

ENGLAND'S SICKNESS.

Is there no balm in Gilead ; is there no physician there ? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered ?—JER. VIII. 22.

SICK is the daughter of Sion ; and the complexion of England gives her not to be sound. If she feel her own pulse, and examine the symptoms of her illness, her works of disobedience, she must confess that her health is impaired ; or if she feel it not, she is obstupefied.

The coast I am bound for is Israel ; but, like faithful merchants, if I can traffic or transport thence any good commodity into our own country, I will venture the welcome of it. Israel and England, though they lie in a diverse climate, may be said right parallels ; not so unfit in cosmographical, as fit in theological comparison. And, saving Israel's apostasy, and punishment for it, we need not think it harsh to be sampled. They could plead much of God's mercy ; if we can speak of more, let us thankfully embrace our transcendent happiness.

Two main passages are directed my discourse to sail through, which shall limit my speech and your attention for this time :—I. The *patient* ; II. The *passion* : the sick, and the disease. The *person* labouring of grief is the 'daughter' of Israel ; her *passion* or grief is sickness : 'Why is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered ?' These two coasts will afford us many subordinate observations, worthy both our travels.

I. The patient, whom we must visit, is described, 1. *Quæ sit* ; 2. *Cujus sit*. God speaks of her, 1. Positively ; 2. Possessively : positively, what she is of herself, 'the daughter of the people ;' possessively, what she is by relation, in regard of her owner, *populi mei*, God's people.

1. Daughter. This title is usual according to Hebraism. 'Daughter of Israel,' for Israel ; 'Daughter of Zion,' for Zion, Isa. lxii. 11, 'Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh,' &c. ; 'Daughter of Judah,' for Judah, Lam. i. 15, 'The Lord hath trodden the daughter of Judah as in a wine-press ;' 'Daughter of Jerusalem,' for Jerusalem, Lam. ii. 13 ; 'Daughter of Babylon,' for Babylon, Ps. cxxxvii. 8, 'O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed,' &c. So Christ calls himself the Son of man, because he took on him man's nature : Isa. xxi. 10, 'O my threshing, and the son of my floor,' for the floor itself, or the corn of it. And Augustine observes on the 72d Psalm, that by 'the children of the poor,' is meant the poor themselves. This is an abstractive phrase, and *vox indulgentis* ; implying pro-

pense favour in the speaker, and tenderness in the person spoken of: *filia populi*. It is a word of relation, simply taken; for daughter depends on the respect of parent. Here it is phrasical, and therefore not to be forced. Yet because *cunctæ apices*, every letter and accent in holy writ is divinely significant, let us not neglectfully pass it over without some useful observation.

Obs. 1.—There is somewhat in it that *filia non filius dicitur*, the name of daughter, not of son, is here given to Israel. Israel's offspring must be a daughter, that she may be married to the God of Israel's Son. Christ is the beloved, the church is his spouse: 'My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies,' Cant. ii. 16. Betrothed to him in this life: 'I will betroth thee unto me for ever: yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness,' &c., Hosea ii. 19. Solemnly married in the next: at what time the saints shall sing, 'Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready,' Rev. xix. 7; and, ver. 9, 'Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.' Thus God the Father, that had a Son by eternal generation, hath now a daughter also by adoption. Hence the church is called the king's daughter—Ps. xlv. 13, 'The king's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold'—because she is wedded to the king's Son. God is a Father in many respects:—

(1.) In *creation*: Deut. xxxii. 6, 'Is not he thy father that hath bought thee? Hath he not made thee, and established thee?' He gave us all *essentiam et formam*, subsistence and form.

(2.) In *education*: Isa. i. 12, 'I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.' We are brought up in the house of this world, and fed from the table of his blessings.

(3.) In *comparison*: Ps. ciii. 13, 'Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.' Yield that a mother (which is rare and unnatural) can forget the son of her womb; yet God cannot forget the children of his election.

(4.) In *correction*: Heb. xii. 6, 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.' *Qui excipitur à numero flagellatorum, excipitur à numero filiorum*,—He that escapes affliction, may suspect his adoption. We are not exempted from misery, that we may not be accepted from mercy. The rod walks over us, lest we should grow wanton with his blessings.

(5.) In *adoption*, and that most principally: Rom. viii. 15, 16, 'We have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father.' Gal. iv. 5, 'God sent his Son, made of a woman, that we, redeemed by him, might receive the adoption of sons.'

All these may be reduced to three: God is a Father, *singularly, generally, specially*. *Singularly*, the Father of Christ by nature; *generally*, the Father of all men and all things by creation; *specially*, the Father of the elect by adoption. The first privilege belongs only to Christ; the second to many who have made themselves by apostasy the children of Belial; the third is blessed, and never to be forfeited.

This is a happy advancement, that the daughter of Zion is made the daughter of God; whom his equal and eternal Son hath vouchsafed to marry. It was no small preferment in David's opinion, by wedding Saul's daughter, to be made 'son-in-law to a king:' how far higher doth the church's honour transcend, that by marrying the Son of God is made daughter-in-law to the King of kings! Specially, when this bond is indis-

soluble by the hand of death, uncancellable by the sentence of man, undivorceable by any defect or default in the spouse; for he that chose her to himself will preserve her from all cause why he may not 'take pleasure in her beauty.' And as Christ, now in heaven, dwells with his church on earth by grace; so she, though partly now on earth, dwells with him in heaven: all her members being burgesses of that celestial corporation, since *animus est, ubi amat, non ubi animat*. Phil. iii. 20, 'Our conversation is in heaven, whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.' Thus Augustine, *Et ille adhuc deorsum est, et nos jam sursum*,—His mercies are still descending to us, our affections ascending to him. The desires of the faithful spouse are with her beloved. Such is the insolubility of that mystical union, which no eloquence of man can express, no violence of devils shall suppress. Therefore *ascendamus interim corde, ut sequamur corpore*,—let us send up our affections before, that our persons may follow after. As Christ hath sent thee down his Spirit as a pawn and pledge of this assurance, so do thou send him up thy heart for a token of thy acceptance; yea, of thy hopeful expectation and desire to be with him. *Minus anima promisit se Christo, quæ non præmisit se Christo*,—That soul hath nothing less than vowed itself to Christ, that hovers and hankers about the world, and is loath to come at him.

This is ineffable, inestimable happiness. Hence the daughter of Israel, (understand me not topically, but typically,) not Israel in the flesh, but the 'Israel of God,' Gal. vi. 16,—'children of that Jerusalem which is above,' chap. iv. 26, or at least 'from above,'—doth apportion all the riches of her husband. If it be *vox amici, Tuus sum totus*, the voice of a friend, I am wholly thine; it is more lively, more lovingly *vox mariti*, the speech of a husband. The bride, among the heathen, on the first day of her marriage, challenged of the bridegroom, *Ubi tu Caius, ego Caia*,—Where you are master, I must be mistress. Marriage is a strong bond by God's ordinance, and knows no other method but composition. God, that in creation made two of one, by marriage made one of two. Hence the daughter of Israel is made one with the Son of God; by a union which the heart may feel, but no art describe. Those gracious and glorious riches, which the Master of all the world is proprietor of, are in some sort communicated to us. His righteousness, holiness, obedience, satisfaction, expiation, inheritance is made ours: as our sin, sorrow, sufferings, death, and damnation were made his, not by transfusion, but by imputation, 2 Cor. v. 21. His sorrow, pain, passion for us, was so heavy, so grievous, so piercing, such a *sic* that all the world could not match it with a *sicut*. Our joy by him is so gracious, shall be so glorious, that *pro qualitate, pro æqualitate nihil in comparationem admittitur*,—for quality, for quantity, it refuseth all comparison. O blessed mutation, blessed mutuation! What we had ill, (and what had we but ill?) we changed it away for his good: what he hath good, (and what other nature can come from goodness itself?) we happily enjoy *vel in esse, vel in posse*, either in possession or assurance. Our Saviour died our death, that we might live his life. He suffered our hell, to bring us to his heaven.

Obs. 2.—It is somewhat, not unworthy the noting, that *filia dicitur, non filia*, Israel is called by the name of daughter, not of daughters. Zion hath but one daughter. The whole people is *unica quia unita*. As she is one, she must be at one, not jarring, not repugnant to herself. Confusion belongs to Babel: 'Let peace dwell in the palaces of Jerusalem.' They are refractory spirits, unworthy to dwell in the daughter of Zion's house, that are ever in preparation for separation from her. The church consists of a com-

munion of saints, a united flock under one shepherd, 1 Peter v. 4; not a company of straggling sheep, getting schism, and forgetting their chism—the unity of the Spirit, that makes men to be of one mind in one house. But as the spirits in man cease to quicken any member sundered from the body, and the scattered bones in Ezekiel's vision received no life till they were incorporate into a body, Ezek. xxxvii. 7; so the Spirit of God, which is *anima corporis*, the soul of his mystical body, forbears the derivation of grace and comfort to those that cut off themselves from it.

She is one, *una, unica*, that is 'mother of us all.' Though there be 'threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number; yet my dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, the choice one of her that bare her,' Cant. vi. 8, 9. There is one body, many members, 1 Cor. xii. 20. The eye must not quarrel with the hand, nor the head with the foot. If we be one against another, let us beware lest God be against all. We have one Lord, whose livery is love, John xiii. 35, 'By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if ye have love one to another;' whose doctrine is peace, Eph. ii. 17, 'He preacheth peace to you that were far off, and to them that were nigh.' Let us then serve him, professing one truth with one heart. It is wretched when sects vie numbers with cities, and there are so many creeds as heads; *qui conantur vel corrumpere fidem, vel disrumpere charitatem*,—who strive either to corrupt faith or dissolve charity, none performing his function without faction. It is testified of those pure and primitive times, that 'the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul,' Acts iv. 32: one mind in many bodies. 'Behold how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!' saith the Psalmist, Ps. cxxxiii. 1; when *inter multa corpora, non multa corda*, as Augustine sweetly,—when among divers men there are not divers minds: *sic viventes in unum, ut unum hominem faciant*,—so loving and living together in one, that they all make but (as it were) one man.

