many lords and masters over them, as she hath friends. But they that specially respect virtue and godliness, which being attended by the other handmaids, as Esther by her seven maids, Esther ii. 9, is the more beautiful and desirable, they marry not only the daughters of such or such men, but the daughters of God himself. A woman that feareth the Lord, she shall so be praised, Prov. xxxi. 30; and the man so blessed, that marrieth her.

We say, in wiving and thriving take counsel of all the world, and so men had need. But in this business affection so far overrules reason in the most, as they could willingly make their choice without the counsel of their nearest and wisest friends. Herein, therefore, friends should be officious and forth-putting, and that both in love of their friends, and for their own sakes also; who, so oft as their friend marries, make an adventure, and the same full of danger, whether they shall not wholly or in a great measure, lose their friend, which is often seen. Herein, parents specially must both preserve the right which God and nature hath given them, and do the duty which the one and the other hath laid upon them; as accounting their children theirs, most of all other things, whom if they this way bestow conveniently and in due time, they provide well both for them and themselves: for them, in preventing two dangerous evils, uncleanness and unfit matching: for themselves, according to the saying of Democritus, that he who gets a good husband to his daughter, finds another son: as he loseth his daughter, that gets an ill one.

The virtue of the wife is the husband's ornament, so is

* Erasmus.

the husband's the wife's, much more. And therefore Philon's wife, being demanded why she alone went so plainly apparelled, made answer, that her husband's virtues were ornament sufficient for her.* If her practice were a rule, and that husbands' virtues were to be measured by their wives' homeliness in attire; either fewer husbands would be thought virtuous than are, or more wives found soberly apparelled than are.

After goodness, fitness in marriage is most to be regarded: and that so much that, as for a pair of gloves or yoke of oxen, two alike, though meaner, both of them are fitter and better for use, than if the one were more excellent; so in this marriage pair and yoke, the woman best qualified is not always the best wife for every man; nor every man the best qualified, the fittest husband for every woman: but two more alike, though both meaner, sort better usually. And according to this, Pittacus, being demanded by a friend what kind of wife he should marry, answered: one fit for him.† Fitness of years is requisite, that an old head be not set upon young shoulders; nor the contrary, which is worse: fitness in estate, lest the excelling person despise the other, or draw him to a course above his reach: fitness for course of life and disposition unto it, the dislike whereof, in either by other, breeds many discontentments. Lastly, agreement of affection and inclination, what may be, to all good persons and things. Only, it is good, if the one be too fiery hot and suddenly moved, that the other can cast on the more cold water of forbearance. But now, seeing there is seldom or never found such conformity between man and wife, but that differences will arise and be seen, and so the one must give way, and apply unto the other; this, God and nature layeth upon the woman, rather than upon the man; although the man should not too much look for it, nor use all his authority, ordinarily at least, which none but fools will do. Gen. iii. 16; 1 Cor. xi. 3—7, xiv. 34; 1 Tim. ii. 11; Esther i. 20—22. As the glass, saith one, though never so rich of gold and pearl, if it represent not the face of him that looks into it, is not to be regarded; so neither is the wife, how well endowed soever otherwise, except she

* Stobæus. † Laertius.

frame, and compose herself, what may be, unto her husband, in conformity of manners.

Many common graces and good things are requisite both for husband and wife: but more especially the Lord requires in the man love and wisdom; and in the woman subjection. Eph. v. 22—25. The love of the husband to his wife must be like Christ's to his church; holy for quality, and great for quantity, both intensively and extensively. Her person, and whatsoever is good in her he must love fervently; mending or bearing, if not intolerable, what is amiss: by the former of which two he makes her the better, and himself by the latter.* And if her failings and faults be great, he by being inured to bear them patiently, is the fitter to converse quietly and patiently with other perverse persons abroad; as Socrates said, he was, by bearing the daily home-brawlings of Xanthippe. Neither sufficeth it, that the husband walk with his wife as a man of love, but before her also as a man of understanding, 1 Pet. iii. 7; which God hath therefore afforded him, and means of obtaining it, above the woman, that he might guide and go before her, as a fellow heir of eternal life with him. It is monstrous, if the head stand where the feet should be: and double pity, when a Nabal and Abigail are matched together. Yea, experience teacheth how inconvenient it is, if the woman have but a little more understanding, (though he be not wholly without,) than her husband hath.

In the wife is specially required a reverend subjection in all lawful things to her husband. Eph. v. 22, &c. Lawful, I mean, for her to obey in, yea though not lawful for him to require of her. He ought to give honour to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, 1 Pet. iii. 7: but now, if he pass the bounds of wisdom and kindness; yet must not she shake off the bond of submission, but must bear patiently the burden, which God hath laid upon the daughters of Eve. The woman in innocency was to be subject to the man: but this should have been without all wrong on his part, or grief on hers. But she being first in transgression, 1 Tim. ii. 14, hath brought herself under another subjection, and the same to her, grievous; and in regard of

* Gellius.

her husband, often unjust; but in regard of God, always most just; who hath ordained that her desire should be subject to her husband, Gen. iii. 16, who by her seduction became subject to sin. And, albeit, many proud women think it a matter of scorn and disgrace, thus to humble themselves to God and their husbands; and even glory in the contrary: yet therein they but glory in their shame, and in their husbands' shame also. And whilst they refuse a cross, choose a sin of rebellion, both against God and their husbands: which shall not escape unpunished from God; though many fond husbands nourish them therein, and by pampering and puffing them up by delicate fare, costly apparel and idleness, teach them to despise both them, themselves, and all others.

Marriage hath divers ends that make it convenient; and one, that makes it necessary, for the most; which is the preventing of that most foul and filthy sin of adultery. And this brand it deserves in special manner; seeing, he who coupleth himself with an harlot becomes one body with her, 2 Cor. vi. 16: which cannot be said of him that consorts with a thief or murderer or drunkard in their sins: as also, for that such an one sins against his own body. Not that he sins not against his own soul too; or that all others sinning, sin not against both body and soul; but in regard of that special blot and blemish wherewith this sin stains the body; which never after can be wiped off, though the guilt of the sin may by repentance. "He that committeth adultery lacketh understanding; getteth a wound, and dishonour, and his reproach shall not be wiped away," saith Solomon. Prov. vi. 32.

As marriage is a medicine against uncleanness; so adultery is the disease of marriage, and divorce the medicine of adultery; though not properly for the curing of the guilty, but for the easing of the innocent: which remedy he may, but is not simply bound to use, as some are the former. Some have said, that he who conceals the faults of his wife this way, becomes a patron of her filthiness:* but this is rightly restrained by others to certain cases. The divorce for adultery both under and before the law was to be made by the magistrate's sword. Gen. xxxviii. 24; Lev.

* Chrysostom.

xx. 10. Where that is not drawn, the innocent may use this remedy against the peccant, as directly violating the marriage bond; which other sins, though greater otherwise, do not. In other cases, divorce, though much used amongst the Jews, was never approved by the Lord in the court of heaven, as no sin, but permitted only in civil courts, without bodily punishment, Matt. xix. 6—9; and only the giving of the bill commanded, and that for the advantage of the divorced, and to testify, that the husband had so freed the wife, as he might not require her after returning unto him, though he would.* This permission unto the Jews being only for the hardness of their hearts, may justly by the magistrate be denied to Christians, whose hearts should be more softened by the blood of Christ.†

As a man may surfeit at his own table or be drunken with his own drink; so may he play the adulterer with his own wife,‡ both by inordinate affection and action. For howsoever the marriage bed cover much inordinateness this way: yet must modesty be observed by the married,§ lest the bed which is honourable, and undefiled, Heb. xiii. 4, in its right use, become by abuse hateful, and filthy in God's sight. It hath been by some well observed, that divers of the patriarchs conversed with many wives, whom they took out of a singular desire of a plentiful progeny, more chastely, than many others did and do with their one.

CHAPTER LX.

OF CHILDREN AND THEIR EDUCATION.

God, that made all things good, and blessed them, Gen. i. 28—31, imparted expressly this blessing first to his creatures, capable thereof, that they should increase and multiply in their kind. More especially, God created our first parents, male and female, and blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth." This order then set, he hath preserved to this day, and mankind by it. By this, parents when they are dead, live in their children,

* Josephus. † Pareus. ‡ Jerome. § Calvin.

as parts of them, and imps* taken from their stock, and in special manner, one with them. This oneness God's gracious covenant with the faithful and their seed confirms, and commends: blessing even the godly dead parents in their living children; and so cursing the wicked in theirs, and that often sundry ages afterwards; as both the Scriptures, common sense, and experience teach. Such parents as leave their seed under God's covenant and blessing, as heirs of their father's piety, as Ambrose said of Theodosius,† provide a good inheritance for them, if they afterwards by their own rebellion and unthankfulness disinherit not themselves. And a sweet comfort it is to Christian parents, when they can commend their little ones, living, or dying into Christ's hands in heaven; who being upon earth testified both in word and deed, their interest in his blessing. Matt. xix. 13, 14. "The generation of the upright shall be blessed: but the posterity of the wicked shall be cut off." Psa. cxii. 2. And as we judge of the plant or graft, by the stock whence it was taken, till it be grown able to bring forth its proper fruit, and that the tree be known by the fruit; so do we of children by their parents, till coming to years of discretion they choose their own way. Not that grace is derived by natural generation, but by the supernatural covenant with believers and their seed, confirmed in Christ; and by godly education on the parents' part, Gen. xvii. 7—11; Gal. iii. 14—22; which promise of blessing, as it is ever effectual in some, according to the election of grace, Rom. xi. 5; so where it follows not, usually the negligence and indulgence of the parents, and, always, the parties' proper rebellion is the cause thereof; as we may see, both in the Word of God and daily experience. We read of Dionysius the tyrant, that, meaning to revenge himself upon Dion, who made war against him, he caused his son, whom he had in his power, to be brought up in riot and wantonness.‡ This labour many save their enemies and do it themselves, and so prove miserable parents of dissolute children. It was an odious thing in the Israelites to sacrifice to devils their sons and daughters which they had borne unto God, and whom he avowed for his children, Ezek. xvi. 20; which, in a

* Grafts. † Ambrose. ‡ Æmilius Probus.

spiritual sense, we certainly do, if we either neglect instructing them, or praying to God for them, or walking exemplarily, as we ought, before them, or correcting them duly, or any other such means, as by which the seeds of grace may grow and prosper in them. And let us remember, that as brutes bring forth in their kind, and all parents their children; so we, being in the Lord's covenant of grace, bring forth, as by nature ours, so by the supernatural covenant and grace, his children also; and that he trusts us with the bringing them up for him, and in his nurture and instruction, Eph. vi. 4; which is a great matter, and wherein we must deal faithfully with him; that so under his blessing, we may fit them for his heavenly inheritance, provided for them with us. It is a during fruit of God's gracious covenant, when good parents by their godly care have gracious children; and that by which our faith is much confirmed.

Children, in their first days, have the greater benefit of good mothers, not only because they suck their milk, but in a sort, their manners also, by being continually with them, and receiving their first impressions from them. But afterwards, when they come to riper years, good fathers are more behoveful for their forming in virtue and good manners, by their greater wisdom and authority: and oft-times also, by correcting the fruits of their mother's indulgence, by their severity.*

They are a blessing great, but dangerous. They come into the world at first with danger, both in respect of themselves, as passing sometimes, from the womb to the grave; sometimes, being born deformed in body; sometimes, incapable of understanding: as also in regard of the mother, the first day of their being in the world, being often her last in it. After their coming into the world through so many dangers, they come even into a world of dangers. In their infancy, how soon is the tender bud nipped, or bruised by sickness or otherwise! In their venturesome days, into how many needless dangers do they throw themselves, in which many perish, besides those into which God brings them, and that all their life long! Above all other, how great and many are their spiritual dangers, both for nourishing and increasing the corruption which they

* Aristotle.

bring into the world with them; and for diverting them from all goodness, which God's grace, and men's endeavour might work in them! These dangers and difficulties, howsoever they make not God's blessings in giving children to be no blessings, or deserving to be lightly esteemed; yet should they moderate our desire of them, and grief for their want: that none should say either to God or one to another, as Rachel did to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die," Gen. xxx. 1: specially if we weigh withal, that though the Lord give us divers towardly, and good; yet one or two proving lewd and wicked will break our tender hearts, more than all the rest will comfort us: like as in the natural body there is more grief by the aching of some one part, though but a tooth, than comfort and ease in the good and sound state of all the rest. If children considered aright of the careful thoughts, sorrows and fears, and sore pains withal of their parents, they would think they owed them more honour, service and obedience, than, for the most part, they do. We seldom consider and prize worthily the cares and pains of parents, till we become parents ourselves, and learn them by experience.

Many bodily diseases are hereditary; and so are many spiritual, in a sort; and that both by natural inclination, and moral imitation much more: that, as the Lord saith of Israel, "Thou art thy mother's daughter," Ezek. xvi. 45, so may it be said of many, that they are their fathers' and mothers' sons and daughters in evil. Yet, if it so come to pass, that God vouchsafe grace to the child of a wicked father, and that he see the sins which he hath done, he commonly hates them more vehemently, than if they had been in a stranger; and good reason, considering how they have been his dearest parent's ruin. Yea further, even where grace is wanting, the child, ofttimes, by observing and sometimes by feeling also the evil of his father's sin, is driven, though not from his evil way into a good way, yet into the contrary evil. Thus a covetous father often makes a prodigal son; so doth a prodigal a covetous. The son of the covetous taking knowledge how odious his father's covetousness is to all; and therewith persuading himself, and being persuaded by others about him, that

there is enough, and more than enough for him, takes occasion as prodigally to pour out, as his father hath miserly hoarded up: as on the contrary, the son of the prodigal both seeing, and feeling the hurt of his parent's lavishness, is thereby provoked to lay the harder about him, for the repairing of his father's ruins.

Love rather descends, than ascends; as streams of water do; and no marvel, if men love where they live, as parents do in children, and not they in them. Hence also is it, that grandfathers are more affectionate towards their children's children, than to their immediates, as seeing themselves further propagated in them, and by their means proceeding on to a further degree of eternity, which all desire naturally, if not in themselves, yet in their posterity. And hence it is, that children brought up with their grandfathers, or grandmothers, seldom do well, but are usually corrupted by their too great indulgence.

It is much controverted, whether it be better, in the general, to bring up children under the severity of discipline, and the rod, or no. And the wisdom of the flesh out of love to its own, alleges many reasons to the contrary. But say men what they will, or can, the wisdom of God is best; and that saith, that "foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, which the rod of correction must drive out:" and that "he, who spares his rod, hurts his son," Prov. xxii. 15; xiii. 24; not in the affection of person, but effect of thing. And surely there is in all children, though not alike, a stubbornness, and stoutness of mind arising from natural pride, which must, in the first place, be broken and beaten down; that so the foundation of their education being laid in humility and tractableness, other virtues may, in their time, be built thereon. This fruit of natural corruption and root of actual rebellion both against God and man must be destroyed, and no manner of way nourished, except we will plant a nursery of contempt of all good persons and things, and of obstinacy therein. It is commendable in a horse, that he be stout and stomachful, being never to be left to his own government, but always to have his rider on his back, and the bit in his mouth. But who would have his child like his horse in his brutishness? Indeed such as are of great

stomach, being thoroughly broken, and informed, become very serviceable,* for great designs: else, of horses they become asses, or worse: as Themistocles' master told him, when he was a child, that either he would bring some great good, or some great hurt to the commonwealth.† Neither is there need to fear, lest by this breaking, the children of great men should prove base-spirited and abject, and so unapt to great employments: for being Adam's sons, whose desire was to have been like unto God, and having those advantages for masterfulness and high thoughts, which great men's children want not, unto whom great affairs are appropriated usually, they will not easily be found unfurnished of stomach and stoutness of mind more than enough; wherein a little is dangerous, specially for making them unmeet for Christ's yoke, and to learn of him, who was lowly, and meek. Matt. xi. 29.

For the beating, and keeping down of this stubbornness parents must provide carefully for two things: first that children's wills and wilfulness be restrained and repressed, and that, in time; lest sooner than they imagine, the tender sprigs grow to that stiffness, that they will rather break than bow. Children should not know, if it could be kept from them, that they have a will in their own, but in their parents' keeping: neither should these words be heard from them, save by way of consent, "I will" or "I will not." And, if will be suffered at first to sway in them in small and lawful things, they will hardly after be restrained in great and ill matters, which their partial conceit, and inexperienced youth, with the lusts thereof and desire of liberty, shall deem small and lawful, as the former. And though good education, specially the grace of God, may afterwards purge out much other evil and weaken this also: yet will such unbroken youth most commonly draw after it great disquietness in crosses, when they fall; and in the whole course of life, a kind of unwieldiness, inflexibility and obstinacy, prejudicial to the parties themselves and uncomfortable, at least, to such as converse with them. The second help is an inuring of them from the first, to such a meanness in all things, as may rather pluck them down, than lift them up: as by plain, and homely diet, and

* Erasmus. † Plutarch.

apparel; sending them to school betimes; and bestowing them afterwards, as they are fit, in some course of life, in which they may be exercised diligently, and the same rather under than above their estate: by not abetting them one against another, nor against any, specially before their faces, without great cause: nor by making them men and women, before they become good boys and girls. How oft have I observed, that parents, who have neither failed in diligent instructing of their chidren, nor in giving them good example, nor in correcting them duly, have only by straining too high this way, either endangered, or utterly overthrown their posterity! hereby lifting them up in their vain hearts, and teaching them to despise both mean things and persons; and themselves also, many times, amongst others: thereby drowning them, Icarus like, in a sea of mischief and misery, by their flying too high a pitch. And this must be the more minded, because there is in men an inbred desire, and that inordinate usually, to hoist up their children, as high, as may be: so as they half think they do them wrong, if they set them not higher, or as high, at least, as themselves, almost whether God will or no. Yea what place affords not some such, as make themselves their children's slaves, not caring how basely they themselves grovel in the earth, so they may set them on their tiptoes.

But first of all for children's competent education, specially for their disposing in some particular course, on which all are to settle at last, though some liberty of stepping this way, or that be given them for a while; as a man, though for his pleasure he see many places, yet seeks his abode in some one in the end,* there is required in their parents a thorough discerning and right judgment of their disposition; which is as difficult, as necessary. The difficulty ariseth from the partiality of parents towards their own: for that as the crow thinks her own bird fairest, so do they commonly their children towardly, and better than they are, or than any other indifferent judge doth. This partiality in many is so gross, as they not only deem small good things in them, great, and great evils, small; but often account the same things well becoming them and commendable, which in others they would censure as indecent,

* Plutarch.

and, it may be, enormous. This pernicious error ariseth from self-love. For, as in nature, the object cannot be seen, which is either too near the eye, or too far from it; so neither can the disposition of that child be rightly discerned, which lieth too near his father's heart. And yet is the knowledge of this, so necessary, that we build not either upon a vain, or uncertain foundation, with great hazard of loss, both of labour, and expense, in sorting our child to his particular calling and course of life; as all without it, is but a very rash adventure. For as none are fit for every course, nor hardly any for many, in any great degree, so every one is fit for one or other: to which if his ability, and disposition be applied, with any convenient diligence on his part and helps by others; he may easily come to a mediocrity therein, if not to some rareness. Hence was it, that fathers in some places, used to lead their children to the shops of all kind of artificers, to try how they could both handle their tools, and like their works; that so they might bestow them accordingly. Some wise men also have wished, that there might be established, by public authority, a course for the due trial, and choice of wits for several sciences. And surely, where there goes not before a natural aptness and moral disposition also for some calling; there will follow nothing but loss: loss of time, loss of labour, loss of charges, and all; as when the seed is cast into the barren ground. And as the midwife how skilful soever in her art, cannot make the woman to be delivered, that was not first with child; so neither can the best masters make their scholars, or servants, to bring forth sciences, unless they have an aptness thereunto first conceived in their brains.*

There is running in the breasts of most parents a strong stream of partial affection towards some one, or other of their children, above the rest, either for its beauty or wit or likeness to themselves, or some other fancied good in it; which is always dangerous, and oft hurtful. Sometimes the Lord takes away such before the rest, to punish the father's fondness: and most commonly such if surviving, prove the worst of all the rest, as growing hereby proud, and arrogant in themselves, presumptuous upon their father's love,

* Plato.

and contemptuous of the rest of their brethren, and sisters; as we may see in Esau, Absalom, and Adonijah, their fathers' darlings; and in many more, in our daily experience. And though they in themselves, which they seldom are free from, be not corrupted with pride; yet will the rest seldom, or never escape the infection of envy at it; as is to be seen in Joseph's brethren. It is natural for parents tenderly to love all their children; and best for them to be as equal towards all, as may be; reserving the bestowing of their best and greatest love, till they see, where God bestows his. And if so be they cannot, or will not command their inordinate affections, as they should, yet it is wisdom to conceal them from their children, whom else they may hurt so many ways; as the ape is said, many times to kill her young ones by too strait embracing them.

The Lord promises and affords long life to such as "honour father and mother," Exod. xx. 12; whose days if he shorten in this life for their good, he lengthens out with immortality in glory. On the other side, he cuts off from the earth stubborn and disobedient children suddenly and in sundry ways.* And if he give them long life, it is for a curse unto them. They also often die without children themselves; and if not, their children oftener pay them that which is due, and owing them from their parents. The history is note-worthy of the father, who being drawn by his son to the threshold of the house, by the hair of the head; cried to him, to draw him no further, for that he had drawn his father no further.† And how should they expect honour from their children who have dishonoured their parents? or a happy life, who despise the author of their life under God? This honour is due not only to them by whom we have our being; but to them also by whom our well-being is furthered.

CHAPTER LXI.

OF YOUTH AND OLD AGE.

THAT city, or commonwealth, saith one, flourisheth most, where old men's counsel, and young men's swords are in

* Calvin. † Melancthon.

request.* And little, saith another, avail weapons abroad, and in the hands of young men, if there be not counsel at home, and in the breasts of the aged.† And as some fruits are ripe before others, and divers fit for divers seasons of the year: so God and nature hath so ordained, that the bodies of young men should be ripe in their youth, and fittest for bodily employments, by reason of their natural heat and spirits: and the counsels of old men in their age, through their long experience and observation. Things go well, where both do their parts in societies.

It is worthily said of one, that childhood should be manly, that is, not without all wisdom: and age child-like, that is, without pride and arrogancy.‡ Yet may the aged above the younger sort, challenge and use a kind of authority and confidence in their words and carriage. So is there to be permitted unto childhood that childishness, which without violence to nature and the God thereof, cannot be driven from it. Many, in pride, striving and straining to have their children men and women too soon, and ere they be full boys and girls, force them above their pace; and either cause them to tire, as discouraged; or occasion them to content themselves, in after time, with certain manly forms, without substance, unseasonably forced upon them, in their childhood. Fruits ripened by art, before their time, are neither toothsome, nor wholesome: so children made men when they should be children, prove children when they should be men. Notwithstanding, stubbornness and corruption cannot too soon be forced out of them: neither is half that liberty to be given to the younger sort, which they would take, not knowing nor being easily brought to believe, how slippery their state is, till they come to feel it by their falls: which if they did, they would not complain with the foolish young man, in the poet, that all parents keeping any hand over their children, though for their good, are injurious unto them.§

As all men are to "honour all men," 1 Pet. ii. 17, because they are men, and made after God's image; so should the younger sort specially be trained up to a bashful and modest reverence towards all, and chiefly towards their ancients. Tit. ii. 3, 4. Which so well becomes their

* Plutarch. † Cicero. ‡ Austin. § Terence.

maiden years, as that the philosopher accounts blushing a virtue in young folks, though a fault in the aged.* Many parents desire to have their young ones trained up in such exercises and courses, as may embolden them: but they should, for the most part, provide much better for them, specially in our audacious age, if they got them held constantly in courses of modesty, and shamefacedness; that so Demetrius might have his wish in them, which was, that young folks would reverence their fathers at home, all men abroad, and themselves being alone.†

The apostle writing to Timothy warns him "to fly the lusts of youth." 2 Tim. ii. 22. If Timothy, who was brought up in the knowledge of the Scriptures from a child, and who had profited so well therein, and whose place in the church was so eminent for the teaching and governing of others, stood in need of such advertisement and warning; what warning can be sufficient for ordinary young people to eschew and fly from such lusts and vanities, as to follow after them, and unto which the heat and heedlessness of youth carrieth them? It is indeed a great mercy of God, when young persons get over that their slippery and inexperienced state without either such public scandal, or secret wound of conscience, as the scar whereof they carry to their graves with them. How much more and greater a mercy is it, when they receive the grace to consecrate their youth and best days to God in holiness! offering their souls, and bodies as the sacrifices of young lambs unblemished, upon the Lord's altar. Wicked men, who hate goodness both in youth and age, use to say, "young saints, old devils:" but the truth is "young devils old Beelzebubs," for the most part. To whom yet, if God, in singular grace, vouchsafe repentance in after age; what a corrosive will it be to the heart of such a convert, casting back his eyes to his youth consumed in lusts and vanity, to think how great dishonour he hath brought to God's name, and hindrance to others' salvation; which he may repent of, but cannot redeem! On the contrary, sweet is the remembrance in old age of a youth led in true virtue and godliness.

Some would enjoy both the honour of age, and liberty

* Aristotle. † Tertullian.

of youth: but curled grey hair is not comely. Either state hath its benefit and burden allotted of God. He that obtains the benefit must be content to bear the burden. Young men must be content to want the honour, which is due to the aged of their order otherwise, in regard of the image of God's eternity, which they bear: and so must the aged be content to forbear even the lawful liberty, and delights of youth.

"Multitude of years should teach wisdom," saith young Elihu in Job, to his three ancients. Job xxxii. 4—6. And this, the younger sort should with reverence, and may with good reason look for, at their elders' hands, considering their long experience, and manifold advantages above them, for the getting of wisdom. This wisdom makes their age honourable indeed, and their "grey head a crown of glory, being found in the way of righteousness," Prov. xvi. 31: whereas an elementary old man, having no other argument to prove that he hath lived long, but his grey hairs, and wrinkled forehead, is a contemptible, and ridiculous creature.* How many such *a b c* old folks are there in the world, whose grey hairs promise wisdom and knowledge; and to whom opportunity and means of attaining it, hath not been wanting; who, yet being proved and known, will appear very babes in understanding, and such as, for that skill, had need to begin to live again! This is not merely a want of wit in them, or of the love of knowledge either; but withal a curse of God upon them, usually punishing a lustful, and reckless youth with a doltish age: in whom the proverb is true, in another sense: *Ab equis ad asinos:* Such of young horses become old asses.

A wise man should live well in youth, and before old age come, that he may die well in age,† if it come; and may be ready for death, as the white regions are for the harvest, John iv. 35: and so may both wait for it, and even meet it the more boldly in the way of such virtuous actions, as expose unto it. For though youth and likelihood of long life should make none withdraw from any good duty, or do amiss for fear of danger of loss of life; yet age should, though in course of nature the more

* Seneca. † Ibid.

fearful, upon ground of good reason, wisdom and grace, make men the more venturesome of that, in a good cause, which God and destiny will deprive them of ere long, though other men let them alone: as Solon was bold upon his old age to oppose himself to Pisistratus the tyrant.* One adviseth to be old betimes, that so we may be old long.† But who would desire to be that long, which is but a long infirmity;‡ save as age, accompanied with wisdom and godliness, adds authority to the aged for the more effectual enforcing of these and the like virtues upon others.

CHAPTER LXII.

OF DEATH.

NATURAL death stands in the separation of the soul from the body: spiritual, of the soul and whole man from God, in respect of grace: eternal, in respect both of grace and glory, with the sense of the contrary evils. "By sin, death," in all three degrees, "came into the world." Rom. v. 12. For albeit "God only have immortality," 1 Tim. vi. 16, and unchangeableness from and in himself, and that all creatures, and so man, with the rest, in regard of his elementary body, be subject to change, save as they do depend upon him, that uncreated being, and are sustained and upheld by the word of his power, Heb. i. 3, and by a continual influx from him; yet God having engraven his image in man, did both so temper his body, and order all creatures, under his providence, for him; as that nothing but sin could possibly impeach his life or welfare. By his sin he actually lost spiritual life; and the right both to temporary, and eternal. The first death is a natural evil; the second a spiritual; the third both. For although in regard of the universal and of God's supernatural ends, it be better that a man be, to be continued, though in eternal misery, than that he should cease to be altogether; yet in regard of the person's particular, as better eye out, than ever aching; better never to have been born, Matt. xviii. 9, or by death utterly to be abolished, as the brute beasts

* Plutarch. † Seneca. ‡ Austin.

are, than to live, and continue always accursed and miserable.

By natural death divers men, how like soever they have been in their temporal state, become most unlike in their eternal: the wicked, miserable without hope; and the godly, happy without fear: and by the same death, both they and all other, in other things, altogether alike, how unlike soever they have been in them formerly. After death remains no natural or civil relation; as of father, son, husband, wife, or the like: all these are for this life only. The lifeless earth unto which "the body returns," Eccl. xii. 7, is altogether incapable of them: so is the soul, being a spiritual substance, whether in heaven or hell. With them in glory, after the end of the world, "God shall be all in all," 1 Cor. xv. 28; and men shall be like the angels, neither taking wives, nor giving in marriage, Matt. xxii. 30, nor remaining married. Peter and Paul neither are, nor shall be apostles there; neither is the Virgin Mary, Christ's mother there: but they only remain those persons which sometimes, upon earth, had these states, and relations upon them. If there be any natural, or bodily difference after death, it is, that the bodies of the richer stink the more by reason of their greater fullness, and abundance whilst they lived.* And for the good, and bad, which are mingled together in this life, but cannot agree; death parts them for ever: being hastened of the Lord, that the godly dying may no more be vexed with, or by the wicked: nor the wicked any longer persecute the godly.†

If men should live always in the world, or but so long in our age, as did the first patriarchs, to what a height would many come in worldly happiness or misery! How extremely rich would many be! how many extremely poor! How mighty and powerful some! how dejected and depressed many more! But the wise providence of God is to be honoured herein: by which it comes to pass, that the more men are set to drive things to extremity, the less time should be allowed them for their courses one or other in the world.

Only man being both mortal and reasonable, can think of his death. Not the angels; for though they can by

* Ambrose. † Austin.

understanding conceive of death, yet are they by their spiritual state, set without the reach of it: nor brute beasts, though mortal, because it is not perceived by sight or other sense; but being a privation, to wit, of life, is only discernible by understanding.* If a beast see never so many of its own kind slaughtered before its eyes, it fears not death, which it sees not; though it may fear the instrument which it sees, or other terrible and sensible object. And hence it comes to pass, that the more brutish men are, they have the less thoughts or fear of death for the most part.

"It is appointed unto men once to die" ordinarily; "and after this the judgment." Heb. ix. 12. I say, as the apostle means, ordinarily: for "some die not, but are changed only," 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52: some die twice, as Lazarus, and others. This death, which will certainly once come, and with it eternal and unchangeable happiness or misery, we should always bear in mind; as if Philip's death's-head were set before us. For though the thoughts of death be not sufficient to raise the heart to heavenly things; yet are they so available to draw it from earthly, which is first to be done, as no thing is more, than the frequent and serious meditation thereof.† We should think seriously of that part of our life, which remains unfinished, that we may provide things necessary for it; and also of our death, that we may cut off superfluities, and use that moderately, which we must not use long.

The saying, Nothing more certain than death, and yet nothing more uncertain than the hour of death,‡ is common, and commonly abused. The certainty of it should teach us moderation in the use of the world and all worldly things, and that "we abuse them not, because the fashion of this world passeth away." 1 Cor. vii. 31. But contrariwise many take hereby occasion to lay the faster hold of it, either in the profits thereof for themselves or theirs; or pleasures, saying, "Let us eat, and drink; to-morrow we shall die." 1 Cor. xv. 32. And whereas God would have us ignorant of our last day and hour,§ that suspecting it always, we might always be ready;‖ we are apt, on the contrary, because we know not the certain time, to be the

* Scaliger. † Jerome. ‡ Bernard. § Austin. ‖ Gregory.

less ready at all times: and which is worse not to take warning neither, as we ought, by any, or all those known messengers of death; which are reckoned three: 1. Casualty, 2. Weakness, and 3, Age: the first showing our death to be doubtful; the second and third to be near, and at hand. Hardly any so old, but thinks he may yet live a year; or so sick, but that he may live a day longer.* Not only the foolish, but even the wise virgins are too prone to slumber, if the Bridegroom defer his coming a little. Matt. xxv. 5. Few regard the good counsel given, to account every day the day of our death,† and as that, wherein we are, it may be, to appear before the Lord. Few "watch because they know not what hour the Lord will come," as all are warned. But "the servant that so doth, and is ready; blessed is he, whom his Lord when he cometh, finds so doing." Matt. xxiv. 42.

Young folk may die shortly; but the aged cannot live long. The green apple may be plucked off or shaken down, by violence; but the ripe will fall of itself. It is wisdom therefore to provide for death in youth, there being many more that die in youth or childhood, than that survive till old age; but madness it is to neglect preparation, when age cometh: though in truth few die well in age, that have not lived well in youth.‡ That we may once die the great death aright and in peace; it is requisite, that we "die daily" many little deaths, both by outward afflictions and inward mortifyings of our worldly and corrupt lusts. 1 Cor. xv. 31.

We should so live, as being content to die, when God calls us hence; and that, upon knowledge of the nature, cause and event of death, and out of a good conscience towards God and men. And not in senseless blockishness, overcoming death, as the most do, by forgetting it; as if a man overcame his enemy, by getting as far from him as he could: nor yet by desperate wearisomeness of life for any troubles in it; but as being willing, yea desirous to live to serve God's providence for good, upon earth. It is ill, saith the wise heathen, to wish death; but worse to fear it.§ But godly Christians are to do both in different respects. To desire it, as it stands with God's

* Hugo Grotius. † Perkins. ‡ Seneca. § Ibid.

will, that they may be free from sin and misery; it being "best for them to be dissolved, and to be with the Lord." Phil. i. 23. To fear it, as being in itself a fearful punishment of sin; the dissolution of the most excellent creature upon earth; and an end of further praising God in his church, and performing particular offices of goodness and love to men. And in truth, though grace have this effect with them that desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, that they do not die only patiently, but even die with delight, and live patiently:* yet nature causeth, that not only they, that know they must die, as all do; but they also which believe, that after death they shall enjoy a more happy state, desire the deferring of it:† so loth to part are the two old acquaintances, the body and soul.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints," Psa. cxvi. 15, when they die for or in faith, and a good conscience: as the gold melting and dissolving in the furnace is as much esteemed by the goldsmith, as any in his shop, or purse. Precious also it is, whilst they live, and that which God will not lightly suffer to befall them. And if he put their tears in his bottle, he will not neglect their blood, nor easily suffer it to be shed: neither doth death, when it comes, part him and them; though it part man and man; yea man and wife; yea man in himself, his soul and body. Friends show themselves faithful in sticking to their friends in sickness, and all other afflictions: but they, how affectionate soever, must leave them in death: and are glad to remove them, and to have "their dead buried out of their sight." Gen. xxiii. 4. But the fruit of God's love reacheth unto death itself: in which he doth his beloved ones the greatest good, when friends can do no more for them.

He that said, Before death and the funeral no man is happy, spake the truth, as he meant, of the happiness which can be found in worldly things. But both he and they, who have so admired his saying, should have considered, that he who is not happy before death in worldly things, cannot be happy in them, by it; which deprives him of them all, and of life itself, which is better than they, and for which they are. But miserable indeed is the hap-

* Austin. † Ibid.

piness, whereof a man hath neither beginning, nor certainty, but by ceasing to be a man. The godly are truly happy both in life and death: the wicked in neither.

We are not to mourn for the death of our Christian friends, as they which are without hope, 1 Thess. iv. 13: either in regard of them or of ourselves. Not of them, because such as are asleep with Jesus, God will bring with him to a more glorious life, in which we, in our time, and theirs, shall ever remain with the Lord, and them: not of ourselves, as if that, because they had left us, God had left us also. But we should take occasion by their deaths to love this world the less, out of which they are taken; and heaven the more, whither they are gone before us, and where we shall ever enjoy them. Amen.

A

DEFENCE OF THE DOCTRINE

PROPOUNDED BY

THE SYNOD AT DORT,

AGAINST

JOHN MURTON AND HIS ASSOCIATES;

IN A TREATISE, ENTITLED

"A DESCRIPTION WHAT GOD," ETC.,

WITH

THE REFUTATION OF THEIR ANSWER TO A WRITING TOUCHING BAPTISM.

By JOHN ROBINSON.

PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1624.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTICE BY THE EDITOR.

THE celebrated Synod of Dort, held in 1618-19, was a General Council of the Dutch and Belgic Churches, assisted by deputies from the Churches of England, Scotland, Switzerland, Bremen, Hessia, and the Palatinate. The object of the Convocation was the settlement of the Calvinistic and Arminian Controversies, which had been carried on in the Low Countries with considerable acrimony for nearly twenty years.

The result of these deliberations was the establishment of the Calvinistic Creed, and the expulsion of the Arminian clergy from the national churches, in which many of them officiated.*

While the residents were agitated by these controversies, the English exiles in the principal towns were not a little affected by them. John Smyth, the pastor of the Separatist Church at Amsterdam, embraced the Arminian doctrines, and his successor, John Helwisse, with many of

* *Vide* Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. ii. p. 299, 8vo. ed.; Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, vol. v. p. 452; Thomas Scott's Articles of the Synod of Dort, &c., p. 104; Peter Hall's Harmony of Protestant Confessions, &c., pp. 538—573, ed. 1844. See also Brandt's History of the Reformation in the Low Countries, vol. iii. p. 62, 8vo. ed.; and Carleton's and Hale's Letters from Dort at the time of the Session.

their church, discarded the Calvinistic notions on the mysterious themes of Election and Redemption. "John Murton and his Associates" published the treatise, to which the following pages are a reply, to counteract the effects of the "Articles of the Synod of Dort," and also to oppose Mr. Robinson's baptismal view, as maintained in his "Apology;" his "Treatise on Religious Communion," and particularly in a tract on baptism, entitled "Manumission." The history of John Murton is unknown. It is conjectured, by some, that he was the John Morton described in Crosby's History of the Baptists,* who is said to have returned to England, and joined Hellwisse's Church in London. He subsequently left the metropolis, and is supposed to have settled at Colchester or its vicinity. In demolishing some houses in that town, a copy of a work of a similar character to the present treatise, and entitled "Truth's Champion," was discovered, and is said, on the title page, to have been written by John Morton.†

The work to which Robinson replies is entitled "A Description of what God hath predestinated concerning Man in his Creation, Transgression, and Redemption. As also, an Answer to John Robinson, touching Baptism. In a Dialogue. The Speakers, EREUNETES, a Searcher, and ODEGOS, a Guide." Printed 1620. 12mo. 176 pages. The copy of the Defence, from which the present reprint has

* Vol. i. p. 276, ed. 1738.

† The editor of the first volume of the Hanserd Knollys Society's publications, conjectures that a tract, entitled "Persecution for Religion Judged and Condemned," ed. 1615; and "A most humble Supplication of many of the King's most loyal Subjects," &c., printed 1620, both contained in that volume, are from the pen of "Murton and his Associates." Internal evidence appears to favour the supposition, but there are chronological difficulties which prevent a decided opinion on the question. *Vide* Tracts on Liberty of Conscience and Persecution, 1614—1661, edited for Hanserd Knollys Society, with a Historical Introduction, by Edward Bean Underhill.

been transcribed, is dated 1624, and is found in the Bodleian Library. Henry Ainsworth, of Amsterdam, prepared a reply to the same work, entitled "A seasonable Discourse, or a Censure upon a Dialogue of the Anabaptists, intituled 'A Description of what God,'" &c., but which was not printed till after his death. The Bodleian copy bears date 1644, twenty years after Robinson's publication. Robinson's "Defence" bears the characteristic mark of his controversial publications. It is a minute and elaborate examination of the statements and objections of his opponents against the Calvinistic Creed; and is a fair and candid exposition and vindication of the doctrines propounded in the celebrated Synod, and published in their "Judgment."

It is only justice to state, that Mr. Robinson rarely quotes the "*ipsissima verba*" of his opponents. He gives the general sense of the passages, or slightly abridges the arguments to be resisted, and, it must also be admitted, with fairness and candour.

When exact quotations occur, they are indicated by the usual inverted commas. In a few instances there were verbal inaccuracies in the quotations; these have been collated and corrected by a rare and valuable copy of Murton's volume, kindly lent by Mr. Underhill.

The Editor has endeavoured to render the work more interesting and easy of reference, by dividing the chapters into numerical sections, and giving them appropriate headings. The parenthetical marks have been, for the most part, omitted, and occasional notes supplied.

PREFACE.

THE record, which the Apostle bare the Jews in his time, such, as either read these men's writings, or know their persons, may bear them; which is, "that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." Rom. x. 2. I add, touching them, nor in modesty neither; which if it held any place in their hearts, as were meet, would moderate and restrain, both their causeless presumption in themselves, and graceless licentiousness which they fear not to use, both towards God, and other men.

They would seem very zealous for the Scriptures' purity and perfection; warning all, in the epistle to the reader, to take heed they presume not above what is written, nor to add to, or diminish from the perfect law of the Lord contained therein: and yet they themselves presume so frequently, and notoriously in this their book, to corrupt the very words of the texts which they cite, by adding to and taking away and altering, for their advantage; as I suppose, the like hath not been seen before in any, of any sect whatsoever: and as if, in truth, they meant not to use a gift to interpret the Holy Scriptures, but a privilege to correct them. A taste of this they give us in their very epistle, where answering an objection taken from the learning of the Synod of Dort, by Isa. xxix. 14, and Matt. xi. 25, 26, they, instead of "wise and prudent," which are Christ's words, put "learned," and that in small letters as part of

the text, both wronging therein that lawful and helpful learning in others, which themselves want, and corrupting the Lord's words, which they ought religiously to keep, and obtruding another meaning than ever came into his mind: which they do usually in this treatise, by neglecting the main scope of the place cited, and catching at a word or phrase in it, which is the highest way, that can be, to all heresy.

And for men, how uncharitable are they towards them in their persons, judging them as perishing without remedy, if they receive not their new gospel of Anabaptistry and Free-will! How injurious in relating their own misformed collections for their opinions! And lastly, how contemptuous of their gifts and graces, how eminent soever! As if the Word of God came out from them, or to them alone. 1 Cor. xiv. 36. It is true we ought not to pin our faith on the sleeves of any, nor to call any master, as Christ speaks and means, but him alone: and no less true, that Christ hath given gifts to some men, for the edifying of others, Eph. iv. 8—11; and that we ought not to look on our things alone, as if we alone had knowledge, and conscience, and zeal, and souls to save: "but every man also on the things of others," Phil. ii. 4, though in some things differing from them, as having these things, as well as we: and therewith considering, that many eyes see more than one, and that specially having, as so many spectacles, the advantages of knowledge of tongues, and arts, with daily travail in the Scripture, which in us are wanting. And thus serving God, in all modesty of mind, Acts xx. 19, and being sincere in the truth in love, Eph. iv. 15, we shall be much fitter, both to help others, and to be helped by them in the things agreeable thereunto.

A

DEFENCE OF THE DOCTRINE

PROPOUNDED BY

THE SYNOD AT DORT.

CHAPTER I.

OF PREDESTINATION.

SECT. I.—MEANING OF THE TERM.

Adversaries.

(Page 3.)

"WE hold that before the foundation of the world the Most Holy God, of his sincere love, without any cause out of himself, predestinated to make the world, and man, and all good things that are made: to make man a reasonable soul; to give him a righteous law; to give him ability to keep it or to break it; if he broke it to punish him, yet so as not to forsake him: but provided the slain Lamb (the seed of the woman) to send him into the world a Saviour for all men; to purchase the very wicked that deny him; yea even his enemies: not to send him to condemn the world but to save it: for so he loved it, that he would send his Son with this proclamation, that whosoever believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting life; yea as he liveth, not consulting that any man should perish, but that all come to repentance.

"Those that receive this his grace by faith in his Son, them, in this his eternal predestination he elected; the rest that will not receive this his grace, but put his word from them, and judge themselves unworthy of everlasting

life, those in his said predestination he rejected or reprobated. This decree of God being done at once; all which in time he effected and manifested."

Defence.

Neither the Scriptures so speak, neither is it sensibly said, that "God predestinated to make the world and man," &c. To predestinate, is to predetermine, or to destinate, or ordain beforehand, a person, or thing to its end. God indeed purposed from eternity to make the world, and man; but destinated it, and him, considered as, to be, made, to their ends. Christ as God was preordained or predestinated "before the foundation of the world, and manifested in the last times for our redemption," 1 Pet. i. 19, 20; yet, is he not of the number of persons or things made or created. Again, the glory of the grace of God, shining in man's salvation, is a created thing, and yet not predestinated of God, nor preordained to any end, being itself the utmost end of all things. We see then something predestinated, and yet not made; and something again made, and yet not predestinated. With like incongruity they add, that God predestinated to make man a reasonable soul, to give him a righteous law, and lastly, to send his Son "to purchase the very wicked," &c., which last words have neither truth in them (in their meaning), nor sense, as they lay them down.

Secondly, the Synod at Dort, against which these adversaries deal, and all others, speaking distinctly of things, apply the decree of predestination, to reasonable creatures; and that Synod, especially to men, and the same considered, as fallen in Adam, and thereby made guilty of eternal death; referring the decree of creation, and permission of the fall, to a more general work of Divine Providence.*

* Art. 6. "But whereas, in process of time, God bestoweth faith on some and not on others, this proceeds from his eternal decree. For from the beginning of the world God knoweth all his works. Acts xv. 18; Eph. i. 11. According to which decree, he graciously softens the hearts of the elect, however otherwise hard: and as for those that are not elect, he in just judgment leaveth them to their malice and hardness.

"And here especially is discovered unto us the deep, and both merciful and just, difference put between men equally lost: that is

Their description of the elect and reprobate may be admitted, in a good sense; namely, that the receiving of grace by some, argues God's eternal election of them, as the effect doth the cause. The not receiving of this grace by others, to whom it is offered, his eternal reprobation; that is, his not electing, but refusing or passing by of others, as the consequent, the antecedent. Of which more hereafter.

In setting down the difference between them and us, they insinuate, as if we made God the author, yea, the principal author of all the evil of sin in the world. But as the Synod disclaims that profane error, so doth it justly complain of this ungodly slander; which in these men ariseth from their want of skill, to put difference between God's working of the sin, as author thereof; and his appointing, and ordering, both of sin and sinner to his own holy ends.

to say, the decree of election and reprobation, revealed in God's Word, which as perverse, impure and wavering men do wrest unto their own destruction, so it affords unspeakable comfort to godly and religious souls."

"Art. 15. Moreover, the Holy Scripture herein chiefly manifests and commends unto us the eternal and free grace of our election, in that it further witnesseth, that all men are not elected, but some not elected, or passed over in God's eternal election, whom doubtless God in his most free, most just, most irreproachable and unchangeable good pleasure hath decreed to leave in the common misery, (whereunto by their own default they precipitated themselves), and not to bestow saving faith and the grace of conversion upon them; but leaving them in their own ways, and under just judgment, at last to condemn and everlastingly punish them, not only for their unbelief, but also for their other sins, to the manifestation of his justice. And this is the decree of reprobation which in nowise makes God the author of sin (a thing blasphemous once to conceive), but a fearful, unreprovable, and just judge and revenger."—*The Judgment of the Synod of Dort*, Chap. i., *On the Doctrine of Divine Predestination*, Arts. 6, 15: extracted from "The Harmony of Protestant Confessions," translated from the Latin. 8vo. ed. 1844. By Rev. Peter Hall, M.A., Rector, Milston, Wilts.

SECT. II.—THE CAUSE OF THE SIN OF ADAM.

Adversaries.

(Pages 4, 5.)

The first particular against which they deal, is our affirmation, that God decreed the sin of Adam, and that, of necessity, to come to pass, and consequently, all other sins, in their time, taking upon them withal to manifest, that herein we not only contradict the truth, but our own affirmation elsewhere, quoting for example, these Genevenses,* where it is affirmed, that Adam in innocency, had free-will or power, from the creation of God, not to have sinned: which matter they also prosecute in many words with great disorder, making the head of their discourse, Predestination; and the body, Sin.