There is no knot of love so sure as that which religion ties. It is able to draw together east and west, sea and land, and make one of two, of ten, of thousands, of all. This is that which gathered the saints together, not to a local, but mystical union, whereby they are compacted under the government of one Lord, tied by the bonds of one faith, washed from their sins in one laver, assigned, assured, assumed by one Spirit, to the inheritance of one kingdom. But the unity of brethren agreeing is not more entire than their dissension, falling out, is violent: 'A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city; and their contentions are like the bars of a castle,' Prov. xviii. 19; but their own loss is the enemy's gain. It is usually seen that *amicorum dispendia hostium compendia*,—dissension is a Lent to friends, a Christmas to foes. They that so labour to untie unity, that true lovers' knot, which every Christian heart should wear and never be weary of, find at last by miserable experience that destruction doth follow where distraction went before; when instead of the right hands of fellowship, struck for consent, they, like the Athenians, will sacrifice for none but themselves and their neighbours of Chios. Needs must the daughter of Israel be disquieted, when such oppressors, like Rebekah's twins, struggle in her womb. If the distraction of voices hindered the building of Babel, needs must the distraction of hearts hinder the building of Jerusalem.

Behold, ye working spirits that must be doing, though you have no thanks for your labour, behold the daughter of Zion, opposed on both sides, as Christ was crucified between two malefactors; straitened as the host of Israel once, betwixt the Aramites and the Syrians, 2 Sam. x. 11, when Joab and Abishai

disposed themselves to mutual help, as needs required : Atheists on one side, Papists on the other. Bend all your forces against them that make breaches in the walls of Zion, and seek, ensue, procure the peace of Jerusalem, who is the only daughter of her mother, and spouse of her Saviour.

Obs. 3.—I might here infer to your observation, without any non-residence from the text, that the church is called *filia Jerusalem*, the daughter of the people, for her beauty, for her purity. I desire you to interpret by church, not only that church then visible in the Jews, but the catholic church also, whereof theirs was but a part ; many things being figuratively spoken of the particular which properly belong to the universal. The church of God, then and ever, may be called the daughter of Zion, for her virgin fairness, matchless by all the daughters of women. The prophet, in those solemn lamentations of Israel's ruin, gives her the title of virgin, with this of daughter : Lam. i. 15, 'The Lord hath trodden the virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a wine-press ;' and, chap. ii. 13, 'What shall I equal to thee, that I may comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Zion ?' The holy promise of God for her restauration is recorded by the same prophet to her, under this unstained title : 'Again I will build thee, O virgin of Israel ; thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry,' Jer. xxxi. 4.

This may insinuate *intemeratam pulchritudinem ecclesiæ*,—the unpolluted beauty of the church. So Christ testifieth of his elected spouse, Cant. iv. 1, *Tota pulchra es amica mea*,—'Thou art all fair, my love, and there is no spot in thee.' Now beauty consists in a sweet variety of colours, and in a concinné disposition of different parts. So the foreign congregations call her 'the fairest among women :' 'Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women, that we may seek him with thee ?' Cant. vi. 1. For her simplicity she is called a dove, for her fruitfulness a vine, Mount Zion for her steadfastness, for her royalty she is called a queen, for her brightness and eminence an ivory tower, for her beauty the fairest among women. As the cedar in the forest, the lily among the flowers of the valleys, Zion among the mountains, Jerusalem among the cities ; as Dinah among all the daughters of the land, so the daughter of Judah among her sisters. None so fair as the Shunammite to content King David, none else can plead that the Son of David takes delight in her beauty. But 'the king's daughter is all glorious within,' Ps. xlv. 13. *Omnis decor ab intus*,—It consists not in outward face, but in inward grace. How comes she thus fair ? Hear her speak of herself : Cant. i. 5, 'I am black, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, but comely as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.' Black indeed by her own misery, white and fair by her Saviour's mercy. Every soul is black by nature ; originally soiled, actually spoiled. We have all a natural corruption, that deprives us of all habitual goodness. We are born Moors, and have increased this swarthy-ness by the continual tanning of unceasing sins. We have no nitre of our own virtue enough to whiten us. Job had no water of snow, nor David of hyssop, nor had the pool of Bethesda, though stirred with a thousand angels, power to cleanse us. Let nature do her best, we dwell at the sign of the *Labour-in-vain*. Only Christ hath washed us, that we might have part with him. A medicine of water and blood, John xix. 34, let out of the side of Jesus by a murdering spear, hath made the daughter of Zion fair. In this sacred fountain hath Christ bathed her crimson sins and ulcerated sores, till she is become whiter than wool or the driven snow. He made her fair whom he found foul, that he 'might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it should be holy and without

blemish,' Eph. v. 27. She must be *pulchra*, or not *sponsa*, to him that is higher than the heavens and holier than the angels. His spouse must be no blouse. She is adorned by him, let him be adored by her.

The useful benefit of this observation teacheth us to make way through our own natural wretchedness to the admiration of our Saviour's gracious goodness. He loved *tantillos et tales, parvos et pravos*,—so small in deserts, so vile in defects; without any precedent congruity or subsequent condignity, *in nobis, quod à nobis*, in ourselves, that was or is of ourselves. For all the beauty of Zion's daughter is derived from God's Son: 'Thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God,' Ezek. xvi. 14. God said once to Jerusalem, ver. 3, 'Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite.' Ver. 5, 6, &c., 'None eye pitied thee, but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person.' But when 'I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I had compassion on thee:' I washed thee with water, clothed thee with broidered work, decked thee also with ornaments, put a jewel on thy forehead, and a beautiful crown on thy head. We have all an Amorite to our father, a Hittite to our mother: I mean, are conceived and born in sin, so foul and full of corruption, that there could no temptation be shot from us to wound the breast of Christ with love. Spotted we were, and nothing but nakedness was left to cover us; sick, but without care of our own cure; deformed and luxate with the prosecution of vanities; quadrupedated with an earthly, stooping, grovelling covetousness; not only spotted and speckled *in concreto*, but spots and blemishes *in abstracto*; pollution itself. As Micah calls Jerusalem and Samaria, not *peccatores*, but *peccata*: chap. i. 5, 'What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria? and what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem?' Or as Lucan speaks of the wounded body, *Totum est pro vulnere corpus*,—The whole body is as one wound. 'Blood touched blood,' and sore broke out into sore; all ulcers were coagulated into one by a general rupture, that even our righteousness was as filthy rags, Isa. lxiv. 6. Oh, then, how ugly were our sins! If old iniquities could provoke, or new ones revoke his favour, we had store to tempt him. If the raw and bleeding wounds of voluntary sins; if the halting foot of neutrality, the blear eye of ignorance, the ear deaf to his word, the tongue dumb in his praise; if the sullen brow of averseness, or the stinking breath of hypocrisy, if these could inflame his love, lo our beauty!

What moved thee then, O Saviour, to love us? Besides the incomprehensible delight and infinite content which God hath in himself, 'thousands of angels stand about him, and ten thousands of those glorious spirits minister unto him.' 'What then is man, Lord, that thou takest knowledge of him? or the son of man, that thou makest account of him?' Ps. cxliv. 3. The meditation of St Augustine* is pertinent to this consideration, and what son of man may not confess it with him? *Neque enim eguisti me, aut ego tale bonum sum, quo tu adjuveris: nec minor sit potestas tua carens obsequio meo*,—Neither didst thou lack me, O Lord: nor was there that good in me whereby thou mightest be helped: neither is thy power lessened through the want of my service. If we had been good, yet God needed us not: being bad, whence ariseth his love? What a roughness of soul findest thou, O Christ, when thou embracest us? What deformity when thou beholdest us? What stench of sin when thou kissest? When thou discourest, what

* Confess., lib. xiii. cap. 1.

rotten speeches drop from us? When thou takest us into thy garden, what contrariety of affections to thy expectation? Our embraces have been rougher than thy crosses; our persecutions like vinegar, hidden in the sponge of our sacrifices; our words swords, our oaths as bitter as *crucifige*, our kisses have been treasonable to thee as Judas's, our contempts thy thorns, our oppressions a spear to gore thy side and wound thy bowels.

Such was our kindness to thee, O blessed Redeemer, when thou offeredst thyself to us, and to the Father for us. The best thing in us, yea, in the best man of us, had nothing of merit, nothing near it: our 'wages is death; thy gift is life,' Rom. vi. 23. *Bona naturæ, melior gratiæ, optima gloriæ*,—Thou gavest us a good life of nature, thou gavest us a better of grace, thou wilt give us the best of glory. Whether it be *pro via* or *pro vita*, for the way or the end, it is thy gratuitous goodness, who hast promised of thy mercy, both *donare bona tua, et condonare mala nostra*,—both to give us thy good things, and to forgive us our evil things. We had misery from our parents, and have been parents of our own greater misery: *Miseri miserum in hanc lucis miseriam induxerunt*,*—Miserable parents have brought forth a miserable offspring into the misery of this world. And for ourselves, even when we were young in years, we had an 'old man' about us, Col. iii. 9: *tantillus puer, tantus peccator*,—a little child, a great sinner. *Sic generavit pater terrestris; sed regeneravit pater celestis*,†—So wretched our generation left us, so blessed our regeneration hath made us. So beggarly were we till Christ enriched us.

If you ask still, what moved Christ? I answer, his own free mercy, working on our great misery: a fit object for so infinite a goodness to work on. He was not now to part a sea, or bring water out of a rock, or rain bread from heaven, but to conquer death by death, to break the head of the leviathan, to ransom captives from the power of hell, to satisfy his own justice for sin; and all this by giving his own Son to die for us; by making him man who was the Maker of man. This was *dignus vindice nodus*,—a work worth the greatness and goodness of God; *deceat enim magnum magna facere*,—for it becometh him that is almighty to do mighty works. Thus to make the 'daughter of Jerusalem' fair, cost the Son of God the effusion of his blood.

This gives us strong consolation. *Qui dilexit pollutos, non deseret politos*. He that loved us when we were not, when we were nought, will not now lose us, whom he hath bought with his death, interested to his life. 'Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end,' John xiii. 1: *usque ad finem*, nay, *absque fine*,—unto the end, in the end, without end. He will not neglect David in the throne, that did protect him in the fold. He that visited Zaccheus a sinner, will not forsake him a saint, Luke xix. If he bore affection to us in our rags, his love will not leave us when we are heightened with his righteousness and shining with his jewels. If Ruth were lovely in the eyes of Boaz, gleaning after the reapers, what is she, made mistress of the harvest? He never meant to lose us, that laid out his blood to purchase us. Satan hath no trick to deceive him of us, us of him. As he hath no power to prevent the first, so none against the second redemption. Christ was *agnus in passione*, but *leo in resurrectione*,—a lamb suffering death, John i. 29, but a lion rising from death, Rev. v. 5. If he could save us, being a lamb, he will not suffer us to be lost, being a lion. 'Fear not, thou daughter of Zion;' he that chose thee sick, sinful, rebellious, will preserve thee sound, holy, his friend, his spouse. There is 'neither death, nor

* Bern. Medit., cap. ii.

† Aug. Confess., lib. i., cap. 12.

life, nor principality, nor power, nor height, nor depth, that shall be able to separate us from his love,' Rom. viii. 38, or pluck us out of the arms of his mercy. But tremble, ye wicked; if ye have not fought in his camp, ye shall never shine in his court.

To press this point too far were but to write Iliads after the Homers of our church. Besides there are many that offer to sit down in this chair before they come at it; and presume of God that they shall not be forsaken, when they are not yet taken into his favour. Enow would be saved by this privilege, if there were no more matter in it than the pleading of it. But in vain doth the beggar's son boast himself of the blood-royal, or the wicked soul of 'partaking of the divine nature,' 2 Pet. i. 4, when he cannot demonstrate his adoption by his sanctification. So that as we give comfort to them that doubt themselves, so terror to them that prefer themselves when God doth not. Make sure to thy soul that thou art once God's; and, my life for thine, thou shalt ever be his.

Obs. 4.—Lastly, from this titular phrase observe, that the 'daughter of Jerusalem' is our mother. Gal. iv. 26, 'Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all'—*μήτηρ παντῶν ἡμῶν*. The holy church is our mother, if the most holy God be our father. She feeds us with sincere milk, 1 Tim. iii. 15, from her two breasts, the Scriptures of both the Testaments; those oracles which God hath committed to her keeping. God doth beget us 'of immortal seed by the word, which liveth and abideth for ever,' 1 Pet. i. 23, but not without the womb of the church. *Non enim nascimur, sed renascimur Christiani*,*—We are not Christians by our first, but by our second birth. Neither is she the mother of *all*, but *us all*, whom God hath chosen before all time, and called in time to himself: *qui sic sunt in domo Dei, ut ipsi sint domus Dei*,†—who are so in the house of God, that themselves are the house of God. 'He that overcometh, I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, that cometh out of heaven from my God,' Rev. iii. 12.

So that *à quo dominatio, ab eo denominatio*,—our name is given us according to her name that cherisheth and is mother unto us. Hence every believing soul is a daughter of Jerusalem, and a spouse of Christ. *Anima credentis est sponsa redimentis*,—The soul of him that believes is the spouse of him that saves. As a multitude is but a heap of units, so the church is a congregation of saints. And as that which belongs to the body belongs to every member, so the privileges of our mother Jerusalem are the prerogatives of all her children: not only the daughter of Zion herself, but every daughter of hers, every faithful soul, is 'a pure virgin,' and so to be 'presented to Jesus Christ.' As Paul to his particular church of Corinth: 'I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ,' 2 Cor. xi. 2. Man's soul is of an excellent nature, and like a beauteous damsel, hath many suitors:—

(1.) First, the devil: who comes like an old dotard, neatly tricked and smugged up, his wrinkled hide smoothed and sleeked with tentations; he comes ever masked, and dares not shew his face. Take away his vizor, and the soul is worse than a witch that can affect him. And as when he tempts wretched sorceresses to some real covenant with him, he assumes the form of familiar and unfear'd creatures, lest in a horrid and strange shape they should not endure him; so in his spiritual circumventions, for the more facile, sly,

* Jerom.

† Aug.

and suspectless insinuation into mortal hearts, 'he transforms himself into an angel of light,' 2 Cor. xi. 14.

The promises of this suitor are large and fair; he offers the soul, if it will be his spouse, a great jointure. Judas shall have money, Esau pleasures, Nabal plenty. Christ himself shall be jointured in many kingdoms, Matt. iv. 9; but ever he indents that we must love him, and join with him in marriage. Doeg shall have a place in the court, so he will malign God's priests. Pilate shall be judge, so he will ply his injustice hard. The Protector shall be made an ecclesiastical judge, if he will promise more connivance than conscience, and suffer Master Bribery to give the censure. Every Balaam shall be promoted, that is readier to curse than to bless the people.

These things to the wicked doth Satan form in speculation, though not perform in action. He is an ill wooer that wanteth words. Hear his voice, and see not his face; believe his promises, and consider him not as a liar, as a murderer, and he will go near to carry thy heart from all. But he hath two infirmities, nay, enormities, that betray him: a stinking breath, and a halting foot.

For his breath; though it smell of sulphur, and the hot stream of sin and hell, yet he hath art to sweeten it. So he can relish covetise with thriftiness, voluptuousness with good diet, idleness with good quiet. Drunkenness, because it is very sour, and fulsome, and odious, even to nature and reason, shall be seasoned, sweetened with good-fellowship. Malice is the argument of a noble spirit, and murder the maintenance of reputation. Lust is the direction of nature; and swearing, a graceful testimony to the truth of our speeches. With such luscious confections he labours to conserve his lungs from stinking. If it were not for those mists and shadows, sin would want both fautors and factors.

But his lame foot cannot be hidden, (as they once foolishly fabled among the vulgar that his cloven foot could not be changed,) for his disobedience is manifest. If he saith, 'Steal,' and God saith, 'Thou shalt not steal;' 'Swear,' when God saith, 'Swear not;' 'Dissemble,' when he cries, 'Woe against hypocrites!' 'Be a usurer,' when God saith, 'Thou shalt not then dwell in my glory:' what pretences soever gloss his text, his lameness cannot be hidden. All his policy cannot devise a boot to keep him from this halting.—This is the first and worst suitor.

(2.) The world comes in like a blustering captain, with more nations on his back than crowns in his purse, or at least virtues in his conscience. This wooer is handsomely breasted, but ill backed: better to meet than to follow, for he is all vanity before, all vexation behind, by the witness of him that tried and knew him, Eccles. i. Sometimes trouble fellows him, but surely follows him. 'The desire of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows,' 1 Tim. vi. 10. He is like a bee or an epigram, all his sting is in his tail. He is troubled with a thousand diseases, and is attended on with more plagues than ever Galen knew remedies. He is now grown exceeding old, and hath but a few minutes to live. He is decayed both in stature and nature: specially he is troubled with a stooping and a stopping—a stooping in his joints, a stopping in his lungs; he neither hath an upright face nor a light heart.

[1.] For the former; he is ever poring on the earth, as if he had no other heaven, or were set to dig there for paradise. His eye never looks up to heaven, but to observe what weather it will be. This is his curvity; he is a warped, aged, and decrepit suitor. There is no straightness in him.

[2.] For the other; he cannot be lightsome, because he never did give a good conscience one night's lodging, which only truly can make 'the heart merry,' Prov. xv. 15. He strives to be merry, but his mirth is madness. He cannot dance unless vanity be his mate, and iniquity his minstrel. All his joy is *vel in vitiis, vel in divitiis*,—either in his wealth, or his wickedness. He cannot be merry if God be in the company. For the good only keep Christmas all the year in their conscience, though not at their table. He hath three inducements to persuade, and three defects to dissuade, the soul from accepting his love. If the former induce any to him, let the latter reduce them from him:—

His *first* allurements is a mellifluous language, able to blanch mischief. His words drop nectar, as if he had been brought up at court. And as by his logic he can make *quidlibet ex quolibet*,—anything of everything; so by his rhetoric he can make stones, hard-hearted worldlings, dance to his pipe, as it is fabled of Orpheus: *Cujus ex ore non tam verba, quam mella fluunt*, as I have read of Origen,—Every syllable is like a drop of honey from his lips. *Magis verborum viribus, quasi transformat homines*,—There lies a magic in his tempting speech, able to enchant and transform men's hearts: making a voluptuous man a hog; an oppressor, a wolf; the lustful, a goat; the drunkard, a devil. His arguments are not empty, but carry the weight of golden eloquence, the musical sound of profit and pleasure.