Defence.

As the contradiction is not in our assertions, but in their misunderstanding; so might I, by good right, forbear to meddle about Adam's sin, in the case of predestination, considering the determination of the Synod at Dort hereabout, which I take upon me to defend: which considers man as fallen in God's account, as the object of the predestination in question. But I will not use all my lawful liberty; but as he that will overtake and hold a malefactor, must follow him, not only in the high and beaten way, whilst he keeps it, but in all the out-leaps also, and turnings which he makes, so, God assisting me, purpose I, though it be troublesome, to follow and prosecute these adversaries in this, and other their particular stragglings, if any way pertinent to the general controversy.

I affirm then, that God's decree, and ordination about Adam's fall was such, as that the same could not but follow thereupon; not as an effect, upon a cause working it; God forbid! but as a consequent upon an antecedent; or as an event necessarily following upon a most holy, wise, and powerful providence, so ordering and disposing, that the same should so come to pass infallibly, though performed by Adam's free, and freely-working will. If any demand

* Propositions disputed at the University of Geneva, p. 26.

how this can be, that God who forbiddeth and hateth sin, yet should so order persons and things, by his providence, and so from eternity purpose to order them, as that the same cannot but be? I answer, by free acknowledgment, that the manner of God's working herein is to me, and to all men, inconceivable; and withal avouch, that he, who will not confess, that God can, and could in Adam's sin, by his infinite wisdom and power, most effectually, and infallibly, in regard of such event, order and dispose of things, without violation to his holiness, or violence to the creature's will, as no mortal man is able to conceive the manner thereof, is himself in a high degree guilty of that pride which was Adam's ruin, by which he desired to be as God in knowledge. Gen. iii. Who is able to understand the manner of God's working, in giving the Holy Ghost to men, and in directing the tongues and pens of the prophets infallibly, and so as they could not err? Much less discernible is God's manner of working in, and about the creature's sinful actions. And because many take great offence at this doctrine of truth and work of God, I will, the Lord assisting me, plainly and briefly as I can, prove, that all events, even those most sinful, in regard of the creature's work in, and of them, come to pass necessarily, after a sort, in respect of God's providence, as being a hand steady and which swerveth not, in ordering the creature in and unto the same.

My first proof is from Acts ii. 22, 23, and chap. iv. 27, 28. "Him," to wit, Christ, "being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." And again, "Herod, Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and people of Israel, were gathered together, to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." What words could the Holy Ghost make use of more livelily to express God's effectual work, according to his eternal purpose? Here is expressly mentioned, not only his foreknowledge, upon which the event necessarily followeth, except God go by guess only, but his determinate counsel, yea his hand, as the effectual instrument of working: as if the Holy Ghost should have said, that which the heart of God unchangeably purposed should be done, touching

the killing of his Son by wicked men, that his hand power fully ordered to be done accordingly.

SECT. III.—GOD'S SUFFERING BUT NOT DECREEING SINFUL ACTIONS.

Adversaries.

(Pages 28, 29.)

Their evasions elsewhere are, that God decreed to suffer them to do that which they did, but decreed not that they should so do, and that God might have appointed some to sacrifice his Son Christ, as he did Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. And again, "that although God determined certainly that his Son should be slain, yet he might have been slain without sin."

Defence.

That God suffered, and so decreed to suffer the wicked to kill his Son, is plain. If he had not decreed to suffer them, he had not suffered them; if he had not suffered them, they could not have done it: but that he only suffered them, is against the express words and meaning of the text, which saith, the wicked took him, "being delivered by God's determinate counsel." Is to deliver by determinate counsel, to suffer only? So, where it is said, that God's "hand determined" that which was done, it shows that God was a doer in the business, and not a sufferer only. If God only suffered them, that is hindered them not, he had no hand in it at all, but withheld his hand from meddling in it. How then could his hand and counsel determine, before whatsoever was done? Besides, if God only suffered the death of his Son, all the worth of our redemption by his death, vanisheth away: seeing that which God suffers only, is only evil and not good Also by this perverse exposition, neither the Father gave his Son, nor the Son himself for us to the death, which the Scriptures everywhere affirm. John iii. 16; Gal. ii. 20; 1 John iv. 9; Rom. v. 8, 9. Lastly, he that considers the end of the church's prayer, Acts iv., will plainly see how they meant therein to ascribe unto God more than the sole suffering of those things. The end was to comfort themselves and other

God's servants against the threatenings and rage of the wicked in all their persecutions. But what comfort, I marvel, can the servants of God draw from this consideration, that God suffers the wicked in rage to persecute them, and hinders them not. This were indeed rather matter of discouragement and despair, than of comfort unto them. But herein stands their comfort firm, that God by the hand of his providence orders all these things according to the fore-determination of the counsel of his will. Neither will their vain imagination help them, that Christ might have been slain, and become our sacrifice, yet without sin. For, howsoever, it be not for them, nor me, to determine what was possible to God's absolute power; yet we know, considering the declaration thereof both by the Scripture and event, that in regard of God's decree, it was necessary that Christ should die, as he did by the conspiracy and rage of wicked men; as both the express words, and plain drift of the places prove. Lastly, it is an erroneous presumption, that God might have appointed some to have sacrificed his Son Christ, as he did Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac, to wit, in obedience to God's commandment, considering how expressly the Scriptures did even before his death, teach the contrary: and that the "Son of man must suffer many things, and be killed" by the elders and chief priests. Also that Christ "ought to suffer," to wit, what he had suffered by the priests and rulers which had delivered him to be condemned to death, and had crucified him: which manner of death, by being hanged upon the tree, so becoming a curse for us, that he might free us from the curse of the law, was as well foretold by the Scriptures, as his death itself. Mark viii. 31; Luke xxiv. 20—26; John xii. 32, 33; Gal. iii. 13. If that cannot but be, which the Scriptures foretell, and that the Scriptures foretold that Christ must thus be killed and crucified by the hands of wicked men, then was it necessary, and could not otherwise be, in regard of God's decree, that Christ should die as he did, and not without sin in them that killed him.

To conclude this place; these men granting, that God decreed the death of his Son, but denying that he decreed the means and manner thereof, make the most wise God

like weak man, who often resolves of a thing to be done, but takes time to consider of the manner of doing it.

Neither yet do we, by all this, make God the appointer of evil in their meaning, that is, either the commander, or worker, or approver thereof; but only the supreme governor of the whole world, and of all persons and actions therein, how sinful soever; using and ordering the covetousness of Judas, the envy of the priests, and injustice of Pilate to this event of Christ's death; in regard of them, most wicked; but of God, most gracious; and to us, most profitable.

Take we one other instance, for this purpose, from God's threatening of David by the prophet, for his sin against Uriah. "Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house," &c. 2 Sam. xii. 10, 11, 12. "Behold I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of the sun," &c. Whence it appears, that Absalom's practices against his father, as necessarily followed, by the work of God's providence, as God's threatenings going before, were necessarily true. Will they say, that God only suffered this, and so gainsay God himself saying, I will do this, v. 12. Is to do, to suffer, with these men? Tell me, you poor seduced souls, doth not the Lord here threaten a judgment from him to come upon David for his sin? Are not all God's judgments good and righteous? 2 Kings xx. 19; Psa. cxix. 160—164. Doth the judge only suffer the punishment of the malefactors, and not inflict or procure it? The Scriptures teach, and these men acknowledge, that whatsoever is good, cometh from the Father of lights. Are not God's judgments, whereof this is one, good in truth, though both evil to man's sense, as this was to David's; and worse sometimes in the instruments, both intention and action, as it was in Absalom's? It is therefore evident, that the same thing, in divers respects, was both the horrible sin of Absalom, and the severe punishment of David, and the just judgment of God. Take a familiar similitude for the explaining of this matter. The water is of itself apt and prone to flow to and fro. The husbandman by his arti-

ficial ditches and trenches, brings it to this or that place, in this or that measure, at this or that time, and so, for other circumstances: yet doth not he at all work the disposition of flowing in the water, but finding it there, makes use of it for his purpose, and by his skill leads the water whither seems good unto him. So neither did the Lord infuse at all corruption into Absalom, but finding it there by the devil's and his own work, ordered it to that his holy end, the glory of his justice in punishing the heinous sins of David: of which punishment He was the author.

These men grant, that "God foreseeth all evil to come." This foresight of God they will not deny to be certain, and that wherein God cannot be deceived. Whereupon it follows, that such evils so foreseen, necessarily and unavoidably come to pass. If any object, that God's foresight is not the cause of the evil, I answer, no more is his decree or work of providence about it. It sufficeth for the purpose in hand, if it follow by way of event or consequence upon the antecedent, though not of effect upon the cause. Let us yet a little further open this point. This knowledge, or foreknowledge of God, is two-fold: natural and indefinite, by which God knows all possible things, and whatsoever in any respect, or upon any supposition, can possibly be: or definite and determinate, by which of things possible he knows what shall and what shall not be. Now, howsoever this foreknowledge, as all other things in God, be one, and that infinite and eternal; yet in our conception, the former of those acts of God's foreknowledge, goes before the decree, the latter presupposeth it. For therefore God certainly and infallibly foresees a thing shall be, because he unchangeably decrees it shall be in and according to its kind: if good, by his working it: if evil, by his suffering it, and governing the creature in working it.

But you will answer, that God from eternity certainly, and infallibly foresaw Absalom's incest, because Absalom would certainly and undoubtedly practise it in time. But I would further know, whence this certainty and undoubtedness of Absalom's such practice should arise, so as it could not possibly but be, nor God be deceived in that his prescience or foreknowledge? It was not of any absolute necessity of itself, that Absalom should be born:

or being born, that he should be preserved, and survive to that time: or being till then preserved, that he should have natural ability, and opportunity therewith to practise that sin: seeing it was not impossible, but that David might have taken his wives with him, or they have fled else whither, and have hid themselves. In all these things, God was not a mere sufferer, but a powerful worker by his providence. But suppose the being of all these things as they were; and withal, Absalom's heart by the devil's work, and his own, fraught with lust and impiety this way; yet was Absalom a changeable creature, having in himself freedom, or liberty of will to have foreborne that act at that time, or to have exercised his lust upon some other object. How then could that particular event follow unchangeably from his changeable will? How necessarily and unavoidably, from his choice of will which was free in itself, either to that act, or to another of that kind, or to neither? Either therefore God's decree from eternity, and so his work in time, must be acknowledged for the disposing and ordering of all events unavoidably, or his knowledge be denied in foreseeing them infallibly.

Lastly, to affirm that anything, great or small, good or evil, comes to pass in the world, without God's providence ordering and governing it and them that do it, is to set the creature from under the Creator's rule and dominion therein; and to shut God out of the earth, whilst men do what they list in it, he letting them alone, and not meddling with them.

How "Adam had power from the creation of God not to have sinned," which they urge in the next place, we shall show hereafter. In the meanwhile, their addition, "that God's commanding him not to sin, and yet his decreeing that he should sin, are contrary, as light and darkness," is faulty both in regard of our assertion and their own. For us, we do not hold, that God decreed Adam's sin, as they conceive, that is, either to approve it, or command it, or compel unto it, nothing less: but this we affirm, that God decreed to leave Adam to himself in the temptation, and not to assist him with that strength of grace, by which he could, if he would, have upheld him; and so to order both him, and all things about him, in that his temptation, as

that, he, by the motion and sway of his own free-will, following his natural appetite to the pleasant, but forbidden fruit, and that false persuasion wherewith his understanding was by Satan overclouded, should both choose and eat the forbidden fruit. Neither are these two things contrary, that God should forbid a thing, and yet decree that it should come to pass in the manner fore-mentioned. God commanded Abraham to kill his son, as it was a trial of his obedience: and yet decreed that the event of killing should not follow: as we know. Gen. xxii. 2—12. God commanded Pharaoh by Moses, to "let Israel go,"—and yet said before, "I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall not let the people go." Exod. iv. 21, 22. That which he said, he decreed and purposed. Christ our Lord desired to drink of that bitter cup appointed him, and to be baptized with that baptism, and was pained till it were accomplished: and yet desired in another respect, that the same cup might pass from him, and he not drink of it, "if it were possible." Luke xii. 50; xxii. 42. These things may well stand together in their several respects, and are not as light and darkness to any, but to them, whose light is darkness.

Next, they take upon them to impugn the received distinction of God's revealed and secret will; and demand, "If it be God's secret will, how we come to know it?" I answer, by his revealing it afterwards, either by his Word or by his work. When a thing comes to pass in this or that manner, though before not so much as insinuated in his Word, and therefore secret, we then know that it was the will of God it should so come to pass, either by his working it according to its kind, if it be good; or by his suffering and ordering it, and the worker thereof, if evil.

It is true which they add, that God's revealed will was not revealed but hidden, before it was revealed. But what then? There was then, say they, "two hidden wills in God contrary to each other: whereof the one willed; yea, decreed Adam to sin, and the other willed him not to sin," and so by consequence, a good will, and an evil will.

I answer, that the will of God in him, and itself, is but one, and the same most simple; but by us conceived of, as diverse, according to the diversity of objects upon which it

is set. Secondly, we do not say, that God willed Adam's sin immediately, but that he willed the suffering and ordering of both the sin and sinner in sinning. Thirdly, the willing and nilling of the same thing in divers respects, makes not two contrary wills, as the Scriptures last cited manifest; but the willing and nilling of the same thing in the same respect, makes the contrariety.

SECT. IV.—PUNISHMENT OF SIN.

Adversaries.

(Pages 6, 7.)

They make us further to say, that "God willeth justice for itself, and sin, not for sin, but that he might have praise either in pardoning or punishing sin:" and thereunto frame answer, that to pardon or punish sin, is not to will sin, and that if God willeth sin in any respect, why doth he punish it in Adam, and all his posterity?

Defence.

But who hath said, that God wills sin, though not for sin? We know that the object of man's will, is only good in appearance, and of God's, in truth. We do not then say, that God wills sin properly, though he wills the thing which in regard of the creature is sin: but in regard of him either a most holy and wise trial of the creature, or just punishment of former sins, either their own that practise it, or others: so Absalom's wicked sin, was God's just punishment upon David, 2 Sam. xii., xv., xvi. So the "reprobate mind," "vile affections," and "all unrighteousness" of the Gentiles, was "a meet recompense" from God of their error, in not glorifying him as God in the things which they clearly saw in the creation of the world. Rom. i. 28—32. They cannot here hide themselves in their burrow of God's bare suffering, considering how expressly it is said, that God gave them up to vile affections, and as a just judge recompensed thereby their former sins, to wit, as otherwise, so by ordering that corruption which was in, and of themselves, to this fearful event of a reprobate mind.

The things which they add about men's, how much more God's, speaking the truth from his heart, and their bold

charge of others with blasphemy, in making God (to be "blessed for ever!") a hypocrite, I pass by as a fruit of that spirit which makes men presumptuous, self-willed, and not afraid to speak evil of the things which they know not themselves, nor will learn of others. 2 Pet. ii. 10; Jude 10. The Lord who taught Paul, that he, who being a Pharisee, and in his ignorance had accounted Christ's doctrine blasphemy, had himself blasphemed, show these men the like mercy; for they know not what they speak.

SECT. V.—ADAM UNDER NO NECESSITY OF SINNING.

Adversaries.

(Pages 7—10.)

In the next place to show how free Adam was from all necessity of sinning, they at large relate how God furnished him with all things that might support him in the estate in which he created him.

Defence.

The particular helps mentioned, I acknowledge with them, but with limitation of some of them, which they set down at a large adventure. Whereas in the third, they affirm, that Adam had a meet help and comfort for him, his wife, Eve. This is true of her created state, but not of that which followed, she, being first seduced by the serpent taking advantage upon her womanly weakness and the absence of her husband, becoming the only immediate instigator of him to sin. So the seventh and last, which is, that God gave Adam will and power not to have eaten, we confess it, but not as they mean it, in their more overly considerations, and peremptory determinations, than is meet, in this deep mystery. Let us therefore a little more distinctly consider, how it may and ought to be granted, that God furnished Adam with all necessary and sufficient grace and helps, against sin, and for perseverance in holiness.

First then, we confess, that God making him a reason able creature, bestowed upon him withal whatsoever grace was sufficient and necessary, on his part; that is, as much, and more, than he was bound to give him. Secondly, that God

gave him whatsoever was sufficient for his preservation in that state of holiness and integrity in which he was created, out of the case of temptation. Thirdly, I grant, that whatsoever grace he wanted, for the resisting of the temptation when it came, it was by his own default, and that, if he had not failed himself, the grace of God would and should have sustained him therein also. Notwithstanding all this, the event manifested, that Adam had not the grace to withstand the temptation of the serpent by the woman, but was seduced thereby. It was nothing but want of grace in him not to withstand it; and this grace he could not have, but by his gift, "from whom every good gift, and every perfect gift cometh down, even the Father of lights," James i. 17. God gave him will actually only to good, but changeably; and power to understand and do whatsoever concerned him if he would: but now that constancy of will upon clear understanding and unchanged purpose of heart, which was requisite in so great a temptation, by so subtle an adversary, in an object so pleasing to nature, and good in itself, together with the persuasion of his wife, so near unto him, this grace, I say, Adam received not of God, as the event in the changing of his will upon deceitful information of his understanding, blinded by an appearing good, made it too manifest: though as before, I said, through his own default, in not depending upon God as he ought.

The things which they annex, that "God gave not Adam a law to ensnare him; but that that law was holy and good, that Adam was the son of God by creation; and if men, who are evil, do good unto their children, and would not beget them to misery; how much less hath the good God created his son to sin and misery? As also, that sin is the defacing of God's image in man," we willingly acknowledge; and withal whatsoever can be rightly gathered therefrom.

We believe that the end of Adam's creation in regard of himself, was holiness and happiness; in regard of God, the glorious manifestation of his power, wisdom, holiness, and goodness; and that sin came in by accident, and misery by sin; man by his free but corrupted will, willing the sin, and God by his just and holy will, the punishment; and that sin was in no sense the destinated end of God's

creation; nor misery, but by accident, as to come from sin. Yet must the difference here be held, howsoever these men tumble all together, between God, Adam's and all men's father by creation, and his children, and between natural parents and their children. God was Adam's absolute Father and Lord, though not for the use of any unjust power; men are but fathers as it were by borrowing, and with a power limited by God's will. 2. God works, and orders all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the evil day, and "of him, and through him, and to him are all things." Prov. xvi. 4; Rom. xi. 36. So do not earthly parents beget and order their children for themselves, as their utmost, and highest end. 3. Earthly parents are bound not to suffer their children to sin, if they can hinder it; but to do whatsoever they possibly can, being lawful, to keep them from sin and misery. Will these free burgesses, of their own choosing, make a parliament-law to bind God to do whatsoever he possibly can to keep from sinning, men and angels? Lastly, earthly parents would rather, had they before known it, never have begotten their children, than that they should, though merely by their own default, have come to sin and misery thereby without remedy. But God, even our adversaries being judges, foreknew these things of men, and yet created them notwithstanding.

SECT. VI.—COULD ADAM HAVE BEEN MADE IMMUTABLE IN HOLINESS?

Adversaries.

(Page 10.)

Here, upon question moved, whether God could not have made Adam so as he could not have been deprived of his state of righteousness; and whether anything can be done against God's will; they undertake to manifest two things: 1. "In what state God made Adam?" 2. That "many things are done against the will of God." For the first, they in their bold ignorance, hold it an "ignorant conceit," that God could have made Adam unchangeable; that is, so have made, and kept him as he should not, nor could have been deprived of his state of righteousness, in

which he was made. For this, say they, had been to have made him God like himself; and so conclude, that God could not have made man otherwise than he made him, a reasonable creature, yet changeable. 2. That then it had been to no purpose, to have set a penalty to the law. 3. That then the most holy attributes of God, his justice to punish sin, and mercy to forgive it, had been void.

Defence.

They, who here desire, that what, they say, may be well observed, should themselves better have observed what they say, than thus, as they do, to deceive both themselves, and others, by an equivocation of words.

Here then in the first place, a distinction must be put, which is, that a thing is unchangeably good, either in, and by itself, and so God only is unchangeable, and so "only hath immortality," and is "only wise," &c., 1 Tim. vi. 16; 1 Tim. i. 17, or a thing unchangeable by the grace and power of God communicated with the creature; and so God could, if he would, have made Adam unchangeable, or kept him unchanged, which is the same, in the present consideration: as he hath made the angels and souls of men immortal, and both angels and men wise in their kind, by communication of the effects of his being and wisdom with them. God, then, is only unchangeably good by nature, and of himself; yet by his grace and power, it was possible for Adam to have been kept unchangeably good, so as he should not have sinned, which is the unchangeableness in question.

And this answereth their first reason. To the second also, I answer, that God making Adam changeably good by created nature, might, had it seemed so good to his infinite wisdom, have kept him by grace from possibility of breaking his righteous law, in our meaning, notwithstanding the annexing of the penalty, and that to great good purpose; viz., both to show how God hates all transgressing of his law, against the breach whereof he denounceth such judgment; and also, as a means, by his blessing and grace, effectually for the keeping of Adam from breaking it: which use also it should have had, if Adam had done his duty in constant obedience, and that

God, by his most powerful grace had so preserved him, that he had not sinned.

For the third reason: First I demand, what necessity there was that God should have use, as they speak, towards men of the attributes of his justice to punish sin, and of his mercy to pardon it upon repentance? Would it have been any diminution of his perfection, and happiness if he had not so done? Doth not the glory of God also even most brightly shine in the elect angels, which have been and shall be kept unchangeably holy and without sin for ever? and in regard of whom those holy attributes, of justice in punishing, and mercy in pardoning have no use. But observe, good reader, how these men are taken unavoidably in their own snare. It is not man's being made changeable, and such as might sin, by which there could come to be use of God's attributes of justice for the punishing of sin, and mercy for the pardoning of it; except, withal, man become actually changed, and sinful. Can there be use of justice for punishing, or of mercy for forgiveness of sin, but where sin is? Their reason therefore, if it bear weight, proves not only, that man might possibly, but that he must sin necessarily. Which I lay down and apply formally thus; that, without which the attributes of God's justice to punish sin, and of his mercy to pardon it, had been utterly without use towards men, that must necessarily be: but without man's sinning, the attributes of God's justice to punish, and of his mercy to pardon, had been utterly without use towards men; ergo, man must necessarily sin, by just consequence upon this antecedent.

Their reasons thus answered, I will plainly prove that God could, if it had so pleased him, have kept Adam unchangeably good; as the angels, and souls of men are, and bodies shall be, at the resurrection, unchangeably immortal.

And first, the Scriptures teach us to give this honour to the power of God, as to believe that our God in the heaven doth, and, therefore, can do, whatsoever pleaseth him, Psa. cxv. 3, and so could, had it pleased him, and been his will, have preserved Adam from sinning against him. Of their distinction of God's will we shall speak by and by. If in the meanwhile they except, that God could not

so will; I would know the reason of their presumption. If they say, there are some things which God cannot do, as to lie, to deny himself, to make the same thing to be, and not to be, at the same time, and the like, inferring either impotence in the Creator, or contradiction in the creature; I demand, what had there been herein against the nature either of the Creator, or creature, if God by his grace, had kept the understanding of Adam from being overclouded with error, or false opinion, and therewith his will and affections in the integrity of obedience? This had not been, as some imagine, to destroy; but to perfect his nature. Hath not God so kept the elect angels without all change from their primitive purity? Was not the Lord Jesus in his manhood so kept upon earth? And shall not all the elect be so kept for ever in heaven? These are, were, and shall be unchangeably righteous; and yet were not, nor are, nor shall be made gods.

They themselves confess, that the "devils are unchangeable in evil." And why then might not both angels and men be unchangeable in good? That is, so kept by the power of God as they never turn from their goodness. Or what bar would these men have put against the power of God, if his will had been so to have preserved and kept Adam? I demand, whether the Apostles, in their time, could possibly preach anything but the truth, being immediately and infallibly guided by the Holy Ghost? All these instances serve to prove, that it is possible to God, if it please him, so to assist and confirm by his Spirit, a reasonable creature, though of a changeable nature in itself, as that in regard of the same Divine assistance, it is not possible it should be changed from good to evil, or sin against God. Lastly, if God could not have so made and ordered Adam, as that he could not have sinned, then God did not so much as suffer him to sin, seeing none can be said properly to suffer a thing to be done, save he that could hinder it, if he would. It were absurdly said, that I suffer the wind to blow, or sea to swell, though I hinder them not, seeing that it is not in my power to hinder them.

SECT. VII.—GOD'S WILL—EZEKIEL XXXIII. 18.

Adversaries.

(Pages 11, 12.)

They add from Ezek. xxxiii. 18, God's asseveration, "that as he lives, he would have no man transgress, and so come under the execution of his justice:" making withal a short description of the will of God, as they call it: and ever confounding these two things; necessity and compulsion: and God's not decreeing, with his forcing men to sin.

Defence.

For the better answering and understanding of the answer unto these things, it must be considered, first, that the will of God, though simple, and one in its nature, yet exerciseth itself diversely, in regard to divers objects. The first and weakest degree of God's willing, to speak of God as man is able to conceive of him, is that, by which he wills the permission or suffering of sin, as sin. For if God suffer it, he suffers it willingly, seeing he both takes knowledge of it, and could hinder it by his omnipotent power, if he pleased. The second degree of God's willing, is that by which he commands a thing to be done, and approves of it, if it be done. The third, and last degree is, that according to which he works all things by his omnipotent power. And if a man, whose will is finite, yet can will things according to those degrees; how much more both possible and easy is it to God's infinite will, to exercise itself more intensely or remissly, according to those degrees? I may be willing, in cases, to suffer that in another which I approve not of: so may I command my servant or child to do a thing, and approve of it, if it be done, and yet not so will it, as to use all the power that possibly I can, to have it done. Some things, again, there are that I so will, as that I do, or am bound to use all my possible skill and power to have them effected. These things are much more rightly said of God, considering the infinite largeness of his will, compared with my straitness. The same may be said of the Spirit of God which is one,

for there is one Spirit, 1 Cor. xii. 4, whose operation yet is diverse, and the same sometimes more, and sometimes less forcible; as we see in the knowledge of an apostle, compared with the knowledge of an ordinary minister or Christian, and many other ways.

And these differences of the will of God, in the exercising of itself towards the creature, I desire the reader here carefully to observe for after use. Their short definition, as they unskilfully call it, of God's will, by which he either "wills what man is to do, or what he will do in himself," is short indeed; as cutting off all that God will do and doth out of himself, and in the creature, as are all his works, *ad extra*, as they are called.

It remains, that in the next place, we show the difference between necessity and compulsion; and God's decreeing in our sense, and his forcing of things, which our adversaries with great error confound as the same, and withal, that things may, after a sort, be done necessarily, and freely too. Freely, yea contingently also, in regard of men, and necessarily, in regard of God's work of providence, according to his decree. I mention God's work according to his decree; because to speak properly, God's decree or will, works not things, but his power according to his will. There is, indeed, a necessity which takes away freedom and voluntariness from men; but then, they rather suffer than do. For example, the striking or thrusting of a man with such violence, as that he is compelled thereby to stagger or fall: this necessity of compulsion deprives me of all freedom to this bodily motion, so as I stagger or fall unwillingly; but this comes from an external principle, or beginning, working violently, and from without me. But this is nothing to that other necessity in regard of God, causing and effecting the good, in and by the creature, according to its kind; and suffering and ordering the evil person and thing, according to its kind; with which man's freedom may well stand.

And first, whatsoever God doth, he doth it both most freely, and most necessarily well. So the elect angels do the will of God most voluntarily, and yet most necessarily. 1 Tim. v. 21; Isa. vi. 2. So did Christ, as man, the will of his Father so freely, as none can do anything

more; and yet as necessarily, as it was necessary for God not to sin. Matt. xvi. 21; John iv. 34; Acts xx. 28. On the contrary, the devils do evil, both necessarily, being by these men's own grant, unchangeably evil, and yet most willingly, as carried thereunto with all their power. Christ saith, "It must needs be that offences come;" and the apostle, that there must "be heresies in the church." Matt. xviii. 7; 1 Cor. xi. 19. If then freedom of will can stand with no manner of necessity, the authors of these "heresies" and "offences" sin not therein; for all sins, especially of this kind, are voluntary. I add in the last place, that the better any man or angel is, he doth good the more, both necessarily and willingly; and the worse any, evil, both ways.

Neither will seem strange unto us, that one and the same action comes under so divers considerations, as in one regard, to be voluntary, contingent, and casual; and in another, necessary: if we consider, how divers agents concur and meet together in producing it. No work of man, is so man's alone, as that God hath not some hand in it, in sustaining and ordering the person and work, yea in effecting that which is good in it, as all that is, which hath in it any created being or order. What hinders then, but that the same thing may, in regard of man, as the particular and immediate cause, be voluntary and contingent; and yet in regard of God, the highest and general cause, necessary? We daily see the truth of this, in proportion, amongst men; the meeting of Ahab and Elijah was in respect of Ahab, casual; but in respect of Elijah, of destinate counsel. 1 Kings xxi. 18.

These things thus cleared, we will come to the exposition of the words of Ezekiel, so oft and vehemently urged by these men, and others; which are, that "God tākes not pleasure in the death of a sinner," but "that he turn from his way and live." Ezek. xviii. 23; and xxxiii. 11.

I answer, first, that the Lord takes no delight in the death of a sinner, that repents, and turns from his wicked way; but otherwise, if the sinner repent not, the Lord takes delight in his death; not for the misery of the creature, but for the glory of his justice shining therein. Of such the Lord testifies, that he "will laugh at their

calamity, and mock them when their fear cometh," Prov. i. 26; and considering, that the death and destruction of the wicked is God's own just and holy work, for their sins, who will deny that God delights in it? Secondly, for sin: who was ever so wicked as to imagine that God takes pleasure in it? It pleaseth him for his holy ends, to suffer sin, and to order the creature sinning by his own free-will, and election of evil, as hath been formerly proved. Thirdly, it must be noted that the prophet speaks there of such sinners only, as to whom the Word comes; saying, "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Whence we do gather evidently these two particulars. First, that the prophet doth not here speak of all men universally, as they—the writers—conceive, but only of the house of Israel, or of such, as to whom he sends his prophets to call them to repentance; secondly, that he speaks not of that decree of the Lord willing, which is accompanied with the powerful work of his grace, by which he will give repentance to wicked men, instructed in the truth by his servants, 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25, 26; but only of that degree of his will which stands in commanding that which is good, and in approving of it, if it be performed. And so we grant it to be the Lord's pleasure and will, that all repent to whom the Word is preached.

It is true which they add: that Adam and others sinned against the will of God, but not that any ever sinned against the secret will of God, as they affirm. The will of God is no law to man till it be revealed; and where there is no law there is no transgression. It is also truly said, that the Jews' unwillingness to be gathered to Christ was against God's and Christ's will: that is, his commanding will: for he would, that is, commanded; and they would not, but disobeyed: but that it was against that decree of God's willing, which sets his almighty power a-work, that I deny. For God could, if thus he would, have given them repentance, and drawn them to his Son. Whatsoever he thus wills, he can do. John vi. 44.

That which they add, as an eye-salve to cure our blindness, namely, that we have nothing to do with God's secret will, not revealed in his Word, Psa. cxxxv. 6; is true

in regard of our obedience to God, and expectation from him, but not absolutely, as they conceive. The particular events of things in the world, though not so much as insinuated in the Scriptures, concern us when they come to pass, so as we may and ought to say, it was the will of God they should so be: either his will to work them, if good; or to suffer and order them and their doers, if evil.

SECT. VIII.—GOD THE AUTHOR OF MAN'S ACTIONS, BUT NOT OF THE SINFULNESS OF THE ACTIONS.

Adversaries.

(Pages 12—17.)

Next comes into consideration a special distinction of ours, which is, that God is the author of the action, or fact, but not of the sin of the fact or crime. Over which they insult, and in it, over all learned men, though they mention Calvin only, with high contempt, and great triumph before the victory; calling it, "merely a fabulous riddle," and "marvellous sophistication"; telling us that "a spade is a spade," &c., but in truth showing themselves fitter to meddle with a spade and a mattock, than with those high mysteries. Let us see their reasons. In the first, whereof they make us say: that "God is the author of the very fact and deed of Adam's sin, yea of adultery, theft, murder," &c.

Defence.

We deny their charge, and answer by distinction; that Adam's taking and eating the forbidden fruit, David's adultery, Joab's murder, and the like, are to be considered in two ways: First, naturally, and as they are motions in nature, performed by man's natural, and created faculties and powers of soul and body: secondly, morally, as those motions are misapplied, and abused to wrong objects, by man's blind mind and corrupt will. In the former respect and materially, as we speak, they are of God and created nature; in the latter and formally, of man's proper corruption. Now the sin is not the natural action of the motion, but the pravity and abuse of the action. The

subtlety of our riddle, they, as if they had ploughed with our heifer, find out to be this, that in our account, sin is nothing, and that God, though the author of all things, is not the author of sin, for sin is nothing; and so the thief and other malefactors, are punished for nothing by the judge: and the wicked for nothing, in everlasting fire.

First, I demand of these men, whether, if God command something to be done, and men do it not, they deserve not to be punished for their doing of nothing? Is it not sin not to do what we should do; and to do nothing when we should do something? These witty men could teach the goats of Christ's left hand, Matt. xxv. 33, at that day, to answer him to the full, that he condemned them to hell fire for nothing; for not to do, is to do nothing. We then answer, first, that we call not sin nothing, negatively, but privatively, as a want of that which should be;* secondly, that sin is not nothing morally, that is, not nothing against God's law, for sin only is something against it, but nothing naturally; that is, nothing which hath a created being in nature.

So for their next argument, that by "authority of Scripture," and our own description, "sin is a thought, word, or deed, contrary to the will of God, and therefore that the deed is sin;" they should consider, that neither the Scriptures' nor writer's meaning is, that the sin stands in the natural deed or motion, but in the contrariety which the same deed, or motion hath in it to the law of God. Darkness, or a shadow, are nothing positively, but only the want of light. The voidness, darkness, and unformedness on the earth and deep, Gen. i. 1, 2, in the beginning were nothing that had real being; but only the want of that form, furniture, and light, which God afterward made, and furnished them withal. When the candle is put out, and it becomes dark, shall we think that any real thing comes into the house, and causes the darkness? or when I make

* The privative character of sin is illustrated extensively in President Edwards's works, vol. 2, pt. 1, ch. 1, sec. 2, p. 102; also pt. 4, ch. 2, pp. 330—341. Dr. Williams's Essay on the Equity of Divine Governments, p. 340, et passim. The Doctrine of Original Sin, being the 11th Series of the Congregational Lecture, by Geo. Payne, LL.D., pp. 154, &c. Ed. 1845.

a shadow by standing in the light, or sunshine, do I put any real thing in the place where the shadow is? or do I not only keep the light and sunshine from it? Likewise, when a man or beast halts in going, shall we imagine that the halting is the very motion of going, or the fault of the motion only? So is sin only the absence and want of that conformity and agreeableness, which ought to be in the thought, word or work of the reasonable creature to the law of God; which as none of understanding and sincerity will deny: so for further satisfaction of the doubting, and conviction of the refractory, I will annex certain most plain and undoubted proofs of Scripture to confirm the same.

First, the apostle quoting and confirming the saying of the heathen poet, witnesseth to the Athenians, that "in God we live and move, and have our being," Acts xvii. 28. Our being then, that is, our souls and bodies, and our life arising from their union; and so our motions arising from our life we have of God: yea which is more, after a sort, in him, who filleth all things with his presence. Where let it also be noted, that he speaks of the being, life and motions of the very profane and heathenish idolaters as well as of any other.

Secondly, God, as it is in the Psalm, "made the heavens and earth, and sea, and all that in them is," Psa. cxlvi. 6. If sin then be anything, viz. anything having being, God made it, and so it is his creature. And, surely, if it have a being, it is either a created or uncreated being. Not the latter, for that is only God; and therefore the former by their ground. If God created all things that are, sin, if it be in their sense, must be God's creature.

Thirdly, the same natural motion of man in which great sin is committed, if it were exercised upon another object, might be without sin, and lawful; and therefore not the very action or motion, but the misapplying of it is the sin; from which the action hath its moral, but not its natural being. For example, the very same natural motion which Adam used in taking and eating the forbidden fruit, upon any other fruit, had been no sin. The same natural act in which David practised adultery with Bathsheba, with his lawful wife, had been no adultery: the very same natural act and motion whereby Joab killed Abner and Amasa, if

exercised upon a malefactor at the magistrate's command, had been no murder, but a work of just execution. The sin therefore is not in the very act, but in the misapplying it, or other vicious adjunct.

Fourthly, considering that there is no sin in deed or action of body, which was not first in the faculties of the soul, the understanding, will and affections; for only "the things which come from the heart, defile the man," Matt. xv. 8; the outward sin, in fact and deed, can no more make the outward action in itself not to be of God,—than the inward corruption can make the created faculties in which it is, not to be of God. It is senseless to doubt, but that when a wicked man sleepeth, and so practiseth no wickedness one way or other, he is notwithstanding a wicked man. And where now resteth his wickedness, but in his heart? And what is his heart, but the faculties of his understanding, will, and affections, which sin possesseth and corrupteth? And yet nevertheless these natural faculties remain God's good creatures; so do their motions natural, notwithstanding sins possessing them. There is in our sinful nature, the faculty, and the sin or disorder in it: and in our sinful works, the action from the faculty, and the outward sin in it, from the inward sin in the other.

Lastly, I thus argue unresistibly: That which God blesseth is good, and of himself. This none will deny, I assume. But God blesseth the natural action, or motion, in which horrible sin is practised. This is most evident, amongst a thousand daily instances, in the sinful commixture of Judah and Tamar, being on his part whoredom, and on her's incest, though with a better mind, Gen. xxxviii. Yet this action, considered naturally, God blessed with a child; yea, with two sons; yea, with him of "whom Christ came according to the flesh, who is blessed for ever." Rom. ix. 5. Here is plainly the action blessed, and therefore good, in our sense, and of God; and yet the sin in the action, evil and accursed.

The meaning of Mr. Knox,* in saying, that "what Ethnics ascribe to fortune," we acknowledge to come from

* In his work against "An Adversary of God's Predestination." p. 155.

God, as the appointer of the things they mistake and pervert, neither understanding the Ethnics' meaning nor his. The heathens, speaking of fortune, did not conceive that there was any such Divine power causing things to be, but the contrary, and that things came to pass without any Divine Providence ordering them, and merely by blind chance or fortune: when they spoke of good fortune, or ill fortune, they meant only the good or ill hap of persons, or things. His and our meaning then is, that which Christ our Lord also teacheth, that "not a sparrow falls to the ground" without God's providence. Matt. x. 29. And where he speaks of God as the author, by his counsel appointing all things to the one part, and to the other; it is plain he intends it only of the ordering and governing of them, which they that deny, do in effect, pluck God out of heaven, by denying his sovereignty, and power over all his creatures in ordering them, and all their actions, to his own supernatural ends. The bitter curses which here they break into in their ignorant zeal against him, and Calvin, and with them, all others, the worthy instruments of restoring the gospel's light, after the darkness of Popery, into which these men are slidden back in no small measure, are like stones thrown upwards by them, which without their answerable repentance, will fall down upon their own heads.

Their proofs that God is gracious and merciful, of whom all good things come, and none evil, are needless, seeing we grant as much; only wishing them to consider these three things. First, that the most of these scriptures cited, mean only the mercy and love of God to his church and people. Secondly, with what mind they, once and again, put moving for tempting, James i. Thirdly, that 2 Pet. iii. 4, is not to be extended to all, as it is by those prodigal stewards of God's grace, but to the elect only, whom the apostle opposeth to the mockers mentioned, ver. 3, and therefore saith, that the Lord which hath promised, is patient towards us, and so defers that his coming till the number of the elect be accomplished, by their effectual calling.

Of God's suffering and doing things, and how they come to pass thereupon, I have spoken before, answering

what they object* thereabout. Only I may not pass by, without giving warning thereof, the stumbling-stone of most grievous error and impiety, which they, purblind people, cast in their own way, making God's purposes and promises no better, in effect, than the vizor of stage-players, which they put on, and off again, at every turn.

SECT. IX.—GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE AND TRUTHFULNESS.

Adversaries.

(Pages 18, 19.)

Their affirmation, that God from the beginning of the world knoweth all things, yet, that all things come not to pass, therefore, necessarily; alleging for that purpose, Matt. xxvi. 53, is dangerous, if they speak to the matter in hand, and with respect to the text, whose word, for the most part they bring: "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world," Acts xv. 18. Their instance, in Christ's "asking twelve legions of angels," Matt. xxvi. 53; "Ananias keeping his possession," Acts v. 3: and the "saving of the ship in which Paul sailed," Acts xxvii. 44. These Scriptures, together with Saul's coming to Keilah, and the men of Keilah's delivering David into his hands, 1 Sam. xxiii., they bring to prove, "that although God do foreknow things will come to pass, and also foretel them, yet they may be prevented:" adding hereunto, that the Lord knoweth and pronounceth, that the wicked shall be damned, and yet there lieth no necessity upon their damnation, but that it may be prevented by repentance."

Defence.

First, these examples of the Lord's asking "the twelve legions of angels," and of Saul's coming to Keilah, and the like, are not to the purpose in hand. The question is, as they themselves put it, of things coming not of fortune, but by God's providence, and of God's willing things that come to pass, both good and evil. To what end, then, mention they things that never did, nor shall come to pass, either good or evil: and so to cover their craft the better

* Vide p. 276—282, supra.

alter the words of the text, "All God's works," into "all things." And what are all these things with them? Christ's obtaining twelve legions of angels; Ananias retaining his possession; the saving of the ship in which Paul sailed towards Rome: Saul's coming to Keilah, and the destruction of the Ninevites within forty days: which were neither works of God, nor man; nor never were, nor shall be. So then by "all God's works," as the text saith, and matter in hand requireth; and by "all things," as they say, they must mean plain nothing, and that which never was, nor shall be.

Secondly, the scriptures cited by them, rightly understood, are to them, as Goliath's sword to him, clearly cutting off the head of their error. Take for instance one or two of them, upon which they most insist.

For, Matt. xxvi. 53, it was a thing in itself possible, considering God's love to his Son, and his faith in him, that he should have obtained those legions of angels to have rescued him; so was it also, not only possible in itself, for Saul, but also in his mind to have come to Keilah, &c. And whence, then, was it that these things came not to pass, and had not their answerable events? Even from the decree and providence of God's ordering things the other way inevitably. In the former instance we have Christ's own testimony, who after mention of such praying, if he would, ver. 53, adds, ver. 54, "But then how shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" As if he should have said, It agrees well with the interest which I have in my Father's love, that I should obtain from him an invincible army of heavenly soldiers, for the rescuing me out of mine enemies' hands: but the Scriptures, manifesting the purpose and decree of God, have foretold the contrary; and that I should thus be "oppressed, and afflicted, and made an offering of sin," Isa. liii. 7, 10; which before he also professed to be "the will of his Father," ver. 39—42. So for Saul's coming to Keilah, 1 Sam. xxiii. 6—15, it was a thing in itself possible, and also Saul's purpose, and this the Lord saw and foretold, but hindered by his providence in sending away David, as he had fore-purposed in his counsel to do, and thereby to hinder Saul's coming thither. These men should have said thus, that God,

always foreseeing, and sometimes foretelling, what in regard of the nature of things might be, and in respect of the dispositions of the persons would be, if they were not prevented, yet doth prevent them effectually by the work of his providence interposed, according to the decree of his will. And this, so far as it looks towards the thing in hand, makes against them, avowing a most powerful work of God's providence, according to a most constant will, overruling all dispositions of persons, and events of things. But for them to say bluntly, as they do, that God foreknows and foretels that things will come to pass, and yet, that those things may be prevented, is to accuse the Lord himself, both of want of wisdom in discerning, and of truth in speaking, and of power in working.

If any object, that God saith, "Saul will come to Keilah," I easily answer, that God therein only foretels what was in Saul's will and purpose; which, compared with the event, shows that Saul's purpose of will was alterable, not God's, "in whom there is neither change, nor shadow of changing," James i. 17; "neither is he as man that he should repent," 1 Sam. xv. 29. So the threatening of the Ninevites, as divers other particulars, both threatenings and promises, are but upon condition, sometimes expressed, and sometimes understood. It is ignorantly said, that a thing will be, which is promised or threatened conditionally, except it be pre-supposed that the condition will be first. Alike impious, as accusing God, both of being deceived and deceiving, is that which followeth, that God knows and pronounceth, that the wicked shall be damned, and yet that there is no necessity of it; but that it may be prevented by repentance. This is to say, that God knows and says a thing shall be, when it may not be; yea, when he knows it shall not be, as in them that do repent afterwards.

If they say further, that wicked men may and shall be saved if they repent, they say, but as the truth is: but if thereupon they conclude of all simply, that therefore they may either repent, or be saved, they err, not knowing the nature of a conditional proposition: in which it is sufficient, if the consequence or latter part follow truly upon the antecedent or former part; though it may be, that neither consequent nor antecedent can possibly be. For

example, 1 Cor. xv. 13—19:—"If there be no resurrection from the dead, then is Christ not risen," and "your faith is also in vain," &c. The consequence is firm: if this, then that, and yet neither this nor that apart, nor both together could possibly be.

SECT. X.—THE DIVINE COUNSEL.

Adversaries.

(Pages 20—22.)

These men having, as they list, vilified God's infallible knowledge, and unchangeable truth, come to his counsel, against which, say they, things may be done, as, Luke vii. 30, the Pharisees did against the counsel of God: adding, that Christ knew those he admonished should perish, if they repented not; yet there lay no necessity of their perishing because Christ knew it, for as he testifieth, repentance might help it.

Defence.

In the former place they commit the fallacy of equivocation, taking the word "counsel" there for the internal and eternal decree of God in himself; when by it, John vii. 30, it meant only the outward instructions and exhortations ministered by John Baptist.

Of salvation upon condition of repentance, I spake even now that which is sufficient, to which the reader may look back.

Coming to answer certain scriptures, they begin with Prov. xvi. 4, which they set down thus: God created all things for his own sake, yea the wicked for the day of destruction, and so corrupt the text whilst they pretend the opening of it; for it is not said, that God created, but that he made, that is, wrought, or did all things, as Psa. xi. 3, and xv. 2, and, generally, wheresoever the word is used. They, therefore, like unskilful workmen, make themselves labour, and lose it when they have done, in proving that God created all men good, and none bad. Neither is it wholly true, much less the whole truth, which they conclude as the meaning, that man becoming evil, God made the day of destruction for him, or him for the

day of destruction, as a just recompense. For first, is it not all one, as they make it, to say, that man is made for the day of destruction, and the day of destruction for man; seeing the one, imports the Lord's work in or upon the person for the thing, and the other, in or upon the thing for the person. Secondly, they miss the meaning of the place; which is, that all things in the world, yea wicked men, who seem to live without all compass, yet come under the Divine ordination; and that as there is nothing so casual in regard of men, no not the casting of a lot, Prov. xvi. 33, nor falling of a sparrow upon the ground, Matt. x. 29, but comes under the Lord's disposition and providence; so there is no person, nor thing in the world so evil, but he rules and overrules it, as it may serve for the manifestation of his glory.

SECT. XI.—DIVINE CONCURRENCE IN HUMAN ACTIONS.

Adversaries.

(Pages 23—27.)

Unto the instances brought by us to prove God's holy work, in and about men's sinful works, and Satan's with them: for example, God's bidding Shimei curse David; his stretching out his hand upon Job, and taking away all that he had; his moving David to number Israel; sending a lying spirit upon Ahab's prophets, and the like: to all these they have their ready and round answer, that God only suffered all these things, and that Satan and evil men were the workers of them.

Defence.