Besides his captivating elocution, he mends the ill fabric of his person with rich accoutrements. He wears all his clothes, as St Paul saith, in the fashion, Rom. xii. 2. He hath change of suits. He puts on pride when he goes to the court; bribery, when he goes to the Hall; ebriety, when to a tavern; prodigality, when he shuffles in among gallants; usury, when he would walk in the Exchange; and oppression, when he would ride down into the country. Only avarice is the girdle of his loins; he is never without it. It is his fashion to be of any fashion, and to apply himself to thy humour whom he courts. He hath a suit to speed his suit, to please thy affection.

This is not all; he tenders thee a fair and large jointure. Give him but marriage, and he will give thee maintenance. *Jura, perjura*,—Defraud, dissemble, swear, forswear, bribe, flatter, temporise, make use of all men, love only thyself; and riches, with preferment in his company, shall seek thee out. Thou shalt hazard no straits, climb no Alps, prison not thyself in a study, nor apprentice thy life to the wars. Entertain but the world for thy husband, and thou art out of all hunger and cold: wealth shall come trolling in even whiles thou sleepest. But happy is he that can be rich with honesty, or poor with content.

These are the glories whereof he would enamour thee; thus would he possess thee with his possessions. But he hath three deterrings: hear them:—

He hath sore eyes, blear and raw with cares; for he is ever in expectation, either of remedy to griefs, or supply to wants. What opulency can boast immunity from sorrow, exemption from crosses? And such is the secure worldling's impatience, when he is once angered with afflictions, that a little misery makes him greatly miserable. He makes his yoke the more troublous to him, because he hath not learned to draw quietly in it. Though he hath already more than enough, he keeps his eyes sore with seeking for addition. In the quest of wealth, he denies himself rest. Needs must his eyes be sore that sleepeth not.—This is one disease incident to the world.

He hath swollen legs, diseased with surfeits. For the world comprehends more than covetousness, by the testimony of St John: 'The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life is of the world,' 1 John ii. 15. We

renounced in our baptism, together with the world, pomps and vanities. Riot, lust, intemperance, epicurism, dissoluteness, are members of the world, as well as avarice. *Tam*, I say, if not *tantum*. And therefore our Saviour, by that terrible sentence against rich men, intends not covetousness for a sole and singular obstacle, (yield it a principal,) but pride, ambition, lust, vain-glory, luxury, the effects of an opulent state, as well as covetise. There are more burdens to load the camel, when he should pass through the small postern of grace, (that needle's eye,) than only avarous affections. What lesson of vice is not the rich man apt to learn? Therefore this makes the world have swollen legs, as the other sore eyes. He is blind, he is lame; both ill qualities in a suitor.

He hath a very weak tenure of all he possesseth; he is God's tenant at will, and hath lease of nothing, but *durante Domini beneplacito*,—during the great Landlord of heaven and earth's favour. At utmost, his hold is but for term of life: and that a warish, short, and transient life, scarce so long as the first line of an indenture. Nay, he hath right to nothing; for he holds not *in capite*, from the Lord of all, Jesus Christ. Therefore every worldling shall be accountant for each crumb of bread and drop of water which they have received. For the right of creatures lost in the first Adam, cannot be recovered but by the second. So that he enters on them as an intruder, and possesseth them as a usurper: his title being so bad, his tenure is certain in nothing but in being uncertain. *Sic transit gloria mundi*,—So 'the fashion of this world passeth away,' 1 Cor. vii. 31. What soul soever marries him, either he leaves his wife, or his wife must leave him, without ever being satisfied.

You see, then, the fraudulent proffers of your personable wooer, the world. What is there in him, that any daughter of Jerusalem should affect him? Only be you simple as doves, in not loving him; but wise as serpents, in living by him. 'Love not the world,' saith St John, 1 Epist. ii. 15; yet make use of it, saith St Paul. *Utere mundo, fruere Deo*,—Use the world, but enjoy God; for 'the world waxeth old as a garment, and fadeth away,' 1 Cor. vii. 31, Heb. i. 11; but 'Jesus Christ yesterday, and to-day, and the same for ever,' chap. xiii. 8. The world, like fire, may be a good servant, will be an ill master. Make it thy slave; it is not good enough to be thy husband. How base is it for a free woman to marry her servant!

(3.) The third is the flesh. This suitor comes boldly in, like a home-born child, and hopes to speed for old acquaintance. He can plead more than familiarity, even inherence, inheritance of what nature hath left us. He is not only collateral, but connatural to us. One house hath held us, one breath served us, one nutriment fed us, ever since one conception bred us. Like Hippocrates's twins, we should have inseparably lived together and loved together, if the prerogative court of grace and mercy had not divorced us. And even in the sanctified this impudent wooer cannot be quite shaken off, till death shall at once deliver that to death, us to life. For though 'with the mind I delight in the law of God, yet I see another law in my members, rebelling against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin,' Rom. vii. 22, 23. His company is wearisome, his solicitings tedious, to the virgin-daughter of Zion. 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord,' ver. 24, 25. So then, with the mind we serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

He will perpetually urge his suit, and not, after many rejections, be said nay. Thy soul cannot be rid of him, so long as thou holdest him in any

hope of success ; and so long he will hope as thou givest him a cold and timorous denial. Suitors are drawn on with an easy repulse, and take that as half-granted that is but faintly opposed. In whom this wooer prevails least, he wearies him with importunity till a peremptory answer hath put him out of heart. This wavering and weakly-resisting spirit cannot sleep in the chamber of quiet, whiles innumerable lusts, (which are the solicitors and spokesmen of the flesh,) beat at the door with their early knocks, pressing more impudently for audience than instruments of villany to Machiavel, or wronged clients to an advocate. Remiss answers provoke his fiercer attempts. He is shameless when he meets not with a bold heart. He thinks that though

'Pugnabit primo fortassis, et improbe dicet,
Pugnando vinci se tamen illa volet;—'

'Though at the first the soul refuse to yield,
She means on further strife to lose the field.'

Only resolution can make him give back, give over.

His insinuations are many :—By promises. *Pollicitis dives*. He is neither a beggar nor a niggard in promising : they are the cheapest chaffer a man can part withal. By tedious and stintless solicitations ; as if time could win thee.

'Quid magis est durum saxo? quid mollius unda?
Dura tamen teneris saxa cavantur aquis;—'

'The stone is very hard, the water soft;
Yet doth this hollow that, by dropping oft.'

As if the strongest fort were not long able to hold out. By shadows (for real proffers) of friendship : *Tuta frequensque via est, per amici fallere nomen*,—It is a safe and common way, by name of friendship to shew false play. 'It was not mine enemy,' saith David, 'but my familiar friend,' that did me the mischief. By tendering to the soul pleasing and contentful objects ; as if

'non vincere possit
Flumina, si contra quam rapit unda, natet;—'

'The floods would easily master him,
If he against the stream should swim.'

Therefore he forms his insidious baits to our inclinations, diversifieth his lusts according to the variety of humours. *Hic procus innumeris moribus aptus erit*,—This wooer can vary his Protean forms, observe all strains, reserve and conceal his own, till he be sure that the pill he gives will work.

This suitor is dangerous, and prevails much with the soul : a handsome fellow, if you pluck off his skin ; for this, saith St Jude, is 'spotted all over.' A virgin, well-natured, well-nurtured, that sets ought by herself, will not fasten her love on a lazar, leper, or ulcerous Moor. Why, then, oh why, should the soul, so heavenly generate, thus become degenerate, as to wed her affections to the polluted flesh ? God, indeed, once married the soul to the body, the celestial to a terrene nature ; but to the lusts of the body, which Paul calls the flesh, he never gave his consent. This clandestine match was made without the consent of parents—of God our Father, of the church our mother ; therefore most sinful, most intolerable. Cashier, then, this saucy suitor, who, like some riotous younger brother with some great heir, promiseth much, both of estate and love ; but once married, and made lord of

* Amor, lib. i.

all, soon consumes all to our final undoing. He breaks open the cabinet of our heart, and takes out all the jewels of our graces, and stints not his lavishing till he hath beggared us.—This is the third suitor.

(4.) The last and best, and only worthy to speed, is Jesus Christ. 'What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women?' say foreign congregations to the church, Cant. v. 9. To whom she answers, ver. 10, 'My beloved is white and ruddy:' he hath an exact mixture of the best colours, arguments of the purest and healthfulest complexion. 'The chiefest among ten thousand:' infinitely fairer than all the sons of men, who alone may bear the standard of comely grace and personal goodness among all. 'His head is as the most fine gold:' the Deity which dwelleth in him is most pure and glorious. 'His locks are curled, and black as a raven:' his Godhead deriving to his human nature such wondrous beauty as the black curled locks become a fresh and well-favoured countenance. 'His eyes are like doves,' &c. : who will, let him there read and regard his graces. 'His name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love him.'

He hath a rich wardrobe of righteousness to apparel us; a glorious house, a city of gold, to entertain us, whose foundation is jasper and sapphire, and such precious stones, Rev. xxi., the least of them richer than ten Escurials: his jointure is glory,—jointure I may call it, for so we are with him joined heirs, though not joined purchasers. If the house of this world be so esteemed, wherein God lets his enemies dwell, what is the mansion he hath provided for himself and his spouse, the daughter of Zion! Rom. viii. 17. His fruition is sweet and blessed, *ob eminentiam, ob permanentiam*,—for perfection, for perpetuity; a kingdom, and such a one as 'cannot be shaken,' Heb. xii., which no sin, like a politic Papist, shall blow up; no sorrow, like a turbulent atheist, shall invade.