But first, let the godly reader, who will not oppose his own fleshly reason against the wisdom of God, well weigh the most effectual and significative terms, that possibly can be used by the Holy Ghost everywhere, to show the powerful work in those matters, and not his bare sufferance; as if he were only an idle looker on, letting men alone without meddling with them, in a great part of the greatest, even all the evil works of their lives: for example, that God sent Joseph into Egypt, and not his brethren, Gen. xlv. 7: that he hardened Pharaoh's heart, and raised

him up to show in him his power, &c., Exod. iv. 21; ix. 16: that the Lord gave, and that the Lord took away from Job, Job i. 21; that God bade Shimei curse David, 2 Sam. xvi. 10—12; that he moved David against Israel, to say, Go number Israel and Judah, 2 Sam. xxiv. 1; that he put a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets, 1 Kings xxii. 22; that Asshur was a staff in the Lord's hand, and the rod of his anger, Isa. x. 5; that he sent strong delusions upon them that received not the love of the truth, 2 Thess. ii. 11; and lastly, to let pass infinite other places, that God by his determinate counsel and foreknowledge, delivered Christ into the hands of wicked men; and that they did what God's hand and counsel had determined before to be done.

Now, can we conceive it to be for no more but a simple suffering, that the Holy Ghost, who knew right well how to speak, should not once, nor twice, but I may safely say, a thousand times in the Scriptures, use words and phrases importing so effectual operation and working? Is to send men to take away things, to raise up, to use men as a staff in the hand, and bid them go, only to suffer them, and let them be still, and alone? Surely the art of chemists is nothing to these men's, in evaporating; who can reduce those most just and powerful works of God to a very nothing; for no more is a bare suffering, than a not doing.

But we will briefly, as may be, handle the particulars, following their footsteps, who beginning with Shimei, allow God only the poor pittance of sufferance, for David's trial. 2 Sam. xvi. 10. But David himself will teach them better, in saying the Lord had said to him, "Curse David: who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?" For first, if God did only suffer, that is, not hinder Shimei, then God did not try David, but only suffered Shimei to try him, which is false: secondly, this was not only a trial, but specially a punishment, or correction of his former sins, and therefore laid upon him by God: but whether it were trial, or correction, or both, it was in that respect good, and of God as the author. God's suffering of Shimei could not be his trial of David. It was Shimei who was suffered; but David who was tried and punished;

who, therefore, bore it with the piercings of a tender and humble heart, as God's just work in ordering the malice of Shimei to become his rod of correction.

Of Job's afflictions, it is also presumptuously said by them, that God only suffered them. Job speaking of his nakedness, and misery, saith expressly, that "as the Lord had given, so the Lord had taken away." Job i. 21. They may as well say, the Lord only suffered the giving, as that he only suffered the taking away of Job's substance. He ascribeth both alike to the Lord, in regard of his providence ordering things according to their kinds. Neither is there sense to imagine that Job so blessed God for only letting the devil, and wicked men alone, to work their malice upon him, and his; but as by the eye of faith he saw the hand of God, (to be "blessed for ever!") ordering and determining the same to his own holy ends. Can any man bless God merely for suffering the devil to hurt him? So God in moving David to number Israel, 2 Sam. xxiv. 1, did not only suffer him and Satan to do their work, but did his own also by them, though they thought not so, in ordering the malice of the one, and pride of the other, to a just occasion of punishing Israel, against whom his anger was kindled; and this agrees well with both the proportion of faith, and generality of the Scriptures.

The same in effect is to be said of the lying spirits seducing Ahab's prophets, 1 Kings xxii. 22, in which God neither puts malice in the devil, nor flattery into the hearts of false prophets; but finding them there before, and that of themselves, useth them by a most powerful and skilful hand to the furthering of the deserved destruction of a wicked king. And where they say, the controversy is, who was the first cause of this cursing, envy, pride, and deceit, they miserably deceive themselves and others. We abhor from saying that God is either first or last cause of any wicked thing; but of the trial or punishment, or other good in the ordering of the wicked thing; as the just judge may use the malice or cruel disposition of the executioner for the exercising of just punishment upon the malefactor. Neither do we say, as they dream, that cursing, envy, &c., are good in God, and wicked in the devil, and man. This is impossible: but we say, that the

ordering of them, and of the persons in whom they are, is good in God, either for trial, or punishment. For example, of such as go to war, and take means, one is moved thereto, because he would not work; another in hope of booty and prey; a third being weary of wife and friends; and so others, in the like corrupt respects: and yet the king, or captain may use and order them all, and all their corrupt ends and intendments to his most just and lawful ends, and intentions, either in offensive, or defensive wars. And if one frail man can make this lawful use of the lawless and sinful lusts of other men, should proud flesh quarrel at God's most infinite power and wisdom in his just and holy works? Or will they, vain men, conjure him herein, within the narrow circle of their understanding? Denying him at all to have any hand in working, where they, blind moles, cannot discern how he works? "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. xi. 33, cried he, who yet could far better discern of them, than they, or we. In opening Isa. x. 5, 6, they speak the truth, and that which we intend, though presently after they devour the hallowed thing. They say well, that one wicked nation was sent to punish another, which thing, say they, was good for God; namely to punish the wickedness of some by others as wicked, and that this is God's justice, though they thought not so. Very well said; God justly punisheth the Jews by the Assyrians; and how doth he that his just work? By the Assyrians invading and spoiling them; and no other way. This invading, spoiling and murdering of Israel, was the Assyrians' horrible sin, Isa. x. 6—13, which, therefore, the Lord hated with great hatred, and punished accordingly. Here then we have plainly the sins of men, and, therefore wicked, in regard of them, the doers, avowed for the judgments of God, and in that regard just and holy. Their daring any tongue to say, that the delusion mentioned, 2 Thess. ii., comes from God, otherwise, than by suffering the devil to delude, is but the fruit of their bold ignorance, with which they abuse unstable minds. As the devil and men's selves, are the only authors of these delusions in themselves considered; so are there divers effectual works

of God in and about them. The first thing indeed is, God's permission or sufferance of the devil to exercise his malice to hurt, wherein, as they rightly say, he and his children take delight; but this is rather a not-work of God than a work, namely, a not restraining, or hindering him. God's next work is to order and direct Satan's malice upon the persons so deluded, that so they may receive a punishment proportionable to their sins, both for quality and quantity. A third work of God is in them, in depriving them of the knowledge and discerning of the truth, which they formerly had, without the love thereof, as the Scriptures testify. What should I say more? These adversaries, elsewhere, being set upon the rack, by the evidence of the place, thus speak, God will have them to be seduced, thereby to punish them: confessing therein their seduction to be a punishment, and, therein, good and God's work, and that which God wills also, as they expressly affirm. The devil wills their seduction as a hurt to them; they will it, as a thing pleasing to them; God wills it as a punishment of them: which last, to wit, a punishment, nothing is in itself, but by way of relation put upon it, by the judge.

SECT. XII.—DIVINE PERMISSIONS IN GENERAL.

Adversaries.

(Pages 27—31.)

And here, to thrust God from the government of the world, they take upon them to prove, that in this, and the like cases, God's sending is nothing but suffering: their proof is, for that the holy evangelists making relation of the devil's possessing and drowning the swine, where one of them saith that Christ sent them, another saith, that he suffered them to enter into them. Matt. viii, 31, 32; Mark v. 12, 13; Luke viii. 32.

Defence.

But first, I would know how they can prove, that though in one place, where no punishment is directly intended, suffering and sending be all one, therefore, they are all one, in all other places, [where the Lord properly and

professedly intends a punishment? Secondly, I deny, that sending and suffering are here all one; but as we find in many other places, so in this, that which one evangelist relates, though truly, yet not so fully, that another sets down more thoroughly with all the parts. Luke saith, "He suffered them," and this is true; Matthew saith, "He sent them," and this is the same which Luke saith, and more; namely, together with the suffering of them, the directing and determining also of their malice this way, for the Lord's most holy, though unknown, ends. And if the Lord in this case only suffered them, and let them alone, then it should follow, that the creature doth some actions, wherein he is wholly left to himself without God's meddling with him, or ruling of him. But to come nearer the matter, I would know of these men, when two evangelists or prophets set down the same thing in divers words, the one in more sparing and strait, and the other in more large terms; whether we be not to expound the straiter by the larger, and not the larger by the straiter, except there be some apparent restraint. The evangelist Matthew, in Ch. viii. 15, relating the miracle done by Christ upon Peter's mother, saith, "He touched her hand and the fever left her;" Mark saith, i. 31, "He took her by the hand and the fever left her." Should we now say, that to take her by the hand and lift her up, were nothing but to touch her hand? Or say we not truly, that Mark said the same thing which Matthew doth, and more also: so is it in Christ's suffering and sending the devils. More plainly yet. We read, how upon the death of Absalom, Ahimaaz the priest being very desirous to be the messenger thereof to David, importunes Joab greatly to let him run, and again to let him run. 2 Sam. xviii. 22, 23. Joab at the last condescends, and saith to him, Run, and so, ver. 29, Ahimaaz expressly affirms that Joab sent him to David. He therefore both suffered him to go, and sent him. He suffered him, as having a desire of himself; and sent him also as his messenger to the king. So Christ both suffered the devils, as desiring to possess the swine rather than to be cast into the deep; and also sent them, as ordering their malice to that object, and none other, for the trial of the Gergesenes.

In the next place, followeth to be considered of, the sending of Joseph into Egypt, touching which, let these two things only be added to the things spoken, for the opening of the former instances. First, that Joseph expressly saith, not only that God sent him into Egypt, but that he sent him thither to preserve life, Gen. xlv. 5, 7, 8, which was God's end, and not his brethren's, and therefore depends upon God's work, and not upon theirs: but withal, that it was not they that sent him thither, but God. Joseph here makes God, in a respect, a greater doer than his brethren; these men shut God quite out, and make him only a sufferer, or one that left others alone, and meddles not with them. His brethren sold him, but God sent him; that is, used their envious injury to his own gracious work, both towards him and them, and much other people, whom by his means he kept alive. Secondly, and for conclusion, let this be observed, that Joseph speaks of God's sending him to comfort his brethren in their sorrow and fear, for the evil they had done to him. But I would know, what comfort it could be to their perplexed hearts, to think that God suffered them to do wickedly, that is, hindered them not? Can any man, having grace, yea, common sense, take comfort in this, that God leaves him to himself to do wickedly, and hinders him not? A miserable comforter would this miserable exposition have made Joseph to have been. Whereas by the other and true sense, though their sin were nothing the less, yet God's providence appears the greater, and more gracious, in ordering their envy and malice to such an event as it had, whence no small comfort did accrue unto them.

Of the death of Christ, and God's work in giving him thereunto, even to the cursed death of the cross, by the hands of the wicked, I have formerly spoken at large, and will not repeat the same things. Only I cannot but tax their allegation of Ursinus * as most vain, who, in the place noted by them, opposeth God's permission, to his willing and working of sin, as sin, and so God indeed only permits, and neither wills, nor works sin, as sin. Otherwise, all that have but once looked into Ursinus, know, how vehemently he impugneth that imagination of bare permis-

* Ursinus's Catechism, Art. on "Divine Providence," pp. 1041, 2.

sion, avowing the effectual work of God's providence in and about sin: as both working the actions themselves, which he calls the materials of sin, and withdrawing his grace; and withal, destinating, directing, and bringing to their ends, the same actions.

That of Amos iii. 6 is misapplied, if by any alleged, and so easily answered.

The last place which they take upon them to answer is John xii. 39, 40. Therefore they, to wit, the Jews, before whom Christ had done so many miracles, could not believe, because that Esaias said, "He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts that they should not see," &c.

SECT. XIII.—DIVINE INSTRUCTIONS NOT ACCEPTED.

Adversaries.

(Pages 31—33.)

Their answer, after divers incongruous forms of speech, and some truths among, is, that this, and the like places affirm, "that they winked with their eyes, lest they should see," "for which cause, God gave them up to this reprobate sense."

Defence.

That is, (they being interpreters,) for winking with their eyes lest they should see, God gave them up to wink with their eyes, lest they should see. Thus, by this untoward construction, the same thing is the cause and effect of itself; their "winking with their eyes," of their winking with their eyes. It is certain, that this reprobate mind in wilful ignorance, and obduration was their proper sin; and as certain, that it was God's just judgment upon their former sins, by his ordering thereunto their corruption; and therefore Christ spake to them in parables, which were dark without exposition, and expounded them, when he was alone, to them which were about him, Matt. iv. 10, 11: rendering thereof this reason, because it was given to them, namely to his disciples, to "know the mysteries of the kingdom of God," Matt. xiii. 11, but unto them that were without, all things were done in parables, that "seeing they

might see, and not perceive," &c. And so Matthew saith, xi. 26, this was given to the one, and not given to the other: whereof also, elsewhere, he rendereth the highest reason, "because so it seemeth good in God's sight:" who "hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth." Rom. ix. 8.

Their alleging of Austin against the heathenish destiny, which they held to come from the stars, is frivolous, and impious against God's infinitely wise and powerful providence, in governing all things in heaven and earth. In regard whereof, the same father saith, that the things which are done against God's will, are not done without his will: viz. ordering and directing them to their ends. And if the penners of this book were not void, either of all knowledge of the author's judgment, whom they cite: or modesty in themselves, they would never allege Austin and Ursinus as patrons of their errors about the Divine predestination, and other points thereupon depending: than whom the Synod at Dort hath none, the one of former, and other of later times, more clearly witnessing with it, and all the best reformed churches, in those matters.

CHAPTER II.

OF ELECTION.

THEIR first head of predestination being ended, they come next to election: which they consider, not as a part of the former with the Scriptures, and all good authors; but as clean another thing. But what, may rather be guessed, than gathered from their words.

And first, in laying down the supposed errors of their adversaries concerning election, they do us and the truth manifold injuries, as the reader may evidently see, who pleaseth to compare with their calumnies, the Confession of the Synod thereabout, which is, *Electio autem est immutabile Dei propositum*,* &c. "Election is the unchangeable purpose of God," by which, before the foundations of the world were laid, out of all mankind, fallen, from its primitive integrity into sin, and destruction, by its own fault,

* Of the Divine Predestination. Chap. i., Art 7.

according to the most free good pleasure of his will, he out of his mere grace, hath chosen to salvation in Christ, a certain multitude of such as were neither better, nor more worthy than others, but lying in the common misery with others; whom, to wit Christ, he hath appointed from eternity for Mediator and Head of the elect; and accordingly to give them to him to be saved, and to call and draw them effectually to fellowship with him by his Word and Spirit: or hath decreed to bestow upon them true faith to justify, sanctify, and at the length being powerfully kept in the fellowship of his Son, to glorify them, for the declaration of his mercy, and praise of the riches of his glorious grace, as it is written: "He hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame in his sight, with love; having predestinated us to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will: to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in that beloved one." Eph. i. 4—6. And elsewhere; "whom he hath predestinated, them also he hath called; and whom he hath called, them also he hath justified; and whom he hath justified, them also hath he glorified." Rom. viii. 30.

And by this joint confession, all equal readers will judge of the faith of the evangelical churches in this point, and not by the partial and perverse relations of such adversaries, as catch here and there a piece divided from the rest, and sometimes altering the words, always perverting the meaning, thereby cast stumbling-stones in their own, and others' way.

SECT. I.—IMPARTIAL BESTOWMENT OF DIVINE BLESSINGS.

Adversaries.

(Pages 34—36.)

These things premised, the particulars follow: the first whereof, is a similitude brought, as they say, by us to exemplify our opinion by, of a physician entering into the house of sick men, and curing some, and that for nothing, who are bound to thank him; and not curing others, who have no cause to complain of him, because he owes them

nothing. This similitude they except against, as that in which comparison is made between a physician, who hath little mercy in him in healing but a few, and leaving infinite numbers unhealed; and God and Christ, who are most merciful, saying, "Come unto me all that are laden, and I wil ease you." Matt. xi. 28. They, therefore, to correct this, will have Christ compared to a physician truly merciful, that, going into the house of sick men, proclaims, that he will heal all that will take a medicine; which some taking, are cured; others refusing, because it is bitter, as to deny a man's self, "take up his cross and follow Christ," remain uncured. Matt. xvi. 24.

Defence.

First, the Scripture by them cited for their catholic cure, is violently stretched above its reach. For, neither are all in the world, no nor a handful, in comparison with the rest, laden, as Christ there speaks; that is, feeling and groaning under the intolerable burden of sin, and of the wrath of God due thereunto. This did very few of the other Jews, and fewer of the Pharisees, who thought themselves righteous; neither doth Christ so call, and therefore not offer to cure, by the preaching of the gospel, every particular person in the world, from the beginning to the end thereof. This truthless and shameless assertion we shall have occasion hereafter to confute at large. In the meanwhile, the place alleged proves only thus much, that Christ, the good physician, offers to cure all that come to him, by the preaching of the gospel, with feeling of their sins and faith in his death, and no more.

Secondly, even for them that come to Christ, and are effectually healed by him; these men err, "not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God for the conversion of sinners," in affirming that he doth no more but provide the medicine of grace, and outwardly persuade to the receiving of it: or that there is, which they take wrongfully for granted, the same natural power in a wicked man to receive grace offered by the gospel, that there is in a sick man to take the medicine offered by the physician. This capital error of theirs is, in this place, to be refuted, and the contrary truth to be cleared; namely, that for the effec-

tual converting of men, God not only provides the medicine, Christ and his benefits, and by the gospel exhorts to the receipt thereof; and so leaves men to their own free-will indifferently without further doing. But that, withal, and above the former, he, by the inward work of his Holy Spirit given them, makes effectual the outward means, in "opening the heart to attend to the things spoken," with reverence; in enlightening the understanding to discern and assent unto the same things as true and good, and that with particular applications; in bending the will efficaciously to consent to the same: and all the affections of the soul to love and like them.

But before this be done by us, it is meet we answer an objection or two, rather insinuated, than expressly made by them. Their words are, which also, as appears by the mark in the margin, they would have accounted remarkable, that "Christ is willing and able to cure men by the means by which they are curable, but not by the means by which they cannot be cured; for his power herein is subject to his will, and his will is that they should take the medicine."

The substance of their objection is, that God will not, and, therefore, cannot cure men otherwise than by their receiving the medicine offered, Christ and his benefits. Very true; God will not, nor can so do by his revealed will, which to us is the rule of his power. But where they say, that God's power is subject to his will, this must be otherwise understood, than as they do; conceiving it to be of that work of his will, by which he appoints others what they shall do; whereas it is to be understood of that work of his will, by which he appoints in himself what he will do, in or about others. As where it is said, "the Lord is in heaven, and doth whatsoever pleaseth him," Psa. cxv. 3, that is whatsoever he wills: the meaning is not, that he doth, or that his power is ruled by what he commands others to do; but by his will or purpose of doing himself what pleaseth him. God so wills the conversion of all, to whom the gospel comes, as to command the same, and to approve it where it is: but he wills the conversion of some, namely the elect, with another and further intention of will, setting a-work the power of

his Spirit in their hearts effectually, and as they speak irresistibly to convert them, "by taking away their stony heart, and giving them a heart of flesh, and by putting his Spirit there, and causing them to walk in his statutes." Ezek. xi. 19—36; xxvi. 27. God's power, then, is not subject to his commanding will, always to work alike, where he commands alike; but it is subject to his purpose of will in himself, according to the good pleasure thereof to work, or not to work by means of his commanding will. Matt. xxv. 29; Rom. viii. 30; Eph. i. 9. The arguments of proof directly follow.

Arg. 1. To receive Christ and his grace, is to believe in him; this believing, or faith by which we are saved, is "the gift of God, and not of ourselves;" John i. 12; Eph. ii. 8. So as not only the medicine itself, and offer of it, but also the hand to receive it with, which is faith, and a believing heart, is God's gift. The physician offers and gives to the receiver the medicine, but not the heart and hand to receive it; but God gives these, also, to them that do receive Christ's justification and sanctification and salvation by him. If it be said, that God gives faith by preaching, and exhortation to receive it, though he add no further work: I answer, that then God gives this gift and grace of faith, as well, and as much to them that receive it not, but remain still unbelievers, as to them that believe; yea more, to many unbelievers, as having more, and more excellent outward means, than many that receive it. It is therefore absurd to say, that God gives faith, or to believe, unto him that never believes; specially, faith being such a gift, as hath no existence, but in the heart of him that believes.

Arg. 2. The apostle elsewhere pronounceth all men, either "spiritual or natural:" of the "natural man" he testifieth, that he doth not, nor can discern the things of God, but that they are foolishness unto him. 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15; but of the "spiritual" that he discerns of such things and receives them. The natural man he neither doth nor can, the spiritual he both can and doth. What is it, then, that of the natural, makes the spiritual man, that can do these great things, the bare publishing and proclaiming of this spiritual and gracious medicine

in and by Christ? Not so; for too many, alas! remain natural still, to whom the gospel of grace is very plenteously preached. What then? Is it his free-will to receive it, to whom it is preached? Not so, neither; for his will is but the will of a natural man, who neither doth, nor can discern and receive the things of God, till he become spiritual. It is then God's Holy Spirit, which he gives to one that hears the gospel, and not to another; which makes one hearer spiritual, and not another: thereby changing both the will, and whole man of him to whom he gives it.

Arg. 3. A third is taken from 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7, "Paul plants, Apollo waters, but God gives the increase. And neither he that planteth is anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." The Corinthians did too highly advance the ministers, by them factiously adhered unto, as is evident; setting them in Christ's and God's place; the apostle thereupon pulls them down, and sets them in their own place, showing, that except God add a further work than their preaching, how sound and excellent soever, all is nothing. But by these men's device, there needs no further work of grace from God, than the gracious proclamation made by preaching, to be received by man's free will: and so God's further work of giving the increase is quite shut out.

Arg. 4. When the Jews, John vi. 44, "murmured at Christ's words," he to stop their mouths, and to prevent his disciples offence-taking, saith, that "no man cometh unto him, except the Father, which sent him, draw him." If any say, that God draws men to Christ by preaching of the gospel, it is true, but not to the purpose of the place: for so the Jews were drawn that came not, as well as they that came and believed. There is then requisite, "that men may come to Christ, or believe on him," ver. 47, a further drawing than that, by the outward preaching only. Not that God draws men, as horses draw a cart, or by any violence, or compulsion against, or without their will; but that he makes them by the inward work of his Spirit, joined with the outward word, of unwilling, willing; effectually driving away ignorance and rebellion, and so enlightening the mind, as to assent, and the will, to consent.

Arg. 5. Lastly, these adversaries, suffering their merciful physician to go no further than the proclaiming and offering of the medicine of grace to the sick of sin, 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25, do, therein, make many despisers of all grace and goodness, so living and dying and perishing for ever, more bound and beholden to God, and his grace, than many other the most faithful, holy, and happy servants of Christ. The reason is plain; for that many living and dying impenitent, have had the gospel in a far more full and plenteous manner and measure, published and preached unto them, with all other outward motives and provocations of grace, than many that truly believe and repent. These adversaries to the grace of God, would make the faithful servants of God more pharisaical than the Pharisees themselves; with whom they consort in divers points of their faith. The Pharisee that went up with the publican into the temple to pray, yet "thanked God that he was not like other men, as extortioners, unjust, &c., nor as the publican." Luke xviii. 10, 11. But by these men's doctrine, we should thank ourselves, if we be not like the wicked and graceless men, and not God; for God, by their saying, hath not done so much for many of us, as for many of them, who have enjoyed more excellent outward means of grace offered, than many of the others. Oh! you the followers of these guides; yea, you the guides yourselves, call to remembrance the days of your ignorance, and profaneness, specially divers of you, before your first conversion to the Lord; and consider whether you were not deeper rooted in sin, than many others, who yet have not received the grace which you have done, to believe, and repent; and give the glory to God's grace, and not to your own freewill, that you believe, repent and obey, rather than they. Be not unmindful of this unspeakable mercy of God towards you above others, equal and above you, in the enjoying of outward means, lest it come to appear in time, that you were never indeed partakers thereof.

SECT. II.—MANY CALLED, BUT FEW CHOSEN.

Adversaries.

(Pages 36—43.)

Next, they come to show what election is, laying down for that end, at large, the "parable of the marriage of the king's son," Matt. xxii.; and insisting specially upon the Lord's conclusion, ver. 14, "Many are called, but few are chosen:" inferring, therefrom, that it was the king's will and pleasure, that all the bidden guests should come and bring their wedding garment.

Defence.

The scripture we acknowledge, and their inference: but both affirm and have proved, that, besides and above this will of God in bidding, and inviting the guests common to those that came not, and that came; and to those that came with, and without the wedding garment, there was a further work of God's pleasure, and will towards the elect vessels of mercy, setting a-work his powerful Spirit in their hearts, to make them willing to come, and that, furnished, as they ought. And so oft as these men, as they do it very often, do urge the will of God, that men should believe, repent and be saved, so oft, the reader must call to mind this distinction: First, that this will of God extends but to such persons, as to whom the gospel, the only means of inviting men, is preached. Secondly, that towards those that do effectually believe and repent, there is also a further degree of God's good will and pleasure, according to which he reveals unto them effectually heavenly things; opens their hearts to attend to the things spoken, and gives them to believe and repent upon their hearing; as the peculiar fruit of their eternal election. Matt. iii. 25; Acts xvi. 14, xiii. 48; 2 Tim. ii. 25.

Their spiritual sense also of the parable I acknowledge. But, whereas, Ereunetes sees "that election consists in this wedding garment, the righteousness of Christ, which is Christ himself, whom the faithful do put on by faith and obedience;" he sees that which is not to be seen, and sees not that which is plain enough. Who having common sense will say, that "Christ and his

righteousness, and the choosing of a man, or his election, are all one?" Christ is not our election, but he in whom we are chosen, or elected, Eph. i. 4. Neither is our putting on of Christ by faith and obedience, our election; as they unskilfully make it. Election is God's work, not ours; for it is God that chooseth us, and not we ourselves; but the putting on of Christ by faith and obedience, is our work by God's grace, and not God's. God doth not believe and obey, but we, by his grace.

Now before we come to refute their opinion about election, hereafter laid down more plainly, but here more confusedly, with certain scriptures rather heaped together, than orderly brought for their purpose; it is expedient we examine a distinction brought by them of this Divine election, by occasion of an objectiom from Eph. i. 4, which is that "election is either in the decree or purpose of God only;" or else "effectually and particularly made," as they speak. This distinction, in a good sense, but not in theirs, is good and true. For God elects men before the world, or before they be, in his decree and purpose only. But it must withal be considered, that this election is also, in God's purpose, actual and particular before the world. Nothing in God is potential, but all actual; otherwise there should be imperfection in God, as all potentials are, being to be perfected by their actualities. They should therefore say, that God's election of some particulars, was only in his decree, before the world, and is by him, in time, brought into actual execution. And here also it must be minded, that whereas all the question, in effect, amongst all, is about election, as before the world, and in God's eternal decree; they, in effect, pass that wholly by, and only treat of it, as God, in time, puts that in decree in actual execution.

Now, though their reasoning of election here be full of confusion and contradiction, as any judicious reader may see, and such as out of which their meaning can hardly be picked; yet this is plain, that they will have it to depend upon the condition of faith and repentance going before, affirming expressly, that those persons in whom God findeth faith and obedience, them he electeth to salvation in his Son, of mere mercy, for the quality which he

findeth in them. But now, wherein, this election properly stands, they neither show us, nor understand themselves, as is plain by their cross and inconstant assertions of and about it; wherein yet they are so peremptory and bold, as if they carried all by plain demonstration of undoubted truth. What course then are we to hold with them? Considering it is with them as Solomon speaks of the harlot, who was "loud and stubborn, whose feet abode not in the house," Prov. vii. 11; but "she was now without, now in the streets, and lying in wait in every corner;" I have no other way but to pursue them into, and hunt them out of every corner, where they lie in wait to deceive.

First, then, for Matt. xxii. "Many are called, but few chosen." It must be noted, that there are three degrees of men's calling to Christ. The first, when the gospel is preached, but the so called refuse wholly to answer and come; so were the first guests called, ver. 3. The second is, when men are persuaded to come after a manner, and in some show, but without truth of faith and repentance; and so he came who "wanted the wedding garment," ver. 1. The third is, when men come in true faith and obedience as they ought; and so the rest of the guests came. Of this third and last degree of calling the apostle speaks, saying, "Whom he predestinated, them also he called; whom he called, them also he justified; and whom he justified, them also he glorified." Rom. viii. 30. This cannot be said of either of the two former sorts of called, but of the latter only.

And for the election here spoken of, it may well be understood of the eternal election, in God's decree; the fruits and wholesome effects whereof, this unprepared guest shows himself not to be made partaker of, though he participated of the outward calling, even to the making of some show of that which in truth he wanted. And as the apostle affirms of the Ephesians, that they were "elect of God in Christ before the foundation of the world," Eph. i. 3, 4, 5, 13, in regard of the faith and holiness appearing in them: so might the Lord well say of this, and other, his like, hypocrites, and unsanctified ones; that they are not of the number of the elect, or chosen in God's eternal decree, so

far as their present state manifests. Neither is it the meaning of the Lord in those words simply to reprove him for not having on a wedding garment; but for coming thither and not having it on. "Friend, how camest thou hither, not having on a wedding garment?" Matt. xxii. 12; and so to warn others to make sure their election, and not to content themselves with the show of obedience, without inward truth. And taking the words thus, they make for our, and against their opinion.

Or take the words as meant of the actual execution of election, and that, in the largest sense, so as in the same be comprehended whatsoever God doth in time, for the effectual procuring of a man's salvation; as of the giving of Christ for him, of the gospel to him, and by it faith and holiness, and the Spirit of adoption, and so glory in the end: and we say, all this he doth according to his eternal purpose of election, effectual only in those who are made partakers of the inward calling, and wedding garment thereby, and not in all that are called outwardly. "For known unto the Lord are all his works, from the beginning of the world," Acts xv. 18. Whatsoever God doth in time that he purposed to do from eternity, as he doth it. But take election as these men do in most places, and which seems likewise to be upon best advice, for that first work of mercy in God by which he actually and particularly, as they speak, chooseth persons to salvation; they err with great error, in holding that this election is for the quality which God finds in persons, and upon the condition of faith and repentance going before, and that God only chooseth and electeth where he finds faith and obedience to his Son.

For first, the apostle teacheth, Eph. i. 4, that "we are chosen in Christ," to wit, as the Mediator and means of communicating all spiritual blessings with us, "before the foundation of the world was laid, that we might be holy and unblameable in love before him." This is meant, our adversaries granting it, of the decree of election: the meaning therefore must needs be, that God hath from eternity decreed to elect or choose us, in time, actually, not because we should or would be holy, as these men perversely imagine, but that we might be holy. As God from eternity purposed to choose men, so he chooseth them actually

in time: but he purposed, from eternity, to choose men that they might be holy, and therefore actually, in time, chooseth them, that they might be holy, and unblameable before him: and therefore not because they are holy, or believe and obey. God's actual choosing therefore goes before our actual faith, holiness, repentance, and obedience, as the cause; and follows them not as an effect, as they mis-judge. The same is confirmed from v. 5, where we are said to be "predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ:" with which join that, Rom. viii. 30, "Whom he predestinated, them also he called, and whom he called, them also he justified, and whom he justified, them also he glorified." To be elected, to wit, in decree, and to be predestinated, in the good part, as here, are the same in substance: only, we are said to be predestinated in respect of the supernatural ends, and means leading thereunto, unto which God in time bringeth us: and to be elect, or chosen in respect of others, from whom God selecteth us. Now, if we be predestinated of Christ to the adoption of children, then, not because we are children or believe, which are the same, John i. 12. To this purpose it is, that the Lord so oft by Moses beats upon this, that he chose the Israelites to be his people, out of his love to them, and love and promise to their fathers: excluding all other motives, and placing the cause of his choosing them in himself alone, and his love, and the stability of his purpose and promise. Moses testifieth, that God chose them "that they might be a holy and peculiar people unto the Lord." Deut. iv. 37; vii. 7, 8; xiv. 2. But these men will make God begin at the other end, and choose men because they are an holy and peculiar people, that is, having faith and repentance going before.

Join we with this, that in the Psalm: "Blessed be the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts; we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, of thy holy temple." Psa. lxv. 4. Faith, then, and holiness are not the fore-found conditions for which God chooseth a man: but the actual conferring and giving of them, according to an eternal purpose, is the very actual choosing of him: even that by which God severs, elects, selects, and chooseth him out of the mass of

the wicked. Every man's common sense will teach this. All are of themselves, and by nature, sinners, and subject to wrath. Now what is it for God actually to choose some from the rest, but to bestow that, upon them actually and effectually, by which they differ actually from the rest, which is faith and repentance? God doth not, therefore, as these adversaries imagine, choose, upon condition of faith and repentance going before: but doth by the very bestowing of these graces of faith and repentance, which others want, choose, elect, select, and sever actually from others, the elected from eternity in his decree.

Lastly, by the cross doctrine of these men, we should choose God, before God choose us; for by believing and obeying, we choose God to be our God; and for this, by their crooked rule, God after chooseth us to be his people. Thus proud flesh will needs be beforehand with God. But Christ our Lord leads us another way, saying, "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," John xv. 16, to wit, first, which he speaks, not only of their apostolical, but of their Christian state also, as the words following make it plain, "that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you," unto the state of faith and obedience only doth this promise appertain. James i. 6; 1 John iii. 22.

Their assertion thus disproved, we will come to their proofs, which are partly impertinent, and partly against themselves. The first is, "the Lord chooseth to himself a righteous man," the place, which is Psa. iv. 3, they note not, for what purpose they best know: but all may know it is grossly perverted, as not being meant of David's election to salvation, but to the kingdom of Israel; whose glory that way, his adversaries would have turned into shame, but all in vain, v. 3. But consider we, this choice in proportion to the other, and see what followeth. God's actual choosing of David to the kingdom of Israel, was that by which he had first actual right to that kingdom, to which he had right before, only in God's decree, and of which afterwards he had possession. So God's actual choosing of a man to the kingdom of heaven, is that, by which he hath first actual right to that kingdom, to which he had no right before, save in God's decree. God's choosing a man

therefore actually, as they speak, to the kingdom of heaven, is the very giving of him faith and holiness; for by these, he hath this actual right to eternal life and glory. If therefore God's choosing men actually, opposed to his choosing them in decree, be his giving them actual faith and repentance, then their faith and repentance goes not before God's choice, but on the contrary, his choosing before their believing. The giving of the grace by God, must needs go before the having of it by men.

With like success, they quote Rom. ix. 15, and 1 Pet. ii. 10, &c., which have no show of ground, whereon to build their assertion, that God chooseth men actually and particularly because they believe and repent: but most firm foundation for the contrary truth; men become God's people, and beloved actually, by actual faith and repentance, which before were his and beloved only, in the purpose of his will, according to election, Rom. ix. 11, 13, and elect, according to God's foreknowledge, 1 Pet. i. 2; God, therefore, actually choosing men, and making them his people, and beloved, which are all one, by giving them to believe and repent: their believing and repenting cannot go before his choosing them, but the contrary. Ephes. ii. 8; 2 Tim. ii. 25. The giving of the gift, is in nature before the having and using of it by him to whom it is given; and therefore God's choosing them, which is his giving them faith and repentance, is before their believing and repenting.

The next place, being Rom. ii. 5, 7, they set down craftily thus: v. 5. If they seek righteousness by faith, and these are the elect according to the election of grace. The words of the apostle are, "so then at this time also, there is a remnant, according to the election of grace;" and v. 7, "the election hath obtained it, and the rest were hardened." The thing obtained was, the righteousness of God, and of faith, Rom. x. 3—6, the wedding garment, the righteousness which Israel obtained not, because they went about to establish their own righteousness; but the election obtained it by believing; even that remnant whereof Paul was one, according to the election of grace. What can be more plain against these men? Or how can any more directly cross the apostle, than they do? The apostle saith, we obtain the righteousness of faith, which is the wedding

garment, according to the election of grace: they say, we obtain the election of grace according to the wedding garment, and righteousness of faith and obedience. The apostle saith, the election obtains the righteousness of Christ by faith: they say, the righteousness of Christ by faith obtains the election: turning God's work upside down, that they may establish their own. Besides this proud exaltation, and Babylonish building of men's work against God's grace, for if it be of obedience, as they say, then of works, to wit, the works of obedience, the apostle, v. 6, clean overturns, saying, "if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace: but if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise works is no more works."

In alleging from 2 Pet. i. 10, that this election must be made sure, they, as before, craftily conceal part of the apostle's words, which being laid down, as the text hath them, overthrow plainly their error. The words are, "give diligence to make your calling and election sure." He joins calling and election together: they leave calling out. And herein I commend them, as the master did the unrighteous steward, for doing wisely, though not honestly. For who knows not, that God's calling us, goes before our answering him by faith, and obedience, as the cause thereof? God calls, and also elects, men to faith and obedience, and not for them. The apostle's meaning is, that the faithful should use all godly care for the establishing and confirming of themselves in the grace of God, to which they were formerly called and chosen. 1 Pet. i. 2; James ii. 5; Eph. i. 4; 1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Pet. i. 3.

The like profane boldness, they use towards 1 Thess. i. 4, where for the apostle's text, "Knowing, beloved, your election of God;" or, knowing, beloved of God, your election, they put their own gloss, the household of faith, the church of God, are the elect of God. The apostle, v. 4, mentions his knowledge of their election, and v. 5, 6, the ground of that his knowledge, and persuasion, which was their faith and obedience by receiving the word by him preached. They were not therefore made elect of God, by faith and obedience, but thereby known for such by men.

Col. iii. 12, makes against them also; where their election is mentioned as a reason to move them to put on bowels of mercy, and all goodness. As indeed the gracious

purpose of God's election, with his effectual calling followeth, and manifesteth, is the only evangelical motive to all earnest study of obedience.

Their assertion following, that "election is not of particular persons, but of qualities," is monstrous, and most cross to the Scriptures, which never mention election of qualities, but always of persons. Is the meaning of Christ, Matt. xxii. 14, "Many are called, but few chosen," that many qualities are called, and few chosen? What quality but of sin, and misery, sees the Lord in them whom he calleth? Or how can qualities be either called, or chosen to grace or glory? Christ tells his disciples, that he had chosen them out of the world. John xv. 19. If they were chosen out of the world, which lieth in wickedness, and hates the good, 1 John iii. 13, 19, for what good qualities, trow we, were they chosen? If they were chosen out of the world, and so were of the world before they were chosen out of it; how had they faith and obedience, for which these men will appoint God to choose them, or else not? That we are God's generation, viz., by creation, is true, but impertinent. Of God's working good qualities in men by his Word, and Spirit, and of their resisting, or not resisting, we have spoken, and shall speak elsewhere: Rom. viii. 29, makes for them as the former places; showing plainly, that our predestination or election goes before our calling, our calling before our justification, our justification before our glorification.

The note in the English Testament,* upon Eph. i. is the same which the Synod at Dort, and all evangelical churches profess. Only these men's error is, in their not putting a difference between God's decree to save, and his actual saving of them that believe, whether by justifying or glorifying them. God's choosing a man, whether in decree from eternity, or by actual and effectual calling, and calling of him out of the state of sin, by giving him the spirit of faith and grace, goes before his believing, for he cannot believe before he have faith, nor have it, before God give

* "This is the true understanding of predestination, that without any merits or deservings of ours, yea, afore the foundation of the world was laid, God decreed with himself to save through Christ, all them that do believe."—Note on Eph. i. 5.

him it: but his actual saving by justification and glorification, follows after faith.

The discourse which here they fall into, touching "God's deliberating, and decreeing to make man," &c., is impertinent, considering that our question is only of that decree which is evangelical, and of mercy, and so presupposeth man fallen, and in misery by reason thereof; so is the deliberation which they imagine in God, incompetent to his infinite wisdom and providence. They make God like a weak man, contriving his purposes with ifs and ands; as though he stood in a mammering,* and unresolved, what to do, till he found by experience, what men would do first.

And here I demand of these men, what, if some of those so actually, really, and particularly chosen to salvation, as they speak, upon their faith and obedience, and to whom God hath so fully purposed, without ifs or ands, to impart the kingdom of heaven, do afterwards wholly fall away, as they hold any may, and many do, then all this actual, real, and particular choosing, and settled purpose of God, is void and frustrate; and God must unpurpose what he had formerly purposed really, actually and particularly; and undecree what he had formerly decreed. They should therefore have learnt in this place, from their more learned masters, to have added the condition of their persevering to the end, without which it is certain, none shall be saved. But then they must needs rush upon the same desperate rock, with the other; which is, that none are thus actually and particularly elect or chosen, till they be dead, seeing they deny all certainty of perseverance, to the living, not acknowledging any thus elect, either before the world, or in it, but after the world, and in heaven.

The Scriptures here produced to prove that men are not "actually, really, and particularly God's people, and partakers of the grace of Christ before the world" and they, also, be, and "before they have learned Christ," might well have been spared, as proving that only which no man doubts of. Only they must learn, that it is one thing for a people to become actually God's people, and partakers of his grace, and another thing for God actually to purpose in himself from eternity, in time to make them such. Nothing in God is potential, but all actual.

* Hesitating mood.

Their proofs of an universal calling in the means of salvation, we will presently examine; noting only by the way, their apparent contradiction of themselves, and unjust insinuation against us. They contradict themselves in saying, that God chooseth all men, good and bad, upon condition of faith and obedience, the partition-wall being broken down. To choose, is to take some from the rest, and not to take all. He that takes all alike, chooseth none. Besides, by this, the same persons are both elected and reprobated, chosen and refused: and every one alike either of both. Than which nothing is more absurd. The insinuation is, that we make "God an accepter of persons," in saying, that he "chooseth men that have not put on Christ." Nothing less. To accept persons in the Scriptures, is to judge of, or do to a person, better or worse, by some by-thing in or about him: whereas God in choosing one before another, whether in the decree, or actual application, of grace respecteth nothing in the chosen, but only the good pleasure of his own will, in himself. Eph. i. 4, 5; Matt. xi. 25, 26. This is the highest cause that God would have us take knowledge of; though we also know in the general, that God is no way wilful in his will, though he be most free, but always most wise and holy. To remove a little further out of the way this stone, at which divers stumble.

First, we know, that all by nature, and of themselves are subject to sin and condemnation, and so might in justice have been left of God, without remedy of redemption. If, then, it had been but just with God to have left all in that state of sin and misery, into which they have cast themselves, it is then mere mercy, that he hath chosen any in his Son, or given him for any. Now if, of all men indefinitely considered as fallen, God have purposed in himself from eternity, to raise up some, by working effectually in them faith and obedience, so to save them; and not to work the same in others, but to leave them to their own affected and effected pravity, and sin, and so in justice to condemn them for that their wickedness by them freely committed, and obstinately continued in; I would know, in regard of whether of these two works

we can be said to make God a respecter of persons? The one being a pure work of his mercy and the other of his justice. Why God should thus choose some, and pass by others, in the general, we see reason, both by the light of nature, and the Scriptures; namely, that the glory of his power and justice might be seen in the one, and of the riches of his mercy in the other. Rom. ix. 21—23. But why in particular, the Lord God should rather choose this man or woman, than that, we leave unto himself to know, till the day of revelation of hidden things. Only, let our care and diligence be in the mean while, first, to know assuredly, that we are ourselves of that blessed number, and by such marks, as cannot deceive; and so knowing, both to have in our hearts, and to express in word and deed all thankfulness unto our good God, and most gracious Father, who hath vouchsafed unto us, above many others, such singular mercy.

SECT. III.—THE REFUSAL OF SALVATION BY THE LOST.

Adversaries.

(Pages 44, 45.)

It now remains, we come to examine, whether (to use their own words) "the wicked that come to damnation, had by this purpose of God (spoken of before) means of salvation, if they had not refused it."

Defence.

First, if this of outward means were granted them, it would not help them to prove the purpose of God to save all; except they could also prove, that there needed nothing on God's part, but the outward means. This, as they cannot do, so have I formerly proved plainly the contrary, and that though God so provide, that even Paul plant, and Apollos water; in the most full, and free offer of the outward means that can be; yet except the same God, by the inward and effectual work of his Spirit, give the increase also, all is nothing. Secondly, I deny, that the wicked who perish, all, and every one of them, have had, or have the outward means of salvation offered them.

Adversaries.

But here, before they come to that which they promise, they offer, and enterprise the proving of another thing, which is, that "Christ died unfeignedly for all without exception; by whose death all might be saved, if they did not reject it."

Defence.

First, I here acknowledge, that the death of Christ, being God, Acts xx. 28, Rom. v. 10: is in itself sufficient for all, and every person in the world; and so might have been an effectual price for all, if it had pleased the Father, and him so to have ordained. But that it was the Father's purpose in giving his Son, or his, in giving himself to the death, to pay the price of the sins of the whole world, and of every particular person therein, and to satisfy God's justice for the same, we deny, and they in vain go about to prove. That Christ died for sinners, and the ungodly, and such as were dead, Rom. v. 6, 8, we grant, as being the apostle's assertion: but that he died for all such, is their bold addition; and, which is worse, plainly against the drift of the place. The apostle having before treated, at large, of justification by faith, shows in this chapter the singular benefit accruing thereby to the faithful, as peace with God, access into grace, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, and that also, in tribulation: that their tribulation was working patience; their patience, experience of God's power and grace in sustaining them; that experience, hope that they should never be confounded, as having such assurance of the love of God in their hearts by the Holy Ghost given of God unto them. The ground of all which he layeth, v. 6. 8, for that Christ died for them, being ungodly and sinners: and thereby appropriates this dying of Christ, unto these sinners, who are in their time thus justified by faith, have peace with God, &c., which limitation the apostle most plainly makes, where he saith: For "when we were yet without strength, God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." He speaks of them, and them alone, in this place, as died for by Christ, who were justified by him. And let me here

turn into the very bowels of these men's error, the sword of the Spirit, which the apostle, in this place, puts into mine hand; and prove briefly, but evidently, that Christ died not for all and every person, as is said; but only for them, and for all them who in the end are saved, and obtain eternal life by him. These men, and rightly, in this very place, make it all one, for "Christ to die for sinners, and to be their reconciliation:" as the apostle makes them all one who are justified by faith, and for whom Christ died. Shall we then make doubt to conclude with the apostle, that they which are justified by Christ's blood, which are the sinners, for whom he died, v. 9, shall be saved from wrath through him, v. 9, or that they which are reconciled to God by the death of his Son, that is, say they, for whom he died, shall much more be saved by his life? For which purpose also he after enters into comparison of the first and second Adam, showing, that as by the offence of one all were dead: so by the righteousness of one, the gift of grace should abound to many, or to all, v. 15, 16, 17: by which gift afterwards he shows himself to mean both justification, and reigning in life. He puts the two Adams as two common roots, the former as a natural root, and the latter as a spiritual: and affirms, that all that were, and are, in the former, and naturally growing of him died by his sin; and proportionably, that all in the latter, live by his righteousness. I say, that were in the first Adam; for Eve, though she were of mankind, yet died not by Adam's sin, because she was not in him, when he sinned; neither yet Christ, as man, not coming of him by natural generation, but by miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost. So, on the contrary, they, and only they, who by faith are planted in Christ, and justified by his blood, shall be saved from wrath through him, and receiving of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by him, v. 9, 17.

The apostle's meaning, therefore, is not, that Christ died for all particulars, but that all for whom he died, shall be saved by him: which seeing all are not; it followeth that he died not for all, as they mean.

For the right interpretation of 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, "For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge,

that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again:" and of many the like places, the common and true rule must have place; that note of universality, as all whatsoever, and the like, must be restrained to the matter in hand: as, "whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that I will do," John xiv. 13: that is, whatsoever according to my will, 1 John v. 14. So, whatsoever they, the Pharisees, bid you do, that do, Matt. xxiii. 3; to wit, according to Moses. So, "they that believed, had all things common," Acts ii. 44: that is, all things lawful, and for necessity. Likewise, Luke iv. 1, All the world should be taxed, that is, all under Cæsar: which a great part of the world was not. So, "all things are lawful for me," and I become all to all: that is, not all absolutely, but all things in themselves indifferent, and of that kind, of which the apostle speaks. I then answer, that by all in this place, he means all of that sort, of whom he speaks: all, whom the love of Christ constrained: all, that so judge of Christ's death: all, that were dead; that is, were dead, but are alive by grace, and so should not henceforth live to themselves, but unto him which died for them: Christ, that one Mediator, died for all of them.

To 1 Tim. ii. 6, Christ "gave himself a ransom for all," we answer, that by all is not meant all particulars in the world, but all sorts of people, as well kings (which many Christians, considering their cruel hatred of Christ, and other enormities, thought rather to be prayed against, than for) as others. The apostle here informs them better, and that Christ died for all, and would have all, that is, men of all sorts saved, even kings as well as others. It is not possible for any Christian to pray for every particular person in the world: nor lawful to pray that God would save all in general: seeing we know by the Scriptures, that all shall not be saved, and are, also, forbidden to pray for some in particular. Luke xiii. 23, 24; 1 John i. 15; Matt. vii. 6; 2 Tim. iv. 14.

The apostle, 1 Tim. iv. 10, speaks not of Christ dying for all men, but of God's saving "of all men, specially them that believe." If he speak of salvation by Christ's death, God should save unbelievers so living and dying:

for he saith not that God would be, but that God is the Saviour of all men. He speaks apparently of God's providence over all, preserving good and bad; yea, saving man and beast: specially them who suffer reproach because they trust in the living God. To conclude, those for whom Christ died, he died alike for; and therefore not specially for any, above others, but alike for all for whom he died.

To 1 John ii. 2, I answer, that he speaks not only of Christ, as dying for us, but also as he is our advocate in heaven with the Father, propitiating, v. 1, 3, or pacifying his anger towards us, in procuring actually the forgiveness of our sins, and acceptance with him. By the "whole world," therefore, he understands such as confess their sins, such as whose sins God forgives, cleansing them from all unrighteousness, such as have Christ their advocate with the Father, for whose sins he is a propitiation, &c., which are only the faithful, and that not only of the Jews intended in these words, and not for ours only, but of the Gentiles also, as the whole world, here and elsewhere by Christ and the apostles opposed to the Jews, Mark xvi. 15; John iii. 16, specially, Rom. xi. 12, where, as here, by the world is meant the believing Gentiles obtaining salvation, opposed to the Jews. And this our limitation in just proportion, the very next place cited by our adversaries, confirmeth; The whole world lieth in wickedness, 1 John v. 19, that is, all such Jews and Gentiles as are not born of God, v. 20, not John, or other believers, one or other.

The apostle Peter, 2 Epist. iii. 9, speaks not at all of Christ's death, but of God's patience, that none might perish, but all repent. By which all he means all the elect which were in their time to repent, and so to be saved; for whose sakes, and not in slackness, as the mockers accounted, he deferred his judgments. Rev. vi. 11, we have this point notably exemplified. "And it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also, and their brethren that should be killed, as they were, should be fulfilled." For which purpose it must be minded, that Peter saith, "The Lord is long suffering towards us, not willing that any should perish," opposing us as the elect, to the reprobate scoffers at God, both in his word and works.

The last place, being 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16, is impertinent, as neither meant of Christ's death, of which the question is, nor of man's salvation by it: but of a bodily and visible judgment: in which kind of works God tieth himself to no certain form of proceeding.

Against this error of universal redemption by Christ's death, I thus argue: Them whom God and Christ love, to wit, with that special love of mercy, they "love unto the end," John xiii. 1; and therefore never come to hate them as they do the wicked and damned. But, for whomsoever Christ died, God in giving his Son, John iii. 16, and he in giving himself to the death for them, Rom. v. 6, love with the most special love of mercy that can be; therefore, they for whom Christ died, never perish, but in time have wrought in them faith and repentance, and are kept in the same, by the power of God to life. Christ, therefore, died effectually, and in his, and his Father's intention of love, for them only that are saved, and perish not. This is also more manifest, John xvii., whence may be drawn many arguments to prove that all for whom Christ died, are saved, seeing "all that are given to Christ of the Father, keep the word of God, and have eternal life given them by him." Now it cannot be denied, but that all for whom Christ died, are given him of the Father, that he might redeem and save them by his death. Furthermore, the death and bloodshed of Christ is everywhere called the price of our redemption, and a ransom for sinners. 1 Cor. vi. 20; 1 Tim. ii. 6: Matt. xx. 28; Ephes. i. 7. Upon this holy foundation most clearly laid in the Scriptures, these men, and others would build a more hateful Babel than that of old in the east: by which they would, as it were, scale heaven, and deprive God of divers his most glorious attributes; by name, his wisdom, his power, and his justice. His wisdom, they impeach, in affirming, that he would buy with so rich and precious a price as the blood and death of his only begotten Son, that, and them whom he certainly knew before, he should never possess by it, for that end, for which he bought them, their justification, sanctification, and salvation. Secondly, it impeacheth God's power, and makes him unable, do he what he can, to save any more than he doth save, though

he desire it never so much. For look, for whom he would do the greatest thing that possibly he could, which was the giving of his only begotten and beloved Son to the cursed death of the cross for them and their salvation, without all doubt, he will do whatsoever other good, as less, that possibly he can. Whereupon it should follow that God cannot possibly give the Gospel to more than he doth, and by it convert and confirm them to and in his grace, which are less things than the former; it, being the foundation, they, but the building upon it: it, being meritorious and deserving cause, and they, effects thereof. Thirdly, this conceit makes God unjust, in taking a full price and ransom for men's sins, at the hands of their surety, Christ, as was his death and obedience, and yet not resting satisfied with it, but exacting the debt of their sins at their hands, by eternal punishment; which is the condition of many thousands in the world.

SECT. IV.—THE APPARENT FRUSTRATION OF THE DIVINE PURPOSES.

Adversaries.

(Pages 45—47.)

Other things follow, tending to prove God's purpose to save all, even such as slew Christ, blasphemed and resisted the Spirit of God, to their condemnation, &c. Acts iii. 25, 26; v. 30, 31; vii. 51; xiii. 46; xviii. 6.

Defence.

I answer, that the persons of whom those Scriptures speak, were the peculiar people of God, and not yet wholly cast off by him. The argument, therefore, from God's will and work for the saving of them, is stretched beyond its reach, to prove such purpose, will or work of God to save all which are not his people, as they were. Secondly, I grant, that where the gospel is preached, there the Lord truly wills, that is, commands the conversion of sinners, and their "turning from iniquity," as the text hath it; approving and rewarding the same with salvation in them, in whom it is found, as it is ordinarily in some of them to whom the gospel is preached; and so was in

some of the persons to whom the men of God spake in those places; who before were elect of God, and redeemed of Christ, and were in their time effectually called to that grace, whatsoever before they had done or been. Now the apostles not knowing which, in particular, were elect, and redeemed in the secret purpose of God and Christ, were to sow the seed of grace upon all grounds, and to preach to all indifferently, as they had occasion; hoping in charity that this, and that, and any one particular, might be of the elect vessels, and good ground in God's destination; by whose preaching such as were pre-ordained to life, believed actually. Acts xiii. 48. The Lord tells Paul, abiding in Corinth, that he had much people in that city, Acts xviii. 10, and that therefore he should speak the Word there, and not hold his peace. He saith not, as they would have him, that all in that city were his people in that sense, but much, or many. Now Paul not knowing which were they, which not, preacheth indifferently to all; and the Lord by giving an increase to his preaching, 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7, shows in time which of them were bought with the price of Christ's blood, 1 Cor. iii. 6, 20; they becoming members of Christ, and joined to the Lord; which he notes as singular privileges of the elect from eternity, above others. And in this I have been something the longer, because being well noted and applied, it may serve for an answer to all the Scriptures brought by them for the establishing of their universal grace from the preaching of the gospel, though it were as universal as they erroneously make it.

More particularly, to their first proof from the similitude of marriage, Matt. xxii., I answer, that it makes nothing for them either in drift or words. The drift of the parable is not to show that all and each person in the world are called, but that few of them that are called, do rightly obey. Neither saith Christ, that all are called, but many. I add, that this place by rebound utterly overthrows them: as showing plainly, that the Gentiles as the latter guests, were not called, till the Jews, the first guests, refused to come. Many thousands therefore of them in former ages, lived and died being uncalled by the gospel. The places, Matt. xxviii. and Mark xvi. speak also of the time after Christ's ascension, and not before, and so overthrow an universal

calling of all, at all times: God showed his Word to Jacob; but dealt not so with any other nation, Psa. cxlvii. 19, 20. Besides, their meaning is not, that the apostles should preach to every particular person in the world; for that neither could they possibly do, neither can they be imagined, without madness, to have done it, but to show, that as God had formerly by the prophets taught that one nation of the Jews; so now he would have all other nations taught, as there was opportunity and occasion, By that Rom. x. 18, the apostle means not, that the gospel was preached in all ages to every person in the world. He quotes Psa. xix. which speaks apparently of the creatures preaching, specially the heavens and firmament, which the Holy Ghost here applieth to the apostles' preaching in their age, either by way of argument, or allusion. And yet even this very apostle in this epistle shows that then there were places, where Christ was not named, nor spoken of, and where men had not heard of him. Rom. xv. 20, 21.

To the other places brought, the former answers suffice. Where it is said, the gospel is now preached to all nations, and through the whole world, and to every creature, and the like, first, the note of distinction now, is to be minded, intimating, that before now the gospel was not preached to nations, but to that one nation of the Jews only. Secondly, we are not to imagine, that by all nations, and the like, is meant every particular nation without exception, much less, every particular person in every nation, but to take the words as indefinitely spoken, as opposed to the preaching to that one nation, as there was occasion for the apostles or other teachers to come unto them. Where it is said, Acts ii. 5, that "there were dwelling in Jerusalem devout men out of every nation under heaven," shall we imagine that there must needs be English and Irish and Japanese there? The particular enumeration of many, v. 9, 10, 11, shows what is meant by all. When the Jews of Asia, Acts xxi. 28, accused Paul to teach all men everywhere against the people, and law, and holy place, shall we be so senseless as to think their meaning to have been, that he so taught every particular person in the world? What is it, if this be not, for the

"unlearned and unstable to pervert the Scriptures to their own destruction?"

Lastly, their passionate outcry against our doctrine, as blasphemy, and as making God to dissemble in all these his sayings, as having "left the greatest number in sin, without any means of reconciliation, because he would have them damned," is to be taken as a fit of their raving, by reason of that spiritual burning fever which possesseth and distempereth their hearts, and brains, and whole man; we do not say that God doth anything at all either tending to, or in the condemnation of men, because he would have them damned, but that he performs all his most just though fearful works about reprobates, to show his wrath, and make his power known, Rom. ix. 22, against sin and sinners, to the glory of his justice, in their deserved condemnation. Which his unsearchable judgments and works, we do not furiously oppugn, as these their, and our adversaries do, but admire with fear and trembling, as we are taught by the apostle's exclamation, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. xi. 33. And what if the holy and just God had left all men universally, as having defaced his image in which they were at first created and made, without any means or hope of remedy, as he did the angels that sinned, had it been any more than justice in him so to have done? 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6. And will these malaperts then sue him at the law, if he have held that course of justice towards some, which was due to all? Will they make the grace of the gospel a debt from God to men, or a matter of mere grace, and mercy? Is it not of mere mercy that he calls any to life? and but just if he leave all to themselves, and their own affected ignorances and lusts? We do not then impute either dissimulation or cruelty to God in anything which he saith or doth, but deny him to say or do as they dream.

Upon the objection here framed in our name, that there are "many which never heard of Christ," we do not demand as they fondly make us, how then the Scriptures, cited by them, are verified? but do affirm that the same Scriptures

are by them perverted against their right meaning. But now, how do they satisfy this objection put into our hands by the apostle himself, Rom. xv. 20? Do they set themselves, as is meet, to a plain and direct answer? Nothing less. But as a crafty guide meaning to deceive his inexpert passenger, leads him by many turnings, and the same perplexed, and hard to find, in which he may easily lose his aim: so do these deceivers here, and in many other places, instead of giving a direct answer, fetch compass about, by bringing in by-things, some true, some false, none pertinent, in which the weaker sort of readers cannot but lose themselves, and forget the force of the argument brought. And by this means they rather escape arguments than answer them.

The discourse about the law, into which they here wander, may be admitted; only one particular greatly weighty in itself, and as greatly by them mistaken, excepted.

SECT. V.—THE LAW OF CONSCIENCE IN RELATION TO INFANTS.

Adversaries.

(Pages 47—50.)

"Adam's posterity, as they came to understanding, had a law." And again, "The law is given to a man when he comes to understanding, and when his conscience gives him peace by keeping it, and war for breaking it, and not till then: which qualities, say they, are not in babes: for they discern not earthly things, and how then should they discern heavenly," &c., seeing "there must be a conscience unto which a law is given, which infants have not."

Defence.

This error in the latter part of their speech, must the more carefully be observed, and clearly refuted by us, because it is laid down as the ground of divers other errors, and the same not small, as will appear hereafter. Neither needs there in truth more, nor can there be any thing more clear against them, than that which themselves bring from Rom. ii. Their words are, "The law is written in the hearts of men in nature, who have a conscience to excuse them, if they do the things of the law," &c. This form of speech, used by the apostle of the law, as written

in men's hearts, is borrowed from God's writing the law in tables of stone, which had first, and by creation, been written in men's hearts, out of which it was almost quite blotted by sin. Now what is it for the Gentiles, to have had the law written in their hearts, in or by nature, as the apostle speaks? This must needs be in nature created: for in nature, as corrupted, there is no writing in, but blotting out of the law. If by nature created, then as infants have this nature, so have they this natural manuscript, or writing of God's hand. This also the very word nature imports, signifying that which is born with a man, or with which he is born: coming of a word in Greek that signifies to beget, or produce, as parents do children, and each living creature its kind: and seeing the apostle here speaks of a law by which men discern the difference between right and wrong; good and evil; honest and dishonest, in moral and main matters; whence, and with what hand, should all, and every man and woman living in the world, even there where is no law otherwise written or preached, have this law and conscience thus written in their breasts, save by the finger of God in creation? This knowledge and conscience being the remainders of that image of God, in which all men, in Adam were made. By all which it appears evidently, that infants bring into the world with them this law of nature, and those footsteps of God's image in their reasonable souls; who having in them faculties of understanding and will, cannot possibly be devoid of all law for the ordering of the same; to which law, they are necessarily either disposed, or indisposed. It cannot be, that the reasonable faculties of understanding and will, in any of mankind, should be void of all virtuous, or vicious disposition, and inclination at least, to the things of the law of nature, that is of God, the effects whereof they show forth actually in their time. And this truth themselves, elsewhere confirm undeniably, though they think it not; where they say, that Adam's posterity, originally, (for of that state they there speak), have weak natures, by the which when the commandment comes, they cannot obey. This original weakness then, is a contrary disposition to the law of God, and to that which they were created: else it could not hinder them from obeying God actually afterward; at least internally, and in their hearts.

Surely nothing but the law of sin is contrary to the law of God, warring against it, and against the law of the mind agreeing with it, as the apostle speaketh. Rom. vii. 22, 23, 25.

Neither follows it, that infants have no law, because they have not peace or war of conscience in them; nor can discern of earthly or heavenly things. The showing the works of the law, and doing the things contained in the law, and so the having a conscience excusing or accusing for the contrary, as the apostle speaks, are not simply requisite for the having of the law, nor for being conformable to it, but for the actual obedience thereunto, in particular actions. Persons are, in three respects, conformable to the law of God; first, in habit, and so a godly man is a godly man, and conformable to God's law when he sleepeth; secondly, in disposition or inclination, and so infants considered, either in state of creation, or regeneration, are conformable thereunto; thirdly, in performance of particular acts of obedience, by men of discretion, for which the conscience excuseth and accuseth for the contrary. As well may these men deny, that infants are reasonable creatures, as that they are lawless. They can perform the works of neither; but have the faculties and dispositions of, and to both, which in time, and in their effects they manifest.

SECT. VI.—CHRIST OFFERED TO ALL MEN.

Adversaries.

(Pages 50—52.)

In the next place, follow their promised proofs, that "Christ hath been, and still is offered to all that have sinned, and that they have put him away, and the fault is their own, and condemnation from themselves; and God freed from partiality."

Defence.

Belike then, if God show that mercy to one in calling him to his grace in Christ, which he doth not to another, it is partiality with them: from which, to free him they take this pains, as if the Lord stood in need of their patronage; whereas in truth, they but forge lies for God, as Job's friends did, and talk deceitfully for him. Let us consider of their proofs, admitting of such as have in them either

apparent truth, or probability, and reproving the rest as there is cause.

And first they err, in saying, that the generation of Adam and Eve took notice of Christ, as they took notice of their sin; seeing the notice of sin, specially, of that which is more gross, is natural, and the effect of the law of nature written in all men's hearts, Rom. ii. 14, 15. Whereas the notice of Christ, is by supernatural revelation.

The like vain presumption, and apparent falsifying, is in the words following, that "all the sons of Noah could do no less, but take knowledge of Christ, to convey it by tradition to all their generations." If it be meant, that indeed they did so. How many thousand thousands are there at this day, which never so much as heard of Christ, at least, as God and man; and Redeemer of mankind by his death!

For this their presumption of the ages before Christ's coming in the flesh, they bring not any show of reason, or testimony, Divine or human. Only they allege the sacrifices of the Gentiles, which, say they, they either had from their ancestors, in their generations; or as being moved by a troubled conscience, which must be quieted by sacrifice. And these sacrifices, they tell us, were the remembrances of Christ, and kinds of acknowledgings of him; though in the end, they account them no better than remembrances of a false Christ instead of him.

As their opinion is not improbable, touching the general beginnings of the Gentiles' sacrifices; so, considering them in their particulars, their own words will judge them guilty of gross error in instancing them, as they do. The question is, of God's offering of the means of salvation to all, even to the very heathen before Christ's coming in the flesh: their proof for the affirmative, is, the sacrifices which the Gentiles had; which yet they grant to have been remembrances, and acknowledgments of a false Christ. And are remembrances of a false Christ, means of salvation? Is there any other name under heaven, by which men are saved, than by the name of the true Christ, Jesus the Son of God, crucified by the Jews, Acts iv. 10, 12, and raised again by God from the dead? 1 Cor. xv. 2, 3, 4. If the remembrances of a false Christ be means of salvation, then is salvation had by a false Christ. The apostle

maketh the sacrifices of the Gentiles, means of fellowship with devils; these men make them means of fellowship with God. The apostle teacheth, that they cannot stand with the remembrances of Christ's body and blood, the cup of the Lord, and the Lord's table; these men make them the same in effect, and remembrances of Christ. The apostle, means of provoking the Lord to anger, and so of condemnation; they, means of pacifying God, and of saving men. Else where, these men in their hot zeal, will have all, even the most zealous ministers in the Church of England, preach and pray, and do all other things by none other spirit, but the spirit of the man of sin, and that all the effects of their so preaching and praying is, but the false enlightening and heat of a false spirit.* And yet here, in their hot charity towards the heathen, they will have their sacrifices, in which they offer to devils and not to God, Deut. xxxii. 17; 1 Cor. x. 20; yea, those in which they sacrificed their sons and daughters unto them, Psa. cvi. 35, 37, and that as histories mention,† by the devil's special direction in his oracles; these they will have means of salvation, by which God calls his guests to the marriage of his Son, and as a good physician offers to heal the sick of sin. Thus transforming God into the devil, the true Christ into a false, the gospel into heinous idolatry, and the means of salvation into the highway, and most effectual cause of utter perdition.

To conclude this point. If in religion, that which is false be none, which, elsewhere, they make the ground of their re-baptizing, how had or have the heathens any means of salvation, which have only the means of knowing, and acknowledging a false Christ?

For the time since Christ's coming in the flesh, their first proof is Luke iii. 6, "All flesh shall see the salvation of our God:" but I demand, of what sight of Christ John here speaketh? Not of bodily, without doubt; neither availed it them, if he did. Of spiritual, then. But so to

* A short Declaration of the Mystery of Iniquity, p. 91, written by Thos. Hellwisse, and which is animadverted upon by Robinson in his Treatise on "Communion," vol. iii.

† Pausaniæ Descriptio Græciæ. Lib. vii. in Achæis. Macrobii Saturnalia. Lib. i. et alii.

see, is to enjoy, as John iii. 36; Psa. lxix. 32; 1 John iii. 6. Neither doth the bare offering suffice to give sight of Christ and of salvation by him, except there be withal an opening of their eyes to whom he is offered, so as they discern, and acknowledge him and salvation, in the means so offering him, to wit, the gospel. But to let pass them that never heard of Christ, how many are there that understand not the gospel, preached to them, Matt. xiii. 13, 14, 19; yea, to whom it is mere foolishness! 1 Cor. i. 23. And how do these see the salvation of God in Christ? The meaning then of the words is, that the Gentiles indefinitely, as well as the Jews, and in greater number than they, should believe in Christ to salvation. By all nations is meant, as we have formerly showed, not every particular nation without exception, much less every particular person, but commonly the Gentiles with the Jews. The sun and moon teaching God, was as well before, as since Christ, but never taught Christ the mediator, but only God the creator, and governor of the world. Neither is the gospel, which is not known but by supernatural revelation of the Spirit, Ephes. iii. 5, so common as the law, which is natural and written by creation in the heart of every man. Neither should it be a fault, if God offered not Christ to all, as they most absurdly insinuate. He owes not the offering of him to any, more than the giving of him for any. All is of mercy, and therefore no fault, but justice only where no such offer is.

Where they affirm afterwards, and truly, that some to whom Christ is offered, put him away quite, as Jews, and Turks. I demand, how, then, they keep and practise any remembrances of him, or make any acknowledging of him, which even now they affirmed every man in the world to do? Or if the fathers put him quite away, how can the children have, or make any remembrance, or acknowledgment of him, having no new offer of him? Can that which is quite put away be still continued?

That Christ might have been manifested to every par ticular person whatsoever, to wit, if God had so pleased; is true; but, both besides the question, which is not what God might have done, or doth, but what he hath done, or doth; and also against themselves; for to say, God

might have done a thing, is to insinuate that he hath not done it.

In adding, that if the means of salvation have not been offered to "every particular soul of reason and understanding" the Scriptures are not true, they are like themselves; but the Scriptures are true, and their gloss upon them false. God is true, and all men liars: even such as tell a lie for God, as they do, whom God will reprove therefore.

The two last kinds of their proofs are strange, and either brought by them in cunning, to deceive the undiscerning reader, with the truth in itself, but nothing to the main purpose, yea, plain against it; or in weakness and want of judgment in themselves to discern what makes for them and what against them. Let us consider the particulars.

They profess and promise proof, that "Christ hath been offered in mercy to every particular man," to whom the law, either written in men's hearts, or in tables of stone hath come, for reconciliation: but instead hereof, as Balaam blessed when he meant to curse, they both affirm and prove the plain contrary, and that God hath not vouchsafed this mercy to many, but in just judgment hath kept it from them. Sundry true grounds they here lay down, and prove; to which we willingly assent: as first, that God by creating the heaven and earth, and by their teachings, sends men "to seek out the work-master." This we grant; and that the heathens should by this light, Rom. i. 19, not of Christ to salvation, of which our question is, but, of God's power and Godhead, have groped after God, Acts xvii. 27, and the further revelation of his will; as he, that lying in a dungeon, sees some little glimpse of light, and gropes after it, by the wall, hoping to come in time to some door or window. A second is, that the terrors of conscience accusing them for sin, should have caused them to seek after God with earnestness, for reconciliation. And to this, we assent also. A third is, that it is not God's fault, but their own, that they are ignorant of the means of reconciliation and salvation. And of this also we are persuaded, as they, so far as there is a fault. But now what did those heathens in this case? "They became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts" were full of darkness, so as they turned the glory of the

incorruptible God to idols; satisfying themselves in their own inventions: And this also as consonant to the Scriptures, we willingly admit of. And what then? God for this, say they, delivered them up to a reprobate mind, that they never knew more: (for what, should he that is not faithful in a little be trusted with more? Luke xvi. 10,) and gave them up to their own hearts' lusts, and so they became past feeling. And to consent with them herein also, the Scriptures lead us very directly. But what now follows of all this for conclusion? Namely, that all "nations, cities, houses," &c., that is, "every particular man, and woman, hath had the mercy of God in the offer of Christ afforded them: that all were bidden to the marriage"? Nay, the plain contrary; and that all were not bidden: but that many instead of this mercy to the bidden, were in justice left to themselves, and given up to their own vain imaginations; the Lord suffering all the nations to walk in their own ways, Acts xiv. 16, as the apostle saith, and refusing, as themselves confess, to trust them with much, which had not been faithful in a little, so as they never knew more. And whereas they cunningly shuffle in, now and then, that men might have had Christ given unto them, or offered them, and that Christ might have been manifested to every one if they had, would, how congruously to the Scriptures they speak therein we now dispute not, is, not only besides the matter in controversy; which is, what was and is, and not, what might have been done; but to their own prejudice, seeing that which only might have been, is not, specially that bar being put by men's own default, which effectually hinders the being of it, as in this case.

Having thus showed that these men either fight busily with their own shadows, in proving at large things never called into question by us; or may easily have their weapons turned upon themselves, in the main matter: I will even now proceed, after that I have briefly observed some particular mistakings by them. And first, they both add to the text, and err in applying that which is written, Rom. xi. 32. The Scripture is, "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all," they add, of their own, every person: whereas the apostle

neither speaks of every person; but only of the Gentiles indefinitely at one time, and of the Jews at another, which he there opposeth the one to the other: neither speaks he of the offering of grace and mercy only, as they deem; but of the actual conferring of it upon all, of whom there he speaks, who believed and obtained mercy; the other remaining in unbelief. And this, both the drift and words of the place expressly manifest, ver. 30, 31, 32. Neither doth that other place alleged, Tit. ii. 11, speak of all, and every particular person, but of persons of all sorts, servants as well as masters, or any others. The apostle, ver. 9 and 10, provokes believing servants to obedience to their masters; rendering this reason of encouragement, ver. 11, "for the grace of God which bringeth salvation unto all, hath appeared," &c.; as if he should say, that even they, though poor bond-slaves, if they continued in faith, and faithful obedience, should have their part in the salvation of God, as well as any others. Secondly, as I will not simply deny, that God punished the heathens' other sins with the want of preaching Christ unto them; so it is certain, that great sinners, and deeplier drowned both in idolatry, and other lusts, none in the world were, than the Corinthians, Athenians, Ephesians, and others to whom Christ was preached, and faith thereby given to many unto salvation. The Lord tells the prophet, that though the house of Israel, to whom he was sent, would not hear, Ezek. iii. 6, yet if he had sent him to the heathens, surely they would have heard him: so the Lord Jesus upbraids the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, where he both preached, and wrought most of his mighty works, Matt. xi. 20, 21, 23, that they were deeper in the contempt of God, and further from all disposition to use aright the means of salvation, than the heathenish cities of Tyre and Sidon, yea, of Sodom itself: unto whom yet he vouchsafed not the means of repentance, and revelation of grace, which he did to the former. By which, it doth appear, that the Lord doth not observe the order prescribed unto him, by these men, for the dispensing of his favours this way, in "trusting them with most, who are, of them, faithful in a little; that is, wholly faithless indeed; but as the wind blows where it lists, John iii. 8, so doth he by the sweet gusts of

his gospel, and Spirit, "according to the good pleasure of his own will," Matt. xi. 25; and not according to the good pleasure of men's will, Eph. i. 3, 4, 5; in their use of natural light and conscience, dispense supernatural grace, both for means, and efficacy. Lastly, as they here contradict their main ground of universal calling, in supposing some nation to have no means of knowing Christ; so I would learn of them, how the Gentiles, wholly void of faith, could rightly examine all things, touching the offence of God, an accusing conscience, and the satisfying of God's justice, as they would have them; or in so doing, could promise to themselves the revelation of Christ by one means or other, as they liberally undertake for them? They tell us, "He that seeks shall find," Matt. vii. 7. But we answer them, that Christ there speaks not of a seeking by blind, and unbelieving Gentiles, but by his faithful disciples. Matt. v. 1, 2.

Now, albeit, the eternal and unchangeable election of God do not manifest itself, in time, in the bare outward calling of the so elected, common to many others with them; but as the same hath joined with it the effectual work of true faith and repentance in the heart, peculiar to them alone; yet seeing these adversaries labour, upon presumption of an universal grace offered to all in the preaching of the gospel, to establish an universal election of all, that is, in truth, to overthrow all election, I will here annex, to the things formerly laid down, two or three plain testimonies for their further conviction. The first is from Psalm cxlvii. 19, 20:—"He showed his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation, and as for his judgments, they have not known them." The heathens, therefore, if we will give credit to the Word of God, had not the knowledge of God's Word, and so not of the gospel, which is most hidden, as being of supernatural revelation only. Of the same Gentiles the apostle testifieth, that "God in times past suffered them all to walk in their own ways:" that is, did not manifest Christ unto them for faith in his blood, and repentance through him, but only his power and Godhead, Rom. i. 20, giving them rain from heaven, and other bodily blessings to witness the same.

With this accords that elsewhere. The times of this ignorance, which had been amongst the Gentiles before Christ, "God regarded not," or "winked at," Acts xvii. 30; but "now commandeth all men everywhere," as well Gentiles as Jews, to repent. The apostle opposeth the time now, in which he preached, to the former times; and shows that God now, and not in times past, called all to repentance by the preaching of the Word. To conclude, the same apostle expressly teacheth, that there is "no salvation but by believing in the name of the Lord Jesus," Rom. x. 14, 15, by the preaching of the Word and Gospel, by preachers sent of God, for that end. But now for any to say, that every particular person in the world hath had, or hath the word of the gospel preached unto him by a preacher sent of God for that purpose, were an assertion of him whose impudency better deserved a club, than any grounds, that possibly he could lay, a refutation; considering both the infallible experience of all ages, and testimony of Scripture to the contrary, and that there were places even in the latter end of the last apostle's time, where Christ had not been named, nor spoken of." Rom. xv. 20, 21.

Next follows to be examined their exposition upon Rom. ix., in the introduction whereunto they mingle truth with error. They deal craftily in bearing the reader in hand, that the disputation of Paul herein is hard, and the matter darkly handled, that so they may turn the thoughts of the reader from it; or at least dim them with prejudice against that plain and evident truth of God's free election, and reprobation joined therewith; both which things he sets down most clearly, though the reason of the Lord's different dealing towards them, that are in themselves alike, he makes unsearchable, and determines in the free purpose of his will, if men did not trouble the pure and clear water of God's sanctuary with the foul feet of their corrupt gloss. They also err in making this one of the places in Paul's epistles, of which the apostle Peter speaketh, 2 Pet. iii. 16. Peter doth not say, neither will the Greek text bear it, that there are things hard in Paul's epistles; but that in those matters in his epistles (to wit, about the day of the Lord's coming, and the dissolu-

tion of the heavens and elements, and the new heavens, and the new earth promised) were things hard to understand, &c. Their perverting of the Scriptures, which they lay to the charge of others, both in the epistles of Peter and Paul, and everywhere else, we have formerly disclosed. Neither do we affirm, as they here charge us, that God reprobates either the greatest number, or any, as they understand, and elsewhere expound themselves, that is, predestinates them to condemnation without any condition. He predestinates none to condemnation; or which is all one, purposes to condemn none, but for sin freely by them to be practised, as the foregoing condition, and only deserving cause of condemnation. Neither say we, as they slander us, that God denieth means of salvation to men, because he would have them perish; but as the apostle teacheth, that he hardens, by that and other his holy dispensations, "whom he will, that he might show his wrath, and make his power known upon the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." Rom. ix. 18, 22.

SECT. VII.—EXPOSITION OF ROMANS, CHAPTER NINTH.

Adversaries.

(Pages 57—67.)

Let us now come to their exposition. "The scope," say they "as of the whole epistle, so of this chapter, is, that not the law, but the gospel is the power of God to salvation; and that we are not justified by the works of the law, but by faith, even that faith which Abraham had."

Defence.

As the proper and particular scope of divers parts of this epistle, is diverse; so do they miss of the drift of this particular chapter which is not, as they conceive, to prove justification not to be by the works of the law, but by the faith of Christ in the gospel: but to show that the first and highest cause, why, of all mankind fallen in Adam, one is cleared, and another not, is only the good pleasure, and free will of God, and not man's deservings; and yet that God in so choosing, or electing one before another, doth nothing unjustly, as shall appear in the

particulars hereafter to be explained; and may in the meanwhile be gathered by these three general reasons.

First, for the apostle, when of purpose he handles the matter of justification by faith, chap. iii. and iv., doth so oft and again iterate and inculcate the terms of faith, and justification, almost in every verse, whereas here, he never so much as once mentions either of them in the disputation itself, which is to the end of ver. 24, where he descends from the matter of election to the calling of the elected, both of Jews and Gentiles.

Secondly, it is unreasonable to conceive, that the apostle, having in the third and fourth chapter so fully handled, and so expressly concluded that matter of justification by faith, and not by works; and chap. v. the effect and end thereof, peace with God, and perseverance to salvation; and chap. vi., the matter of sanctification; and chap. vii., the imperfection of that sanctification in this life; and chap. viii., the afflictions of the faithful, and their perseverance notwithstanding to the death; should now again without any occasion, and against all order, return to the same matter of justification, so fully handled and ended before. This might well agree with these men's wanderings in this their treatise, but agrees not with the wisdom either divine or human wherewith the apostle was furnished. Much more absurd is it to imagine, that having formerly handled that subject-matter of justification so plainly as he hath done, chap. iii. and iv., he should return to handle the same matter so darkly and obscurely as all the adversaries to the truth, and fautors * of this conceit, are compelled to confess he hath done in this place.

Thirdly, if this were the apostle's proper drift, what needed he to have made such deep protestations of his hearty sorrow for the Jews as he did, more in this place than in the former, where he handled that matter more clearly than here? It was, in truth, no other thing that moved the man of God to these sad and sorrowful protestations, than to remove the offence which might be taken at the Jews' rejection, and calling of the Gentiles in their stead; of which, and the highest cause thereof, he was now to speak in the 9th, 10th, and 11th chapters.

* Favourers.

Lastly, we shall, God willing, make it appear in sundry particulars, that these adversaries, by wresting of some things, and omitting of others, pervert the apostle's words to a strange sense, howsoever they think to get advantage by striking others first with that imputation.

And first, though they account it plain and without difficulty, that the apostle's meaning ver. 5 and 6, is, that not all the Israelites, "not all the children of Abraham's flesh" specially, not such as boasted of the observation of the law, were therefore in the state of salvation, or should be saved: yet in truth, he plainly means another thing; namely, that all Israel, all that were the seed of Abraham, and children of the flesh, were not that Israel, that seed, those children to whom the promise was made: that is, were not they touching whom God by his promise declared his purpose of election mentioned, ver. 11. For though all are saved that receive the promise by faith, and none by the works of the law, yet the apostle in this place, neither speaks a word of salvation, as the effect of the promise, but of election, as the cause thereof: nor yet of men's receiving the promise by faith; but of God's making it, according to election; that so the purpose of God, and promise manifesting it, might stand according to election, ver. 11, that the word of God might take effect, ver. 6, even the word of promise: "at this time will I come," &c. ver. 9, they are then called children of the promise, not because they received, but because the promise, "Sarah shall have a son," &c., was made unto them, according to the election of grace and stableness of God's purpose, ver. 8, 9, 11, which promise also, they did in time, receive by faith, according to the election of that remnant from the rest, the promise following the purpose of election; and faith, and salvation by it following the purpose and promise. Though Israel, that is, all which were of Israel "obtained not that which he seeketh for, yet the election hath obtained:" even the remnant of Israel, to whom God's promise is, according to the election of grace: chap. xi. 5, 7; in regard of which remnant according to election, the word of God is effectual, and the promise fulfilled touching the younger son of Rebecca: of whose two sons, it was said before they were

born, or had done either good or evil, the elder shall serve the younger.

And as they truly affirm, that neither birth nor works did prefer with God: so I demand here, what those works were, by which Esau sought for justification? The Scriptures expressly term him a profane person, Heb. xii. 16, that is, a despiser of goodness; yea, of his very birthright, Gen. xxv. 32, 33, which was a special legal privilege. How then sought he to be preferred with God, and justified for birth or works? Or how doth this example of Esau fit their imagined plain exposition? specially to prove that the children of Abraham's flesh were not in the salvation, who so much boasted of being Moses' disciples in the observation of the law: whenas the law of Moses was not yet given, nor the lawgiver born.

Their words following, that God purposeth to prefer those that seek it by his free election, through faith in Christ, are true in themselves, but not in their sense. Their meaning is, that God purposed to save them effectually that should believe in Christ Jesus: whereupon should be meant in this place, only such a purpose of God as was no more towards Jacob than towards Esau: for God, by their doctrine, purposed to choose Esau if he believed; and not Jacob, but upon his believing first. But the apostle speaks more than evidently of such a purpose of God, as was towards Jacob particularly and alone, excluding Esau.

Besides, the standing of this purpose and election, are here noted as two distinct things; of which, election is the former, and that according to which the purpose of God stands: whereas they make them one and the same, accounting election nothing but the purpose of bestowing salvation upon them that believe.

Thirdly, the apostle cannot mean such a purpose and election as presupposeth faith in Christ, which they would have, seeing he expressly affirms it to have been when the children had done neither good nor evil. Is to "believe in Christ, to put on the wedding garment by faith and obedience, to submit to the righteousness of God," which they will have the condition upon which election depends, and the quality for which God elects the persons in whom

he finds it, are these to do no good with these men? and is the doing of the contrary to do no evil? Lastly, he saith not, that the purpose of God, according to election might stand, not of works, but of faith, as they say: but not of works, but of him that calleth; that is, as followeth, that "will have mercy on whom he will have mercy," ver. 15. By which it is plain, that Paul doth not in this chapter, as chap. iii. and iv.; and Gal. iv., oppose works and faith; but works, and God's calling: he should have said for their purpose; that the purpose of God stands not of works but of faith, or of him that believeth: and not, as he doth for the purpose of the Holy Ghost, of him that calleth: showing thereby his meaning to be in this whole discourse, that the obtaining of righteousness, or standing of God's purpose in its actual effect, depends upon God alone, according to three degrees here expressed: first, his gracious purpose of election in himself towards some: secondly, his free promise manifesting his purpose: thirdly, his effectual calling, in which his word of promise hath effect, and his purpose stands firm and undisappointed, notwithstanding the unbelief of the body of Abraham's seed.

Their making Jacob and Esau types as they do, is like the rest, or worse. The Scriptures are not to be drawn from their natural and simple sense, without apparent warrant. It is the highway to heresy, to be bold in framing typical expositions. And with what spirit these men are led this way, appears by their expounding the parable, Luke xv., making the Jews the elder brother, who sought salvation by works; and the Gentiles, the younger in the offer of the gospel, seeking salvation only by the free promise of God: whereas the plain meaning of Christ is, only to avow his preaching to the publicans and sinners resorting unto him, against the pride and envy of the Pharisees; those publicans and sinners being Jews as well as the other.

Secondly, I demand, what it was, in which Jacob typed out believers, seeking righteousness of God? and in which Esau typed out workers, seeking justification by their own works? The contrary in Esau is expressed in the Scriptures.

Lastly, seeing it cannot be denied, but that Jacob as a

faithful and godly man was in time actually beloved in God, and Esau, as godless and profane, actually hated; it must needs follow, that God before the world was, purposed in himself accordingly, to love the one and hate the other: seeing whatsoever God in time doth, by way of emanation or application to, and upon the creature, that he purposed to do, as he doth it, from eternity.

If the apostle, ver. 13, "Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated," confirms his former doctrine, as they say, then he confirms the doctrine of God's eternal and stedfast election from eternity. And their boldness is excessive in calling them perverters of the words of Paul, which will have this to be before Jacob and Esau were born; seeing the apostle adds this scripture out of Malachi i. 2, 3, to show the reason of that contained in the former, which both Moses and Paul with him, expressly affirm to have been before the children were born: namely, that the highest cause of the elder, to wit, Esau's serving the younger, to wit, Jacob, was God's love to Jacob, and hatred of Esau, Gen. xxv. 23; Rom. ix. 11.

That following is partly true, namely, that ver. 12 and 13, is not showed for what cause God loved Jacob and hated Esau: for that is showed so far as God would have us see, ver. 15—18. But false, where they say, that they show not when this was. For this love and hatred was, and before, when God said, The elder shall serve the younger: and this he said, when the children were not yet born: the effect of which was, that the purpose of God according to election might stand in after time, and that both in respect of the two persons themselves, and of the bodies of the nations to come of them, though not of every particular. And so indeed they are to be considered, both as instances in their persons, and heads of their nations; the Scriptures accordingly everywhere testifying, that God loved and chose from the rest, the Israelites in their father Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, according to the tenor of his gracious promise and covenant of being their God, and the God of their seed, expressing his eternal, and most stedfast purpose of will. Gen. xvii. 7, 8; Exod. iii. 6, 7, Deut. vii. 7, 8—29; 12, 13, 14.

That which they add in the last place of God's not

hating, to wit actually, and destroying without desert, is most true. But when we speak of God's loving or hating any before the world, we mean only of his decree of loving which he actually exerciseth in time for Christ's righteousness by faith applied upon the so loved; and so of his decree of hating, which hatred he comes not to exercise actually, but for sin deserving it. God from eternity purposed in time to glorify his justice in the deserved destruction of Esau, and not of Jacob. Of this different decree of God, touching Esau, and not Jacob, and his leaving him in and to his own corruption, and hardening him in the same, rather than Jacob, our reason is, the will of God; but of God's actual hating and destroying of him rather than the other, the Scriptures show sufficient reason, to wit, his obstinacy in sin, the only cause of his destruction.

Ver. 14, upon the premises, that God of two alike in themselves, and without respect of good or evil, in the one, or other, had loved the one, and hated the other, an objection is framed, that by this, injustice might seem to be with God: which the apostle denies, with "God forbid!" This objection our adversaries understand "to be upon God's rejecting the fleshly Israelites, for contemning their salvation offered them by faith in Christ, as Esau was rejected for contemning his birthright." But herein, as children skip, where they cannot read, they leave out the principal part of the objection, which is not only moved upon God's rejecting some, but withal upon his receiving of others. The apostle in the words before going, which occasion the objection, mentions not only Esau the elder hated, and serving; but also Jacob the younger loved, and served; so in answering the same objection, he speaks first and most, of God's showing mercy and compassion, and last and least, of his hardening any. Now whether they have omitted this part of the objection in cunning or inconsiderateness, themselves best know. This is certain, that the adjoining it, quite overturns their exposition. For comparing together two such persons, as whereof the one glorious in his own righteousness, as perfectly answering to the holiness and righteousness of the law: justifying himself, when the law condemns him;

despising the grace and mercy of God in Christ offered, and making him a liar in not receiving the testimony which he gives of his Son and joining with these, blasphemy and persecution, and all injurious dealing against them that do receive this grace of Christ: 1 John v. 10; 1 Tim. i. 13; Gal. iv. 29: all which those proud justiciaries, and carnal Israelites did: and the other, as honouring God's justice and holiness, in the sense, and confession of sin, and misery due therefore; flying to the mercy of God in Christ, and by receiving the testimony of his Son, setting to his seal that God is true, John iii. 33: and therewith repenting with all his heart, which every true believer doth that God now should show mercy upon the latter of these and not upon the former, cannot minister to any man, indued with common sense, occasion of objecting injustice to God; seeing the light of nature teacheth every natural man the reason of a difference. And if any should be so senseless, as to object injustice to God in such a case, as they conceive the objector to be, yet was not the apostle so witless, as to fly for answer to the absolute will of God, and to plead, that God will do so, because he will or pleaseth to do it, as ver. 15, 18, "I will have mercy, on whom I will have mercy," &c. Which answer of the apostle also ministers matter of further and more difficult objection, as appears ver. 19, 20. Whereas if the objection had been cast in their mould, a child could have answered it, and said, that it had been a most just and equal thing for God to have received and loved the one rather than the other; considering how the one honoured the holiness, justice, truth, and mercy of God; which the other dishonoured and despised. They err therefore in applying to this purpose, Rom. ii. 4, 5. Neither doth the apostle there speak of a mercy and bounty, to be showed to them that believe, and repent, as they conceive; but of that which goes before repentance, as a means to lead unto it: but here he speaks of a higher work of God's showing mercy: namely, the purpose of his will according to election to glory; and the means thereunto.

And truly, these men's boldness is too great in putting, for, "God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy;" God hath mercy on them that seek him by the means that he

himself appoints. 'For though it be most true, that God hath mercy on such; yet the apostle here speaks no more of God's appointing or commanding will for his showing of mercy, than of his appointing or commanding will for his hardening, ver. 18, "whom he will he hardens." He speaks of that will, according to which he himself works in love or hatred: not of that according to which he commands and appoints men to work. These men, in truth, confound all things, setting man's will where God's should stand. God saith, "on whom I will:" they say, on him that himself wills, or seeketh as he ought, &c. The same idol of man's will they advance and set up, ver. 16, where instead, of God's showing mercy; they put, man's believing mercy. The Lord, "by willing, and running," ver. 16, excludes whatsoever is of, or in man, and either within or without him: and draws all to himself alone. In the stead of God showing mercy, they put themselves, and their free-will receiving mercy by God offered, as the proper cause of difference between man and man.

The 17th verse, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh," &c., they handle very slightly: saying something, such as it is, about God's hardening Pharaoh's heart; but not meddling at all with the place, according to the coherence which it hath with the words going before: unto which, yet the Holy Ghost strongly tieth them, in saying, "For the Scripture saith," &c. And herein they are in truth, wise in their generation. These words must needs answer to the latter part of the objection of unrighteousness with God in hating; that is, as they interpret it, in rejecting such as seek righteousness by the works of the law, as did the fleshly Israelites. But wherein, I wonder, did Pharaoh so? How sought he justification by the works of the law? Who so professedly despised the God thereof, saying, "Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice?" Exod. v. 2. Did they see, that this example of Pharaoh, and their exposition of the place could not stand together; and therefore chose to cut off the coherence so firmly tying the words together, rather than to let fall their preconceived erroneous exposition? Whatsoever they intend herein, we know it is brought for an example of God's absolute, but righteous, power of hardening, rather than another, whom he will; and not whom

he finds most deserving it; for whom finds he not too much deserving it, if he would deal in like manner with all? as it is said, "whom," that is, which rather than other, he will, "he hardeneth," ver. 18.

And let it be diligently minded, that the apostle here opposeth God's showing mercy to some, and his hardening of others. The adversaries, by God's showing mercy, would have us understand his saving of such, as believe and repent. And then, on the contrary, by God's hardening, should only be meant his not showing mercy to, but punishing and condemning such as do not believe, nor repent. But we know, that the not hearing God's voice, not believing and repenting follow upon hardness of heart. Whereupon the Lord promiseth, that in the day of his mercy, and pity, he will take from his people their strong and hard hearts. Heb. iii. 7, 8, 15, 18, 19; Rom. ii. 1; Ezek. xi. 19, 36; xxi. 26. And so touching Pharaoh, the Scriptures expressly show, Exod. iv. 7, 8, &c., that his hardness of heart was the cause of his unbelief, and disobedience. Whereupon I conclude, evidently, that the apostle here speaks not of such a mercy only, as follows faith, as the adversaries would have him, but as goes before it also: as he speaks of such a hardening as goes before unbelief.

Note we here also, that the apostle in this place propounds God's will as the cause of his dealing diversely with divers persons; and not of his saving such as are to be saved, after a diverse manner from that, which some, namely the carnal Israelites imagined.

SECT. VIII.—HARDENING OF PHARAOH'S HEART.

Adversaries.

(Page 68.)

Now to return to them, they lay down a question thus: "What is the meaning of the hardening of Pharaoh?" And in their answer wholly pass by God, as no doer in the business. They make Pharaoh a doer in hardening his own heart, which is true; and Satan a doer in hardening Pharaoh's heart, and this is true also; but God no doer, but a sufferer only in giving him up, that is, as elsewhere

they expound it, in leaving him to himself, and to Satan, to be hardened.

Defence.