This suitor is only beautiful, only bountiful: let him possess your souls, which with his blood he bought and with his power brought out from captivity. For him am I deputed wooer at this time, (for 'as though God did beseech you through us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God,' 2 Cor. v. 20,) who would fain 'present your souls pure virgins to Jesus Christ,' chap. xi. 2. Forbear the prostitution of them to any ravisher, to any sin; for *peccare*, to sin, is to commit adultery. *Quasi pellicare, id est cum pellice coire*. Christ lays just title to you: give yourselves from yourselves to him; you are not your own unless you be his.

2. We have heard the daughter of Zion described *quæ sit*; let us now hear *cujus sit*, 'the daughter of my people,' saith the Lord. God was pleased with that title, 'the God of Israel.' His own Scriptures frequently gave it him: Jer. xxxii. 36, 'Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel,' &c. The children are usually called after the name of their father; here the Father is contented to be called after the name of his children: 'The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac,' &c. So Darius proclaims in his decree, Dan. vi. 26, 'The God of Daniel.' Isa. xlv. 5, 'One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel. Thus saith the King of Israel,' &c. And, chap. xlv. 4, 'For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.' Here might be inferred the inutterable compassion of God to Israel. It is my people that is thus sick. But I have not scanted this observation before.

That which I would now direct my speech and your attention to, is the strangeness of his complaint; *ægrotat Israel*. Others to have been sick

were not so rare. It had been no wonder in Egypt, Ammon, Edom, Babylon : Israel hath the best means for health, therefore the more inexcusable her sickness. They should have been so mannered as they were manured, and brought forth grapes according to their dressing : Sidon shall judge Chorazin, Nineveh Jerusalem. In Sidon, where was no prophet, was less wickedness ; in Nineveh, where less prophesying, greater repentance. This conviction was demonstrated in many particulars. The praise of the centurion is the shame of Israel ; the mercy of the Samaritan, the priest's and Levite's condemnation. The very dogs licking Lazarus's sores confute the stony bowels of Dives. The returning of the strange leper, with a song of thanksgiving in his mouth, was an exprobration to all the nine ; when Christ had the tithe of a person he least expected.

God reproacheth this 'daughter of Zion,' Ezek. xvi. 46, that Samaria and Sodom were of her sisterhood ; yea, ver. 47, 'As if their abominations were a very little thing, thou wast corrupted more than they in all thy ways.' Nay, ver. 51, 'Thou hast justified thy sisters, in that their abominations came short of thine by the one half.' 'The people of thy holiness,' as the prophet Isaiah calls them, chap. lxiii. 18, are become, by the same prophet's testimony, 'a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity,' chap. i. 4. 'They that were not called by thy name,' chap. lxiii. 19, are not so rebellious. *Eo sunt deteriores, quo meliores Deus reddere conatus est.* It is grievous that God's goodness should make men worse ; and the more kind God hath been to them, the more unkind they should be to themselves, the more unthankful to him. Christ for the Jews turned their water into wine, John ii. ; the Jews for Christ turned their wine into vinegar, and offered it him to drink, Matt. xxvii. 34. They that were the richest of God's own making, became the most bankrupts in religion. They changed *cathedram mysterii*, wherein God placed their doctors, *in sedem pestilentiae*, into the scorner's chair, contemning his benefits ; they had a vineyard at an easy rate, yet paid no fruits of obedience. It is hard to say whether God was more gracious to them, or they more grievous to him. This boldly, never was more pity requited with less piety. God sowed mercy, and reaped a crop of iniquity.

God can brook this in none ; but as he forsook his temple in Zion when it became 'a den of thieves,' so he will take out his ornaments wherewith he graced the temple of the soul, when we set up the Dagon of this world in it ; and withdraw his riches, as from a divorced spouse, running after other lovers. Whiles Adam served God, God, in a manner, served him ; he provides for him a mansion, a companion, and sustentation. We read of nothing that God did six days together, (and his works were not small nor few,) but work for Adam ; as if he had been hired to labour for him. Is it not strange that such a child should prove rebel to such a father ? Let none think his fault was small in eating an apple, or that his punishment weighed heavier than his trespass. His sin was so much the greater, because against a God, and so good unto him. The more gloriously the sun and summer have apparelled a tree, the more we admire the blasting. When God hath planted a soul in his own holy ground, watered it with those sacred, purifying dews of his graces, shone on it with the radiant beams of his soul-reviving mercies, spent much *et operæ et olei*, both of care and cost upon it, and hath his expectation requited, abused with a mere flourish of leaves,—with either a *nequam*, or *nequicquam fructus*, none or evil fruits,—there goes out a curse, 'Never fruit grow on thee more.' When God hath put his grace into our unworthy vessels, how abusive is it to empty ourselves of that precious liquor, and swell our spirits with the poison of hell ! How just is it with

him to take away what he gave, Luke viii. 18, and to put a consumption into our vital parts! Hence (without wonder) our judgment rusts like a never-drawn sword; our knowledge loseth the relish, like the Jews' putrified manna; our faith dissolves as a cloud; our zeal trembles, as if it were held with a palsy; our love freezeth the harder, as water that once was warm; our repentance turns to ice, and our hope to snow, which the heat of affliction melts to water, not to be gathered up: the image of death is upon all our religion.

Was this strange in Israel, and is it nothing in England? Look upon the inhabitants of the earth, somewhat remote from us, to whose face the sun of the gospel hath not yet sent his rays; people blinded with ignorance, blended with lusts. What were our desires or deserts, former matter or latter merit, congruity before conversion, or condignity after, more than theirs, that might shew that God should put us into the horizon of his grace, whiles they 'sit in darkness and shade of death?' Want they nature, or the strength of flesh? Are they not tempered of the same mortar? Are not their heads upward toward heaven? Have they not reasonable souls, able for comprehension, apt for impression, if God would set his seal on them, as well as we? Eph. iv. 30. Are they not as likely for flesh and blood, provident to forecast, ingenious to invent, active to execute, if not more, than we? Why have we that star of the gospel to light us to Christ Jesus standing over our country, whiles they neither see it nor seek it? It is clearly, merely God's mercy. Now why are our lives worse, seeing our knowledge is better? Why devour we their venom, refusing our own healthful food; whiles they would feed on our crumbs, and have it not? Woe unto us if we scant God of our fruits, that hath not scanted us of his blessings!

Bring presents to the King of glory, ye children of his holiness, and worship before him. Endanger not yourselves to the greater misery, by abusing his great mercy. He hath loved us much and long in our election, when we could not love him; in our redemption, when we would not love him. His love was not merited by ours; let our love be deserved, inflamed by his. If God prevent us with love, we can do no less than answer him in the same nature, though not (it is impossible) in the same measure. Publicans will love those that love publicans, Matt. v. 46. The poet could say—

'Ut præstem Pyladen, aliquis mihi præstet Oresten;
Hoc non fit verbis: Marce, ut ameris ama;—'

'Give me Orestes, I shall Pylades prove;
Then truly, that thou mayest be loved, love.'

But God loved us, even being his enemies. *Ejus charitas est substantia, nostra accidentalis*,†—His love is a substance, ours only accidental. His, *ignis accendens*; ours, *ignis accensus*. His love is that holy fire that enkindles ours. If we return not our little mite of love for his great treasures, his great love shall turn to our great anger; and we shall fare the worse that ever we fared so well. God, as he hath advanced us into his favour, so hath he set us as 'a light on a hill,' among the nations; if darkness be on the hill, what light can be in the valley? A small scar on the face is eminent. If one eyebrow be shaven, how little is taken from the body, how much from the beauty! We are now the world's envy; oh, let us become their declamation!

Obs.—Is the daughter of God's people sick? It may then be inferred,

* Martial, lib. vi., Epigr. 11.

† Bern., Ep. 11.

that the church may be sick, though not die and perish ; die it cannot. The blood of an eternal King bought it, the power of an eternal Spirit preserves it, the mercy of an eternal God shall crown it, Heb. ix. 14. The heathens have imagined to vaunt themselves and daunt us with the downfall of our church. *Ad certum tempus sunt Christiani, postea peribunt ; redibunt idola, et quod fuit antea,**—These Christians are but for a time ; then they shall perish, and our idols shall be returned to their former adoration. To whom that father replies : *Verum tu cum expectas, miser infidelis, ut transeant Christiani, transis ipse sine Christianis.*—But whilst thou, O wretched infidel, expectest the Christians to perish, thou dost perish thyself, and leave them safe behind thee. Whiles they boast in their self-flatteries, that we had a time to begin and shall have a time to continue, themselves vanish, and we remain to praise the Lord our God from generation to generation. Indeed, Matt. xv. 13, 'Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up.' But whom he loves, for ever he loves, John xiii. 1. Yet may this church, whiles it is not freed from militancy, be very sick in the visible body of it. *Egrotat Israel ;* yet in Israel was the true church of God. It was so sick in Elias's time, that, Rom. xi. 3, he complaineth, 'Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars ; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.' The church was sick, you see ; yet the next verse of God's answer frees it from being dead : 'I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, that never bowed the knee to the image of Baal.'

What church since hath been so happy as to joy in her freedom from this cause of complaint ? The church was from the beginning, shall be to the end, without limitation of time, of place. Yet she is a garden : Cant. iv. 12, 'A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse ;' sometimes by diligence kept neat and clean, sometimes by negligence overrun with weeds. She is a moon, oft clear and beautiful, oft waning, and waxing darksome, chap. vi. 10. Die then it cannot, be sick it may. Time was, saith Chrysostom,† that *ecclesia cœlum fuit, Spiritu cuncta administrante, &c.*,—the church was a heaven, the Holy Spirit governing all things, &c. Now the very steps and tokens thereof do but scarcely remain. *Mali proficiunt, boni deficiunt*,—Wickedness grows strong, goodness faints. The lambs are few, the goats swarm.