But first, the text imports a further thing in God, whom it brings in thus speaking. "For this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared through all the earth." Exod. ix. 16; Rom. ix. 17. Is God's raising up, which is his hardening, ver. 8, nothing but his letting a man lie still, and fall down lower than he was before? Besides, the end, which was the glory of God's power and name, shows God to be a worker. Every end must have an efficient or working cause. The glory of God was not the end of Satan's work, nor of Pharaoh's work; and therefore of God's work in it. Thirdly, God hardened Pharaoh's heart, by sending Moses and Aaron unto him, as by an occasion, though not a cause; as the law is, the occasion of sin, Rom. vii. 8; and the gospel the occasion of strife and variance. Matt. x. 34, 35. Fourthly, God deprived Pharaoh of the use of common sense and reason; otherwise it could not have been, that after so many experiments by him taken of God's powerful hand against him, and for the Israelites, he should so furiously as he did, have followed them into the midst of the sea. Lastly, besides, and above all these, God, "in whose hands the hearts of kings are, as the rivers of waters, to turn them whither he will," Prov. xxi. 1, hardened Pharaoh's heart, by ordering his pride, cruelty, and contempt of God to this effect of obstinacy, appearing in his most desperate course; without which powerful and unerring hand of God, all the former notwithstanding, it might have come to pass that Pharaoh's heart might have been softened by the miracles and means used; and so God's word, which before had foretold his hardening, might not have taken effect, ver. 6; which is contrary to the truth, and drift of the apostle in this place. God therefore was not only a sufferer, but a doer in the hardening of Pharaoh.

SECT. IX.—RESISTING GOD'S WILL.

Adversaries.

(Page 69.)

Their next question is, "How consider you these words? 'Who hath resisted his will?'" ver. 19. Unto which they frame this untoward answer, viz. that those Jews seeking salvation by those works of the law did not resist God's will, and gave him no cause to complain.

Defence.

Nothing less, we have showed, and shall further manifest by and by, from the apostle's answer, ver. 20. The meaning is plain. The words, ver. 19, "Thou wilt then say unto me, Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will?" are an objection against that which immediately went before; "Whom he will, he hardeneth." Now against this, it may colourably be objected, that if God hardens whom he will, he hath then no reason to complain of men's being hardened in disobedience; for who can resist his will, if he will harden them? A piece of an eye is sufficient to see the plainness of this exposition, and coherence. Their discourse then following, that God would save all, and have all repent, amend and believe, is frivolous. The objection is of God's will to harden men; their answer is of God's will to soften them by repentance.

SECT. X.—HATING ESAU AND PHARAOH.

Adversaries.

(Pages 69, 70.)

Here they lay against their adversaries, God's friends, two false accusations: First, that they make God hate Esau, and Pharaoh, and the reprobates before they be born: "from which hatred he decreed their damnation," and that, by his secret will, which cannot be resisted; to which the will of God declared in the Scripture, is contrary: Secondly, that God compelled Pharaoh to trespass, and so to suffer.

Defence.

By the law the false accuser must be done by, as he would do by his brother, Deut. xix. 19. These men's slanders therefore, being false, are as odious in them, as were the opinions odious in us, if true.

First, we know that God hates none before the world, otherwise than they are, and that they are no otherwise than in God's decree, and foreknowledge. He hates none actually, or by application of hatred, till they have actual, yea sinful being; but hates them before in decree only, as they are only in decree and foreknowledge. This decree of God we consider according to two objects, sin and condemnation: for sin, we say, that God decrees to suffer the sin, which he could hinder by his Almighty power, if he would, and to order both sin and sinner, both before he sin, and in sinning, and having sinned, to his own holy ends. For damnation, we hold, that God decrees it towards none, but for their sin, by him infallibly foreseen, and by them freely to be committed and continued in without repentance. For though God be moved only from within himself, and the love of his holiness, to decree the condemnation of a sinner; yet doth he not so decree to condemn him, but for sin, as the deserving cause, foreseen, and by him to be practised. Neither yet do either of these decrees pass forth from God for themselves, but both the one, and the other for the glory of his power and justice to be made known to men and angels, ver. 22. Neither is the secret and revealed will of God held by us, contrary one unto another, as they misjudge: no, not though he will that by the one, called revealed, which can be resisted, and will not, but nill that by the other, called secret, which cannot be resisted. I say, though God will the same thing by the one, which he nills by the other: for some things God wills by both; for example, the repentance of Paul and Peter, and of all that do repent. It is his revealed will which requires it; but his secret and unknown will to give it, till he make it known by giving it. Neither doth the willing and not willing, no, nor nilling, which is more, of the same thing, make two contrary wills, save as they cross one another in the same respect, else they are but divers in respect of divers objects in consideration.

To open this a little further. It was the revealed, or commanding will of God, that Pharaoh should let Israel go: but so it was not his secret, or working will; that is, God did not so will this, as that he would use his omnipotent power, and do what he could to bring it to pass: God who turned the heart of Laban, persecuting Jacob, Gen. xxxi., and of Saul, persecuting the Christians, Acts ix.; and "in whose hands are the hearts of kings as the rivers of waters, which he turneth whithersoever he wills," Prov. xxi. 1, could, had it so pleased him, by his irresistible power have softened Pharaoh's heart towards his people Israel. It was God's revealed will, wherewith Moses acquainted him, that he should let the people go: his secret will, which he knew not, till he felt the woful effects of it, to harden his heart for the declaration of his power in his deserved destruction. So for Abraham's offering up his son Isaac, Gen. xxii. 2, it was God's revealed will, that he should offer him up for a burnt offering, as is plain, in that he commanded him so to do, ver. 1, 2; yet withal, it was God's secret will, that he should not offer him, nor lay his hand upon him, nor do anything unto him; as he also revealed unto him in due time, but purposed in himself before: God being without variableness, or shadow of turning, James i. 17, and not to be conceived to have changed his mind, as vain man doth; yet were not these two wills contrary one to another, but diverse, not in God in whom all things are one, even one God, but in respect of diverse objects and ends. God willed Isaac's offering, so far as the commanding will reached, for the trial of Abraham's faith and obedience, and this he revealed: but now God would not have him offered, in regard of the event of the thing: but this as secret for the present, and till God revealed it in its time. Neither do we, or the apostle whose steps we tread in, by teaching that God hardens men by a will that cannot be resisted, say, as they ignorantly accuse us and him, that God compels men to trespass, and so to suffer. There is no compulsion of any, but of him that is unwilling: but he that is hardened, is willingly hardened, as well as necessarily. His hardening of himself in a course of sin, is as voluntary, as is God's hardening him by way of punishment, necessary and irresistible.

The apostle teacheth, how it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, &c., if they fall away to renew them again to, or by repentance. Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. If it be impossible for them to repent, then they remain impenitent necessarily by God's just judgment upon them, and yet I suppose voluntarily also, even our adversaries being judges. Their impenitency, therefore, and hardness of heart, though in regard of men a sin, and therefore voluntary; it is in regard of God a punishment, and therefore necessary and irresistible; except we will say, that men can resist God's judgments: and do that which the apostle affirms to be impossible.

Neither needs this deep and divine mystery of God's judgments trouble any that consider aright of these three things: first, that as the sun puts no ill savour into the dung-hill, though the stink thereof be increased by its shining; so neither doth God add any hardness, or impenitency to any, but only leaves unrestrained, occasions, stirs up, and orders the corruption which he finds in men to this event. Secondly, that man is more willing to be impenitent, and hard-hearted, than God is to have him so. Thirdly, that this, in regard of man is a sin: in regard of God, a punishment of former sins.

The apostle's answer to the objection now followeth, ver. 20: "Nay, but O man, who art thou that disputest with God? shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another to dishonour?" Wherein, 1st, he represseth man's insolency, who being but man, yet dare presume to call God's doing into question. 2nd, he justifies the Lord's doing by his absolute power over the creature, as the potter hath power over his clay.

And by this answer of the apostle it appears, how these men mistake his meaning in the question. His answer is not at all, of this or that manner of saving men, as they imagine and maintain, but of the saving of this person rather than that: they being both alike in themselves, and as the clay of the same lump. If Paul's answer should be shaped according to their misformed question, then the meaning must be; that the potter might choose which way he would

make a vessel of honour, whether by the works of the law, or by faith and obedience to the gospel: and so not of the same lump, but of two contrary lumps: the one believing and obeying; the other, not turning from his wicked way, and yet seeking salvation by his works. The apostle here plainly pleads the Lord's power over the creature, to make him a vessel of honour or dishonour: they plead the Lord's power over the means only, by which he will do this: he, the Lord's power over the clay of the same lump: but they, over clay of clean contrary qualities. Besides, if Paul meant here to bring in the Jews defending themselves that God had no cause to complain that they stuck to the law, that is, looked to be justified by it, seeing God's will was that men should obey his laws, and so live in them, what needed he to have sought so far for an answer, as the absolute power of God? seeing he had an answer at hand which might have stopped all mouths, and which he ever presseth when question is of justification by the works of the law? which is, that they could not fulfil the law, and therefore could not psssibly be justified by it. Rom. iii. 23: iv. 15; Gal. iii. 9, 10.

Lastly, their exposition of these words, "Why hast thou made me thus?" that is, "that I cannot obtain salvation by the works of the law," directly crosseth the apostle, who grants that God made men, as is there objected, and justifies him in so making or framing them, both in his decree, and work of holy providence, by the power which he hath over men, as the potter over his clay. "Hath not the potter power over the clay?" ver. 21, &c. Besides, men make themselves incapable of salvation by the law, in that, they keep it not. But the apostle here speaks of God's making men, vessels unto dishonour, and not of men's making themselves; and of the potter making the vessel, and not of the vessel making itself thus, or thus. It is plain Paul grants the objection, that no man can resist God's will; and yet justifies his complaining, considering his power over his creature to decree, and so bring unto most contrary estates by just and convenient means, persons in themselves alike, and as the clay of one lump, ver. 21, 22, 23.

SECT. XI.—THE POTTER'S VESSELS.

Adversaries.

(Pages 71—75.)

In the opening of these verses they follow their usual, but ill custom of carrying the reader away to other places, and things; and enter upon a tedious discourse upon Jer. xviii., from whence they affirm, the apostle hath these words, and so speaks of the same "making of a vessel of dishonour" with the prophet in that place.

Defence.

I deny their peremptory assertion, and require their proof. If they say the same words are there; first, that is not simply true; for part of them only are there to be found, and so are they in other places, by name, Isaiah xlv. 9, where it is evident, the prophet speaks of another matter. It is too weak a collection, that because the like phrase or form of speech in part, is to be found in two places, that therefore the one is taken out of the other, and that to the same purpose. And to put the matter out of doubt, it is evident that the prophet, and apostle speak of clean divers things: the prophet speaks of marring the vessel, and making it again; that is, of destroying persons or peoples, if they repent not; or doing good to them which repent: the apostle, of making the vessel out of the mass, or lump, honourable or dishonourable. The prophet speaks of the making or marring of one and the same vessel: the apostle of divers vessels, and the making of one to honour, and another to dishonour. Lastly, the apostle here speaks of the Lord's purpose and work, without respect to good or evil done by the persons, and considering them as clay of the same lump: the prophet, of God's dealing with persons, according to the good or evil which he finds in them, and so being diverse, yea clean contrary lumps. And where they insinuate, that we hold the making of the clay to be in creation, which they affirm to be in vocation; they speak untruly in both. No man ever held that God in or by creation made any vessel to dis-

honour; neither can they ascribe this, as they do to vocation. God's calling men is not to dishonour, but to honour only. It is the devil, and his instruments, and not God, who call men to dishonour, which these men also prove against themselves at large, in the two pages following; and therein pull down with the one hand, what they have built with the other, as children use to do with their cob-castles.

That which followeth, ver. 24, 25, &c., is not to the thing in hand. The disputation about election ends, ver. 23, and that of vocation followeth: which latter is an effect of the former, declaring indeed the persons, but not confounding the things.

And thus, if these men may be their own judges, and may have the praise which their own mouth gives them, they have very sufficiently explained the ninth chapter to the Romans, and to full satisfaction of him that doubts, resolving him in every difficult place thereof, as they blow the trumpet, or rather the bladder of their own praise. But if the Scriptures in their true sense and scope may be judge, and give sentence, they will be found neither to know them, nor the power of God over his creatures. Which power, yet, ver. 22, is declared not to be tyrannical, but most just, never punishing, but after the enduring of the vessels of wrath having sinned: as is his mercy also richly glorious in the salvation of the vessels of mercy, ver. 23.

SECT. XII.—ORDAINED TO ETERNAL LIFE AND BELIEVING.

Adversaries.

(Page 75—77.)

The last place which they take upon them to answer is, Acts xiii, "So many as were ordained to eternal life believed," that is, say they, so many as believe, and obey the truth, are ordained to eternal life.

Defence.

A strange perverting of the Scriptures, setting the head in the feet's place, and the feet in the head's. For although

the thing which they affirm be in itself true, yet is it not the evangelist's meaning. Luke descends from the cause to the effect; they crossly ascend from the effect to the cause. The evangelist's meaning is, that Paul's preaching in Antioch had a diverse event with divers: of whom so many as were pre-appointed, or ordained to life believed, that is, of unbelievers, which they were before, became believers in Christ: according to that, Rom. viii. 30, "whom he predestinated them also he called:" that is, he gave them to believe and repent. Their pre-ordination or predestination to life therefore, went before their effectual calling and believing, as the cause before the effect.

Their assertion in the application of their similitude, of a merciful rich man, offering money to so many as come, that they who proudly refuse the rich man's gift were ordained to have it, as well as any that received it, is most erroneous, being applied to the matter in hand, and strikes directly against the text, which saith, that "so many as were ordained to life did believe;" that is, did come and receive eternal life by believing in Christ. John i. 12; 1 John v. 11, 12. If all, or so many as were ordained received it, then they that received it not, were not ordained. Neither doth, ver. 46, as they affirm for a conclusion, that their end may answer their beginning, testify any such thing: but only that they who thought themselves unworthy of eternal life, had the Word of God preached unto them: but that they were therefore ordained to eternal life, is not the testimony of the text, but their unskilful gloss. The Holy Ghost expressly opposeth unto them to whom Paul speaks, ver. 46, them that were ordained to life, ver. 48.

CHAPTER III.

OF FALLING AWAY.

Adversaries.

(Page 78.)

THE third head questioned is, according to their order whether a man may fall from life eternal, but is more plainly

and fully thus laid down; whether a man truly and effectually called, justified, and sanctified, may wholly fall away from the grace of Christ? They hold the affirmative; and that a man may thus fall away; though they set down their opinion both in improper and doubtful terms, where they say, that the "promise of God's election is continued unto us upon continuance in the same condition" of faith, and obedience to Christ's gospel.

Defence.

First, the Scriptures speak not of the promise of God's election, as they here do again, and again. Election, or God's purpose of electing is before the world: the promise not, till men actually be. God's purpose must needs be before his promise, for he but promiseth in time, what he purposed from eternity. If they had spoken of God's purpose of, or according to election, Rom. ix. 11, it had been something: but what the promise of election means, I understand not; nor, I suppose themselves. All election is to somewhat: and this, of which they speak, to salvation, the kingdom of God, and eternal life. In their meaning then, God promiseth to choose to eternal life, and continueth to promise to choose to eternal life, upon condition of continuance of the condition of election, faith and obedience. Now a promise made upon a condition to go before, is not to be performed till the condition be performed: and so, by their doctrine, God doth not elect any till they have continued to the end, in faith and obedience, that is till they be dead. And so actual and particular election, is not of men living, but dead: to which absurd assertion, these men's masters, the Arminians are driven. It is true, that God neither purposeth nor promiseth to save any, but such as persevere in faith and repentance unto the end: so is it also true, that this perseverance in grace depends upon election, which is, both to the end, and means, Christ Jesus, and perseverance in faith in him, and obedience unto him. Eph. i. 3, 4, 5.

SECT. I.—SCRIPTURE CAUTIONS AND EXHORTATIONS.

Adversaries.

(Page 78.)

Their arguments are of two sorts: the former drawn from such scriptures as teach, as they say, that the godly may fall away: the latter from such, as exhort and admonish godly men to keep them from falling away. The latter of these two they prosecute in the first place, upon this ground: that if there were not danger, and great need of warning, the Lord, who saith not in vain unto his people, "Seek ye me," Isa. xlv. 19, would not so oft move them to take heed, beware, and the like.

Defence.

As they are deceived, by the translation which they follow, Isa. xlv. the Lord not speaking of his not saying in vain to his people, "Seek ye me:" but of their not seeking him in vain; seeing all his words tend to righteousness: so the ground which they lay is true in itself; namely, that were there no danger any way, then it were in vain, to warn to take heed, which to affirm of God, derogates from his wisdom. We are therefore in the first place, by way of distinction, to consider a faithful man, either in respect of himself as restraining himself: or in respect of the grace of Christ sustaining him. Considering him in himself, we willingly grant, that a faithful man may as easily fall away, as did the angels in heaven, and Adam in Paradise, being left to themselves: grace not being, as is reason, an inseparable property, but that which is separable from man's nature. But now considering the same faithful person, as a living member of Christ's body, receiving nourishment from him the head; and given to Christ by the Father, that he might save him; as having the Spirit of Christ dwelling in him; and as kept by the power of God, through faith to salvation: Col. ii. 19; John xvii. 6, 8; Eph. ii. 22; 1 Pet. i. 5; in that regard we deny, that it can come to pass possibly, that such a one should wholly fall away from the grace received. And this diverse consideration of one, and the same person, is founded in the Scriptures, and light of reason. The

apostle teacheth, that both he and all others are insufficient of themselves, to think anything, as of themselves: but sufficient, 2 Cor. iii. 5; 2 Cor. xii. 9; 1 Cor. xv. 10; as of God; that the faithful may be weak in themselves, and have God perfecting his strength in man's weakness; that not a man's self, but the grace of God in him may labour abundantly, that is, he by it, and not by his own strength. Thus, to open the distinction yet fullier, might Christ's flesh have seen corruption, Psa. xvi. 11, considered in itself as being made of the same mould with ours: but so could it not possibly in regard of God's purpose, promise, and work of providence to the contrary. So considering his bones in themselves, and their natural strength, it was as possible they should have been broken by the soldiers, as the bones of the two thieves, crucified with him: but yet this was impossible in respect of God's precedent word and prediction, "Not a bone of him shall be broken;" and of his present work of most powerful providence, according to his word. Numb. ix. 12; Exod. xii. 46; Psa. xxxiv. 20; John xix. 36.

If now with this consideration, that a believer may of himself fall away, we conjoin this other, that the exhortations, and admonitions in the Scriptures, are means sanctified of God to keep, and preserve all his from such apostacy, how should it seem strange unto any, that God should infallibly obtain his own end, the perseverance of his saints, by his own means, which these exhortations are? Is it a good argument that God may fail of his end, because he useth effectual means whereby to obtain it, as exhortations and warnings are to perseverance? Is it a good argument, that the conduit may want water, because a man, skilful in water-works, layeth the conduit pipes with all diligence, and art, between the spring-head and the conduit; or that the child, whom his father holding him fast by the hand, in a slippery way, and bidding him look that he fall not, can fall out of his father's hand? Nay, though left to himself, he may, yea cannot but fall; yet considering his father's strength supporting him, one that cannot fall himself, whereof the child is made partaker for his supportance, he cannot fall: such a holding, and helping hand of God are these exhortations, made effectual by his Spirit in the hearts of his children, true believers.

Unto whom, as the Lord saith, "Seek ye my face;" so they answer, "Thy face Lord do we seek," Psa. xxvii. 8: the Lord saith in his Word, "Take heed, stand fast, beware that ye fall not away," and the like. Unto which their godly hearts answer, Lord we do take heed, do beware, &c. For by "these the servant of God is warned," Psa. xix. 11. They are as "seed sown in good ground, which brings forth fruit with patience to the harvest," Luke viii. 15. So as in truth, the clean contrary doctrine to these men's collection, is true; that therefore the truly faithful cannot fall away, because they, they, I say, being faithful, obedient, and of honest hearts, are by such exhortations, and admonitions, armed against such evil of apostacy.

To conclude this point. The Lord Jesus gives his apostles in charge to teach all nations whatsoever he had commanded them, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20: adding thereunto, the promise of his presence with them, if they did so, to the end of the world: against whom also a woe was denounced if they did not preach the same gospel, 1 Cor. ix. 16. I would now know whether it could so come to pass, that these apostles should not, and that willingly, preach this gospel, and the truths thereof? This to affirm were to blaspheme the Holy Spirit of God, by which they were immediately and infallibly guided in their ministry. Promises therefore and threatenings are not in vain for the provoking of men unto those duties, which by reason of the Spirit's powerful work in them, it is not possible but they should perform.

SECT. II.—ESAU'S LOSS OF BIRTHRIGHT, AND OTHER INSTANCES.

Adversaries.

(Pages 79—89.)

The scriptures brought by them for their assertion, follow. The first is, Heb. xi. 15, whence they gather, that, as Esau lost his earthly inheritance, to which he had right, so may the saints lose their heavenly inheritance, which they have right to.

Defence.

The apostle doth not so conclude, but exhorts them only to take heed thereof: and of that matter we spake even

now at large. Esau was a profane person before he sold his birthright, Gen. xxv. 23—27, and never other; no doubt but a profane person, or hypocrite, nourishing in himself the root of bitterness, though living in the church, may lose whatsoever right he had; and of such the apostle here speaks. If it be further objected, that Esau had right indeed to the birthright, by them unskilfully called the inheritance, I answer, that he had never right to it spiritually, nor in God's appointment, but only in outward course, and in regard of men: and such a right to the heavenly inheritance may be, and is, by too many lost, as the apostle here insinuates. Lastly, who sees not the difference between the inward grace of faith and holiness in the heart of a true believer, and the carnal right to that which is common to good, and bad.

In Matt. v. 15, Christ saith, not as they accuse him, that salt may lose its savour, but if the salt lose its savour, as he saith, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me:" Matt. xxvi. 39; which yet, all things considered, could not be. Of which form of speech we have lately treated, and shall more hereafter. I suppose it was never seen, that salt wanted saltness: and if it do, how is it salt? Besides, Christ calls not his apostles salt, and light, in regard of the grace of faith in their hearts; but of their preaching the gospel, therewith to season and enlighten the world. 2 Pet. ii. 20, they pervert as the former places: making that absolute which is but conditional, and with an If. They, say they, which are washed, may return with the sow, to wallow in the mire, and their latter end be worse than the beginning. The apostle saith, "If after they be washed," &c. These forms of speech, whether in Scripture, or other where, if this, then that, do not necessarily prove, that either this or that is so indeed; but only, that if this be so, then that also. Both this and that in themselves may be impossible, and yet the consequence good: as if I should say at midnight, If it be day, the sun is rising; or at midday, If it be night, the sun is set: so in the Scriptures, Luke xix. 40; 1 Cor. xv. 13, 14, 15, 16, &c., Gal. i. 5, 10, and in infinite other places. It is sufficient for the truth of a conditional proposition, that the latter part follow infallibly upon the former; if it be; but requires

not that it should be. These men and others herein labour of the same mistaking with the disciples, John xxi. 22, 23, who upon Christ's words to Peter touching John, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" concluded, that John should not die, but should survive till the second coming of Christ; which fancy also continued a long time in the minds of many. But the evangelist in the same place, ver. 23, teacheth them that will learn, not to interpret conditional speeches, as absolute. Jesus said not unto him, he shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, or die not.

If it be further replied, that the apostle aims at certain particular persons, which "denied the Lord that bought them, whose pernicious ways others followed," and "unto whom it did happen according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his vomit again:" which same persons Jude, verse 4, also chargeth to have turned the grace of God into wantonness; I willingly grant the thing so to have been; but deny the conditional form of speech to prove it absolutely. And for the thing, I answer, that the apostles there speak of men's being purged and washed, and the like, according to the outward profession only, which they formerly made, and which the church took knowledge of: and not according to the inward truth of the heart, which they knew not, but God alone. I add, to put the matter wholly out of question, that these apostles thus speaking, do in the same places both gather themselves by the event, and teach us that these persons, of whom they speak, were never truly and effectually sanctified, but only in their own, and other men's opinion; as where 2 Peter ii. 7, 8, 9, opposing righteous Lot to the wicked Sodomites, addeth, that as God delivered him, so he knoweth, that is, can and will "deliver the godly out of temptations," and "to reserve the unrighteous to the day of judgment" for punishment. Likewise, ver. 21, "The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire." They were always then, in truth, but dogs and swine, though sometimes vomiting dogs, and washed on the outside as swine are in the waters. And yet more plainly, of the same persons Jude saith, verse 4, that they were "ungodly men, and

before of old ordained to that condemnation," and such as crept in unawares. They were at the best but hypocrites, in truth, and such as crept in unawares, though seeming for a time to others, and it may be to themselves also, sanctified and purged, by their outward profession, which profession formerly by them made, the apostle upbraids them with, to their greatest confusion.

To Heb. x. 29, the same answer serveth. The form of speech is but conditional, "If we sin wilfully," &c., ver. 26, which proves, that if any so sin, then there remains no more sacrifice for him: but proves not that any truly justified and sanctified, doth so sin. If it be asked, to what end then serves the fearful denunciation used? I answer, first, to keep the truly faithful from so sinning: second, to awaken even the secure, if not desperate: third, to point out the fearful state of incurable hypocrites and apostates. And as the particular persons unto whom the apostle there hath reference, could not by him certainly be discerned ever to have been truly and inwardly sanctified, "for what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him?" 1 Cor. ii. 11. So by their after course of apostacy from Christ, he seemeth not obscurely to gather, and pronounce of them, that at their best they were but hollow-hearted; as ver. 38, 39, making an opposition between the truly just that lives, and perseveres notwithstanding all temptations, by faith; and those withdrawers to perdition. So, chap. vi., speaking of the same, and like persons, "if they fall away," ver. 6, he insinuates against them, ver. 8, that they were never other than thorny earth, opposed to good earth, bringing forth herbs meet for him that dresseth it. As also, ver. 9, 10, he makes it a point of God's righteousness not to forget the work and labour of love of the truly faithful, or beloved; viz., so as to suffer them to fall away from the things which accompany salvation. With which accords that elsewhere, "Faithful is he that calleth you, which will also do it," 1 Thess. v. 23, 24; that is, will preserve the truly faithful blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ: as doth that also in the parable, where only the seed sown in the stony or thorny ground withered, and was choked before the harvest; but not any one corn sown in good ground. Matt. xiii.; Luke viii.

To 1 Tim. i. 19, where it is said, that some, as Hymeneus and Alexander by name, have put away a good conscience, and made shipwreck of faith, I answer, letting pass other things, that Paul speaks no more of them than he knows: and so not knowing their heart, and inward man, which only God doth, he speaks of their faith, and good conscience, not as considered in their hearts, which he knew not; but in outward profession, whereof he had taken knowledge. The same answer serveth to 1 Tim. v. 12, if by the first faith there be not meant these women's former promise of serving the church, in the widows' or deaconesses' office; and then it is nothing to the matter in hand.

It is not said, Exod. xxxii. 32, 33, in the text, but in their gloss, that some written in the book of life may be blotted out. Moses only desires there that if God would not pardon his people's sin, and bring them into Canaan, he would "blot him out of his book." But the Lord answers him in the same place, that that cannot be, but that he that sins against him, he will blot out. Is it to be conceived, that Moses for the sin of others; whereof he was altogether innocent, yea for his holy zeal and love towards God's people, should be blotted out of the book of life? If you say, that yet some, to wit, sinning may be blotted out, I grant it in God's sense, but not in theirs. For first, this is meant of temporary, and not of eternal life, of the "blotting their name from under heaven," Deut. ix. 14; of the destroying them, and making of Moses a nation greater than they. Of that of which God is said to repent upon Moses' prayer, ver. 14, which was only in regard of their temporal state and life. 2. It is not only vanity, but impiety also to affirm that these persons were ever truly justified and sanctified. Not only Moses and Aaron, but God himself upon this very occasion testifies the contrary, ver. 9, 22: Deut. ix. 7, 13. To Psa. lxix. 28, I answer, that David means no more, than that his adversaries should no longer be continued in the church and fellowship of God's people, the latter part of the verse expounding the former, "Let them not be written with the righteous;" which the prophet Ezekiel terms, "not being written in the writing of the house of Israel." Ezek.

xiii. 9. And seeing David here speaks of certain particular persons his adversaries, let these men show the marks by which he knew certainly that they were once truly justified and sanctified, or by which they know them so to have been. They take that for granted, in which the main question lieth; and laying such foundations, what can their building be?

As the blackamoor changeth not his skin; so neither do they their bold manner, in putting their gloss for the scripture; as appears in the next place cited by them, Rev. iii. 5: Christ there teacheth, that some, namely, they that overcome, shall not have their name blotted out of the book of life. They bring him in saying, that some written in the book of life may be put out. God blots not out their name that overcome: and if any overcome not in the spiritual warfare, it shows his name was never written there. "All that dwell on the earth shall worship the beast," Rev. xiii. 8—11, "whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb." On the contrary, the saints indeed, and elect, get "victory over the beast, by faith and patience." Rev. xv. 2.

That by the talents given to the servants, Matt. xxv., is meant the graces of justification and sanctification; and not the gifts of the Spirit given for the edification of the church, as 1 Cor. xii. 7; and Eph. iv. 8, is their presumption. Justification and sanctification make men the servants of Christ at first; these talents were given to them that were servants already; and that according to their several ability for their special places. Besides, the taking away of the talent here spoken of, is not in this life, but at the day of judgment; and therefore is unskilfully brought for their purpose.

Touching Paul's affirming that the saints at Rome were justified by faith, Rom. v., and yet threatening, that if they continued not in the bounty of God, they should be cut off, chap. xi. 21, I answer, as before; first, that the threatening is conditional, as Gal. i. 8, "If we," &c. Was it possible that Paul should preach any other gospel? Or were he an angel from heaven, or of God, that should do so? I suppose no, but an angel from hell rather, and of the devil. Chap. iv. 14. The question is not whether

if any should not abide in the bounty of God, they were to be cut off or no. But whether any with whom he hath dealt so bounteously, as indeed to justify and sanctify them, have not also a promise, by his power, to be kept in that his bounty, by the means which he hath appointed? Secondly, Paul pronounceth those Romans justified, not from the judgment of certainty, but of charity. Of whom as some were undoubtedly sincere, whom God did by this and the like warnings, preserve and keep in his grace: so for the hypocrites mingled amongst them, it was but that which we say, if in their time they were broken off from that which formerly they seemed to others by their profession, and it may be to themselves also, to have had.

And indeed, this very place, if it be well minded, ministers full answer to the most of their arguments. This warning, though immediately given to the Romans, concerns all Christians as well as them. And being founded upon an example of the Lord's dealing with the Jews must be expounded, and applied accordingly. Who then were these exemplary Jews, formerly cut off by the Lord from the olive tree? Were they such as had once truly believed, but had after made defection? I suppose not even in these men's judgments; but such as occupying a place in the church, yet were, in truth, faithless hypocrites, and as chaff in the Lord's floor, which "the Son of man coming with his fan in his hand purged out." Matt. iii. 11, 12. And in these we may see, what kind of branches they are, which in time come actually and visibly to be broken off from the olive.

The instances following of Eli's house losing the priesthood, Saul the kingdom of Israel, and the Israelites Canaan, serve only to fill up the room. The priesthood, kingdom, and Canaan, were not the graces of faith, and sanctification in the heart; nor the loss of them sin, but punishments only. Only the last place, Matt. xviii. 32, where debt forgiven, is, as they say recalled, were something to the purpose, if the drift of the parable were to show, that God indeed forgives sins, and after unforgives them: which were lightness unbecoming any grave and honest man. But the scope of the parable being no more than that we ought to forgive such as offend us, and that

otherwise God will not forgive us: to draw more from it is to forget that it is a parable, and to take the high way to most grievous error. Besides there is in this parable no colour for falling away from grace, and true godliness, formerly had; but only, even their exposition being admitted, that a man may have his sins pardoned, who yet wants all brotherly love and goodness, which the Scriptures everywhere deny, Matt. vi. 14, 15; Mark xi. 24, 25; 1 John iii. 14, 15; Rom. viii. 1; Psa. xxxii. 1, 2. Thirdly, by these grounds, no man can certainly know, that his sins are indeed pardoned, whilst he lives in the world, because he may still fall away, and so have his pardon recalled, though sealed up unto him by the very Spirit of God itself. Eph. i. 13. And so all our faith must be but adventure whilst we live in the world, whether our sins past be in truth pardoned or no; contrary to the Scriptures. Lastly, this impeacheth both the justice of God, and his truth. His justice in making him require double satisfaction for the same debt; first, of his Son, even the price of his blood, and the same also by faith, applied to the person that hath sinned and believeth; and after of the person himself. Of his truth, and that both of his word absolutely promising forgiveness of sins to him that believeth, and also of his Spirit, by which he seals up the same unto their hearts. Rom. iii. 25; Eph. i. 13.

Their second and third reason, taken from the fall and sin of Adam, and all men's falling, and sinning in and by him, are wholly beside the question; which is only of falling from the grace of God in Christ; from election in him, Eph. i. 4, from the love of God towards us, when we were enemies, Rom. v. 8, from mercy, Rom. ix. 15, which presupposeth sin, and misery, and is properly evangelical. God gave Adam his portion in grace by creation, and left it in his own keeping, which he soon misspent: but hath dealt more mercifully with us in making his Son our feoffer in trust that he as our head, might keep and improve the grace of God belonging to us, as is meet for us: lest we having all at once, and that same left in our own hands, should misspend all, as Adam did.

To that which they allege from Eph. i. 4, compared with Rev. ii. 4, 5, I answer, first, that Paul styles those Ephe-

sians elect only as he knew them so to be; which was by outward appearance of holiness. Secondly, that the leaving of their first love was not a total falling from grace, but only a decaying of their former zeal. Thirdly, the threatening of the candlestick's removing, was to the truly called, an effectual means of drawing them to repentance. When these men can make it appear that any one of the truly elect and sanctified Ephesians did wholly despise this and the like means of their bettering, I will then grant their proof strong. It may as well be concluded, that therefore the fire goes out, because it hath good and fresh fuel put unto it, and is diligently blown. For these exhortations and admonitions are as fuel and blowing to preserve from going out the sparks, and fire of grace in the hearts of believers.

That only "he that continues to the end, and overcomes shall be saved;" and that the promise of acceptance, and salvation, by them miscalled "the promise of election," is no otherwise intended to us, than upon our abiding in the faith and obedience of Christ. We believe and confess with them, according to the Scriptures, but withal are taught, and believe according to the same Scriptures, that God keeps all his holy ones unto the end, and gives them to overcome; that he "puts his fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from him;" Jer. xxxii. 40; that the seed sown in good ground shall neither wither by persecution, nor be choked by cares of the world, or deceitfulness of riches, or otherwise; Matt. xiii. 23; but shall grow up to the harvest; that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church, Matt. xvi. 18; or any one member thereof, built upon the rock of Peter's confession; that God is faithful, who with the temptation will give a way to escape, 1 Cor. x. 13, for all his; that they are kept by the power of God, through faith to salvation; 1 Pet. i. 5; and that being born of God, they do not sin nor can (to wit, as the children of the devil do) because his seed remaineth in them. 1 John iii. 9, 10.

Their objections following, that by our doctrine men need not fear falling into condemnation, though they fall into notorious sin, nor repent having committed such sins; are of no weight; seeing God, though he promise salva-

tion to the truly called, certainly, yet he neither promiseth it, neither are they to believe it immediately; but by means of fearing to sin, and of repentance when sin is committed, which he also promiseth to work, and put in their heart that they shall not depart from him. Jer. xxxii. 40. The Lord promised by the prophet Jeremy, that after seventy years of the Jews' captivity accomplished at Babylon, he would visit them, and cause them to return to Jerusalem. And, whereas it might be objected against the certainty of this promise and event, What! shall they return though they repent not, nor seek the Lord, but remain rebellious, as they have been, and their forefathers before them? He answers, that then they shall call upon God, and pray unto him, and seek unto him; and he will hearken unto them, be found of them, and return their captivity. Jer. xxv. 12, and xxix. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. He promiseth both the end and the means; and he that promiseth is faithful in performing, and providing for both temporal and eternal deliverance, and the means thereof.

Their argument taken from exhortations, and admonitions in the Scriptures, that we receive not the grace of God in vain, 2 Cor. vi. 1, and the like, hath formerly been fully answered. They are not in vain, either in respect of elect or reprobate; neither yet will we own their absurd answer here fathered upon us, and the whole Scriptures are given to keep both elect and reprobate from falling into gross sins; yet that neither the elect can be damned by transgressing them, nor the reprobate saved by observing them. The Scriptures have divers ends; and amongst others, are given to keep all, not only from gross, but from all sins. Neither do we affirm, that the elect cannot be damned by transgressing them; or that the reprobate cannot be saved by observing them, as they, like deceitful proctors, plead for us, or rather for their own advantage. But this we say, that the elect and truly sanctified are so kept by the power of God in his fear, that they never transgress as the wicked do; nor can, because his seed remaineth in them; that they continually renew their repentance; particular, for sins known, into which through infirmity they fall; and general, for sins unknown, as

David did, 2 Sam. xii. 13; Psa. li.; and that even by means of those exhortations and admonitions, Psa. xix. 12, which God opens their hearts to attend unto, Acts xvi. 14, and gives increase accordingly, 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7. And the contrary, the reprobates, being left to themselves of God, have by their own and Satan's malice, their eyes so blinded, and hearts hardened, as though those means of exhortation come unto them, they either understand them not, or believe them not, or despise them; but never observe or obey them aright.

Their curses of the doctrine in this point, received in all reformed churches, atheistical and damnable; and their blessing themselves from it, is here as everywhere, the fruit of that wild zeal, wherewith their ignorant hearts are possessed.

Their answers follow to the Scriptures brought against them. The first is, Matt. xxiv. 24. "If it were possible they," the false teachers, "should deceive the very elect." Whence we conclude, as they say, that it is not possible the elect should perish. And here first they show, who are the elect of God; noting indeed the persons, but perverting the order of grace. If in saying, as they do, that the elect of God, are those that receive and obey the truth of Christ, and abide in him unto the death, they meant, that such as are chosen of God in his decree before the world, and actually and effectually, chosen and called in time by the Word and Spirit, to believe and obey, did so abide to the death, it were but the truth, which the Scriptures teach and we profess. But intending as they do, that men have only the promise of actual and particular election till then, but are not absolutely elected, and that absolute election follows this abiding in Christ till death; they are like the foolish builders, which would lay the foundation upon the roof of the house. But their comment upon Christ's words, men should be in danger to be seduced by false prophets, when they have abided in Christ unto death; for till then they will have none elect; and the elect are here said to be in danger to be seduced.

That which they gather from the manifold warnings in the Scriptures to the elect, that none deceive them, &c., is true; namely, that the elect may fall from their election,

or rather from the grace received, if they take not heed. But they should withal prove, that God doth ever, so far leave and forsake any truly justified, and sanctified in Christ, as that they take no heed at all, as they ought. It is certain that if the very elect angels in heaven, or Christ Jesus upon earth, had taken no heed to God's commandments, they could not have observed them.

That which is added, that many may fall away, not by being deceived, but willingly forsaking the truth; and again, that many fall away willingly, not being deceived, is neither pertinent, seeing the place in question speaks only of such as are deceived; nor true, seeing a man cannot will any evil, but under a show and appearance of good, so presented to the will by a deceived, and erring understanding. And so the Scriptures everywhere ascribe all manner of defection from God, and his holy commandments, to error, either in the general ground, or particular case. Psa. xcv. 10; Isa. liii. 6; Prov. xiv. 22; Heb. iii. 10; 2 Pet. iii. 17, &c.

The next place is John x. 27, 28, "My sheep hear my voice, and they know me, and follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any take them out of mine hand. My Father which hath given them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

They here conceive the purpose of Christ to be to confirm his sheep, so long as they continue his sheep, &c. But herein they draw violently Christ's purpose to their own. For Christ, as may be seen, by comparing herewith ver. 16, 26, 27, is to show how it came to pass, that some of his hearers believed and obeyed his voice, and some not. Many of the Jews believed not, because they were not his sheep: some did, being his sheep, to wit, by destination of God. Christ saith not, that they are not his sheep, because they believe not; but that they believe not, because they are not his sheep; that is, not being of the elect of God, they are left to their own impenitent and unbelieving heart, which they also willingly harden against Christ's voice. Where ver. 16, he saith, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, whom also I must bring," &c., he means the elect amongst the heathens destinated

to that one sheepfold, under him that one Shepherd, and by his voice to be brought thereto. This is yet more plain, ver. 15, where he saith, "I give my life for my sheep." Christ died for the ungodly, Rom. v. 6, 8. By his sheep therefore in this place, are meant the elect for eternity, for whom he died; the fruit of which election of God, and death of Christ, showeth forth itself in their timeous faith and obedience.

Further, note we for the thing in hand, that Christ gives unto his sheep, that hears his voice and obey him, eternal life: ver. 28: as elsewhere also he saith, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." John iii. 36. If this life which they have given them, and have (in the beginnings of it) even in this life, be eternal and everlasting; how can it be broken off afterwards? Or if it can be interrupted and broken off, how is it everlasting and eternal?

Lastly, if none be able to pluck Christ's sheep out of his, and his Father's hand; then no sinful person, or temptation, no malice of Satan can turn them from God: for if they can, then they can pluck them out of God's hand. Is not the destroying and corrupting of men's faith and obedience, the plucking them out of the hand of God? ver. 12, the same word is used, "The wolf catcheth and scattereth the sheep," that is, corrupteth them, as Matt. vii. 15; Acts xx. 19; where the same word is used also. As they are elsewhere too prodigal of Christ's benefits to all the goats in the world, so are they here too niggardly of them to his own sheep. Although in truth they grant, though unawares, as much as we plead for, in saying, that those sheep, so long as they continue his sheep, have spiritual peace, and safety, &c. Spiritual peace and safety is against all assaults of all spiritual enemies, labouring to subvert the spiritual state of God's people.

To the scriptures here alleged by them for their purpose, the answers formerly given touching conditional threatenings, and God's people in appearance, must be applied.

Of the former of the two scriptures following, which is John xiii. 1, "Whom he loveth, he loveth to the end," they

speak as the thing is, of God's love: but as loth to be too much beholden to him for it, and desirous pharisaically to justify themselves, they pull down what they formerly built, in saying, that the question is not of God's and Christ's love unto his, but of the continuance of our love unto him; wherein they both gainsay themselves in this whole treatise, and the Scriptures throughout. They put the question themselves of God's election, and of the promise of election. And is election, and the promise of election a work of our love to God, or of God's to us? Eph. i. 4, 5. The Scriptures also ascribe the whole work of our salvation, as election, redemption by the blood of Christ, vocation, revelation of heavenly things, justification, sanctification, adoption, faith, repentance, and the giving of the Spirit, issue out of temptations, and continuing blameless to the coming of the Lord, unto the good pleasure and love of God alone. It is true, that we must also love God, as they say: but we must know withal, that this our love of God depends upon his love of us first, and the same shed abroad into our hearts by his Spirit, which gives testimony thereof to our spirits: which, as it were, forceth love again from us to God, and the continuance of it the continuance of our love; according to that of the apostle, "The love of Christ constraineth us." Rom. v. 8, 10; Gal. i. 15; Rom. ix. 11; Matt. xi. 25; Rom. iii. 24; Gal. iv. 5, 6; Rom. viii. 15; Eph. ii. 8; 2 Tim. ii. 25; 1 Cor. x. 13; 1 Thess. v. 23; 2 Cor. v. 14; Rom. v. 5. For as the beams of the sun shed into the bosom of the earth first heat it, and so cause it to reflect heat again towards heaven: so by the love of God shed into our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given us, our hearts are most effectually drawn, and persuaded to love God again, and men for, and according to him. Which I further also manifest thus. Our love, whether to God or man, ariseth from faith unfeigned, 1 Tim. i. 5. Faith stands in the assured persuasion of the heart, by the Holy Ghost, of God's love to us: whereupon I conclude, that our salvation depending immediately upon our faith, love, and obedience, as conditions requisite by God's ordination, and they upon God's love, and the same known to us, and so the continuance of them upon the continuance of it; the question is properly and princi-

pally of the love of God to us, and the unchangeableness thereof.

For, Rom. xi. 29, they dream waking, that the meaning is, that God will never repent of saving all persons at all times, in all places, that seek salvation by faith in Christ, and continue therein. If this were all, what needed the apostle, ver. 33, to break out into that admiration of the riches of the wisdom, and knowledge of God, and of the unsearchableness of his judgments? What strange thing is it, that God should not repent of so gracious a purpose and promise, as is that of saving such as believe in his Son? Secondly, it is more than evident, that he speaks not here of saving all, at all times, but of the saving of some at some times; namely, of the Israelites in their time, and of the Gentiles in theirs. Rom. xi. 25, 26, 30, 31. Thirdly, the apostle speaks not of saving them that believe, but of giving the election to obtain mercy to believe. Lastly, the words are a reason of that which goes before, the Israelites touching election, are beloved for the fathers' sake, ver. 28. For, or because the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, as if he should have said: though for the present, the body of the Israelites be enemies of the gospel, that is, in not believing it, till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; yet the election, such as are that Israel, according to election, and God's people which he foreknew, ver. 2, them he loves in his decree unchangeably, for their father, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob's sake, and without repentance; and so will in their time make them actually partakers of his most gracious gift and calling. They here add certain scriptures, and may do many more, proving that God denies the effect to conditional promises, men breaking the conditions first: but as the scriptures cited by them, speak not all of salvation in Christ; so neither do any other show, that God ever alters purpose, or promise of saving any, whom he once loved in Christ, whether in decree, or application of love.

The last place which they labour to elude, 1 John ii. 19: "They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be manifest, that they were not all of us." And here, instead of answer-

ing directly to the place, they make out-leaps, as their manner is: making us to affirm that God hath predestinated some persons to salvation, and some to damnation without any condition: and that these persons, the elect, making never so great show of wickedness, and walking in the ways of Belial, are still elect, and can by no means fall out of their election: the other persons having never so many testimonies of godliness, and walking in the church of Christ, yet can never but be reprobates, and if ever they fall away from the church, or truth, that they were never truly of it.

We affirm, that God predestinates none to salvation but with condition of the death of Christ, and the persons' coming to years of discretion, faith, and repentance, and continuance therein to the end, to go before that their salvation: nor to damnation, but with condition of sin and impenitency therein to go before that their damnation. But our adversaries being bold and presumptuous, speak evil of the things which they neither know, nor are willing to understand. Only, these two things we further hold in this case. First, that the former conditions, Christ, and faith in him, are God's free gifts also, infallibly and effectually obtained by the former persons; the latter condition, impenitency in sin, the certain effects of Satan's malice, and their own corruption, being left of God thereunto. The second is, that other reason why God hath, of two alike corrupt in themselves, pre-ordained the former to salvation, by the former means; and the latter to condemnation, by the latter; the Scriptures do not acquaint us with, then, the mere pleasure of him, who "hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth;" and who hath loved Jacob, and hated Esau, to wit, in decree, the children not being yet born, neither having done either good or evil. Rom. ix. 11, 15, 18. Secondly, we say not that the elect so remain, though walking in the ways of Belial; but deny, that ever they so walk after their effectual calling, though, through the remainders of corruption, in some more strong than in others, they have not only their common slidings, but often their greater falls, from which they recover themselves by repentance: the spirit always lusting against the flesh, and they in regard of the law

of their mind, and spiritual man, not allowing, but hating the evil, which through the sin dwelling in them, they do, Rom. vii. 15, 17, 23.

Neither, on the other side, do the reprobates ever show any one, much less many, true testimonies of godliness; though many seeming such oftentimes, both in their own judgments of themselves, and other men's of them. He that should challenge a man for affirming, that it could not but be light at midday, nor but be dark at midnight, in comparison, that he affirmed, that it could not but be light at noon, though the sun should not be up; nor but be dark at midnight, though the sun were not set; should but use slanderous cavillation: even such, and no better, is their collection upon our assertion.

Where they add, that as all men's estates are one by creation, and one by transgression, all being dead in sins; and that, as all are shut up in unbelief, so he hath mercy on all, to wit, every particular person alike, they misinterpret the scripture, as hath been formerly shown; mistake the proportion of nature, whether by creation, or corruption, with that of mere grace; and are most impious against God's mercy, which they make all one towards Pharaoh and Moses; Herod and Paul. Besides it should follow hereupon, that God hath mercy actually on all and every person in the world, in taking away their sins, and saving them; for the apostle whose words they cite, speaks expressly of such an "all" as obtain mercy that way. Rom. xi. 26, 27, 30, 31. With like truth do they after affirm, from Matt. xiii. that the sower soweth the seed of salvation upon all. It cannot with modesty be denied, but there are, and have been many millions, unto whom the gospel, the only seed of salvation, was never preached. And as they begin, so go they on with this parable; as being of them, in whose mouth a parable is like the legs of the lame that are lifted up, and like a thorn that goes up into the hand of a drunkard. Prov. xxvi. 7, 9. As first, where by the good seed they understand the seed of salvation, or gospel, and by tares, false doctrines: as if they knew the mind of our Saviour, better than he himself: who expressly teacheth, that the good seed are the children of the kingdom, so called, because they are the heirs of their

Father's kingdom, in which the righteous are to shine forth as the sun, ver. 43, and the tares the children of the wicked one, which do iniquity, are to be gathered by the angels in the end of the world, and cast into the furnace of fire, &c., ver. 38—43. And if the good seed were the gospel, and the tares false doctrines, as they, transforming persons into things, would make them; yet is it untruly affirmed by them, that the persons of them who receive the good seed were no better than the other, nor the persons of them who receive the tares any worse than the other. That both are alike, to wit, dead in sin, when God offereth the gospel, we willingly grant, and are glad to hear them confess: but to say they are both alike, when the one receives the gospel, and the other refuseth it, and receives the tares contrary unto it, is to say that the good ground, and the bad, are both alike. For what makes them that are alike, when the gospel comes alike unto them, not to remain alike still? And what is the reason why the one receives it, and not the other? They say, because the goodness of the sower first sowed it, and therefore he hath cause to praise him only. But, say I, this goodness is alike to both the two in sowing, or offering the gospel's seed: whereupon it must follow, that he who receives this good seed, hath no more cause to praise God the sower, than he that receives it not: for it is sown alike in both, in regard of outward offer; but for the one's receiving of it, rather than the other, he hath cause to thank himself alone, and his own free-will. And indeed this is the mark at which all those adversaries' arrows are shot. But the Scriptures teach us a further thing, than these ungrateful persons will acknowledge; which is, that besides, and above the offer common to both, God gives the increase, 1 Cor. iii. 7, to some, without which, all preaching is nothing: even by opening of the heart to attend unto it, as he did the heart of Lydia. Acts xvi. 14. And as persons receive the Word of God into their hearts by his opening them first, so in that his gracious work in them, he makes them which were before alike, in spiritual consideration, to become unlike, and better than others; and so more beloved than others for the godly qualities, as they call them, which he hath wrought in them. Neither

doth the Lord hate only the works of wicked men, as they say; but also the workers of iniquity, Psa. v. 5, 6: not with a passion of the mind, as hatred is in man, but with a holy will to punish the violation of his righteous law. And though with a general love of the Creator to the creature, he always, after a sort, loves the persons of men, as being his generation, yet he loves, as is meet, the honour of his holiness, more than the happiness of his creature, having violated and profaned it without repentance.

They further betray their ignorance, where they think to mend the matter, in saying, that God hates the persons, as weapons, and instruments of those wicked qualities. Where hath God ever so spoken, or any other man before them? The godly qualities, or graces of knowledge, faith, love, patience, and the like, 2 Cor. vi. 6, 7, are the spiritual armour and weapons of godly men, Eph. vi. 13, &c.; the members also of men are called the weapons of righteousness, or unrighteousness, Rom. vi. 13, for that with them they practise and perform the works thereof. But to say, the persons are weapons and instruments of the qualities, is to put the person in the hand of the weapon to be used by it; whereas on the contrary, all know, that the weapon or instrument is in the hand of the person, and to be used and exercised by him. They here, in desiring the reader well to observe what they have said, as being a most blessed truth, are loth that their nakedness should not be seen in their spiritual drunkenness.

SECT. III.—APOSTACY IN GENERAL.

Adversaries.

(Pages 90—93.)

Now for the words of the apostle, to which they return after so long wandering; their comment is, they went out from us, &c., that is, say they, "those lying spirits, those persons who had once the spirit of truth in them, went out from the apostles and other saints." And again, those "lying spirits and antichrists in men's persons, went out from the truth and were never of the truth," the sum of all being, that lying spirits, and antichrists in men's persons, went out of the truth. 1 John ii. 19.

Defence.

A riddle, better fitting H. N.* than the professors of the truth in simplicity. It behoves us therefore a little to insist upon the text, opening it according to the apostle's meaning, and to ours with him; and first proving against them, that by those that went out, are not meant the lying spirits in the persons, but the persons themselves.

And first, these words, "they went out from us," or better, from out of us, show, that those out-goers were formerly of them in a respect; else how could they have gone out from them? But lying spirits were never of the apostles and saints; but the persons themselves were. Secondly, he saith not, as they corrupt the text, "if they had been of the truth," but "of us;" nor "they would have continued with it," but "with us:" nor, "but they are not of it," but "they were not of us:" all carrying it to persons so, and so qualified. Thirdly, is it to be conceived, that the apostle would complain, as here he doth, that lying spirits did not continue with the churches? Fourthly, in saying, "they went out of us, that it might be manifest that they were not all of us," he shows that by their out-leaps, something was manifested which was hid before. But it was plain before, to the apostles and saints, that lying spirits were not of the truth. He speaks therefore of the persons of hypocrites, whom by this their professed defection, God discovered. Fifthly, in saying, "they were not all of us," he insinuates that some of them were; what! some lying spirits of the truth? No; but that not all the persons that formerly professed the truth with them, were true members of Christ's body, which they were. Lastly, ver. 20, he makes an opposition between them of whom he writes, and to whom. "But ye:" What? ye spirits; and so, ver. 28, "little children," that is,

* Supposed to refer to Henry Nicholas, a mystic and rhapsodist of Westphalia, who about 1556 began to propagate his sentiments in Amsterdam, and founded the sect of Familists, or "the Family of Love." This sect extended itself to England, where it had numerous adherents in Essex and Cambridgeshire. It appears to have continued in existence only a few years, but has recently been resuscitated in the "Family of Love," who have located themselves in the "Agapemone" near Taunton. Vide Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv. p. 468, ed. 1823. Hanbury's Historical Memorials, vol. i. p. 178, note; Appendix to Tracts on Liberty of Conscience, edited by Bean Underhill, Esq., for the Hanserd Knollys Society.

little spirits. All may see with what spirit these men are led. He then speaks of the going out of persons, not of spirits, as they mean; but being indeed antichrists, as, ver. 18, in regard of their spirits, and doctrines, for which they pretend the spirit of Christ.

That which they add of the spirit of Hymeneus, together with his person, being in fellowship with Paul, is like the rest. By his spirit it seems they mean his faith, in saying faithful Hymeneus was of the truth; erroneous Hymeneus was never of it. Hath the faith of a person fellowship with the saints? Or did Hymeneus' faith, 1 Tim. i. 19, 20, sometimes hold faith and a good conscience, and after put them away? Or are not these things plainly spoken of the persons of men? Paul speaking that of Hymeneus, and others, which he knew in regard of outward appearance, and not that which he knew not of, the inward truth in the heart.

The meaning of John is plain enough, that these antichrists went out of the church, 1 John ii. 18—22; iv. 1, not by making any separation, or schism from it, as some think, for they still continued in the outward fellowship, preaching, and prophesying and deceiving; but in it, by heresy and profaneness, contrary to that outward profession of faith, and holiness, which they had formerly made: by which their defection they showed, that they were never truly regenerate, and inwardly and indeed living members of the body: but having been hypocrites, at their best, God so ordered, that they should hereby discover themselves. For had they been indeed of the number of the faithful, they had so continued to the end. Which truth this apostle confirms further, 1 John iii. 9, very evidently, saying, "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin:" for his, that is, God's seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. He doth not say, as some would have him, he cannot sin, or commit sin, that is, give himself to sin, as the wicked do, whilst the seed of God remains in him, or whilst he is born of God; but for, or because, this seed of the new birth remaineth in him.

One observation I will here annex, and so conclude this head. It cannot be, saith Christ, but offences will come. Matt. xviii. 7. And of all offences, none is greater, and which more wounds the tender heart of a weak Chris-

tian, than when he sees such, as by their former profession and appearances, have purchased to themselves the opinion of piety and godliness, to apostate and fall away from that their former profession; either to gross error, or profaneness. This occasions him to suspect, Satan by suggestions of unbelief, furthering him herein, that there is not in the course of Christianity, that power of grace, stableness, and true comfort, which it promiseth. This stone of offence, which Satan's malice casts in the way, God's Spirit removeth in providing, that where there is in the Scriptures, either mention, or insinuation of man's falling away from the grace of God, there is withal commonly an item given in the same place, that such persons were never effectually sanctified, but hypocrites, at their best, whatsoever they seemed either to others, or to themselves. Thus, where some at the first, receiving the word with joy, are after, when tribulation or persecution ariseth, offended, Matt. xiii. 20; others have made some growth, yet become unfruitful by the cares of the world and deceitfulness of riches: the Lord would have us take knowledge, that such were never better than stony and thorny ground. Thus, that Judas being lost, was none of them whom the Father had given unto Christ, but a child of perdition. John xvii. 12. Thus where, Israel did not obtain that which it sought for, but was broken off, yet that the election obtained it: "the gifts and calling of God being without repentance." Rom. xi. 7, 17, 29. Thus, that they, which fall, are such as think, that is presume, that they stand, rather than even do so indeed. 1 Cor. x. 12, 13. Thus, that though some come to err concerning the truth formerly professed by them, yet the foundation of God stands steady, having this seal: "the Lord knoweth who are his." 2 Tim. ii. 18, 19. Thus, that if some enlightened, and tasting of the heavenly gifts, &c. fall away, it is they that are dull of hearing, like the earth, that beareth but thorns and briars, notwithstanding the rain's falling upon it. Heb. vi. 4—6. Thus, that false teachers, and such as follow their pernicious ways, were at first and best, but men creeping in unawares. 2 Pet. ii. 1; Jude 4. Lastly, that such as went out of the fellowship of the apostles and churches, in the outward profession of faith, and holiness, were never truly, and inwardly of them, as was made manifest in due time.

CHAPTER IV.

OF FREE-WILL.

AFTER a loud blast in the beginning, as formerly, of their full and sufficient dealing in the former point, our adversaries begin this with a false, and foul accusation.

SECT. I.—ARE MEN COMPELLED TO SIN?

Adversaries.

(Pages 94—100.)

The Calvinists hold, that wicked men "are compelled to sin by God's power," and again, that men "are compelled by the power, force and compulsion of God's predestination to all wicked, and cruel crimes." Against which they allege out of "Bastingius," and "Thes. Genev.,"* that "man by evil was spoiled not of his will, but of the soundness of his will, therefore that which in nature was good, in quality became evil:" and that, as Bernard teacheth, "there is in us all power to will, but to will well, we had need to profit better; to will evil we are able already by reason of our fall:" as also, that there remains freedom "in all good, natural, civil, moral, and judicial things, but not in spiritual." These things, they say, "if we will stand unto, they require no more."

Defence.

Both we will stand to them, and they must fall by them, as they might evidently see, if they considered, that all our question is about freedom of will in spiritual things; which alone we deny.

The ground of their error here is, that they unskilfully confound necessity and compulsion; and conceive not how a thing, both free and casual in itself, may by the overruling hand of God's providence be determined necessarily this way, or that. The difference between necessity and compulsion I have formerly† both proved and opened at large: showing how man's free-will in choosing that which

* Vide "Propositions disputed at the University of Geneva," p. 18.

† Pages 290, 291, *supra.*

is evil, and God's powerful hand in governing him in that his choice, according to his wise counsel, to his holy ends, may well stand together. And for that which is good, God works it by inclination, by his Word and Spirit; which inclination cannot be compulsion, seeing compulsion and violence is only against the inclination of the thing, and not the inclining of it. God herein first takes away the former corrupt inclination, that it reign not, which is the cord wherewith a man is tied, as they speak, and then gives a new inclination contrary to the former, not hauling up a man by main force, as they mis-shape a similitude for us, but giving inward will and strength of grace for the man to raise up himself by. And if all kind of necessity abolish all kind of freedom, then in truth a man doth nothing freely; for whatsoever he doth, he doth it necessarily, when he doth it.

They do here in vain heap up scriptures like medicines upon a sound stomach, to prove that election, and choice cannot be but in, or rather with liberty. We acknowledge that whatsoever good or evil a man doth outwardly, or inwardly, where the will comes to work (for there may be acts of the understanding, and motions of the affections before and without the will's working), he useth liberty and freedom in choosing, or refusing: that is, he doth it not by any violence or compulsion, but from the inward principles of his mind; the understanding directing, and the will consenting; though yet the wicked, being left of God, cannot but do wickedly, any more than the Ethiopian can change his skin, or the leopard his spots, Jer. xiii. 23; nor the godly but do godlily, by the grace of God effectually inclining him thereunto. Neither doth our affirmation make void, or unmoving the threatenings of God; but makes both threatenings, and promises, and precepts, and all, most effectual; God by the inward work of his Spirit giving an increase to the outward preaching, and opening the heart to receive the same. One can move another by outward motives, works, and the like. Will these men afford God no more, or other work? Will they deny any inward work of God's Spirit at all, above the Word's work, though in and by it? Numb. xi. 25, 26; Judges xiv. 5, 19? What mean then the Holy Scriptures, speaking so frequently of this Spirit's work in

men, with means, without means; for ordinary, and extraordinary operations, both gifts and graces? Or if there be such a Spirit of God dwelling, and working in men, why do they deny unto it, a prevailing power, wheresoever it pleaseth God to bestow it? And for those that cannot repent, as they plead for some; God, and their consciences will plead against them, that they will not repent: and so are not tied with a cord by others, and violently withheld, as they plead for them, but do willingly cast, and keep the cords of iniquity, and rebellion upon themselves. Psa. li. 11, 12; Ezek. xi. 19, xxxvi. 26, 27; Luke i. 15; Acts i. 8, ii. 17, 18; Rom. viii. 9, 18, 26, 27.

We acknowledge also, and they therefore prove in vain, that to whomsoever the Word comes, them "God would have gathered unto him, hearken unto his voice, repent that they might live and not die," to wit, in that degree of willing, which stands in commanding those things, and approving them if they follow; and "that the fault is only in men's obstinacy, if they repent not."

Neither do the Calvinists, as they surmise, make either God's decree, or the defect of his grace in fault, if men repent not; because they affirm that God decreed not to give them the grace to repent, nor doth give it them; except either God may not require repentance at all, or be bound to give it to all. It is not my fault, that a drunkard falls and lies in the street, though he cannot but both fall and lie there, except I hold, and help him up; except withal I be bound so to help him: nor my fault that a prodigal spendthrift comes into debt, and is cast into prison, and cannot escape the one, or other, unless I pay his debts; except withal I be bound to pay them: so neither is it God's fault that men remain and perish in that impenitency, out of which they neither will, nor can come without God's special gift of repentance, except it be God's bounden duty, as these men seem to make it, to bestow that grace upon them.

The two places, Isa. v. 1, 2, 3, &c., and Matt. xi. 21, 22, we will a little more particularly examine. In the former where God saith, he could do no more to his vineyard than he had done, he speaks only of outward means, as the text makes it plain, "I fenced it," &c. I would ask these men,

whether there be not requisite, that the natural vineyard may bring forth fruit, something besides the fencing, gathering out of the stones, and the rest there mentioned? It cannot be denied, that, except besides, and above all these, God gives the increase by an inward blessing, all planting, and watering, and outward dressing whatsoever is nothing: so is it in the spiritual vineyard much more though planted by Paul himself, yea by Christ himself in the outward ministry. And where God saith, He expected sweet grapes, but it brought forth wild, ver. 4, we must not imagine, as our adversaries seem to do, that God is deceived in his expectation, as men often are: but only, that the Israelites did not perform that which God required, and they ought.

Touching the repentance of Tyre and Sidon. First I would know how they prove that Christ speaks of other than legal repentance, such as Ahab manifested in sackcloth? 1 Kings xxi. 26: which was not from a godly sorrow for sin; but from a servile fear of punishment. Secondly, either this repentance should have been wrought by those mighty works alone, or by them with other helps. Mighty works alone cannot work faith, and repentance, which must come by hearing, and instructions of the Word, which they serve to confirm unto men. Mark xvi. 20; Rom. x. 17; 2 Tim. ii. 25. If Christ speak of his mighty works, as means though not sufficient of themselves, yet available, with other requisite helps, he excludes not the Spirit's work, but includes it. But, in truth, the meaning of Christ seems to be no more, but to reprove the obstinacy of Chorazin in a form of speech like that unto Luke xix. 40: "If these should hold their tongue, the stones would immediately cry out." And as it were a vain thing hence to dispute about the speaking of stones; so is it, to gather anything thence of the Tyrians' repentance. The meaning of the Lord here is not to commend the Tyrians at all, but to upbraid the Chorazites, and to show their hardness of heart to be greater than the others. The like form of speech we have to the like purpose, Ezek. iii. 6. And if so be there were in these Tyrians this proneness to repentance, if they had enjoyed the means which the others did, but they wanted; and withal, that God so desires the

repentance and salvation of all; how came it to pass, that God did not afford those helps unto them that were so prone and willing to have used them aright? It seems the former case is now altered, and that men might say to God, that they would, but he would not.

SECT. II.—CAN MAN CHANGE HIS OWN HEART?

Adversaries.

(Pages 101—106.)

Their invincible argument serves only to betray their incurable disease in heaping together many scriptures to prove that, which no man doubts of; namely, that the "works wrought in us by God are attributed to us also;" as the cleansing of our hearts, &c.; wherein yet they mingle with God's truth their own errors, and that in particular, in affirming, that God takes it to himself "as a proper title," to justify a sinner: and yet that David saith, he justified his heart. Psa. lxxiii. 13.

Defence.

First, if it be proper to God to justify a sinner, how is it common to David with him? Secondly, they slander David in making him say, he justified his heart. Could David forgive the sin of his heart, which God doth in justifying a sinner? David, Psa. lxxiii. 13, speaks of sanctification, not of justification.

They ignorantly apply the scriptures, Psa. cviii. 12, and Psa. cxviii. 13, to God's working grace in men, being meant only of his working deliverance for them.

They vainly, and deceitfully affirm, from Acts vii. 51, and xiii. 46, that man may resist the grace of God, wrought by his Word and Spirit. The places speak not of any grace wrought by either of them. The former speaks only of resisting the Spirit; as the author of the Word in the prophets and others. The latter of resisting the Word of God; not working, but offering grace only. Besides, they notably abuse those scriptures cited, in making them plainly to show that man hath free choice, to wit alike, to work with God, or against God in the work of his grace. It is true, that men whether receiving or refusing grace,

do it freely, and without compulsion: but the latter freely of themselves, being left of God to themselves; the former freely, by God's special grace, and Spirit, giving them, and effectually drawing them to Christ. John vi. 44. I say more effectually, though not violently, than any one creature can by violence draw another. Oh, that any made partakers of this free grace of God's Spirit dwelling in them, should deny the powerful work of it, to establish their own free-will!

After scriptures, they come to experience. And first, they err in thinking, that liberty and necessity of sinning in wicked men cannot stand together. It is certain, that the more wicked either man or devil is, he sinneth both the more freely and the more necessarily. Their similitude, of a man's drinking poison, is against themselves, so far as it is pertinent. I would know of them how the drinking of poison by any is unavoidable? If they say, because he knows it not to be in his drink, therein they grant that sins of ignorance are done unavoidably, and yet not by compulsion, as they conclude. Secondly, who would think that any, after the profession of the knowledge, and obedience of the gospel, which these men have made, so many years, both in the Church of England, and elsewhere, should so far apostate therefrom to popery, and pharisaism, as to think it as easy a thing, for a man, yea, though never so wicked, to keep himself from all sin, as from drinking of poison, which he knew to be in his cup? For he that knows it not cannot avoid it. How grievously err they, in affirming, that all men are able to keep the law, to wit, without the least failing, all their life long, in thought, word, or deed! For this they plead in this whole section, that except it be possible for every man thus to keep the law, neither his conscience can accuse him, nor God justly punish him for breaking it.

Neither do the Calvinists hold, as they barbarously speak, and unjustly slander, that men commit evil "by force of God's providence," or are decreed to do evil, or "compelled to sin by power." But they believe, as the Scriptures teach, that all men in Adam have sinned, Rom. v. 12—15; and by sin lost the image of God in which they were made; so as the law is impossible, Rom. viii. 3; unto

them by reason of the flesh, and so cannot possibly but sin, by reason of the same flesh reigning in the unregenerate, and dwelling in all: which these light persons, expressly confess in the sequel of this book: and that this so comes to pass by God's holy decree, and work of providence answerable, not forcing evil upon any, but ordering all persons in all actions, as the Supreme Governor of all: and that the wicked, being left of God, some, destitute of the outward means, the gospel; all of them, of the effectual work of the Spirit, from that weak flesh, and natural corruption, daily increased in them, sin both necessarily as unable to keep the law, and willingly, as having in themselves the beginning and cause thereof, the blindness of their own minds, and perverseness of their will and affections; and so are inexcusable in God's sight.

Here with the loud boasts of their "large and undeniable proofs," they join sundry errors. As first, in making the good things of creation to come from God's grace, viz., for salvation, of which our question is. The good things of creation the Scriptures account our own, and of ourselves, ever opposing them to the good things of grace, to salvation. Gal. v. 4; Eph. ii. 8; Rom. vii. 5. Secondly, they err egregiously, in saying, that what Adam had in creation, and lost in transgression for himself and his posterity, that is restored through Christ, to wit, to all; for so the question is. By this, all should be restored actually into God's favour, have his image repaired in them, and be wholly free from that weak flesh making the law impossible unto them. With like perverseness do they misapply to all Adam's posterity without difference, that which the apostle speaks of himself, and other godly ministers, and Christians only, Rom. viii. 3, 4; 2 Cor. iii. 5; Phil. iv. 13; as any that pleaseth to peruse the places, may see. Lastly, they most absurdly affirm, that the flesh through Christ is able to fulfil the law; whereas we fulfil the law no further, than as we kill, crucify, and destroy the flesh and lusts thereof by the Spirit. Rom. vi. 15, viii. 1, 8, 12, 13; Gal. v. 17, 24.

SECT. III.—DIVINE INFLUENCE IN CONVERSION.

Adversaries.

(Pages 107—112.)

To the question, "Whether a man can do anything in the work of his regeneration," they answer, after much froth of words, "that faith and repentance is regeneration, and that it is most plain" (as what is not to their piercing eye) "that even in the work of regeneration, man may submit to it, or hinder it."

Defence.

An ignorant assertion, showing the ground of their error is not putting difference between God's work and man's. They may as rightly say, that the life and motion of the child is its begetting. To regenerate is nothing else, but to beget anew. Doth the child beget itself? Or doth not the parent only beget it? So God begets by the ministry of the Word, and man is begotten by him: according to that of the apostle, "Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." 1 John v. 1. So James i. 18, "Of his own will begat he us, by the word of the truth." By these men's doctrine we should beget ourselves of our own will. Begetting in creatures, is both in nature and time, before the being of the begotten. Men then before they be, must beget themselves, (by their saying.) And as God regenerates, and not man; so doth man, being regenerated, believe and obey, and not God. Whereas, if faith and obedience be regeneration, then God believes and repents; seeing God regenerates. Besides, as the outward means of regeneration may be, and are, by too many hindered from working, and made unprofitable: so where God pleaseth to add to the outward means, and motives of the gospel, the inward work of the Spirit, of which Spirit, we are born or begot anew, John iii. 5, 6, 8; 1 Pet. i. 23; of the Spirit, I say, though by the Word; by the same Spirit which he puts within him. He takes away first what might hinder their regeneration, even their "stony heart; and giving them a heart of flesh," Ezek. xi. 19; "a heart to know God, and putting his fear in their hearts," Jer xxiv. 7, xxxi. 33; and by "putting his Spirit in them, causing

them to walk in his statutes," Ezek. xxxvi. 27; he thereby regenerates them, or "gives them faith, and repentance," Eph. ii. 8; 2 Tim. ii. 25; which they must have before they can believe or repent: as the child must have life before it can live, or do acts of life, and must be generated, or begotten, before it have life, or being. Regeneration, therefore, goes before faith and repentance.

This head they shut with answering three scriptures. The first, Matt. xxii. 9, but mistaken for Luke xiv. 23, which, as it is frivolously objected (if by any) so is it easily answered.

The second is, John vi. 44, "No man can come to me except the Father draw him." This is not meant (say they) of violent compulsion. True, nor yet only, as they would have it, of outward teaching by heavenly doctrine: for thus the Father drew many that came not to Christ; whereas he speaks here, of such a drawing as is peculiar to them that come to him; who shall never hunger, v. 35, and whom he will in no wise cast out, v. 37. He speaks not, therefore, of the outward teaching only, but withal, and principally, of the inward teaching of the Spirit, as Isa. liv. 13; Jer. xxxi. 33, 34; 1 John ii. 27. The most of them whom the Father drew by heavenly doctrine, that is, to whom Christ preached, murmured at him, v. 41: this he reproves, v. 43 and v. 44, takes away the offence which might arise, at the consideration of the small effect which his words had with many, considering what he testified of himself, v. 39, 40, showing that such was man's perverseness in spiritual things, as that except God, to the outward word, adjoined the inward work of the Spirit, thereby drawing him, his obstinacy could not nor would not be tamed, nor he turned to God.

Lastly, to Phil. ii. 13, "It is God that works in you both the will and deed," after much impertinent discourse, and many errors mingled among, they answer, that God doth this in men by reasons and persuasions, that they would choose life, and avoid death.

And first they conclude without and against reason, that if the unregenerate have power to resist, they have power not to resist: which is, as if a man should say, if a fool can do foolishly, then he can do wisely, or the like.

Secondly, it is a slander upon the Calvinists, that they are divided in this point; or that any of them affirms, that the elect, though unregenerate, cannot resist good. Whilst they are unregenerate they can do nothing else but resist in spiritual things: but God in time, as he hath decreed, by the Spirit of regeneration, overcomes their corruption, and works in them, not to resist, but willingly to follow him, that calleth them.

Thirdly, I would know what they mean by these phrases, of God's sending his word and Spirit to work our regeneration: and again, of God by the power of his word and Spirit showing man the benefit of life, &c. If they consider the Spirit only as the Author of the word, speaking in the men of God, why do they not say the Spirit and the word, rather than, as they do, the word and the Spirit? Or how doth God send the Spirit, thus understood, to work regeneration in men? If they answer, that God is ready to give the Spirit, and so doth, to them that will receive it: first, to be ready to give, is not to give or send: secondly, they should understand, that to be willing to receive spiritual things, is a main fruit and effect of regeneration, and therefore not a cause, as they mistake. For the will, thus holily bent, presupposeth the understanding divinely enlightened, whose direction it follows, and without which going before, it is blind and brutish. Neither can a man possibly will a thing, but as he understands it to be good for him. If the understanding be divinely enlightened, and the will holily bent, then the whole man is before regenerated; that is, begotten before of God by the Spirit of regeneration. In truth, they but speak of "God's sending his Spirit to work in man's regeneration, as Sennacherib by Rabshakeh spake of God's sending him against Jerusalem," 2 Kings, xviii. 25: he, to cover the pride of violence; and they, to cover the pride of free-will, in bending itself, of itself, to receive grace offered.

To conclude this head, referring the reader to the arguments of conviction formerly laid down,* I only add thus much: that if "God only bend the will by persuasions of promises and threatenings," and works not otherwise than by "force of reasons," and "by using strong arguments and

* Vide pp. 328—338, *supra.*

persuasions," as they expressly affirm, then that, whose contrary, both the Scriptures and experience confirms, would ordinarily come to pass; namely, that the wise and prudent should have heavenly things revealed unto them, Matt. xi. 25, and discern them much more easily and effectually, than babes and weak persons, 1 Cor. i. 26, 27; and so should be converted sooner than they: specially sooner than harlots and light persons, considering how much better they mind and understand arguments and reasons of all sorts, than the other. We therefore conclude with the apostle, that God works in us both the will and the deed: not only by his word working on us, but by his Spirit working in us: not only by sending Paul to plant, by propounding strong arguments of persuasion, but also by giving the increase by the most effectual work of his Spirit, enlightening the eyes of the understanding to see the force of those arguments, opening the heart to attend unto them, and so writing them in the same heart, and most inward parts, as they cannot be blotted out. Eph. i. 18; Acts xvi. 14; Jer. xxxi. 34.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE ORIGINAL STATE OF MANKIND.

THE main question here to be discussed is, whether all infants sinned in Adam, and so be guilty of death, and condemnation naturally, and without mercy in Christ or not? This I will prove, God willing, against them; answering and disproving what they bring to the contrary, and that in their own order, as followeth.

SECT. I.—DID INFANTS SIN IN ADAM?

Adversaries.

(Pages 113—118.)

"Infants had no life, nor being," as Adam had, "at that time," when God gave the law to Adam; and therefore no law was given unto them; and therefore sinned not, nor were guilty of condemnation.

Defence.

I grant, that infants had then no life and being, as Adam had; to wit, actual, and distinct: but affirm, that they had both, after a sort, and as the branches in the root. Odegos, the guide of the blind, as Rom. ii. 19, affirms, that mankind was in Adam "in bodily substance;" they had therefore being in Adam after a sort, namely, so far as they were in him. If they had being in Adam any way, they had life also in him: for nothing in Adam was dead, but all living: their being therefore, so far as it was in him, was a living being.

We read, Heb. vii. 9, that Levi paid tithes to Melchisedec in Abraham. But how could this be, might one say, seeing Levi had then no life and being? The apostle answers, that he was in the loins of his father Abraham, when Melchisedec met him. And reason teacheth, that none can do any act, but he must first be, nor do it otherwise, than as he is. Levi therefore, then, had a kind of being, and that living, and reasonable also, as he performed that act of paying tithes. He in Abraham as a particular root: Mankind in Adam, as in a general root.

2. That infants had a law given them, I thus prove. First, the Word of God, Gen. ii. 17, "In the day that thou eatest of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt die the death," shows, that whom God threateneth with death, to them he gave the law. The punishment, Gen. iii. 17, 18, 19, reacheth to all Adam's posterity, and so the threatening, and by consequence the law. Secondly, the apostle teacheth, Rom. ii. 15, that the law is written in the hearts of the Gentiles, according to which law of nature written in their hearts, (though they had it not written in tables of stone, as the Jews,) they shall be judged at the day of the Lord, ver. 15, 16, 17. These Gentiles cannot be imagined to have this law thus written any other way, than as God in the beginning created Adam, and all mankind in him, after His image, in righteousness and holiness, in which respect also they are said, to do by nature the things contained in the law, having also a natural conscience in them, which without a law were vain: under which general law, binding the reasonable creature to faith

and obedience in all things (in disposition before use of discretion, and in act afterwards): the particular law, Gen. ii., is contained, and to be referred unto it. Thirdly, if infants have reasonable souls, then have they the faculties of understanding and will, though not the actual use of them, as men have. This understanding cannot be conceived by any to be without all disposition and proneness, either to the knowledge of God, or to ignorance, error, and doubting of him; nor this will to be without all disposition, and inclination to will according to, or against God's will. As the young whelps and cubs of lions, bears, and foxes, have in their natural and sensitive faculties, a proneness and inclination to raven; and every beast proneness to the things of its kind, after, actually performed, and practised by them: so have infants necessarily in their reasonable faculties, a disposition, one or other, to understand and will things, specially such as concern God, by reason of the most natural, necessary, and indissoluble relation, between the reasonable creature, and the Creator, and that specially in those most noble faculties.

The objection from Rom. vii. 1, hath in it no colour of truth; for neither are there any such words, that the law is given (especially only, which must be added) to them that know it: neither doth the apostle there intend at all to show to whom the law was given, or not: but only, that the Christian church at Rome, specially many of them being Jews, as appears, chap. xvi. to which he wrote, was not ignorant of the law, whether general or particular, to which he had reference in that place.

To Deut. xi. 2, besides things answered by Mr. Ainsworth,* I add, that Moses there excludes not only infants, but many grown men, as appears, ver. iii. 4. The other two places, Matt. xiii. 9, and 1 Cor. x. 15, exclude, too, many men of years also, considering how few have ears to hear, or understanding to judge aright of spiritual things.

For the third head, "and that all sinned in Adam," it is so plain from Rom. v. 12, as they have nothing at all to answer, though they object the place: only they bring certain other scriptures, in such a manner, as if they

* Vide Ainsworth's "Seasonable Discourse; or, a Censure upon a Dialogue of the Anabaptists," intituled, &c. &c. Ed. 1644.

would disprove one scripture by another. And indeed what exposition can be given, or evasion found, considering the expressness of the words? "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that," or as the original hath it, in whom, "all men have sinned." So ver. 19, "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners," &c. If they say, as some do, that all are made sinners by imitation only, they are clearly confuted; first, by daily experience, in which it is plain, that children coming to some discerning, will lie, filch, and revenge themselves, though they never heard a lie told, &c. It is, alas! too evident, that they bring this corruption into the world with them. Secondly, by the apostle's words, ver. 19, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." If we be made unrighteous only by imitation of Adam's sin, and not by his performing it, as our root naturally, then we are made righteous only by imitation of Christ's righteousness, and not by his performing righteousness, and fulfilling the law for us, as our spiritual root, in which we are grafted by faith.

Lastly, these adversaries grant, that "by Adam's sin all his posterity have weak natures, by which when the commandment comes, they cannot obey, and live, but sin, and so die. Rom. viii. 3. Can they which are accustomed to do evil, do well? Or will these men never leave their godless custom of corrupting the words of the text, for advantaging of an evil cause? For flesh, which the text hath, they put nature: whereas it is without all question, that by flesh, the apostle there understands properly, sin and sinful flesh, as he expressly calleth it, and as is plain in the whole context. In all which he opposeth the flesh to the spirit, and the sinful life of the one, to the righteous life of the other.

And I would know of these deep divines, what but sin could possibly make Adam's posterity unable to keep the law? This flesh, or nature, as they will have it, must be contrary to this good and holy law, and resist it. Rom. vii. 12, 17—24; Gal. v. 22. And is not that properly sinful and unholy, which resists, and is contrary to that which is good and holy? Lastly, this enemy to the law of God in a

man, must be in his soul. And what else can it be, than a disposition in the understanding, to ignorance and error, touching God and heavenly things; and an inclination in the will and affections, to evil? which is as properly sin, as their acts and effects are properly sinful. Infants therefore bring sin properly into the world with them.

Two things they here object: First, that Christ often accounts children innocents, as Matt. xviii. 3, 4, and xix. 14. I answer, first, not as they mean; that is, such as have in them nothing virtuous or vicious; good, or evil; but as being humble, and without pride; and such, as unto whom the kingdom of God, and his blessing did appertain. Secondly, He speaks not of all children, but of those of, and in the church. Mark x. 14, 15, 16.

Their second objection is, that our souls being the subjects of sin, are created of God immediately. But to this objection, they that refer the soul's original, immediately to God's supernatural, and indeed miraculous work, do give divers answers, which these adversaries should have refuted. Amongst others, Mr. Ainsworth's answer is worthy the consideration. But let us consider their proofs for the soul's immediate creation. The first is, Acts xvii. 26, "Of one blood God made all mankind," &c. But this place makes rather against them; seeing the body alone makes not mankind, but the soul with it, by which specially the man is. The next place is Heb. xii. 9, whence they gather that Adam is the father of our bodies, and God the Father of our spirits. But first, the text neither mentions Adam, nor can agree to him in the state of creation: seeing in that estate there was no use of correction.* Secondly, it saith not, the fathers of our bodies, but of our flesh: nor the Father of our spirits, but of spirits. And the meaning seems unto me, with due respect had to other men's different judgment, only to be this: that if we give honour to men, our carnal or fleshly fathers, chastening us, as they think good: how much more owe honour to our spiritual Father, chastening us for our eternal good? And surely God, in his kind, is the Father of the whole man, not of the soul only: so is

* Vide "Religious Communion, Public and Private," vol. iii. ch. 6, sect. 4.

man, in his kind, the father of the whole man, and not of the body only. Lastly, seeing the drift of the place, is to show, that God, as a father, "chasteneth his sons which he loveth," and on the contrary, that "they that are not chastened, are not sons," ver. 6; and so have not God for their father, I see not how the apostle can speak of the creation of souls, seeing in that respect, wicked and godly, children and bastards, have God alike their father. The Preacher, Eccles. xii. 7, speaks of the manner of the creation of the first man Adam only; but no more proves that our souls or spirits are created by God immediately, than that our bodies are made of dust immediately. That (Eccles. iii. 8) hath no colour of proof in it.

Against our fourth and last assertion, that all by Adam's sin are guilty of death, Rom. v. 12, they cavil, that we were not in Adam to bring any soul to hell for the breach of that commandment, Thou shalt not eat.

Where, first, to pass by their incongruity of speech, they free Adam himself from the guilt of condemnation, of which our question is, as well as his posterity, by that his sin; seeing it brought not him himself to hell; but, secondly, and for the thing itself, they grant, according to the Scriptures, that death, as a part of the curse, came over all Adam's posterity for his sin. And will they then deny, that eternal death was also due by the same law of justice? Is not the justice of God infinite, and so requiring infinite satisfaction? To what reasonable creature soever, the smallest punishment is due from God; the greatest is due also in rigour of justice. And so the curse (as they grant) extending to Adam's generation by his sin; eternal condemnation, as the principal part of it, extendeth unto them necessarily, except mercy be showed to them.

Neither will it help our adversaries, that other creatures die also; seeing their absolutely mortal condition limits their punishment to this present life. But such is not the estate of infants; but their immortal souls unto which their bodies at that day are to be reunited, makes the whole capable of a more full declaration of God's justice, if he deal in severity thereof without mercy, as he may. Besides, the apostle saith, that "death passed upon all, for that all have sinned," Rom. v. 12; viz., in that one man

Adam. Doth death come over brute beasts because they have sinned in Adam? They are brutish that see not the difference, which these men will not acknowledge. It is said elsewhere, that "in Adam all die," 1 Cor. xv. 22. Do beasts die in Adam, as his posterity doth? As all that are Christ's are in Christ, and made alive by him; so all Adam's posterity were in him, and die in him: which death also the apostle makes no less, than judgment to condemnation; to wit, if redemption be not obtained: to which he opposeth justification and eternal life. Rom. v. 16, 21. Join herewith, these men's confession, that all mankind by "Adam's fall are made unable to keep God's precepts, when he gives them, and so all fall under the wrath of God, and are therefore said to be children of wrath," Eph. ii. 3, and there is sufficient for their conviction, as hath been showed. But I add, that the apostle means plainly a further matter, and that all are born children of wrath; for to be so by nature, and to be born so, are the same. We are children of wrath by sin only; if therefore all be children of wrath by nature, it is by the sin of nature, which we call original sin, and not by actual sin only, as they surmise.

Lastly, I demand whether, if Adam had not sinned, he should not have transferred to his posterity the image of God after which he was created, and a proneness to keep it, as, notwithstanding sin, he doth some feeble remainders thereof and, therewith, right to eternal life? Rom. ii. 14, 15. If yea, why not then sin, and guilt thereof, by proportion, having sinned?

To Ezek. xviii. I have formerly answered. He speaks of the sins of immediate parents, not of the first sin of our first father, which was natural: whereas the other but personal; yea, not only other men's, but his after sins also. Secondly, it is plain, he speaks of such children, as seeing all their father's sins, consider, and do not the like, but do that which is lawful and right, keeping and doing all God's statutes. To such God imputes no sin. Ezek. xviii. 14, 15.

Their affirmation following is strange, that "infants shall receive no judgment," because they have done neither good nor evil, according to which all judgment passeth. By this, they should neither be saved, nor damned; for

what else is it to receive judgment of salvation, but to be saved? and so for the contrary. They do ignorantly exclude infants from a state one, or other, for wanting that condition, which is required of men of years only. They might as probably say, that infants shall be damned; seeing Christ saith, "He that believes not shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16.: or should not eat, because it is said, "He that will not work, shall not eat." 2 Thess. iii. 10.

To the place, Psa. li. 5, "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me;" they answer not directly, but by many *ifs* and *ands;* choosing many uncertain vanities, rather than one certain truth; which is that David in this whole context confesseth his transgression and sin. And as men ascend by the stream to the fountain; so doth he in those words to the fountain of all evil. As if he should have said: Lord, I am not only stained with, and guilty of these particular evils; but I am even wholly corrupt by nature from the very womb, and have brought a fountain of sin into the world with me, from whence these particular mischiefs have issued.

SECT. II.—ON BEING BORN IN SIN.

Adversaries.

(Pages 119—123.)

Their answers follow. The first is, that David confesseth that he is made, as Psa. ciii. 14, of weak flesh, and unable to resist the tempter, being dust, &c.

Defence.

Doth man's being made of dust make him unable to resist the tempter? Then God making Adam of the dust, made him unable to resist the tempter also; which both crosseth the truth, and their own assertion. The Psalmist (Psa. ciii. 14,) speaks of bodily weakness and frailty only, which is nothing at all to the matter in hand; and which, if it had been greater in David, would have been more advantagable against that sin into which he fell.

Next, for their advantage, they corrupt the text, Rom. viii. 3, in saying, "Christ came in sinful flesh;" where the

text saith, he came in the similitude of sinful flesh; he came in nothing sinful, but all holy, and pure from sin. So do they that, 2 Cor. v. 21, leaving out "for us:" which shows, how Christ became sin for us; that is, as our surety, and liable to the curse due to our sins; but not in sinful flesh, as they erroneously say. Thirdly, they absurdly affirm, that the sin of his mother, whether Eve, or that bare him, is that sin or punishment laid upon her, which he here confesseth, in saying, "I was conceived in sin." David confesseth a sin as evil, whereas all punishments are God's good work; yea, his own sin only, of which he desires forgiveness. Neither do the words here at all agree with those, Gen. iii. 16, as they say. The reader that will, may see them opened at large by Mr. Ainsworth.

They add, that it is "frequent with the Holy Ghost to call punishments for sins, by the name of sins." But first, not so frequent by a thousand times, as to call the transgression of the law, sin; secondly, the phrase "in sin;" is never taken but properly, as to be "in sin," to "live in sin," "to continue in sin," to "die in sin," and specially to be "born in sin;" as John ix. 34, the Pharisees in so judging, followed the error of the Pythagorean philosophers: thirdly, where Christ is said to bear our sins, it is primarily in regard of the guilt, as he was our surety. Of what sin of his mother was David guilty?

They unjustly accuse us, as saying, "that David sinned in being born and conceived;" or that "the very matter and substance whereof David was made, was sin." Vain are they in imagining such vain things of us. David was merely a patient in being born, and sinned not therein; neither yet did his mother sin, either in conceiving or bearing him, though she conceived and brought him forth in sin. But he having sinned in Adam, as in a general root, was so conceived and brought forth, by his mother, in sin.

Secondly, it is one thing to be conceived and born in sin, another thing to be made of sin. The former, David affirms of himself; the latter, they vainly impute to us, and refute in us, with many words.

That infants are under condemnation; that is, naturally guilty of, hath been formerly proved: that actual faith in

* Vide pp. 403, 404, *supra*.

Christ is required for their reconciliation to God, doth not follow hereupon. Actual, I say, for the seed of faith they have, and of all graces: (for but by God's Holy Spirit in them, which carries all graces with it, they cannot be holy; and so not be glorified, if they be not holy first;) but that hereupon they need actual faith, is their saying, without proof. Actual sins indeed require actual faith; but for sin in disposition (called original) why may not faith in disposition suffice, through the mercy of God, for the applying of it?

About the infants of Sodom and Gomorrah they discourse marvellously; as first, in ranking them in their deaths with unreasonable creatures in theirs: secondly, in making them not only innocent, but godly also. The Scriptures teach, that besides the temporary death, those "cities suffer the vengeance of eternal fire," Jude 7. Let them prove children not to have been of those cities. If God exempted them, or any of them, from that vengeance, it was not for any condition common to them with brute beasts, as they insinuate, but with respect to Christ; besides whom, the Scriptures acknowledge no other Saviour, nor no other salvation, but by him.

SECT. III.—HAVE INFANTS ANY NEED OF CHRIST?

Adversaries.

(Pages 123—129.)

To a question moved by themselves, What need infants have of Christ, if they be not under condemnation? they answer, "that through his redemption they live, and move, and have their being, and enjoy all other earthly blessings," with resurrection from the dead, and glorification. 1 Cor. xv. 22.

Defence.

Thus they make Christ and infants amends. But how prove they, that by Christ's redemption they live, move, &c.? The scripture, Acts xvii. 26, to which they have reference is meant of the natural life of all, by God's work of creation and providence, which is nothing but continuation of creation, and nothing at all to Christ as Redeemer. The redemption for which Christ came is from sin, and so

from the curse due for sin, as the Scriptures everywhere testify. "The first Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam a quickening spirit." Matt. x. 28; Heb. ix. 26, *ad fin.*; Eph. i. 6; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Tit. ii. 14; Gal. iii. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 45. We have therefore our natural life, motion, and being, (common to Heathens with Christians) by the first Adam; our spiritual and glorious life, by the second.

Lastly, the apostle saying, 1 Cor. xv. 22, "In Christ shall all be made alive," speaks only of all believers, as is evident, ver. 14, 17, 18, 19, who have Christ for the first-fruits, and are Christ's, ver. 20, 23. Are any Christ's, but Christians? Is not the lump and the first-fruits one? Men should have risen again, though Christ had never come, or been promised; but to condemnation; our resurrection, only in regard to the glory of it, is from Christ's glorious resurrection. And if infants have glorification from Christ, then they have the pardon of sin from Christ also, 1 Cor. xv. 17, 23, and therewith his Spirit dwelling in them for sanctifying and quickening them. Rom. viii. 9, 10, 11. These men divide Christ, 1 Cor. i. 13, making him a king to some for glorification, to whom he is not a priest for redemption by his blood.

Next, to a question by themselves moved, How we must have the Son? they answer, By keeping his commandments; forgetting faith, by which alone we receive Christ, John i. 12; from which followeth love, purity of heart, and obedience, 1 Tim. i. 5; Acts xv. 9; which faith hath more properly the consideration of a condition, as a hand to receive a promise; than of an act of obedience to a commandment.

It is true, being rightly understood, which they add, that repentance is of all sin: to wit, particularly of all sins known; and generally of sins unknown. For, "who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults," Psa. xix. 12, said he, that observed, and knew his ways better than either these men, or I. Do they think nothing amiss slips from them, in thought, word, or deed, or ever hath done, whereof they do not, or have not repented particularly? Is their knowledge so perfect as they need not pray for further enlightening? as Eph. i. 17, 18. Are

they certain they are ignorant of, and err in nothing in the Scriptures, written for their learning? Rom. xv. 4. This their book sufficiently reproves their Pharisaical dream of perfection.

Where speaking of idolatry, they affirm, that God cannot be worshipped after a false manner, they expressly contradict the Scripture, saying, "The people did sacrifice still in the high places, yet unto the Lord their God only." 2 Chron. xxxiii. 17. Here was worshipping the true God; and him only, and yet after a false manner in a respect. The same apostle teacheth the Athenians, "The God whom you ignorantly worship, declare I unto you." Acts xvii. 23. When Papists direct their prayers to God, the Maker of the world and Father of Jesus Christ, hoping the rather to be heard by means of the Virgin Mary's intercession, who doubts but they worship the true God, but in a false manner? Neither doth Deut. xviii. 20, prove the sin one, of speaking in the name of a false God, and speaking falsehood in the name of a true God, but divers; though both deserving death.