'Little faith shall be found
When the last trump shall sound.'

We have read often the church compared to a body, *cujus caput Christus*, 'whose head is Jesus Christ.' In the 4th to the Ephesians, we have it likened to a man, *cujus anima Christus*, whose soul is Christ : 'Till all come to a perfect man,' &c. Now the soul increaseth in a man, not augmentatively, but *secundum vigorem* ; transfusing into the body her virtual powers and operations more strongly. Christ is *semper idem objective, subjective, effective*,—ever the same in himself, and to us, Heb. xiii. 8 ; but this body grows up with the head, this man with the soul, this church 'increaseth with the increasing of God,' Col. ii. 19. Sickness, then, to the church cannot be mortal, yet may the body be distempered ; her doctrine may be sound, her members want health : 'Why is not the health of the daughter,' &c. But to descend from the universal to a particular, from the invisible to a visible church ; this may be sick, either by some inbred distemperature, or by the accession of some outward malady. There may be grievances in either respect to afflict the daughter of Israel.

* Aug. in Ps. lxx.

† In 1 Cor. Hom. 36.

Inwardly : corruption may gather on it by degrees and put it in need of physic. For as the natural body of man, when it is overcharged in the veins and parts with rank and rotten humours, which it hath gathered by misdiet, surfeiting, or infest airs, the man grows dangerously sick, till by some fit evacuation he can be discharged of that burden : so the body of a church, being infected with humours, and swollen with tumours of unsound doctrine, of unsound life, superstitious ceremonies, corrupting the vital pores and powers thereof ; troubled with the cold shakings of indevotion, or taken with the numbness of induration, or terrified with windy passions of turbulent spirits, cannot be at ease till due reformation hath cured it. Now such a church sometimes is more swelling in bigness, and ostents a more bulky show ; but once truly purged of such crude superfluities, it becomes less great and numerous, but withal more sound, apt and fit for spiritual actions.

Our particular church of England, now fined from the dross of Rome, had a true substantial being before, but hath gotten the better being, by the re-purgation wrought by the gospel, maintained by our Christian princes, the true 'defenders of the faith' of Christ. God had doubtless his church among us before, for it is catholic and universal ; but his floor was full of chaff. The Papists demand where our church was before Luther's time. We answer, it lay hid under a great bulk of chaff ; and, Matt. iii., since Christ vouchsafed to come 'with his fan to purge it of the chaff,' it now shews itself with greater eminence, and is clearer both in show and substance. It was before a wedge of pure gold, but coming into the hands of impostors, was by their mixtures and sophistications, for gain and such sinister respects, augmented into a huge body and mass, retaining still an outward fair show and tincture of gold. They demand, where was the gold ? demonstrate the place. I answer, in that mass. But for the extracting thereof, and purifying it from dross, God hath given us the true touchstone, his sacred word, which can only manifest the true church ; and withal reverend bishops, and worthy ministers, that have been instruments to refine and purge it from the dross of superstitions, foul ceremonies, and juggling inventions.

The Papists brag themselves the true ancient church, and tax ours of novelty, of heresy. But we justly tell them, that *ecclesie nomen tenent, et contra ecclesiam dimicant*,—that they usurp the name of the church, yet persecute it. For the truth of our church, we appeal to the Scriptures. *Nolo humanis documentis, sed divinis oraculis sanctam ecclesiam demonstrari*.*—It is fit the holy church should be proved rather by divine oracles, than human precepts or traditions. We stand not upon numbers, (which yet, we bless God, are not small,) but upon truth. You see, as the church of the Jews, so any particular church, may be sick inwardly. To describe these internal diseases, I will limit them into four :—

(1.) *Error*. Indeed heresy cannot possess a church but it gives a subversion to it. *Errare possum, hereticus esse non possum*, saith that father,†—I may err, a heretic I cannot be. Now, *quicquid contra veritatem sapit, heresis est, etiam vetus consuetudo*,‡—What is diametrically opposed against the truth is heresy, yea, though it be an ancient and long-received custom. But logic, which is a reasonable discourse of things, shews a great difference between *diversa* and *contraria*. A church may be sick of error, and yet live ; but heresy (a wilful error against the fundamental truth, violently prosecuted and persisted in) kills it. Therefore, *heresis potius mors, quam morbus*,—heresy is rather death than sickness. When the truth of doctrine, or rather doctrine of truth, hath been turned to the falsehood of heresy, God hath re-

* Aug. de Unit. Eccl.

† August.

‡ Tertul.

moved their candlestick, and turned their light into darkness. Error may make it sick, but so that it may be cured. The churches of Corinth, Galatia, Pergamos, had these sicknesses; the Holy Ghost, by Paul and John, prescribeth their cures. If they had been dead, what needed any direction of physic? If they had not been sick, to what tended the prescription of their remedy?

To God alone, and to his majestical word, be the impossibility of erring. That church, that man, shall in this err palpably, that will challenge an immunity; whosoever thinks he cannot err, doth in this very persuasion err extremely. I know there is a man on earth, a man of earth, (to say no more,) that challengeth this privilege. Let him prove it. Give him a term *ad exhibendum*, and then for want of witness he may write, *Teste meipso*, as kings do,—Witness ourself, &c. Nay, ask his cardinals, friars, Jesuits. This is somewhat to the proverb, 'Ask the sons if the father be a thief.' But he cannot err in his definitive sentence of religion. Then belike he hath one spirit in his consistory, and another at home; and it may in some sort be said of him, as Sallust of Cicero: *Aliud stans, aliud sedens de republica loquitur*,—He is of one opinion sitting, of another standing. 'Let God be true, but every man a liar,' Rom. iii. 4. One of their own said, *Omnis homo errare potest in fide, etiamsi Papa sit*,—Any man may err in faith, yea, though he were the Pope. If they will have Rome a sanctuary, let them take along with them Petrarcha's catachresical speech, calling it an *asylum errorum*, sanctuary of errors. What particular church then may not err? Now can it err, and be sound? Be the error small, yet the ache of the finger keeps the body from perfect health. The greater it is, the more dangerous; especially, [1.] Either when it possesseth a vital part, and infecteth the rulers of the church. It is ill for the feet when the head is giddy. [2.] Or when it is infectious and spreading, violently communicated from one to another. [3.] Or when it carries a colour of truth. The most dangerous vice is that which bears the countenance and wears the cloak of virtue. [4.] Or when it is fitter to the humour, and seasoned to the relish of the people. Sedition, affectation, popularity, covetousness, are enough to drive an error to a heresy. So the disease may prove a gangrene, and then *ense recidendum, ne pars sincera trahatur*,—no means can save the whole, but cutting off the incurable part: *Pereat unus potius quam unitas*.

(2.) *Ignorance* is a sore sickness in a church, whether it be in the superior or subordinate members; especially when 'the priest's lips preserve not knowledge.' Ill goes it with the body when the eyes are blind. Devotion without instruction often winds itself into superstition. When learning's head is kept under avarice's girdle, the land grows sick. Experience hath made this conclusion too manifest. Our forefathers felt the terror and tyranny of this affliction; who had golden chalices, and wooden priests, who had either no art or no heart to teach the people. Sing not, thou Roman siren, that ignorance is the dam of devotion, to breed it; it is rather a dam to stifle, restrain, and choke it up. Blindness is plausible to please men, not possible to please God. Grant that our faults in the light are more heinous than theirs who wanted true knowledge. *Ex furibus enim leges eos gravius puniunt, qui interdum furantur*,*—For the laws do punish those thieves most severely, that fear not even by day to commit outrages. Yet in all reason their sins did exceed in number, who knew not when they went awry, or what was amiss.

Rome hath, by a strange and incredible kind of doctrine, gone about to

* Chrysost. in Ps. ix.

prove that the health, which is indeed the sickness of a church, is ignorance. Their Cardinal Cusan saith, that *obedientia irrationalis est consummata obedientia et perfectissima*, &c.,—ignorant obedience, wanting reason, is the most absolute and perfect obedience. Chrysostom gives the reason why they so oppose themselves against reason: *Hæretici sacerdotes claudunt januas veritatis*, &c.,—Heretical priests shut up the gates of truth; for they know that upon the manifestation of the truth their church would be soon forsaken. If the light, which maketh all things plain, should shine out, *tunc hi qui prius decipiebant, nequaquam ad populum accedere valebunt, postquam se senserint intellectos*,—then they who before cozened the people could preserve their credits no longer, being now smelt out and espied. Hence the people aim at Christ, but either short or gone, and not with a just level. But *nemo de Christo credat, nisi quod Christus de se credi voluit*,—let no man believe other thing of Christ than what Christ would have believed of himself. *Non minus est Deum fingere, quam negare*, saith Hilary,—It is no less sin to feign a new God, than to deny the true God. The priests call the people swine, and therefore must not have those precious pearls. And so the people *amant ignorare, malunt nescire, quod jam oderunt*,*—had rather continue ignorant, as not loving to know those things, which they cannot love, because they know not.