Next, they in their wild order, come to treat of faith: where they affirm, that no man can have faith to justification, before he have repented. If they had said, that no man hath the grace or habit of faith before the grace of repentance, it had been true: God, by the Spirit of regeneration, infusing the habits of all graces at once: but that the act and exercise of faith in believing, is before our repenting, appears both by Scripture and common sense. We live the life of Christ, whereof our repenting is a part, by the faith of the Son of God. God purifieth the heart by faith: and justifies the ungodly by his faith. Gal. ii. 20; Acts xv. 9; Rom. iv. 5. In all which it is plain, that faith hath the pre-eminence and first work. So, 2 Cor. vii. 10, "Godly sorrow works repentance," repentance then pre-supposeth godly sorrow. Godly sorrow, or whatsoever is truly godly, must needs please God, which without faith no man can do, Heb. xi. 6; but even everything is sin, Rom. xiv. 23. Faith working that which worketh repentance, must go before it. Secondly, godly sorrow is not only for the fear of punishment, for so the devils are sorry, but for the offence of God specially. Now none can be sorry for his offending God, except he love God;

nor love him, except he know first that he be loved of him in Christ, in which faith consisteth. We believe therefore, before we repent, in the truth of the thing, and order of causes; though we can hardly discern this order in our own sense.

CHAPTER VI.

OF BAPTISM.

(Pages 129—176.)

In the next place they come to baptism, in which they think themselves in their element, as a fish in the water. And beginning with John's baptism, they will have it so called, as Paul calls the gospel his, Rom. ii. 16, but they mistake. It was so called, because John was (under God) the first both instituter, and exerciser of it. By their rule John Murton might be called John Baptist. Secondly, they err in saying, baptism is repentance for the remission of sins, &c. Repentance goes before baptism, Acts ii. 38; 2 Tim. ii. 25: repentance is inward; the baptism outward, of which our question is. God gives repentance; men confer baptism: repentance is man's work; for it is man that repenteth by grace; baptism (considered as inward) is God's work; as outward, the minister's under God. They affirm, that the baptizing, or washing, of which we speak, is "an action of the hand." Is repentance so with these men? Indeed, that repentance upon which they baptize, is rather the work of their hands, than of God's.

The Scriptures alleged, show what is required of men of years, before they be baptized; but are misapplied, as a bar, to the infants of believers. Divers of them might more colourably, though alike untruly, be brought to prove, that no infants could be saved; as elsewhere hath been shown them.*

Their answer to the objection, is but the fencing of their own stroke. We willingly acknowledge, that the doctrine and practice for baptizing men of years, brought to believe by preaching, and unbaptized before, is perpetual. This was the state of the persons instanced; and this alone the places cited do prove.

* Vide Religious Communion, vol. iii. ch. 5.

SECT. I.—SCRIPTURE AUTHORITY FOR INFANT BAPTISM.

Adversaries.

(Pages 131—133.)

Against the baptizing of infants, they allege, that there is "neither commandment, example, nor true consequence for it in all Christ's Testament, which is perfect," &c.

Defence.

The perfection of Christ's Testament we avow, and that the estate of the church under the ministry, and institution of the apostles, those great master-builders, was more perfect as otherwise, so in respect of ordinances. But in saying that we grant, "that there is neither commandment, nor example for baptizing infants," they take their own presumption for our grant. We grant that the Scriptures nowhere say, in express terms, Baptize infants, or that infants were baptized: but withal they should consider with us, that whatsoever can by just consequence be drawn out of the Scriptures, expounded in their largest extent, is contained in them first: else how could it truly be drawn out of them? Whatsoever then can be drawn by true consequence out of a commandment, is commanded in it, though not expressly, yet truly, and as well, as if it were expressed. Else how could all duties towards God and our neighbours be commanded in the Decalogue, called the Ten Commandments? Surely not; except things be commanded which are not expressed, if by consequence they can be gathered. Else how could Christ say from Deuteronomy, "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve"? Matt. iv. 10. Whereas the word only, upon which the special weight of Christ's answer lieth, is not expressed, but the thing only included, and thence to be truly, and necessarily collected.

But let us trace their footsteps in disproving manifestly our consequences, and taking away clearly all our objections to every man's conscience, in the sight of God: if bold promises may be taken for due performances.

And first, in observing what baptism is, they again untowardly confound the inward and outward baptism. Which though they ought not to be separated by God's appointment, yet are too oft by man's default, and should always by us be distinguished: the outward, as the work of man's hand, as themselves elsewhere confess; from the inward, as the work of God alone: the former being with water, the latter with the Holy Ghost, Matt. iii. 11; as John expressly distinguisheth his baptizing, and Christ's that came after him. John i. 31, 33.

The meaning of the English Primer,* and of Ursinus,† they mistake. They speak of the inward and outward baptism jointly: whereas our question is, of that which is outward, and in man's power to give, or withhold. So the faith and repentance, which they require in persons to be baptized, is actual indeed, in men of years, but in infants only in disposition. Neither doth Ursinus simply say, that the sacraments are no sacraments in an unlawful use, as they cite him, but that they are not sacraments, but to them that receive them with true faith, only they have benefit by them. In like manner, the apostle tells the Corinthians, that their coming together, was not to eat the Lord's Supper, 1 Cor. xi. 20; that is, not for the better, as ver. 17; else they did eat the Lord's Supper outwardly. So elsewhere, he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh, that is, not, that wherein God took delight; else, he was a Jew, and that was circumcision, after a sort. Rom. ii. 28.

I demand of these baptizers, whether Simon Magus, being baptized by Philip, and yet remaining in the gall of bitterness, and without all part in the ministration of the gospel, Acts viii. 13: and so whether those false brethren creeping in unawares, Gal. ii. 4; Jude 4, and being, without doubt, baptized by the apostles, or others, had that inward, and greater baptism or no? If not, as is plain, how were their baptism a sacrament in the lawful use? And if God gave any of them repentance afterward, were they to be baptized anew as being unbaptized before, because they wanted the inward and greater baptism,

* The Catechism in the Book of Common Prayer on the questions about the Sacraments.

† Ursinus' Catechism, Art. Baptism, p. 723.

when they received the other? I suppose no, even in these men's judgments. If any object, that the fault here was only in the baptized's unfitness in God's sight, he saith truly, but must withal remember, that notwithstanding the inward and greater baptism wanted, which by their ground should have made a mere nullity of the other. And note herewith as of special consideration, that baptism is most corrupted by an unworthy receiver: since both the baptism is ministered, and the baptism ministereth for the baptized's sake; who being impure himself, all things are impure unto him, Tit. i. 15: and that his baptism, no baptism of the Lord to him in right use, but rather a profane usurpation, till by his faith and repentance, God afterwards giving them, it become the Lord's baptism to him, for the confirmation of his faith, in the blood-shedding of Christ for his sins.

Neither is it requisite, that we prove, as they require of us, that infants have faith and repentance: but let them prove, which they presume, but prove not, that the actual having, and manifesting of these graces, being conditions requisite for men of years, are to be exacted of infants, if they be admitted to baptism. May they not as reasonably, and charitably, conclude, that infants are not to eat, because they work not, from 2 Thess. iii. 10? and are to be damned, because they believe not, from Mark xvi. 16? And was there not that required at Abraham's hands for his circumcision, which was not required at Isaac's for his? Or not more of such heathenish men, of years as became proselytes, than of their infants, to be circumcised with them? The ground of this error in so many is, that they understand not the true nature of the gospel, and ordinances thereof. The gospel aims not at the exacting upon man, as made after God's own image, obedience due, as a natural debt from the creature to the Creator, as the law doth, but considers him as a most miserable creature, drowned in sin, and altogether unable to help himself: neither yet serves it, and its ordinances, primarily to declare and manifest, what man in right owes, and performs to God; but what God in mercy, proposeth, and doth, and will perform to man: being εὐαγγέλιον, a joyful message, or glad tidings of salvation by Christ. So, to apply this for

the baptizing of infants, albeit they on their part, can for the present, make no manifestation or declaration of obedience or thankfulness, or any other goodness: yet sufficeth it for evangelical dispensation, that God, according to the covenant of grace, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed," can and will make manifestation and declaration of his gracious mind of washing them, with the blood and Spirit of his Son, from the guilt and contagion of sin: they also, being bound in their times, to reciprocal duties. Let us not think scorn, as proud free-willers do, of God's taking, both of us, and our infants, to be his people, going before our, or their taking of him to be our God: but let us rather magnify his mercy in this regard, both towards us, and them.

SECT. II.—INFANTS UNREGENERATE.

Adversaries.

(Page 134.)

Next, they undertake to prove, "that infants are not regenerate, and so not to be baptized." Their reason is, because they have not faith and repentance. This regeneration they define to be a turning from sin to God: which they would prove from Rom. vi. 11.

Defence.

The apostle, Rom. vi., speaks not of regeneration itself, which is God's work: but of our living to God, as an effect thereof. For as our natural life is an effect of our first generation, or begetting by our parents: so is our spiritual life an effect of our regeneration by God, and his Word, and Spirit. Turning from sin is man's work, by God's grace: regeneration is God's work, not man's. So for repentance, they rove about it on all sides, but scarce touch the true nature of it. Repentance, to wit, evangelical, required for baptism in men of years, is neither a sight, and knowing of sin by the law, for that the wicked also do: nor a confessing of sin, for that is outward, and follows repentance in the heart: nor a sorrow for sin, for that goes before it: nor a promise to forsake sin, for that follows after it, as an outward effect: no, nor yet properly, an endeavour to forsake it, though that come nearest. 2 Cor.

vii. 10. Repentance is properly, a growing wise afterwards, and changing of the mind from sin to God, in the purpose of the heart, having an effectual endeavour to forsake sin accompanying it as the effect thereof.

Now their argumentation in this place, that because infants have not faith, and repentance, to wit, actual, and that in manifestation also, which are the conditions required in men of years for their baptism, and the inseparable fruits of regeneration, therefore they are not regenerate, and so not capable of baptism, is, as if some idiot would affirm, that infants are not born, nor to be reputed reasonable creatures, nor endued with the faculties of understanding and reason, because they make no manifestation thereof, no more than brutes do.

Their proof against the regeneration of infants thus disproved, I manifest the contrary, as followeth:—

Christ the Lord teacheth, that "except a man be born," or, as the word more properly imports, begot "again, he cannot enter into God's kingdom." John iii. 5. Either, therefore, regeneration is to be granted infants, or God's kingdom to be denied them. If any say this is meant of men of years only, the text convinceth him; which opposeth the first birth, or generation, which is of infants, to the second regeneration. The first, as ver. 6, being of the flesh, making them so born incapable of God's kingdom, without the second, by the Spirit.

Secondly, They confess, elsewhere, that all, by Adam's fall have, that "weak flesh," Rom. viii. 3, "by which they cannot keep the law," &c. Now I demand, whether infants to be glorified, carry this "weak flesh," hindering thus effectually true holiness, into heaven with them, or no? If not, as is certain, then it must be purged out of their souls, and hearts, as the seat, and subject thereof. But nothing can purge out that which is contrary to holiness, save the Holy Spirit of God, the spirit of regeneration, which "lusts against the flesh, and is contrary unto it," Gal. v. 17: either therefore, they must be regenerated, or not glorified.

Thirdly, The Scriptures teach, that by "the spirit of Christ, which is the spirit of life for righteousness, dwelling in us, our bodies shall be quickened, and raised up unto glory." Rom. viii. 10, 11. Children, therefore, by their

grant, being to be raised again, and glorified by Christ, must have Christ's spirit, which is the spirit of sanctification, and regeneration, dwelling in them.

Lastly, Join with these things, that all are by nature, I say by nature, with the apostle, not by act alone, as say the adversaries, "children of wrath," Eph. ii. 3, having right to wrath, as children to their father's inheritance; and therewith, that "baptism is the lavacher (laver) or washing of regeneration," Tit. iii. 5; it will follow, that children, if to be freed from the wrath to come, and glorified, are to be regenerated and baptized also. Christ saves, and so glorifies, his body only, which is the church; which he sanctifies with the washing of water, and the word, Eph. v. 25, 26; and there is "one body, and one baptism." Eph. iv. 4, 5.

SECT. III.—PETER'S EXHORTATION.

Adversaries.

(Pages 134, 135.)

Their answer to the scriptures, brought for the baptizing of the infants of believers follow. To Acts ii. 38, 39, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you, &c. for the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord shall call:" they answer, that this is meant of such fathers of the Jews, and their children, and fathers of the Gentiles, and their children, as believe, viz., both fathers and children, and that by children are oft meant men of years, in the Scriptures, specially Abraham's children.

Defence.

That such are sometimes meant, we grant: but deny that meaning in this place. And first, by them "afar off," are not meant the Gentiles far off in state, as Eph. ii., but the Jews far off in time, as the original τοῖς εἰς μακρὰν carries it. Besides neither was Peter himself, as yet, sufficiently persuaded of the calling of the Gentiles, Acts x.: neither if he had, was it, as yet, seasonable to mention that matter to the Jews.

Secondly, In saying, "the promise is made to you and your children," he speaks of some solemn promise made to them all, and the same to have its fruit and effect in them, and their children with them, upon their repentance. This

could be no other, than that promise made to Abraham, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed," in that blessed seed Christ.

Thirdly, He exhorts the Jews to repent, and to be baptized, "for that the promise was unto them and their children;" and, therein, shows, that he speaks not of a promise made to Abraham's children, upon their faith and repentance, as they mistake; but on the contrary, exhorts to repentance, upon a promise made. The promise is the ground of the exhortation, and presupposed by the apostle, as going before it. Hence also it is, that he calls the Jews, which had denied and killed the Lord of life, and not yet repented, as appears, Acts iii. 19, "Children of the prophets," ver. 25, "and of the covenant, which God made with the fathers:" with which accords that, Acts xiii. 32, 33. They were not therefore here called, the children of the promise because they repented; for that they did not: but because they came of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and so had Christ promised unto them as their king and saviour: and so were by faith and repentance to receive the fruit of the same promise, and the confirmation, or seal thereof, by baptism to them and their children. Of which here, and everywhere, they are exhorted not to deprive themselves and theirs. Neither is this exhortation to repent, and be baptized, made to the children, but to the parents, for the obtaining of the benefit and confirmation by baptism of the promise both to parents and children.

If any demand, was not Christ promised to the Gentiles also? I answer, not as to the Jews: he was promised to the Jews, indefinitely, as the church of God, and Abraham's seed, as being their king, Matt. xxi. 5—43; Luke xix. 12, 14; but to become the king of the Gentiles: the Jews were his citizens; the others were, by faith, to become his citizens, and of the household of God. Eph. ii. 19.

SECT. IV.—CHILDREN CONSIDERED AS HOLY.

Adversaries.

(Pages 136—140.)

To 1 Cor. vii. 14, "Else were your children unholy, but now are they clean," they answer, "that the believer's

children were no otherwise holy, than as their unbelieving wives were holy, namely, to be used by their parents."

Defence.

Here first, as commonly, they treasonably clip the Lord's coin in leaving out, for their advantage, "to the believing husband," and "to the believing wife." The apostle saith simply, the children are holy; so saith he not simply, that the unbelieving wife is holy; but holy to her believing husband; and the unbelieving husband sanctified, or holy, to the believing wife; as all things are pure to the pure. Tit. i. 15.

Now for the better clearing of the place, the apostle's drift is to be considered: which was to teach believing husbands, that they might lawfully, and without scruple, keep, and converse with their unbelieving wives, (and so believing wives with their unbelieving husbands) as being sanctified to them, though not in themselves. This he proves by an argument taken from their children, "Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy:" that is, if the believing husband might not lawfully retain his unbelieving wife, then the children so born should be unholy: but they are holy. Whereupon it follows, that he may lawfully keep, and converse with her. This word ἐπεὶ, else, or otherwise, ever includes in it a causalty: as Matt. xviii. 32, "because thou desiredst me:" and ch. xxvii. 6, "because it is the price of blood." So 1 Cor. v. 10, "Else," or for then "you must go out of the world:" as if he had said, Seeing Christians are not to go out of the world, but to live in it, they may, therefore, eat with the fornicators of the world: so here, seeing your children thus born are not unclean, but holy; therefore, you may and ought to retain your, though unbelieving, wives. The apostle, therefore, making the children holy, and their holiness a ground of the husband's lawful keeping, and conversing with his wife, can have respect to no other thing than the covenant with Abraham, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed;" as a known and received ground by the Corinthians, and all other churches. This will yet be the more plain, if we bear in mind, that the question propounded to Paul by the believing Corinthians was, not whether they might keep

their children or no, but their wives. He had, therefore, no occasion of mentioning the children, as he doth, but to fetch from them an argument for the retaining of the wives. Now, if his meaning were, as they say, that the children were holy to the believer's use, as the wife was, then he should have argued from the holiness of the wife, to prove the holiness of the children: but this he doth not, but the clean contrary. Besides, if the apostle had argued as they would have him, where had he laid the foundation of his proof? or how had he removed the scruple out of the Corinthians' hearts?

They add, that the Corinthians made no question of their children. True; and that overthrows their exposition; as showing, that the apostle argues not from the wives to the children, as they make him; but from the children to the wives. Secondly, the apostle disputes not from the Corinthians' supposition, or persuasion, but from the truth of the thing, the holiness of their children. "But now are your children holy."

They object, that these children must be holy, either as the believing, or unbelieving part is holy. We say they are holy as the believing part, in regard of that federal holiness and the spirit of regeneration. Then, say they, "They are separated from common uses in which they were used, and are set now apart to God's use." We say they are, as were the infants in Israel, set apart, or severed, from the world, and taken into the number of God's people. They themselves affirm, a few lines before, that Israel was sanctified and set apart from common and profane uses to the service of God. And were not the infants part of Israel, thus set apart and sanctified? And yet could they not testify any purity of heart, or other grace. That which in the very same period they build with one hand, they pull down with another. Secondly, if, as they say, infants be no otherwise sanctified, than to the use of others, and as unbelievers are, then can they not be saved: except the unholy can enter into God's kingdom.

They object further, that then all the children of believers, though of age, and unbelievers, should be holy also. But why rather holy, than innocent, which they will have all infants be? By their unbelief, they are cut off from

God's covenant, as the Jews were, and from all holiness thereby. Rom. xi. 16—21.

The next objection is ill framed, as they set it down; and the answer, worse. The error in both is, that they consider not John's Baptism, and Christ's according to their distinct parts; John's as outward, Christ's as inward. John's outward baptism, and Christ's outward baptism were the same: for Christ was baptized by John, thereby sanctifying baptism to us, as circumcision to the fathers by his being circumcised. The inward baptism is not common to all, but peculiar to the elect: the outward, whether by Christ or John, is not peculiar to the elect only, but common to others with them: witness Simon Magus. The outward baptism by John, and all other ministers was, and is, only with water, opposed to Christ's, as the inward with the Holy Ghost, Matt. iii. 11; John i. 33. Which baptism with the Holy Ghost, being understood of extraordinary gifts, sometimes went before the other, as Acts x. 47, but commonly followed upon it: but understood of ordinary graces, did, or should, always go before it in right order of things.

SECT. V.—BAPTIZED INTO MOSES.

Adversaries.

(Pages 140—142.)

Next follows, 1 Cor. x. 1, 2, &c. The meaning of the Holy Ghost herein they take upon them to explain to others, not understanding it themselves, as is evident, in that they will have this "baptizing unto Moses in the cloud, and sea," &c., to have been only for bodily deliverance, and the offer of Christ. But the apostle looks upon those things with a more piercing and spiritual eye: as appears, first in that, ver. 1, he calls the Israelites indefinitely, his and the Corinthians' fathers. "Moreover, brethren, I would not have you ignorant, that all our fathers," &c. As if he should have said, Let not the children look for more privilege from punishment, if they sin, than their fathers have enjoyed. He, therefore, considers the Church of Israel here, as in the state of a spiritual fatherhood to the Corinthians. Secondly, he expressly saith, that they were all baptized to Moses, and that the meat was spiritual which they eat, and the

rock of water, which they drank spiritual, even Christ himself, to wit, sacramentally and mystically. Thirdly, the apostle's argument, that it may go in full force, must thus be framed: They that are alike for substance in God's benefits, shall alike be punished, if they sin alike: but you Corinthians now, and Israel of old were, and are alike in those spiritual benefits mentioned; therefore, if you sin, as they did, you shall surely be punished, as they were. If the apostle had propounded unto the Corinthians, the tokens of God's love and protection only for bodily things, as they carnally conceive, there had been no force in his reason against the security of the Corinthians, especially occasioned by their enjoying the Lord's ordinances of baptism, and the supper as signs, and tokens of God's love for spiritual blessings in heavenly things. Might they not easily have answered Paul, that the Israelites indeed might well perish, and be destroyed for such things as they practised, having only God's love tokens for bodily deliverance: but for them, they were better secured against dangers, as having the tokens of God's love for spiritual and eternal deliverance, by the body and bloodshed of Christ?

I conclude, therefore, that all Paul's and the Corinthians' fathers, being baptized with the baptism signifying deliverance by Christ, and many of them being infants, the infants of Israel now are to be baptized also.

They object, that "the meaning of the Holy Ghost is not, that Moses did at all wash them with water in the cloud and sea."

Defence.

Neither say we he did; but with the apostle, that they, were "baptized to Moses in the cloud and sea: "God not only preserving them bodily thereby from Pharaoh; but also moistening them with the cloud "arising out of the sea, and showering down waters upon them," as the Lord's peculiar people, and for spiritual use, the apostle himself in this place bearing witness, under the ministry of Moses their pastor or shepherd; procuring with this, the other blessings, even of the meat which was spiritual from heaven; and drink which was spiritual, even Christ mystical out of the rock.

Besides our adversaries hold back the better part of God's love, in saying, he offered them Christ in the drink out of the rock. If the rock were Christ, and they drank of the rock, then God not only offered, but they also received, and drank of Christ's blood, as the Corinthians did, in mystery. Secondly, the apostle's argument, as they put it, had been too blunt to have pierced the Corinthians' consciences; who might easily have answered themselves and him, that the Israelites indeed had Christ in their time offered; but for themselves they received him also, and so were better fenced against God's plagues; yea, though they sinned, than the others were.

Thirdly, It is neither true, which after they affirm, that Noah's Ark is called the figure of baptism, but that the saving of eight souls by water (to wit, bearing up the ark) had baptism, that now saveth, &c., for a like figure, or antitype: much less is it said, that Noah and his family were baptized in the ark, or water, as it is expressly said, that the Israelites were baptized in the cloud and sea. Every type of baptism, is not baptism, but hath only something necessarily which resembles it. But the more agreement there is, between Noah's ark, and the baptism now, the more firm argument may be gathered for the baptism of infants. It is evident that Noah through faith prepared the ark for the saving of his household, and not of himself alone. Heb. xi. 7.

To their objection, that there is as much warrant to enjoin infants to suffer persecution, because it is called by the name of baptism, as to baptize them, because the cloud and sea is called baptism: I answer, passing by their incongruities of speech, that infants may be persecuted, as well as men of years. Witness Christ himself, persecuted on his mother's lap by Herod. Besides, the Israelites, and their infants with them, are here said to have been baptized by water in spiritual use, and consideration.

SECT. VI.—HOUSEHOLD BAPTISMS.

Adversaries.

(Page 143.)

Their next answer to such scriptures, as show that whole households have been baptized, and therefore infants, as

a part of the household, is, that "there are many households in which there are no infants;" and that, therefore, except we prove such households to have had infants, it is nothing. Secondly, that "it is most true, that as the apostles practised in one household, so they practised in all;" and that therefore they baptizing in the jailor's house such as believed, did not baptize infants.

Defence.

We grant, that the apostle's practice was the same, where there was the same reason: but as some families had in them infants, and some not; so all of years in some believed, and in some not: according to which diversity of persons, they administered baptism diversely; and not alike in all households. Secondly, if these men would have taken any sound course for the clearing of things, they should here have given answer to such scriptures, as elsewhere have been brought against them, to show, how the tenor of the Lord's promise, and blessing, runs upon godly governors, and their families with them:* and more specially to that about Lydia, Acts xvi. 14, 15, of whom it is testified, that she "having her heart opened to attend and believe the gospel, both she and her household were baptized." But it is easier for these men to repeat over the same things many times, than once to justify them.

SECT. VII.—INFANTS BROUGHT TO JESUS.

Adversaries.

(Pages 144, 145.)

To the Scriptures' record, that "little children were brought to Christ, that he might lay his hands on them, and pray, or bless them;" and that whereas his disciples would have hindered them from him; even upon the same ground, without doubt, upon which these men exclude them, he being therewith displeased, bids "Suffer them to come unto him, for that of such is the kingdom of heaven; and takes them in his arms and blesseth them:" and to our collection hence, they answer; first, that he saith not, that "infants are of the kingdom of heaven, that is, obeyers of

* Vide Relig. Com. vol. iii. chap. 5.

the gospel; but that they that enter into the kingdom of heaven, must become as little children, for of such," &c. And that his main end was to declare the innocent estate of infants, and to teach all to be like unto them by conversion: and withal, that "Christ baptized them not;" and lastly, that his blessings are manifold to infants in their creation, life, and bodily benefits.

Defence.

Let us examine the particulars: First, they presume, but cannot prove, that only such are of the kingdom of heaven, as obey the gospel. Shall infants (which they affirm elsewhere) be glorified in the kingdom of heaven, and yet are they not of it? There are not two kingdoms of heaven; but one, begun in grace, and perfected in glory. Secondly, they to make more colourable their erroneous construction of the evangelist's words, and Christ's work about those infants, cite for Matt. xix. 14, 15; and the like places, Matt. xviii. 2—4: and so the slight readers, such as their disciples are, might conceive that Christ had no other meaning in the other places by us alleged, than in that by them, Luke ix. 46—48, xviii. 15; and that he spake not of a child personally, but in condition, as David was, Psa. cxxxi. Whereas in that place, Christ's meaning was to reprove the ambitious contentions amongst his disciples, by the contrary disposition in a child, which he therefore took, and set in the midst of them; but in the other, his purpose was to show what interest the children of the church had in him, and in his blessing, for which they were brought unto him by their parents. Against these depravers, both of the word and work of God, I thus argue: That which the parents, which brought their infants desired, that the Lord did for them: but it is plain, that their desire in bringing them was, that he might pray for them, and bless them, as the Scriptures expressly teach he did.

But, say they, "He baptized them not." True; for he baptized none, John iv. 2, though actual believers. It sufficeth, that he did that by which he declared that they had right in him, and in his blessing, and that it was his will they should come unto him. Let them show a way, how they can now come to Christ, save by baptism; or

how they can have right in his blessing, and yet have no right in his bloodshed, and in baptism, for the signifying and applying it?

They add, that Christ healed the sick, and gave bodily blessings of life, growth in stature, and the like. But as it is merely, and vainly imagined, that these children were brought for the healing of any bodily diseases: so are we taught expressly by the Holy Ghost, that Christ's blessing them was not for bodily benefits, but because, the kingdom of heaven was of such: that is, appertained to them, and to such as they were.

SECT. VIII.—INFANT CIRCUMCISION.

Adversaries.

(Page 145.)

To our next argument, taken from the circumcision of Abraham's infants, they answer: "First, there is no commandment for baptizing of infants now, as there was for circumcising them then:" Secondly, that "that commandment included males only, children, or servants, though unbelievers;" thirdly, that "circumcision was to be performed on the eighth day:" so as, "there is no proportion between circumcision and baptism."

Defence.

He that pleaseth to read the former passages between them and us, which they have in their hands, but answer not, shall see how weightless this exception is;* and how we have proved against them, that the Church of Israel, and ours, is one in substance; the covenant the same which God made with them in Christ to come, and with us in Christ come in the flesh; and withal, how our baptism succeeds their circumcision. They trifle in objecting the legal difference, of days, and sexes, which the Scriptures expressly teach to be abolished. Gal. iii. 28, iv. 10. Are not pastors now the Lord's ministers, as the Levites were of old, Isa. lxvi. 21, and their successors therein: and yet are they not tied to any certain tribe, as they were? Is not our Lord's Supper the same in effect with their pass-

* On Relig. Com. vol. iii. chap. 5.

over? Both the one and the other, the mystical eating of the Lamb of God: which yet is not tied to any certain day or month, as was the former.

Lastly, They err grievously in saying, that "unbelieving servants, and children were commanded to be circumcised." The Lord would have all the wicked cut off from his people, Deut. xvii. 12; 2 Chron. xv. 12, 13; Psa. ci. 8; and would he have unbelievers received unto them? Hath God entered covenant with unbelievers to be their God, as he hath done with all to whom circumcision appertained? Was it "the seal of the righteousness of faith," Gen. xvii. 7—10; Rom. iv. 11, and yet due to the faithless? Rather than these adversaries will admit the seed of the faithful to be of God's people now, they will have very infidels and unbelievers of old, to have been of his peculiar ones. If their heresy were detestable, who made the God of the law worse than the God of the gospel; surely their's is not light, nor small, who thus contumeliously speak of him in his people, which he took near unto himself, and whose God he became; and of that special ordinance, by which he differenced them from the profane world, as holy unto him; in which they interest the unbelievers, and unholy.

SECT. IX.—THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

Adversaries.

(Pages 145, 146.)

Now followeth our main foundation, that "as the infants of Abraham, and of the Israelites' posterity, were taken into the church-covenant, or covenant of life and salvation, as they call it (and rightly in a true sense) with their parents, and circumcised: so are the infants of the faithful now, and to receive accordingly the seal of baptism:" to which they say, and prove, as they say that "neither circumcision was, nor baptism is a seal of the covenant of salvation, but the spirit of promise which is ever the same."

Defence.

Their dispute from the seal of the Spirit, to prove that there is no other seal, is as if a man should deny all teaching, direction, and comfort by the Word and sacraments;

because the Spirit teacheth, directeth, and comforteth the faithful. This point I have elsewhere proved at large against them;* neither are they either able, or do they go about to give any show of answer; and yet, without modesty, they repeat their former bare sayings, fully answered and refuted.

Where the apostle, 2 Cor. i. 22, and Eph. i. 13, and iv. 30, speaks of the seal of the Spirit, means he, that the Spirit makes a material print in the soul, as a seal doth in wax? or not this only, that it helps to confirm, and comfort a Christian inwardly in the love of God, and hope of salvation? And are not the sacraments outward helps of comfort and confirmation of a believer's heart in the same love of God, and hope of glory? Upon the same ground, that the apostle calls it a seal inwardly, we call them seals outwardly.

SECT. X.—THE SEAL AND THE SEED OF THE COVENANT.

Adversaries.

(Pages 146, 147.)

To show that the covenant in question was the covenant of the law, and Old Testament, and not the covenant of salvation: and so circumcision the seal thereof, and not the sign and seal of life and salvation; they discourse at large upon Gal. iv. and of the two seeds of Abraham, the one after the flesh, unto which the covenant appertained, whereunto circumcision was annexed.

Defence.

First, They err greatly, in denying the very covenant of the law to have been the covenant of life and salvation. For "the commandment was ordained to life." Rom. vii. 10. And "the man that doth the works of the law shall live in them." Lev. xviii. 5; Gal. iii. 12. And if the law promise not life and salvation, then neither doth it threaten death and condemnation. The covenant then is of the same things, but the condition divers: the law exacting perfect obedience of, and by ourselves: the gospel requiring

* Vide Relig. Com. vol. iii. chap. 5.

true faith, and repentance, which it also worketh in the elect.

Secondly, It is most untrue, that circumcision was the sign or seal of the Old Testament, or law, taking it properly, as they do. The apostle expressly calls it, the seal of the righteousness of faith, Rom. iv. 11; opposed to the righteousness of works, or of the law; of which more hereafter: elsewhere showing, that the same law was given four hundred and thirty years after the covenant, or promise to Abraham and his seed, confirmed before in Christ, through the preaching of the gospel, that they which are of faith might be blessed with faithful Abraham. Gal. iii. 16—19. How preposterous are these men's ways, who will have the seal so long before the covenant.

Thirdly, Circumcision was the seal of that covenant, by which Abraham, and his posteritry became the Lord's peculiar people, separated from all the uncircumcised heathen unto him for his inheritance, and therein blessed: for "blessed is the nation whereof the Lord is God," Psa. xxxiii. 12; "the people that he hath chosen for a possession to himself;" and "blessed is the people, whose God is Jehovah." Psa. cxliv. 15. Now will these gainsaying spirits have men blessed by the law whether God will or no? Saith not the Scripture, that "by the law all are accursed?" and that "as many, as are of the works of the law are accursed;" as being unable to keep it? The covenant then by which Israel became God's people, and therein blessed, of which circumcision was a sign, and seal, was not the covenant of the law, but of the gospel, and so of grace, and salvation by grace.

Lastly, How wide, and wild are they in expounding the allegory of Abraham's two sons? Gal. iv. 22—31, making Abraham's children after the flesh, the infants of the faithful: never considering the apostle's general scope, unto which the particulars are to be applied. Doth he in that place deal against the infants of the Galatians, or against the men of years, though children in knowledge? who had begun in the Spirit, but would be made perfect in the flesh: that is, would be justified by the law, specially by circumcision in the flesh: by which they made Christ of none effect and fell from grace. Were they infants to whom

he saith, "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law," &c. So where he addeth, "He that is born after after the flesh persecutes him, that is born after the Spirit," Gal. iii. 3, 11; v. 2, 3, 4; iv. 21, 29, 30, doth he mean that infants are persecutors? Or is not his meaning plain, that such as glory in the flesh, and in circumcision, and other fleshly prerogatives, and so despise the free promise of grace in Christ, and them that rest under it, as Ishmael did both in truth of person, and type of others, are these persecutors, at all times, to be cast out, with Ishmael; as having no right to the inheritance of grace or glory? Are the infants of believers to be cast out for their persecutions? Out of what, I marvel, and for what persecutions? These men in opening this allegory, or parable verify that of the wise man, "As a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, so is a parable in the mouth of fools." Prov. xxvi. 9.

That the covenant, Gen. xvii. whereof circumcision was a sign was the same, which we have now in the gospel, we have not only said, as they say* we have done; but proved by so clear arguments, as that, had they only set them down, there had needed no further confirmation of them, notwithstanding anything that they could have excepted. But they have cunningly passed them by in silence, as if no such thing were in the book; and do only repeat over, and again, the same things with great irksomeness, specially to those, that have formerly confuted them.

SECT. II.—THE NEW AND BETTER COVENANT.

Adversaries.

(Page 147.)

But they tell us, that the covenant under the gospel is a new and better covenant than the old, &c.

Defence.

We grant it: but affirm withal, that the covenant with Abraham was not the covenant of the law, or old Testament, as they mean. The covenant with Abraham was confirmed of God in Christ, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. The covenant of

* Vide Relig. Com. vol. iii. chap. 5.

the law, or Old Testament was four hundred and thirty years after, and was added for transgression, till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made: Gal. iii. 9—19: that is, to detect and manifest men's sins, and cursed state thereby; that so they might fly the more earnestly to the promise of Christ, the blessed and blessing seed, made formerly to Abraham. Neither do the Scripture in this matter ever oppose Abraham and Christ; but Moses and Christ. "The law was given by Moses; but grace and truth by Jesus Christ." John i. 17. So Heb. x. 28, 29, the law of Moses, and covenant of the Son of God, are opposed: and Moses made the mediator of the Old Testament, and covenant, established in the blood of bulls and goats: and Christ the mediator of the new by his own blood. Heb. ix. 11, 15. And I would know of these men where the law is ever called the law of Abraham, as it is everywhere, the law of Moses: which law or Old Testament, opposed to the new, was written and engraven in tables of stone, and had therefore, not Abraham, but Moses the mediator of it. 2 Cor. iii. 7.

Lastly, for the ceremonial part of the law, Old Testament, or covenant, the author to the Hebrews makes it plain, that it was received under the Levitical priesthood, having a worldly sanctuary and ordinances, and divers washings for the purifying of the flesh, but not of the conscience from dead works: Heb. vii. 11; ix. 1, 2, 10, 13: whereas by the promise and covenant to Abraham and his seed, the blessing of justification came, both upon the Jews in their time, and Gentiles in theirs, through Christ Jesus, in whom it was confirmed. Gal. iii. 11, 14, 16, 17.

In adding, that the old "taught that Christ was not come in the flesh," "nor into their hearts at their circumcision:" they make the Lord's covenant negative, as teaching what is not, and not what is. A covenant is a promise upon condition; and a testament, or will, that, in which legacies are given. But by this doctrine, here should be nothing either given or promised. It is, besides, very ungodlily said, that Abraham, in whom principally we are to consider both of the covenant, and seal thereof circumcision, had not Christ in his heart, when he was circum-

cised. Both Moses in Abraham's history, and the apostles, who well understood it, affirm the contrary, and that he was justified in uncircumcision, by believing in Christ: in which respect he is called the father of them that believe, not only circumcised, but uncircumcised also. Rom. iv. 9, 10, 11. Have his children that which he for substance had not; even in that wherein he was their father? This thing they grant in the very next page; and that Abraham "had the covenant of grace promised him, by which promise he had salvation in the Messiah to come;" and therein, that the covenant made with Abraham, whereof circumcision was a seal, was the covenant of the gospel, and the same with ours now. It is strange that these men, who so magnify baptism, as they will have men made Christians by it; should so vilify circumcision, as to make it of right to appertain to godless and wicked men: for such were and are all, at all times, since Adam sinned, that had, and have not Christ in their hearts. Was it not an holy ordinance of God? and therefore not to be prostituted to the unholy, and impure, as all unbelievers; that is, all into whose hearts Christ is not come, are: and unto whom nothing is pure or holy. Tit. i. 15. Could it be to any a sign that God was their God; a seal of the righteousness of faith; Gen. xvii. 7, 11; Rom. iv. 11; a pledge of God's protection; and note of distinction between God's people and others: and yet belong to such as were wholly without Christ, and so without God in the world? When any of the heathens became proselytes, they chose God to be their God, came to trust under the wings of the Lord God of Israel, and separated themselves from idolators to the law of God: and of all this, they made solemn profession by circumcision: Judges xiv. 3; Ruth i. 16; ii. 12; Neh. x. 28: which they must either do without faith, and so not please God therein, Heb. xi. 6, which is absurd to say they did, which did it, lawfully: or else with faith, by which Christ, though not come in the flesh, was come into their hearts.

Of the ceremonies of Moses, and so of circumcision which Moses took of the fathers, John vii. 22, into the body of the ceremonial law; and of their divers considera-

tions, I have elsewhere written at large, and do refer the reader thither for satisfaction in that point.*

That none of the church of Israel, called by them affectedly Abraham's seed in the flesh, had the ordinances of the new covenant, is not true. They had John's baptism, which even now these men avowed as the baptism of the New Testament; and Christ's also, who baptized more disciples than John; and with them, the twelve had the Lord's Supper also, and all these, whilst the Jewish church and ordinances stood in their full strength. It is true, that John's was not in the kingdom of God, as Christ speaks, Matt. xi., that in the state of the church and ordinances dispensed under Christ glorified: otherwise, the Jews had the kingdom of heaven, which else could not have been taken from them and given to others: Matt. xxi. 43, 45: neither could Christ have been, as he was, the king of Sion. So the Patriarchs received not the promise, that is, Christ come in the flesh; to which purpose the apostle saith, before faith came, &c., Gal. iii. 23. Shall we therefore say, that before Christ's coming in the flesh none had true faith to salvation; or that true believers received not Christ, though to come, as we now receive Christ come in the flesh? They, Christ promised and prefigured, by the word and ordinances then: we, Christ manifested and remembered by the word and ordinances now; properly called the New Testament, as founded in the actual death of the testator. Heb. ix. 16, 17.

SECT. XII.—THE COVENANT IN JEREMIAH XXXI., AND HEBREWS CHAPTER VIII.

Adversaries.

(Page 148—151.)

Here follows an exception against me in particular: which is, that by the old covenant mentioned Jer. xxxi. 31, and Heb. viii. 8, is not meant, as I affirm, that which was made on Mount Sinai, Exod. xix., but the covenant mentioned, Exod. iii. ver. 6, &c. Their reason is, for that God made that covenant with them, when he "took them

* Relig. Com. vol. iii. chap. 4, 5.

by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which is mentioned Exod. iii. and not Exod. xix.," for then, say they, "did God appear to Moses, and commanded him to take them by the hand, and lead them out of the land of Egypt, where the covenant is mentioned, I am the God of thy fathers, Abraham," &c.

Defence.

First, to let pass, that though they bid, "mark the words," yet they cite them not: I answer, that these words "in that day," as the text hath it, cannot be restrained to that particular day when God appeared to Moses; seeing the Lord did not that particular day take them by the hand to bring them out, but divers days after, as it is expressly affirmed, Exod. xii. 51; Psa. lxxvii. 12; and cv. 27, 43. By that day therefore is not meant, any particular day, but indefinitely the time of their transporting out of Egypt into Canaan: as, elsewhere, by the day of their birth, Ezek. xvi. 4, 5, is meant the whole time of their foregoing misery. So many hundred times, in the Scriptures, by the day or that day is meant indefinitely the time in which a thing happeneth, or is done. Besides, where the prophet speaks of the day in which God took them by the hand; they speak of the day in which God appeared unto Moses, and commanded him to take them by the hand; which was, whilst he was in the land of Midian. God indeed then showed his will to Moses, but stretched not out his hand for their deliverance, till many days after.

They say further, that Exod. iii. 6, the covenant is mentioned, I am the God of thy father Abraham, &c. But is every mentioning of a covenant, the making of it? And did God make a covenant with, and become the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, at that time? That is, when they were now dead divers hundred years before. What can be more plain, than that the Lord doth not there make a new: but remembers the old covenant made before with Abraham, &c., of which the bringing his posterity out of Egypt into the promised land, was an appurtenance? God promised to be Abraham's God, and the God of his seed, that is, all-sufficient for the good things, not only of this world, but also of the world to come, as Christ ex-

pounds his Father's words, Matt. xxii. 32, 33, and so gave them accordingly the land of Canaan, as a store-house of earthly good things; and figure of heavenly. These men therefore, in this place, unskilfully transform the fulfilling of an old promise into the making of a new, which they also confess, in effect, in the very same place, in saying, that the promise, that is, the covenant on God's part, was made to Abraham, Gen. xvii. 7.

The word "everlasting," Gen. xvii. 7, I urge not further to prove the covenant with Abraham perpetual; than as the nature of the same covenant carries it. It was that by which God became Abraham's God; and more he is, or can be to none: and that which Christ himself extends to the very resurrection of the bodies of Abraham, &c., Matt. xxii. 31, 32, whose God the Lord was, and is. Two reasons I will annex to justify mine exposition of the prophet Jeremy, and apostle after him; and to prove that by the old covenant, they meant the covenant of the law given on Mount Sinai. The former from the opposition, between the old and new covenant, expressly made in the general; and particularly insinuated in these words, "I will write my law in their hearts, and will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sins no more:" Jer. xxxi. 31, 32, 33: which was, not according to, but most unlike to the old covenant, or law given on Mount Sinai, written in tables of stone, and by which sin, and transgression was not forgiven, but quickened and increased. Rom. vii. 8; Gal. iii. 19. A second reason is, for that the old, and first covenant, opposed to that in Christ, "had ordinances of divine worship, and a worldly sanctuary," or tabernacle, wherein was the table, and candlestick, Heb. ix. 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. which no man that believes the Bible, can make doubt to be meant of the law, and covenant given on Mount Sinai, to and by Moses. By the old covenant is meant, that of the law by Moses on Mount Sinai, unto which the other is opposed.

Their exception, that "Abraham's children of eight days old could make no covenant, nor agreement," is too childish to exclude them from it; and that, by which they should have been in no covenant at all with the Lord, nor he with them; new, nor old; legal nor evangelical: for

they could make none. It is not required, that every one comprehended in a covenant, should actually stipulate, or promise. Witness the covenant with Noah, in which, both all his seed, and every living creature, both fowl and cattle, were included. Gen. ix. 9, 10. It was therefore sufficient to bring Abraham's seed into the Lord's covenant that God in grace made, and Abraham by faith received, the promise that he would be his God and theirs.

That every faithful man and his seed, is (as) Abraham and his seed, the Scriptures prove, in teaching, that every believer is of the faith of Abraham, and walks in his steps. Rom. iv. 12, 16. For if Abraham did by faith receive the promise, that God would be his God, and the God of his seed, without which, no promise had belonged unto them, Gal. iii. 6, 9; then, where the same faith is for substance, there is the same promise for substance to every believer; though a son of Abraham as following his example, yet as Abraham himself in believing as he did. And this is most manifest, in that by this very covenant God was not only the God of Abraham, and his seed Isaac; but of Isaac, and his seed Jacob; and of Jacob, and his seed the Patriarchs, and so successively; not by fleshly descent of the children from their parents (as they absurdly cavil) but by spiritual and divine promise of grace; which they ungraciously despise for their children, because they cannot be doing something to God again, by their free-will, to require him withal.

Next comes to be examined that notable place, Rom. iv. 11, "Abraham received the sign of circumcision, the seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, being uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all that believe, though uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed unto them also."

SECT. XIII.—ABRAHAM THE FATHER OF THE FAITHFUL.

Adversaries.

(Pages 151—153.)

Their evasion is, that by faith here, is not meant faith in the Messiah, by which he was, and we are justified; but, say they, circumcision sealed up Abraham's "fatherhood of

the faithful;" that is, was a seal of his faith in believing God, that he should be the father of many nations.

Defence.

And this faith, say we, was the faith of the Gospel, and faith in the Messiah, which the Apostle expressly saith, "was imputed to him for righteousness," and by which he was justified; as is plain, from ver. 17, "I have made thee a father of many nations," compared with ver. 22, where he infers thereupon, even upon that faith, "and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness;" which also, that it was the same in substance with ours now, the words following manifest. "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but to us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe in him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our sins," &c. Ver. 23, 24, 25.

This will yet the more clearly appear, if we consider what is meant by these promises, "I have made thee a father of many nations, and so shall thy seed be," recited by the apostle for the purpose in hand: in these words, "I have made thee a father of many nations," he opposeth many nations to that one nation of the Jews. Of these many nations, he was the father, even of all that believe, though uncircumcised, ver. 11. And how a father? By way of example, that, as he was justified by faith in the promise of God, and of the promised seed Christ, even when he was uncircumcised: so they, believing the same promise of God in Christ, now come of him, though uncircumcised, should in like manner, be justified as he was. Which is yet further confirmed, where it is said, that he is the father of all them, though not of the circumcision, that walk in the steps of the faith of Abraham, which he had yet being uncircumcised. Whence I gather, that if we be justified by the same faith that Abraham was justified by, and that he was justified by faith in that promise, that then that promise was made of, and in, the Messiah, Christ, the blessed and blessing seed; as it is said: "So shall thy seed be: and Abraham believed, and he counted it to him for righteousness." And again, "In thee shall all nations, or families of the earth be blessed." Gen. xv. 5, 6; xii. 3; xviii. 18. Now

of this faith the apostle here speaks, and of it he testifies circumcision to have been a seal to Abraham. Rom. iv. 17, 18. It cannot be denied, but that the apostle in this whole discourse, speaks of faith to justification; proving partly, by the example of Abraham and partly by the testimony of David, that we are justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law. And to what end, or with what order should he thrust in an impertinent discourse of any other faith? To affirm this, is no better than to defame the Holy Ghost with equivocating. Or to what purpose should he mention the sign of circumcision, as a seal of faith, if not of that faith, of which he treats? For whereas it might be objected, that if Abraham were justified by believing before he was circumcised, as is said, ver. 3, 9, 10, then what needed he after to have been circumcised? The apostle answers, ver. 11, that he "received the sign of circumcision, as a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had yet being uncircumcised," which faith, ver. 9, "was reckoned to him for righteousness:" that by it the covenant of grace between God and him might be confirmed, as covenants among men formerly agreed upon are, by the seals thereunto annexed.

Lastly, Who endued with common sense, and modesty can deny, that by the "righteousness of faith," whereof circumcision was a seal, is meant the righteousness which is by faith, as ver. 3, "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness," and ver. 9, "Faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness;" which righteousness of faith, in this whole discourse, he opposeth to the righteousness of works by the law, as is expressly to be seen, ver. 3, 14, 15, 16.