But, alas! ignorance is so far from sanity and sanctity, that it is a spilling and killing sickness. Men are urged to read the Scriptures, that never-emptied treasure-house of knowledge: they answer, *Non sum monachus; uxorem habeo, et curam domus*,†—I am no priest; I have a wife, and a domestical charge to look to. This is that pestilence (no ordinary sickness) that infects to death many souls; to think that knowledge belongs only to priests. This is a work of the devil's inspiration, not suffering us to behold the treasure, lest we grow rich by it. *Dicis non legi; non est hæc excusatio, sed crimen*,—Thou sayest, I have not read; this is no excuse, but a sin. The Romists stick not, as once the Valentinian heretics, *veritatis ignorantiam, cognitionem vocare*, by a paradox, pseudodox, to call the ignorance of the truth, the true knowledge thereof. Like those, Wisd. xiv, that 'living in a war of ignorance, those so great plagues, they called peace.' But *qui ea quæ sunt Domini nesciunt, à Domino nesciuntur*,—they that will not know the Lord, shall not be known of the Lord. It is objected, 1 Cor. viii. 1, 'Knowledge puffeth up.' Let Irenæus expound it: *Non quod veram scientiam de Deo culparet, alioquin seipsum primum accusaret*,—Not that he blamed the true knowledge of God, for then he should first have accused himself.

Beloved, 'let the word of God dwell in you plenteously,' Col. iii. 16. Do not give it a cold entertainment, as you would do to a stranger, and so take your leave of it; but esteem it as your best familiar and domestical friend: making it your chamber-fellow, study-fellow, bed-fellow. Let it have the best room and the best bed; the parlour of our conscience, the resting-place in our heart. Neglected things are without the door, less respected within, but near the door. *Sed quæ pretiosa sunt, non uno servantur ostio*,—The more worthy things are not trusted to the safety of one door, but kept under many locks and keys. Give terrene things little regard, preserve them with a more removed care. But this pearl of inestimable value, Matt. xiii. 46, this jewel purer than gold of Ophir, Ps. cxix. 127; lay it not up in the porter's lodge, the outward ear, but in the cabinet and most inward closure of thy heart. Deut. xi. 18, 'Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul.' Mary thought that place the fittest receptacle

* Tertul. in Apologet.

† Chrysost. in Math. Hom. 2.

for such oracles. This is that physic which can only cure the sickness of ignorance: *ubi ignorans invenit quod addiscat, contumax quid timeat, laborans quo premietur, pusillanimis quo nutriatur, famelicus convivium, vulneratus remedium*,—where the ignorant may find what to learn, the refractory what to fear, the labourer wherewith to be rewarded, the weak nourishment, the guest a banquet, the wounded a remedy to cure him. Be not ignorant, be not sick. ‘Search the Scriptures,’ read, observe. This is not all. *Non prodest cibus, qui statim sumptus emittitur*,*—The meat nourisheth not which tarrieth not in the stomach. It must be digested by meditation and prayer. *Meditatio docet quid desit, oratio obtinet ne desit*,—Meditation shews our want, prayer procureth supply. Let it not be said of our perfunctory reading, as it was of the Delphian oracle, *quoties legitur, toties negligitur*,—that we disregard what we read. Read to learn, learn to practise, practise to live, and live to praise God for ever.

(3.) A third sickness, which may inwardly afflict a church, is *dissension*: a sore shaking to the joints, an enervating the strength, and dangerous degree to dissolution. The world being but one, teacheth that there is but one God that governs it; one God, that there is but one church, one truth. The church is not only *columna veritatis, sed columba unitatis*,—the pillar of truth, 1 Tim. iii. 15, but also the dove of unity: Cant. vi. 10, ‘My dove, my undefiled is alone.’ Dissensions, like secret and close Judases, have given advantageous means to our common enemies, both to scorn and scourge the church. Clemens Alexandrinus† brings the heathen exprobrating our religion for untrue, unwarrantable: *quia omnis secta Christianismi titulum sibi vindicat, tamen alia aliam execratur et condemnat*,—because every sect challengeth to itself the title and right of true Christianity, yet one curseth and condemneth another. Within how much the narrower limits this distraction is pent, it so much the more violently bursteth forth, and strives to rend the bowels of a church: like some angry and furious vapour or exhalation restrained, that shakes the very earth for vent and passage. Such hath been the distractedness of some times, that men have laboured to be neuters, and studied more to be indifferently disposed to either side, than to be religious at all. Such a time doth Erasmus mention: *quando ingeniosa res fuit esse Christianum*,—when it was a point of policy and wit to be a Christian.

I confess, indeed, that unity is no inseparable and undoubted mark of the church; for there was a unity in those murdering voices, ‘Crucify him, crucify him!’ ‘The kings of the earth have banded themselves together against the Lord,’ Ps. ii. 2. Those favourers and factors of Antichrist, Rev. xvii., that make war against the Lamb, are all said to ‘have one mind.’ Nay, Chrysostom saith, that *expedit ipsis demonibus obaudire sibi invicem in schismate*,—it is necessary for the very devils to hearken one to another, and to have some mutuality in their very mutiny, a union in their distraction. Yet can it not be denied but that dissension in a church is a sickness to it. It goes ill with the body when the members agree not: those that dwell in one house should be of one mind. It endangers the whole building to ruin, when the stones square and jar one with another. What detriment this hath been to whole Christendom, he hath no mind that considers not, no heart that condoles not. We may say with the Athenians, *Auximus Philippum nos ipsi Athenienses*,—We have strengthened King Philip against us by our own contentions. Christian nation fighting with Christian hath laid more to the possession of the Turk than his own sword. Where is the Greek church, once so

* Bern.

† Stromat., lib. vii.

famous? *Græciam in Græcia quærimus*, saith Æneas Sylvius,—We seek for Greece in Greece, and scarce find the remaining ruins. Behold, we have laid waste ourselves, who shall pity us? Our own seditions have betrayed the peace of our Jerusalem. He hath no tears of Christian compassion in his eyes that will not shed them at this loss. If you ask the reason why the wild boar hath spoiled the vineyard, why the *Im* and *Zim*, filthy and unclean birds, roost themselves in those sanctified dominions, why Mohammed is set up, like Dagon, where the ark once stood, and paganism hath thrust Christianity out of her seat, it is answered, Israel is not true to Judah; the rending of the ten tribes from the two hath made both the two and the ten miserable.

It is one of the sorest plagues, (oh, rather let it fall on the enemies of God and his church! let his own never feel it,) when men shall be 'fed with their own flesh, and shall be drunk with their own blood, as with sweet wine,' Isa. xlix. 26, fighting and fighting one against another, till an utter extirpation devour and swallow all. The malignity of this sickness hath been terrible to particular churches. They that have been least endamaged have little cause to joy in it. Our own home-bred jars have lately more prejudiced our peace than foreign wars. The Spanish blades have done less hurt unto us than English tongues. Our contentions have laboured about trifles, our damage hath been no trifle; but I know not whether more to our loss or our enemy's gain. Look but on the effects, and you will confess this a dangerous sickness. Rome laughs, Amsterdam insults; whiles the brethren scuffle in the vineyard, atheists and persecutors shuffle in to spoil all. God's Sabbath, his worship, his gospel is neglected. Some will hear none but the refractory and refusers of conformity; others take advantage of their disobedience to condemn their ministry. Wicked hearts are hardened, good ones grieved, weak offended. Is this no sickness? Is it unworthy our deploring, our imploring redress?

We are all brethren, both by father's and mother's side. It is more than enough that our fallings-out have been a grief to both our parents. If we proceed, the brethren shall smart for all. Whether we be victors or vanquished, we may beshrew ourselves. Let us think we behold our mother calling us to stay our quarrels, and to lay down the cause at her feet. Otherwise, as Jocasta told her two sons—

'Bella geri placuit, nullos habitura triumphos,'—

we undertake a war whose victory shall have a sorry triumph. Let every star in our orb know his station, and run his course without erring; the inferior subjecting themselves to the higher powers, whiles the courses of superiors be wisely tempered with moderation and clemency. For *etsi omnibus verbi ministris commune idemque sit officium, sunt tamen honoris gradus*,*—though the office of all God's ministers be common and the same, yet they have different degrees and places.

We have adversaries enow at home to move our tongues and pens against. Oh that arguments of steel and iron might supply the weakness of the other! We have the Edomites with their no God, and the Babylonians with their new god; dissolute atheists, resolute Papists: the former scoffing us for believing at all, the latter for believing as we do, as we ought. These oppose (though under the pent-house of night) mass against service, sacrament against sacrament, prayer against prayer; confounding the language of England, as the Jews once of Israel. Whiles we are praying in one place,

* Calvin.

'O Lord God of Abraham,' &c., they are mumbling in another place, 'O Baal, hear us.' Whiles we pray for fire to consume the sacrifice, they for water to consume the fire; we for the propagation, they for the extirpation of the gospel; hating us and our Christian princes more mortally than if we were Saracens. For as no bond is so strong as that of religion, so no hostility is so cruel and outrageous as that which difference in religion occasioneth. Hence they cross, they curse, they persecute, they excommunicate. Nothing but our blood can stay their stomachs.

We know they hate us; let us the more dearly love one another. The manifestation of enemies should confirm the mutual league and amity of brethren. 'Oh, pray for the peace of Jerusalem!' Pray we that the deceived may find their errors, correct their opinions, and submit their judgments and affections to the rule of truth. Yea, that the wandering sheep, yea, that those who are yet goats may become sheep, and be brought into one fold, under one shepherd. Whiles they continue cockle there is small hope. Yet Paul was once a tare, who after proved good wheat, and is now in the garner of heaven. *Recte dicitur glaciale nivem calidam esse non posse: nullo enim pacto quamdiu nix est, calida esse potest.**—It is truly said that the frozen snow can by no means be made hot; for so long as it is snow, and frozen, it admits not to be calefied. Yet if that snow be melted, the liquidity thereof may be made hot. God, that is able to turn a stony heart into a heart of flesh, work this change upon them; unite all our hearts to himself, to one another; and heal our souls of this sickness!