But now what say our adversaries to these things? As men in a maze, and not knowing how to find the way out, go sometimes backward, sometimes forward, and sometimes leap unorderly from one place to another; so do they in expounding this scripture. In their outleaps about Abraham's fleshly children, I shall not need here to follow them. Where, after, they say, that circumcision was a seal of Abraham's "faith in believing God that he should be the father of many nations," and "that this was imputed to him for righteousness;" they say as much as we do, or desire

they should. But where they say, in the very same place, that he "received not circumcision to seal up his faith in the Messiah," they go backward most dangerously, to bring in a faith to justification, imputed for righteousness, which yet is not in the Messiah. Was righteousness ever, or is it imputed to any for justification, but by faith in Christ, then promised, now exhibited? The reason insinuated by them is a pleasant one; namely, for that "Abraham had faith in the Messiah twenty-four years before he was circumcised." Whereas on the contrary, it could not have been a seal of such faith, except he had had the faith before, whether longer or lesser time, it matters not, but is, as it pleaseth him who bestoweth both the one and the other. Signs and seals are not to be set to blanks; neither do they make things that were not before, to be? but serve only to confirm things that are.

These things thus cleared, the reader must be requested not to measure our arguments from Abraham and Isaac's circumcision, to the baptism of infants, by the crooked line which these men draw between them; but by the right rule of sound reason, applied as followeth in three particulars.

First, That the covenant unto which circumcision was annexed, was the covenant of the Gospel, and not of the law and Old Testament, as they take it. For then it could not have been to "Abraham the seal of the righteousness of faith," any way, Rom. iv. 15; but of unrighteousness and condemnation every way: for righteousness is not by the law, which worketh wrath, and by which sin revives, and becomes exceeding sinful. Rom. vii. 9, 13. And surely it is more than strange, that any believing the Scriptures, should believe that the Lord's covenant made with Abraham, and so with Israel in him, by which he "took them to be his peculiar people, from among all other peoples, because he loved their father and them," Deut. iv. 37; vii. 6, 7, 8; by which they were "a blessed nation," having Jehovah for their God, Psal. xxxiii. 12; in "remembering of which covenant with Abraham," &c., Lev. xxvi. 42, he so often showed them mercy, and did them good; and in time, gave his Son Christ to save them from their enemies, Luke i. 71, 72; and lastly, by which covenant they shall again be called "when the fulness of the Gentiles is come in; and so all

Israel shall be saved, as it is written, There shall come out of Sion a deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant with them when I shall take away their sins." As concerning the Gospel they are enemies for the Gentiles' sake; but as concerning the election, they are beloved for the father's sake: for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, Rom. xi. 25—29: that this covenant of love and mercy, making them blessed which are taken into it, and procuring the giving of Christ, and of salvation, should be the covenant of the Old Testament and law: of the law, I say, and Old Testament, which is the "ministry of death;" "the letter that killeth," 2 Cor. iii. 6, 7, "which worketh wrath," Rom. iv. 15, "was added for transgression," Gal. iii. 19, 20; by which "sin reviveth, and all die, and are accursed," Rom. vii. 9. What is this else but to bring the current of gracious mercy, into a channel of severe justice, and to curse where God blesseth, as Balaam purposed to have done?

Secondly, We conclude hence, that the church of the Jews, and church now is one in substance, though diversely ordered: one "vineyard," Isa. v. 1; Jer. ii. 21, in which there are both grown trees, and young plants; one "kingdom" which was taken from them, and given to us, Matt. xxi. 33, 34; the "branches of one olive tree," holy in the same holy root Abraham, from which most of them were broken off for unbelief, and we by faith planted in their place, Rom. xi. 16; "one body," Eph. iii. 6, and therefore having infants in it now, as then, and the same therefore to be baptized (there being also "one baptism," as "one body," Eph. iv. 4, 5,) as they were circumcised of old: baptism (as elsewhere I have proved at large, to their silencing in that point) coming in the place of circumcision.*

Thirdly, That all their disputes against infants' baptism, because they cannot manifest faith and repentance, are but the same quarrels which might have been picked of old against infants' circumcision.

That there was something in Abraham's circumcision extraordinary, is true: for he first received it for his posterity; and for the proselytes with them, which joined themselves to the Lord: so was there also in his faith, as

* Vide Relig. Com. vol. iii. ch. 4.

he was the father, by example, to all that should believe after him.

Their profane assertion, that "faith was required of none, to wit men of years for circumcision," I have formerly disproved. How can it come into the hearts of reasonable men, that the Lord in whose eyes the prayers, sacrifices, and all other services of ungodly men were so abominable, should like of their circumcision?

Lastly, For Abraham's children of the flesh, according to their misunderstanding of them, they were by nature children of wrath as well as others, and had thereby no more right to circumcision, than the infants of Sodom. It was of grace, and not of nature, that they were within God's covenant. Of Gal. iii. and Rom. ix. we have spoken at large formerly, and of their misconstructions of the apostle's meaning.

Lastly, We neither run, as they say, nor go "to the Old Testament, law, or Moses for the baptizing of infants;" but to the covenant of the gospel solemnly made with our father Abraham long before the law was given, the Old Testament established, or Moses born.

Their discourse about Rome is vain, except they can prove that the outward baptism there administered (though unlawfully) is not to be retained by such, as unto whom the Lord afterward vouchsafeth the inward baptism of his Spirit; and so answer our reasons to the contrary, which they have, and have had so long time in their hands.*

SECT. XIV.—LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL ADMINISTRATORS OF BAPTISM.

(Page 153.)

These things thus cleared, it remains we come in the next and last place to examine their defence of that their own unhallowed baptism in use amongst them: formerly proved by me a mere nullity by their grounds, and practice set together.* Their ground is, that "baptism unlawfully ministered is no baptism," their practice, that "he who ministering his gift," poorly as their manner is, "doth convert," in truth pervert, "another: may also baptize him without any special calling."

* Vide Relig. Com. vol. iii. ch. 4.

For foundation of my proofs I laid down these two rules.

1. "There is no lawful baptism, but by him that hath a lawful calling to baptize." 1 Thess. iv. 11; Heb. v. 4, 5. And unto this they assent.

2. "Only he hath a lawful ordinary calling to baptize (and extraordinary they challenge not) who is called thereto by the church." This their first baptizer Mr. Smyth had not, neither have they, that now administer baptism amongst them; neither do they account, that more is requisite for power, and right to baptize, than a personal gift of teaching, and making thereby one of their proselytes, and supposed converts. Whereupon it follows, that they themselves being baptized by such, as want a lawful calling, are not lawfully baptized; and so by the verdict of their own quest, unbaptized persons.

Their defence they begin with the perverting both of my words, and meaning, very dishonestly, in setting down the state of the question; which yet seems not strange unto me, considering their licentious dealing in like sort, with the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures. They frame the question; "whether any but pastors or elders may baptize?" and my charge upon them; that they "are unbaptized," because "wanting pastors."

But where have I so spoken? Or how gather they that to have been my meaning? had it so been, why could I not as easily have said, that none but pastors (for of baptism by others, "elders which labour not in the word and doctrine," 1 Tim. v. 17, we approve not) may lawfully baptize; as, that none but such as are lawfully called by the church may baptize? which are my words. My meaning was not to deny, that a church wanting pastors may not appoint a member able to teach (though out of office) to baptize: for which much may be said, and hath been by some so minded. Which though I do not simply approve of; yet neither did, neither had I occasion to deal there against, but only against the wild course of these All-alikes; of whom any that can wrest a few scriptures, intended of men of years only, against the baptizing of infants, to the corrupting of some simple man, or woman, thinks himself another John Baptist, as their practice and

profession manifests. Now whether they have thus altered my words, and perverted my meaning out of bold rashness, as being more hasty to answer, than to understand their adversary; or out of cunning for their advantage, the Lord and themselves be judges. Only this any may see, and I shall make appear, that the most, and most colourable of their arguments are against their misconceived, and not mine intended sense; which gives occasion to suspect, that they have rather been cunning, than careless in the thing.

SECT. XV.—CHURCH MEMBERS: HOW CONSTITUTED—BY BAPTISM, OR FAITH, OR BOTH?

Adversaries.

(Pages 154—156.)

Let us come to the particulars; and first to their first and main ground, and foundation of their course which is, that "members and churches of Christ are so made by faith, and baptism even by both," and not by the one only.

Defence.

This their foundation in respect of baptism is sandy; seeing it serves both to signify, and confirm what was before; but makes nothing to be that was not. The scriptures, being many, cited by them are partly impertinent, and partly against them, some of them expressly, and the rest truly.

Some of them indeed speak of being "baptized into Christ," Gal. iii. 26, 27; and "into his death," Rom. vi. 3; and "into one body," 1 Cor. xii. 13, with him, and make baptism "a foundation," Heb. vi. 2: but mean not to show, that men are made Christian souls by baptism, as ignorant persons think and speak; but only that they are confirmed, and furthered thereby in that which they were before. Some of the places join with baptism the "Lord's Supper," 1 Cor. xii. 13; Heb. vi. 2; others the "laying on of hands," which yet rather is meant by the doctrine, than manifestation of those things. Now do they conceive, that such as were no true Christians before, are in part

made Christians by the Lord's Supper, and laying on of hands? When the Scriptures affirm anything of an ordinance, they must be interpreted according to the nature of the ordinance. As where Christ saith of the bread, "This is my body;" or of the rock, "and the rock was Christ;" or the apostles here, that "we are baptized into Christ," and draw near unto Christ by baptism, and the like; we must understand the speeches as sacramental, so far as they applied to ordinances; that is, as intending those things, for signs, and seals, and means of confirmation, and not otherwise.

Others of the scriptures brought by them are so plainly against them, as it is marvel that in setting them down, they thought not of the Lord's answer to the evil servant, Luke xix. 22. For example, Matt. xxviii. 19, "Go teach," or as they well turn it, "Make all nations disciples baptizing them," &c. The apostles then were first to make, to wit, by their teaching, disciples, that is Christians; and after to baptize them. Is it not the Scriptures' constant voice, and these men's plea true in itself, but to a wrong end, that men must first believe and repent, and upon manifestation thereof, be baptized? Acts xi. 26. Are not they that believe, and repent Christians with them? Otherwise, how do they baptize them? But thus it is with men in all sects, that are led by passion and appetite, more than reason: they doat upon some one thing truly or apparently good: and labour above measure, to magnify it, esteeming all things without it, as nothing. Thus these men esteem of baptism, others of church government, others of separation, others of imposition of hands by bishops; and so, according as men have advantage by particulars, or suffer for them, or are otherwise prejudiced towards them, they set high valuation upon them. But as grace teacheth us to acknowledge better things in Christians than any outward ordinances; so must wisdom warn us not to ascribe too much to any one, as fond folks use to do to the person or thing which they affect.

Matt. xviii. 20, is against them. To be gathered together in Christ's name there, presupposes a church state. So is John iv. 1, Christ "made and baptized" disciples: they were made disciples by preaching, and after

baptized. John iii. 5, speaks of regeneration by the Spirit, compared in that place to water, as elsewhere to fire for its property in purifying. And admit, it speaks of the ordinance of baptism: yet must it follow regeneration, as a means of confirmation.

As therefore Christians are not made by the ordinance of baptism; so much less are churches.* This I have elsewhere proved against them by many firm arguments; to which seeing they neither give answer, nor show thereof: (though this be a main matter in question between them and us) what should I say more to them? These they may answer if they be able, as I am sure they are not; nor, I think, will ever go about it. Only, I here add this one thing: If members and churches be made by baptism, I demand, when J. M (urton) alone, baptizeth one of his converts alone, what church, or member of what church is here made? And if one alone may receive or make members of the church, why not also cast them out, and excommunicate them without the church's presence or privity? Such is the confused course of these men.

Here they cite sundry scriptures, but proving only that which we willingly grant: viz. that men and women converted from heathenism and Judaism, to the faith of Christ, and so to be added to the church, and being before unbaptized, were to be baptized. But how proves this, that they were made either churches or Christians by baptism? When any of the heathens became Jews, that is, embraced the Jewish religion, and separated themselves from the other idolaters of the land to the law of God, and came to put their trust under the wings of the God of Israel, Esth. viii. 17; Nehem. x. 28; Ruth ii. 11; and were to be circumcised: did their circumcision make them such? Or did it not only, declare and confirm that state of grace, in and unto which God had called them? Neither yet could the things forementioned be performed by their infants: and yet were they made partakers of circumcision with them.

* Vide vol. iii. Rel. Com. ch. 4.

SECT. XVI.—THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST.

Adversaries.

(Pages 156, 157.)

But mind here a further matter. They say, "the church at Jerusalem was the first church of Christ;" and by faith and baptism made a church: and in the next words, that the twelve were so made also.

Defence.

If the church at Jerusalem were the first church of Christ (as in a sense it may be so called), I would know how the baptism of Christ before that time, and of John's before Christ's (having also joined with them faith in the baptized) made churches? Were any made before the first? Or what, and which were the churches which they so made, and gathered? Both the one and the other living and dying members of the Jewish Church. I add, considering how it is said of John, "that Jerusalem and all Judea, and the regions round about Jordan were baptized of him confessing their sins," Matt. iii. 5, 6; and of Christ, that "he made and baptized more disciples than John," John iv. 1; it is very evident, that thousands, afterwards made members of the churches in Jersusalem, Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, were baptized long before, by John and Christ; and were made members of the church, in our sense, long after their baptism. Here then we see baptism administered, and yet no church made: and again, churches made, and yet many the members thereof, not then, but long before baptized.

We grant, as they say, that Rome is that "Egypt," "Sodom," and "Babylon," in mystery, mentioned in the Revelation: but deny which they adjoin, as being both untrue, and uncharitable, that "all in that church are in God's account as the worst pagans," &c. God hath his people, considered in their persons, in Babylon, unto whom he saith, "Come out of her, my people," &c. Rev. xviii. 4; being held captive there, by her craft and cruelty. Neither is Babylon called a "habitation of devils," Rev. xviii. 2,

for that the devil possesseth men, but to show its desolation after the day of the fall thereof: the evangelist in that speech, alluding to the forms of speech used by the prophets before against Babylon civil, in regard to her utter ruin, and desolation shortly to follow. Isa. xiii. 19—21, xxi. 9, 10; Jer. l. 2, 8, 39, 40, &c.

Neither is the "baptism in Rome, a Babylonish, or Egyptian washing," as they calumniate; no more than the doctrine of baptism, in the name of the Trinity is a Babylonish doctrine; but it is as a vessel of the Lord's house, though profaned there. Much less can that vitupery agree to the Church of England, where the faith is found for justification and salvation, and effectual for obtaining the same in those that truly profess it. The circumcision of God's people, though too much infected with their sins, in Egypt, and Babylon, was not Egyptian and Babylonish, Ezek. xxiii. 8; no more is the baptism in Egypt and Babylon spiritual: specially in regard of God's people there; as not a few also show themselves to be by coming out thence at the Lord's call; though some more slowly than others; as of old they did out of Babylon civil, as Ezra and Nehemiah testify.

That the everlasting gospel commands believers to be baptized; to wit, if unbaptized before, we grant; but that men "become a habitation of God by his Spirit, and water;" is as if they said; Water dwells in men, as the Spirit of God doth! It is hard to say, whether the Papists' bread, or these men's water, be made the greater idol. Neither do we in retaining the baptism received at Rome, take a corner-stone out of Babylon, either for foundation, or wall, but bring thence a vessel of the Lord's house there captived with the Lord's people. I know not but that the very circumcision of the Shechemites, Gen. xxxiv. 24, might have been retained, if any of the males had survived and embraced the truth of religion; which yet was far from being lawfully administered.

Lastly, though all were true which they say for anabaptizing in the general; yet were their particular practice not justified thereby, nor our exception cleared, being against their manner, and the same singular, from all other of their sect, in all places, of baptizing, by persons

uncalled thereunto, either by God immediately, or mediately by the church, or otherwise than by their own particular and personal motion.

SECT. XVII.—BAPTISM AND THE MINISTRY.

(Page 159.)

To their objection arising from the supposed proportion between baptism and the ministry; and their demand, why I cast away my "Popish priesthood," and retain "my Popish washing for my Christianity," as they please to speak,*

* From this point to the end of the volume, Robinson replies to the arguments of his opponents in their attack on his tract, entitled "Manumission," of which no copy has been found, and to which Ereunetes, in the dialogue, thus refers:—"That John Robinson, preacher to the English, at Leyden, hath printed half a sheet of paper; who laboureth to prove that none may baptize but pastors or elders of a church."—p. 154.

The question discussed in the tract was, Is it scriptural and right for any person who can preach and whom God blesses in his labours to baptize others? Mr. Smyth and his friends contended for the affirmative, Mr. Robinson for the negative. The question had its origin in the fact, that on the Rev. John Smyth and the Rev. Thos. Hellwisse becoming anti-pædobaptists, they renounced their church connexions, and hence a difficulty arose how they could be baptized. They agreed together that Mr. Smyth should baptize himself, whether by immersion, as the English baptists now practise, or by affusion, as the Mennonites or Dutch baptists did and still do practise, is not known; and then Mr. Smyth baptized Mr. Hellwisse, and thus both became qualified to baptize others. They justified their baptism by contending that any church or teacher had a right to administer the ordinance; that it was not so far a church ordinance as to require its administration by pastors or elders; and that Christ had so ordered it in his last commission to the apostles, Matt. xxviii. 19. Mr. Robinson endeavours to prove that baptism is a church ordinance; that no one should administer it but the pastor of a church; except in the two following cases—by an extraordinary calling, as John and the apostles by divine authority—or when a church has no pastors, by a "special calling" from the church itself. Neither of the cases applied to Mr. Smyth; he was not inspired, and he belonged to no church. The question excited great interest in Amsterdam, both among the Mennonites and the English separatists. Mr. Underhill, the respected secretary of the Hanserd Knollys Society, informed the editor that, when in Holland, he found among the archives of the Mennonite Church in Amsterdam, a formal application from some of Mr. Smyth's party to be admitted to the fellowship of the church,

I have answered elsewhere at large;* neither have they been able, to this day, or now are, to say against my answer anything at all, either true, or colourable; and yet neither have they the humility to suffer themselves to be taught better; nor the modesty to hold their tongues in the matter; but do irksomely demand anew the things of old answered. For the present, I will only note these differences. First, it is absurdly said, that a man is made a Christian by his baptism, as he is made a minister by his outward calling. He that is not a Christian before he be baptized, becomes not one thereby. But by the outward calling of the church, he that was no minister before, becomes such properly and immediately. Secondly, a man is to be baptized but once; and God adding to the outward washing with water that which is inward, and by his Spirit, sanctifies the former, and covers many failings in the manner of administering it, 2 Chron. xxx. 18—20; but a man may on the contrary, upon occasion, be called divers times to a ministry, in divers churches, one after another. Thirdly, the ministry is the church's, 1 Cor. iii. 21—23, xii. 28: and depends upon it, as the adjunct upon the subject, so as if the church dissolve, the ministry ceaseth; which the same church also that gives it may take away, and make him that was a minister no minister: besides, that in the meanwhile his ministry is bounded within the precincts of that church whereof he is an officer. But in the ordinance of baptism the case is clean otherwise. For neither can the church which hath given it, take it from him; neither ceaseth he to remain a baptized person, though alone, and without either church, or other Christian in the world with him; nether is he in any church where he comes, to be barred from the privileges of his baptism, or use of anything depending upon it.

but were refused till acknowledgment was made of their error, in maintaining that baptism might be administered by individuals, apart from connexion with a church, or that a church might administer it among themselves, independently of pastors or elders. This subject is further adverted to in vol. iii. Religious Com. chap. iv.

* Justification of Separation, ch. iii. sect. 7. Error 9.

SECT. XVIII.—JOHN'S BAPTISM.

Adversaries.

(Pages 161, 162.)

For the justifying of the matter of their rebaptizing, and to prove that the disciples of Christ, though no pastors (they must add, nor having any church-calling) may baptize: their first instance is from John Baptist, who was no pastor, and yet baptized.

Defence.

We grant it; no more was Christ himself a pastor in our sense, nor his apostles. But we say John, as they, had an immediate and extraordinary calling, not only to exercise, but also to introduce the ordinance of baptism: being expressly prophesied of before by Isaiah, ch. xl. 3, and Malachi, ch. iv. 5, 6, promised to his father Zachariah, by "an angel of the Lord, and filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb," Luke i. 11, 13, 14, 15. Will these men compare their conceited gifts of converting, with John's divine and extraordinary charter and endowments? We say with Christ our Lord, that John was a prophet, and more than a prophet, Matt. xi. 9: they answer us, that the least disciple, or that hath John's doctrine, in the kingdom of God is greater than he. But we reply, that Christ doth not there mean the least disciple, but the least able minister of the New Testament, whereof these anabaptizers are none. When Christ asked the Jews, if they went out to see a prophet, think we he meant of any ordinary Jew, having a poor gift of expounding the Scriptures, like these men's? Or not rather of some, both of singular abilities, and special calling? So, by "the least in the kingdom of heaven," he means the least minister of the New Testament, furnished with special abilities, and calling. Besides, his meaning is not that the least minister, no nor the greatest neither, was greater than John the Baptist in respect of power of ministering baptism; for none was comparable to him this way, being under God the instituter of it, and the Baptist, which neither Peter nor Paul was. But the greatness

here, is in regard only of the more full knowledge of Christ, not only come in the flesh, and entered upon his ministry, as in John's time; but having finished his work upon earth, and being dead for our sins, and risen again, and ascended into the heavens; whence he did, and doth most graciously, and powerfully administer his kingdom amongst men. Is it not enough for John Murton, and his consorts, to be equal with John Baptist in the power of baptizing, but they will needs perch above him therein, and be greater than he? But it is no new thing for the bramble to advance itself above all the trees, even the vine, olive, and fig trees. But such pride will have a fall. Judges ix. 7—15. The Lord grant it may be by, or with repentance, to prevent the downfall to perdition!

To their instancing the disciples of Christ, and Ananias's baptizing, what shall I say more than I have done in the very writing which they undertake to answer? Wherein I have proved, that these instances are so far from helping them, as that they make plainly against them, as the reader that will, may see. To my proofs they answer nothing at all, nor confirm their own tenets further, by any circumstance of the text. Only they tell us in the general, that "these things were written for our learning." We grant it, and therewith affirm that amongst other things, we are to learn this from them: that such as are to baptize are to be furnished with (besides, and above the gift of teaching) a special warrant and calling from Christ, either, extraordinary and immediate, as had these disciples, and Ananias; or ordinary, and mediate by the church: which alone is delegated by Christ the Lord, with authority to call men to the ministering of his solemn ordinances; whereof baptism is one, and not the use of a gift, as bare teaching is.

SECT. XIX.—THE APOSTOLIC COMMISSION.

(Pages 162, 163.)

In opening Matt. xxviii. 16, "Go teach all nations," &c., they show a strange strain of wit; in gathering from thence, that any disciple of Christ may baptize, from whence all others of learning or judgment, of all sects, do gather the

contrary, and that none, but such as have special calling to teach may baptize. Let us examine things particularly.

And first, I affirm, that the Lord in that place gives an apostolical commission properly; which I thus prove. First, because he bids them "Go," or go forth, "and teach all nations," opposing the apostles' going forth, and teaching all nations then, to the prophets' tarrying, and teaching that one nation of the Jews formerly. Do, or can these men, though their feet abide not in the house, Prov. vii. 11, go to, and teach all nations? Their answer is frivolous, that every disciple is to do this according to his best ability, seeing the Lord calls none to a state or work, but such as he furnisheth with answerable abilities. By such answers, the calling of any, how unfit soever, to any place or state how excellent soever, might be justified. Secondly, if not in this place, I would know when, and where Christ gave the commission properly apostolical.

Where they add, that the "apostles have left their power wholly behind them, and that nothing is dead but their persons," they err not a little; for not only their persons are dead, but their office also is ceased. If any now have the power of apostles, they have then the office of apostles first, from which the power is, and in which it is to be exercised. If they say they are apostles; they are not, but are easily found liars by plain direction of the Scriptures. Besides they expressly contradict themselves in the same place, in saying, The commission was given to such, as whose persons remain to the end of the world. Gal. i. 1; 1 Cor. i. 9, iv. 9. If their persons be dead, how remain they? But they add, as their corner-stone, that this commission was given to the succeeders of the apostles in their doctrine from time to time, with whom Christ promiseth to be present always, even to the end.

If I should answer, as I know not but I might lawfully, that these words of Christ, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," are to be expounded as those of the apostle, 1 Thess. iv. 15, 17, "We which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord," &c.; and that the meaning of both is, that all should so walk, as if that day of the Lord were to come every day of our lives, what would they reply?

But admit this be spoken mediately to the successors of the apostles, not in their power apostolical, for that ceaseth with their office apostolical, and their office with their persons; neither is there left in the church any authority or direction for the choosing of apostles, but in the performance of such ordinary works, in lawful order, as the apostles were to exercise themselves in, specially of teaching and baptizing there mentioned: I thus prove, that by those successors are not meant, as they conceive, disciples, but such as have special commission, and authority, and so specially pastors.

And first, Christ here opposeth them to whom he speaks, as the makers of disciples (as the words are) to disciples to be made by them. Secondly, if every disciple of Christ, then why not women also, which are disciples as well as men, and whereof there are divers to be found better gifted than any of this fellowship? Neither can they object the apostle's prohibition of women, 1 Cor. xi. and 1 Tim. ii. seeing they hold baptism no church action, but personal only; and so administer it as privately, as midwives use to do. Thirdly, if pastors be most rightfully the apostles' successors in other works of their apostolical commission here given; by name, in administering the Lord's supper, and over-seeing the flock, and defending the same in the truth, which they grant: why not, in teaching, and baptizing also, which alone are expressed? Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

SECT. XX.—BAPTISM AN OFFICIAL ACT.

Adversaries.

(Pages 162, 163.)

But this they account "a mere fiction, seeing converting and baptizing is no part of the pastor's office, which is to feed, watch and oversee the flock of Christ, and defend the same in the truth:" than which they deny further charge to be laid upon him by his office: quoting for that purpose, Acts xx. 28; Tit. i. 9, proceeding also to challenge it as an "imagination, that he is to preach by virtue of his office:" yea, adding "that any disciple having ability is

authorized, yea commanded to preach, convert, and baptize, as well, and as much, if not more, than any pastor." To this height of usurpation are these Korahites come.

Defence.

First here, as always, they alter the state of the question, which between them and me is not whether only pastors, but whether only such as have a special church-calling, may baptize. Secondly, it is true, that pastors in the right state of things, are not to be set over herds of goats and swine, but over flocks of sheep: yet doth it not follow thereupon that pastors, in no sort, convert. For first, there may be in the church hypocrites undetected, or after detection, yet uncensured, which they may by God's blessing effectually convert. Secondly, the pastor, as pastor of the flock, and feeding it, may convert a stranger coming in, and why then not baptize him by their own ground? The person so converted publicly, may and ought to be baptized publicly; and should not the pastor do it, by whom also he is converted, rather than by a private member? Thirdly, it is not all one, though they confound them, to convert, to wit, from being wicked to become godly, and to make a disciple. Children born in the church may be made disciples, yet not so converted; as, it may be, never having been such, as of whom it could be said, that they were wicked. Fourthly, it is their ignorance to make converting of men, and the baptizing of them, actions of the same nature, seeing only men and women before converted, and repenting, are to be baptized. Acts ii. 38. Lastly, in granting, according to the Scriptures, that the pastor is by office to feed the flock, 1 Cor. iv. 15: they cannot deny, but that he is to baptize thereby: seeing baptism is a part of that feeding properly, serving to confirm the faith of believers in the washing away of their sins by the blood of Christ; begetting is by the seed of the Word, the Word of truth, James i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23: and so whatsoever means follow thereupon, if but for feeding and nourishing the so begotten.

SECT. XXI.—PREACHING NOT AN OFFICIAL ACT.

Adversaries.

(Page 163.)

But that which followeth is admirable, viz. that "the pastor is not required to preach, nor doth perform it by virtue of his office, when he doth it."

Defence.

Many men, and these with the rest, have spoken many absurd things in religion: but these in this exceed them all, yea and themselves. They, from Acts xx. 28, affirm that the pastors are to feed the flock from their office. And can the flock be fed as it ought without preaching, and where the bread of life is not broken unto it? They also grant in the same place, from Titus i. 9, that he is to defend the flock in the truth against all gainsayers. But why to defend the flock, &c., as their cunning and corrupt gloss is, rather than as the words of the text are, by sound doctrine both to exhort, and convince the gainsayers? Are exhortations and convictions by sound doctrine no preachings with these men? yea, are they not directly for the conversion of gainsayers? And how then belongs it not to pastors, to whom these things belong, to convert? So where it is required that the bishop, to be called, be apt to teach, 1 Tim. iii. 2, is he not by his office to do that which is requisite in him for his enabling unto it? I say for the enabling of him unto his office, and not for the adorning of it only, as hospitality is: which though he only want ability to perform, yet that disables him not; as the want of aptness to teach doth.

Join with these the apostle's exhortation, that the elders that rule well be had in double honour; specially they that labour in the word, and doctrine; "for the labourer is worthy of his reward," 1 Tim. v. 17: and what can be clearer, than that the pastor is to preach by his office, and that as being the special work, for which his wages are due unto him? Is not to labour in the word and doctrine here spoken of, for him to preach, and that as an elder; as the former rule as elders? Strange it is that, a pastor or

teacher, Eph. iv. 11, by office, should not teach and preach by office; that is, not exercise their office or ministry, the teacher in teaching, and exhorter, or pastor, in exhortation. Rom. xii. 5, 7, 8. And see we not here, what new patrons dumb ministers have gotten, of whom the old almost everywhere are ashamed? If it be not required of the pastor to preach by his office, then though he never preach at all, yet it cannot be said to Archippus, "Fulfil thy ministry, which thou hast received in the Lord." Col. iv. 17. The pastor might, by their canon, most faithfully perform and fulfil his office, though he never preached one sermon all his life long.

But as all errors have some truth either in them, or nigh unto them, and so are raised upon mistaking of one thing for another, with which it hath some affinity: so is it in this case. For first the ability or gift to teach is not by the office, but before it, and merely personal, and so remains even in the officer; and the same greater in one than in another, though the office be the same in both. Yet because the gift fits for the office, and enables to the performing of it, many unskilfully confound them. Secondly, there is both a liberty, and duty of using the same gift in time and place, before and without the office. But herewith, the office concurring, is joined, and added a bond of authority, and special charge upon the officer to wait upon his office, the teacher in teaching, the exhorter or pastor in exhortation, as the apostle speaks.

Here amongst sundry scriptures not so much as looking towards the matter in hand, but speaking of the general liberties of Christians, and graces of Christianity, common to women with men, and to such men as want all gifts of teaching with others, they allege 1 Cor. xiv. 1, and the apostle then commanding every believer to covet to preach.

But first, why put they preaching, and not prophesying, as the text, and all translations have it? Secondly, it is their presumption, that he speaks of every believer. Was every believer to covet spiritual gifts, to wit, all both extraordinary and ordinary there mentioned? And are there not many in all churches, who, without a miracle, cannot possibly attain to any competent ability to teach publicly

in the church? But let them stretch the words to their own size, what follows hereupon? All are to desire the gift of exhortation, &c., and such as have it, to use it in time and place: *ergo*, it is not required of pastors by virtue of their office to exhort. Why not then thus? It is required of every member of the church in his place, to watch for the good of the whole, and to defend the same against gainsayers in the truth: and therefore it is an imagination, which these men in the page beforegoing affirm, that the pastor is by his office to watch, and defend the flock against gainsayers. Or thus: It concerns every Christian, being able, to distribute to the necessities of the saints, Rom. xii. 13, and therefore not to the deacons by virtue of their office; which yet for the very thing are called distributers in the same place. Rom. xii. 8. Every citizen and subject is bound to defend his city and country against the enemy in his place and standing; and therefore by their consequence, not the magistrate by virtue of his magistracy. Their conclusion therefore, that a pastor is not bound to teach by his office, because he might after a sort, and in an order, teach without it; it is, as if they should tell us, that he who is bound to a post with one cord, cannot be bound with two.

SECT. XXII.—THE DUTY OF CHURCHES WHEN WITHOUT OFFICERS.

Adversaries.

(Pages 164—174.)

They add, that "the church may receive in members, without officers, or when they are sick, or in prison, and so baptize them, as the primitive churches were gathered by faith and baptism, and that being without pastors a good while, which the apostles afterwards placed amongst them."

Defence.

They oft say, but never prove, that churches are gathered by baptism. Baptism is an ordinance and service given to the church, as were the statutes and services of old, given to Israel, and circumcision, Rom. ix. 4; Psa. cxlvii. 19;

John vii. 22, amongst the rest. If the church receive in men by baptizing them; then it is to cast them out by unbaptizing them. For they are to be put out or excommunicated by the undoing of that, by the doing of which they were taken in.

Besides, receiving in, and casting out of members are dispensations of Christ's kingdom; baptism of his prophetical office.

Thirdly, as both infants might be born in the church, and men of years received into it, and both the one and the other be baptized afterwards, as God afforded fit and lawful means; so can it not be proved, specially in the plenty that then was, that the apostles still left not behind them some extraordinary officers, prophets, or evangelists to water, where they had planted, and to order things unperfected. 1 Cor. iii. 7—9; 1 Tim. i. 3; Tit. i. 5.

Lastly, let it be observed, how in this place, they make it a work of the same power, to baptize, and to receive members into the church: and whereupon it must follow unavoidably, that baptism administered by one alone, and without a church power, which theirs was, and is, is unlawful: seeing one alone is not a church, nor hath power to receive in, or cast out members.

To conclude the point about the apostles' successors. The apostle Paul, calling unto him at Miletus the elders, or bishops of the church of Ephesus, and charging them "to feed the flock whereof they were made overseers by the Holy Ghost," Acts xx. 17—19, 28; and for their direction therein, propounding unto them his own apostolical example to be followed by them in so many particulars, shows who are the apostles' ordinary successors in their several charges. The same also doth the apostle Peter, in calling himself a sympresbyter, 1 Pet. v. 1, or fellow-elder with the ordinary elders. And truly what man, not at utter defiance with common sense, will deny that a pastor in his charge is more properly an apostle's successor, than a private brother.

In answering mine exceptions, they build amiss upon my foundation, and father their bastards upon me: knowing that I both put, and have proved against them, elsewhere, a difference between no baptism, and baptism unlaw-

fully administered, in divers respects; and that the latter, though it ought not so to have been administered, or received; yet ought not to be iterated; specially, if God have added thereunto the inward baptism of the Spirit of regeneration.

1. Now my proofs, howsoever by them vilified, confirm, that besides and above the personal ability to teach, a special calling is requisite for him that dispenseth the ordinance of baptism. This special calling ordinary is by the church, which alone hath Christ's delegated power for ordinances. The argument I thus frame. That which by many proofs of Scripture appears to have been done by special calling, and commission from Christ, and never otherwise; that not being done by such special calling, and commission, is unlawfully done, 1 Cor. iii. 21—23; Matt. xviii. 17—20; but by the proofs by me brought, it appears that baptism hath still been ministered by special calling, and commission, and not otherwise; therefore, these men's baptism not so administered, was, and is, unlawfully administered: and so they by their own grounds, which they vainly make mine, unbaptized persons.

Neither can they make an escape by saying, that they in whom I instance had "no calling by the church, nor were pastors of particular flocks:" seeing our question is not of pastors, but of such as have a church-calling: and that John Baptist, Christ's disciples, Philip, and the rest, had a calling extraordinary. These adversaries neither have the former, nor challenge the latter. And indeed, by this defence, so oft renewed by them, they make it evident to all the world, that they neither consider of their own practice seriously, nor of mine exceptions.

Of the difference between teaching and baptizing, I shall speak in the fourth rule: as I have also formerly, both in this treatise, and elsewhere at large cleared their exception about ordination: which they cunningly dissemble. Here I only demand of them, whether one man alone, without either presence, or preceding election of the church, may ordain a pastor as is their manner of baptizing. And for me, do they not know in their consciences that I was ordained publicly upon the solemn calling of the church, in which I serve, both in respect of the ordainers, and

ordained? Whilst then they account me wilfully blind in putting difference between my church ordination and their baptism; they show themselves witlessly blind in making them alike.

2. To my proof, from Matt. iii. 13, that Christ in coming to John to be baptized of him, fulfilled all righteousness, &c., they answer, "That this is still done, when any disciple," &c: wherein first, they make both John and Christ disciples of Christ. Secondly, if Christ had herein considered John as an ordinary disciple only, what needed he to have come from one country to another, even from Galilee, to Jordan in Judea, to have been baptized of him? Why might he not as well have used some ordinary disciple near at hand? Christ therefore, in being baptized by John, fulfilled all righteousness, in consecrating unto us baptism, as circumcision to the fathers, in his own person, "who of God is made unto us righteousness," 1 Cor. i. 30: and that by John's ministry, who had a most solemn and singular calling thereunto. Lastly, it is not likely, which they take for certain, that John in these words, "I had need be baptized of thee," meant not, to wit, at all, of the baptism with water, considering that the question between our Lord and him, was about that baptism and none other. The words therefore insinuate, that some special state and calling is required in the baptizer above these men's common discipleship.

3. Here first in answering John i. 19, 25, for their own credit they disgrace the priests and Levites, as blind and ignorant Pharisees, for demanding of John, by what authority he baptized. But considering both the places, and John's practice in bringing a new ordinance of religion into the church, they did nothing herein not well sorting with their office.

Secondly, their answer, that John proves his authority to baptize, by proving his authority to preach, from Isaiah the prophet, Isa. xl. 3: shows, how short their wits are in gauging the depth of the Scriptures. He doth not prove his authority to baptize, by a common authority or liberty to teach, which any of Israel, gifted, might use; but he justifies his whole ministry, in all the parts of it by his special calling, as the harbinger and forerunner of Christ,

plainly foretold by Isaiah and Malachi. Do they think, that the prophet's words "the voice of one crying in the wilderness," &c., appertained to every Israelite that could teach; as they ascribe power to baptize to each of their teaching disciples? Or might John, without a special calling, have instituted and brought into the church, as he did, a new ordinance? Yea I would know, which of John's disciples ever offered to baptize? Of whom yet it cannot be doubted, but divers were able to teach.

4. As cowards most vilify in words, where in deed they dare do least, so do these men account this proof most vain, against which they have nothing to bring, saving an equivocation in the word "ordinances," and a cunning course in leaving out that which I allege from Rom. xii. 3, which would discover the fallacy. The different nature of baptism and teaching, merely by a personal gift, is evident. A man becomes a prophet, and able to teach, by the gifts of the Spirit, knowledge, and utterance, 1 Cor. i. 5. But I would know by what gift of the Spirit any becomes a baptizer, or able to baptize? 2. Besides the scriptures, 1 Pet. i. 12, &c.; the light of nature, and general law of love, shows, that he who knows anything profitable for another, should in his place, and upon occasion declare it to him; so as teaching by him that hath ability, hath its plain foundation in nature: but so is not baptism by the light of nature; but merely ordained and instituted of God by supernatural revelation; in which respect I call it an ordinance. And this consideration alone, if there were nothing else, will with reasonable men, oversway all their presumptions. Actions of religion are some of them performed immediately from a personal gift, and grace of the Spirit in the heart, as preaching, or prophesying, and prayer, out of a special state or office; others, by no special gift of the Spirit at all, but by authority conferred upon some special person; as the ministration of sacraments, censures, ordination, and the like; and lastly, some others by both, as pastoral preaching, prayer, &c.: the gift ministering ability; and the office charge to use the gift, for feeding of the flock committed to the officer.

5. In answering my fifth proof, they allege things

partly impertinent, and partly unreasonable. Of the former sort is their discourse about the eunuch's being a member of Christ, and his remaining in any particular church: whereas they should have answered directly, whether by his faith and baptism he had been made a member of any particular church, or not.

But they seeing what would follow upon a direct answer, have rather chosen an indirect evasion. Of like hue is that which they add of Israel's renewed covenant, conceiving Israel as a true church, which we meddle not with in this business.

Absurd it is in itself, and a slandering of our practice, which they affirm of one casting out another, where there are but two of a church. Which of us ever so held or practised? One man, or woman either, may upon just ground, separate from a whole church: may he, or she, therefore, excommunicate a whole church? Or hath J(ohn) M(urton) excommunicated the whole Church of England? Separation, where lawful, only shows the liberty, which every Christian hath to keep himself pure from the sins of others: excommunication imports a judiciary power and state of authority to execute a solemn censure and punishment; which appertains only to the church gathered together in Christ's name; Matt. xviii. 19, 20; 1 Cor. v. 4, 5; which one cannot be. Two may join together, and so receiving one another mutually may become a church: or may, upon just occasion, part asunder, and so dissolve: but cannot receive in, to speak properly, or cast out one another, by solemn ordinance. This imports authority; the former, liberty only. But thus it becomes the new builders of Babylon, to use brick for stone, and lime for well-tempered mortar.

6. Their answer to my sixth proof about witnesses of the baptism, that Philip baptized the eunuch, and Ananias, Saul, none else being by, is presumptuous. It is apparent, Acts viii., that the eunuch had divers in his retinue, and most probable, that some of them were godly also, and baptized with him, though the story mention him alone. Neither is it like, that Ananias in that city, where so many Christians were, was not accompanied with some or other of them. Besides, those baptisms were adminis

tered by extraordinary, and miraculous direction, and assistance; and therefore not to be drawn, for the manner, into ordinary example. Lastly, these instances overthrow their main ground, which is, that all particular churches are gathered by faith and baptism. One alone cannot be a church; neither is a church gathered by that which may lawfully be performed without a church gathering. Paul's own manifestation of the grace of Christ received, was sufficient testimony of his conversion; and the church's weakness it was, to stand need of further witness.

In their answer to mine other demand, that any "disciple present, though no instrument of conversion, may baptize," they raise their own main ground, which how sandy soever, yet is theirs, from Matt. xxviii. 19, that every disciple, that can teach, or make disciples, according to his best ability, may baptize; and, whosoever makes a disciple may baptize; and that Christ hath coupled them together, and that no man should separate them, &c.; yet here themselves separate them, in affirming that any disciple, though making no disciple, nor being instrument of conversion, may baptize. Their instances of Christ's baptizing none, but leaving that to his followers, and Paul's baptizing few in Corinth, are too presumptuous. It is too much vanity for base persons to play on stages the parts of kings: what is it then for John Murton, to play Christ and Paul, if yet Paul had not evangelists in his company, in commanding others of his disciples to baptize his converts, as Christ our Lord did his?

About woman's baptism, they are like a bird in a net, seeking many holes to get out, but finding none. First, they answer, that "women may neither teach nor baptize in the church." True: but why not, as they do? which is, not in the church; but out of it, and in a corner, where, it may be, none is present but the baptizer and baptized? They say further, that "women have been, and may be, worthy instruments of converting of others." I grant it, and that even of men. But may they therefore baptize them? This they dare not say, nor do; and yet except they say it, they must unsay their so oft repeated lesson, "that they that may convert, may baptize."

Their dispute from my former plea out of Mr. Perkins,

that where God gives the word, he gives the power also, helps not: for first, both Mr. Perkins* and I† speak of a church having this power of the Lord, and not of a single person. If all the body were one member, where were the body, 1 Cor. xii. 19, or church? saith the apostle. These men make all the body, and one member the same. One and all, and all and one, is all one with them. Secondly, we speak of having and using the power of the Lord, according to the Lord's order; and not in their confused fashion. Which order of the Lord is, that men first be called, ordinarily, by the church, and so minister baptism as the stewards of the mysteries of God.

Lastly, they most wrongfully accuse Peter Martyr, and me from him, as pleading for women's baptism: the reader that pleaseth, may see the contrary.‡

I do not, as they here challenge me, in answering their objection, that because men, by virtue of their gift, without other calling, may do the greater which is teaching, they may do the less, which baptizing is, wrong them; as saying, having no calling, but no other calling but by their gift. If they have any other calling, though not pastoral, let them show it; and so renounce their former plea raised from their personal gifts alone.

Their proof that "he that may do the greater may do the less," is taken from Matt. xxiii. 16, 17, 19, 20, &c., wherein they say, Christ proveth plainly, that either it was not lawful for them to swear by the gold, and the offerings, which were lesser: or that it was lawful for them to swear by the temple, and altar.

Nothing less. It was lawful to swear by none of them all, but by the Lord only. The meaning of Christ was to reprove the hypocrisy and covetousness of the Pharisees, that bare the people in hand, that if they sware by the altar, and temple, it bound them not, at least, in comparison; but if they swore by the gold, or offering, that oath bound them to performance, that by this means, they might possess the people's minds with an high opinion of

* On Galatians i. 11.

† Vide Justification of Separation, vol. ii. chap. iii. sect. on Scriptural Ordination.

‡ Ibid.

the offerings, and gold, which turned to their proper advantage and profit. If from hence they would conclude anything lawful from the greater to the less, they must argue thus: If it be lawful to swear by the greater, then by the less, much more: but it is lawful to swear by the greater, and greatest, God himself, that dwelleth in the temple: therefore it is lawful to swear by the temple, altar, sacrifice, heaven, earth, &c. If they would be ashamed of this conclusion, so may they be of their argumentation.

My plea for the power of calling ministers, and censuring offenders by the church where officers are wanting, which here again they bring in, is in their hand, like a sword in a child's hand, wherewith he sooner hurts himself, than his enemy. For, to let pass the difference between the power of receiving in, and casting out of members, and so of choosing of ministers, on the one side, and of baptizing on the other, elsewhere manifested; they here strike through their own course, in confessing that these things must be done by the church's power and right, by which they baptize not, but merely by a personal liberty: by which yet they themselves, I suppose, would be loth to avow the calling of ministers, and censuring of offenders.

That my collection from Scripture is their conviction, and makes plainly against their corner-stone, that he which may do the greater may do the less, they may see, if they please to consider it. For if the prophets in Israel, not being Levites, though preaching God's word, might not carry the ashes from under the altar; but the Levites only, Numb. iv. 13, then their rule holds not absolutely, that he that may do the greater, may do the less; and so they must confess, except they will deny the preaching of God's word to be a greater thing than the carrying of the ashes out of the temple.

The former part of their first answer; that the priests only, they should say the Levites, were appointed to this, makes against them, as showing, that we are not to measure our liberty or power by the greatness or smallness of the thing, but by God's appointment, who hath allotted to every one his portion. Their second answer is of admirable device, that "as the priests might meddle with all the services of the Old Testament; so all the saints being priests unto

God, no men excepted, may meddle with all the services of the New Testament."

But why might, and may; and not ought, and must? The priests under the law were bound, leaving unto the high-priest his functions, and to the Levites, theirs, in their courses, to all the services of the tabernacle, and temple. So by their crooked rule, every Christian, no men excepted, not only may, in liberty, but must in duty, minister not only baptism but the Lord's supper also, and all other ordinances, in his turn: and so all must be alike for public ministrations; for all are priests to God alike. "All the congregation are holy every one of them, and the Lord is among them, and you, Moses and Aaron, take too much upon you;" said Korah of old. Numb. xvi. 3. They err grossly therefore in making all priests for all public ordidances in the church: whereof some appertain to Christ's prophetical administration, as the sacraments, which are seals of the covenant dispensed by preaching: others to his kingdom, as the appointing of officers, and censuring of offenders. Our Christian priesthood stands only in our offering of spiritual sacrifices of praises, and prayer from a broken heart, works of mercy, and the like.

That baptism is a service of the temple, that is, an ordinance of the church, we have formerly proved. And surely strange it is, that I should need to prove, that there is any ordinance of religion which the church is not to administer. Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas are the churches, and is not their baptism theirs? This whilst they compare to the hewing of stones in the mountains, they lay in common for ministration to very unbelievers, with disciples: for the Sidonians, or other of the heathens, as well as Israelites, might either square stones, or hew wood for the temple. 1 Kings v. 18.

Lastly touching my similitude. As it cannot be denied, but that the setting of the seal unto the king's pardon granted to a malefactor, is a matter both of more solemnity, and authority, than the bare manifestation and making known of the same pardon; which any, ordinarily, may do to any, as opportunity serves: so have I proved long ago against these adversaries, by many arguments, hitherto by them unanswered, and I assure myself unanswerable, that

the outward baptism, of which we speak, is an outward seal of the covenant of grace: that is, an holy outward sign ordained of God, as a means by the work of the Spirit, to confirm the faith of the church in her washing, both from the guilt and contagion of sin, by the blood of Christ Jesus. More than this, we mean not in calling the sacraments seals, Rom. iv. 11, with the apostle; and less none can yield them, that hath learned their right use, either from his own fruitful experience, or the Scripture's information. Glory be to God, and good men!

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