(4.) To omit many,—for sins, as they are innumerable for multitude, so diverse for quality; and many can define sin, but few decline sin,—the last of these inward sicknesses is irreligious *profaneness*; a grief of all times, a disease of all churches. Other times have been notable for this, ours notorious. Not that I praise the former, which doubtless were conscious of evils enough. They know theirs, we our own. 'The deeds of the flesh,' if ever, 'are now manifest,' Gal. v. 19, not only to God, 'before whom all things lie naked,' Heb. iv. 13, as a dissected anatomy, but even to the observing eye of man. Oppression shews itself in open field, depopulating, ruining city, country, church. Drunkenness reels in the street, and gluttony desires not to be housed. Malice not only discovers, but ostenteth her devilish effects. Bribery opens his hand to receive in the very courts. Robbery and murder swagger in the highways. There is emulation in open school, superstition in open temple, sects in open pulpit. Brokery stands, like a sign, at the usurer's door, and invites foolish want to turn in thither for a miserable supply. Whoredom begins to neglect curtains, and grows proud of an impudent prostitution. Pride holds the restraint of concealment a plague, and rather would not be, than be unnoted. Oaths are louder than prayers; men scarce spend two hours of seven days at their supplications, whiles they swear away the whole week. If profaneness be not our sickness, I will almost say we are sound.

'Niger omnibus aris,
Ignis, et in nullis spirat deus integer extis.'†

If this sickness be not lamentable, rejoice, triumph, and say you have no need to mourn. If a temporal loss fall on us, we entertain it with ululations and tears. Let pirates and rocks spoil us at sea, the oppressing Sabeans in the field, the fire at home: see we our houses and towns flaming, our gold and goods (worldlings' gods) transporting, our wives, children, friends, shrieking

* Aug.

† Stat. Theb. 5.

under the hand of slaughter, we need not 'call for mourning women,' Jer. ix. 17, to wail for us; 'our own eyes would run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters,' ver. 18. Let profaneness lift up his wicked hand against God, to blaspheme his name, despise his truth, disallow his Sabbaths, abuse his patience, deride his treatings, his threatenings, his judgments; this we see and suffer without compassion, without opposition. But 'knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, we not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them,' Rom. i. 32.

These sicknesses may afflict a church inwardly. She may be sick *outwardly*—(1.) By the persecution of man; (2.) By the affliction of God.

(1.) By persecution of man. I need not call your thoughts back to elder times, and weary you with antiquities, to justify this assertion. This church of ours so well remembers this sickness in Queen Mary's days, as if she were but newly recovered. Whence descended those evils but *à culmine Pontificio*, as one calls it,—from the top tower of the Pope? Yet the Romists stick not to answer this, laid to their charge, by averring paradoxically that their persecution was in love, as Sarah to Hagar. In love they tyrannised, slandered, beat, imprisoned, manacled, massacred, burned us; all in love. As Philip-pides cudgelled his father, and pleaded it was in love. If this were charity, then sure the very 'mercies of the wicked are cruel:' their love is worse than others' hatred. *Nunquid ovis lupum persequitur aliquando? non, sed lupus ovem. Quem videris in sanguine persecutionis gaudentem, lupus est*, saith Chrysostom; *—Doth the sheep ever persecute the wolf? no, but the wolf the sheep. Whom thou seest delighting in the blood of innocence, let him plead what he will, he is a very wolf. We tell the Papists, as Augustine told the Donatists, notwithstanding their distinguishing by pretences, that their persecution exceeded in cruelty the very Jews'. For the Jews persecuted *Christi carnem ambulantis in terra*; these *Christi evangelium sedentis in cælo*,—the flesh of Christ walking on earth; the Papists the gospel of Christ sitting in heaven. But their cruelty is our glory; we have sprung up the thicker for their cutting us down: *plures efficimur, quoties metimur*,—contrary to the rules of arithmetic, our subtraction hath been our multiplication. The church of God *morte vivit, vulnere nascitur*, receiveth birth by wounding, life by dying. *Occidi possumus, vinci non possumus*,—as the inevitable and invincible truth hath manifested. We may be killed, we cannot be conquered. 'For thy sake we are killed all the day long,' as Paul saith, Rom. viii. 36, from the Psalmist, Ps. xlv. 22,—to shew that both the church of the Old Testament and of the New give experimental testimony of the truth,—yet 'in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us,' ver. 37. If our plant had not been set up by the all-prospering hand of God, the malignancy of these enemies would have soon rooted it up. They have verified, in their persecutions against us, what one of their own† writes of the Turkish Alcoran: *Omnium quæ in Alchorano continentur, ultima resolutio est gladius*,—The last resolution, propagation, propugnation of all things contained in the Alcoran (in the Pope's decretals) is (not the word, but) the sword. But blessed be our God, that hath limited this rage, and sealed us our *quietus est*. Though they will have no peace with us, we have peace with him that can overrule them.

But have we no persecutors still? Oh that no Israelite would ever strike his brother! There are two sorts of persecutors remaining—Esau and Ishmaels; nourished with the same air, borne on the same earth, and carried

* In Matth., Hom. 19.

† Cusan.

in the indulgent bosom of the same church. But *nobis ignominia non sit, pati à fratribus quod passus est Christus; neque illis gloria, facere quod fecit Judas*,*—Let it be no more shame for us to suffer of our brethren what our Saviour suffered of his, than it is glory for them to do the works of Judas. Some persecute with the hand, others with the tongue. *Exercet hi sapientiam, illi patientiam ecclesie*,—The latter exercise the wisdom, the former the patience of the church. We are secured from Ahab's, and Herod's, and Neroes; the teeth of the dogs be broken, and the jaws of the wolves pulled out; the Bonners and butchers of the church are hushed in their graves. Oh that the serpents also, which hiss and spit their venom at our peace, when all the birds of our air sing acclamations to it, were at quiet! But 'as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now,' Gal. iv. 29: now so, and will be so. We cannot see an end of these things without the end of all things. Our turn is still to suffer: we return not blow for blow; but instead of sounding a point of war, we cry one to another, *Patiamur potius*,—'Let us rather suffer.' Let the Roman affections, like so many pestilent rivers, run all *in mare rubrum*, or rather *in mare mortuum*,—into the red sea, into the dead sea; and snatching the sword of vengeance out of his hand that owns it, quit themselves on their imagined enemies with blood and death. Let him that is styled the servant of servants shew himself the tyrant of tyrants. Philosophy teacheth that external accidents change inward qualities, but without an absolute mutation *ipsius speciei*, they change no substances. A church may indeed at one time be better or worse disposed than at another; more hot or more cold; more sick or more whole. But as it were a strange fit that should transform Apuleius into an ass, so it were a strange variation of accidents in a church, that should turn patience into cruelty, humility into pride, a tutor into a tormentor. Let their motto be *ferio*, the term whereon all their arguments rest; let ours be *fero*. It is far better to suffer than to offer wrong. Let savage persecution sit under the ensigns of wolves; meekness and patience be our arms and armours.

This outward malady of a church, *persecution*, discovers the malignity of itself in many extensions. Especially, [1.] In martyring her professors; [2.] In treason against her sovereigns; [3.] In seducing her seers.

[1.] Martyrdom. God hath in all ages of his church suffered some wittnesses of his holy truth to be purified like gold in the fire. Though they are blessed that have so suffered, and the church hath in conclusion gained by this loss; yet during the turbulent working of these thunder exhalations in our air, we have lamented *miseram regionis faciem*, the miserable state of our country, whose face hath been snatched and torn by the bloody nails of these persecuting bears. Needs must the land be sick, where the governors, like ill physicians, have purged away the good humours and left the bad behind them. When they have imprisoned, stripped, scourged, famished, drowned, burnt the innocent, and rewarded the wretched instruments of such deeds: when the poor infant falling out, by the midwifery of fire, from the mother's womb, hath been cast back again into the mother's flames: when the bodies and bones of the dead, which by the law of nature should rest in quiet, have been digged out of their sepulchres, violated, cursed, burnt, as if, saith the proverb, they would kill 'God have mercy on his soul:' when women have been dragged out of their houses, sick men from their beds; and the woods have abounded with saints, whiles the temples with their persecutors; wild deserts have been frequented with true worshippers, Heb. xi. 38, and

* Cypr., lib. i., ep. 3.

the consecrated churches with idolaters: when the holy book was either not had or must be hid;—is it no impeachment of a church's health to have these assaults goring her sides? Such a time will give cause to complain with Israel, 'I am in distress; my bowels are troubled: mine heart is turned within me, for I have grievously rebelled: abroad the sword bereaveth, at home there is death,' Lam. i. 20.—This is the main blow of persecution.

[2.] Treason is a fearful and prodigious evil. Needs must the body of that realm be in hazard whose head is broken. They mean Israel no good, that strike at the life of David. I confess that this evil is not so properly (in strict terms) a sickness as a danger. Yet as a man that hath ill humours in him, though by good diet and strength of nature they are kept from uniting their forces, and casting him down, cannot be said to be in health whilst those enemies remain within him, watching their time of mischief; so the church, though it be not sensitive of the fever which such raw and undigested crudities as traitors can put her into till it be upon her, yet can she not be perfectly well till she be purged of such pernicious and malignant adversaries. Were not the Fauces of that horrid treason a disease and burden to the stomach of the land, till it had spued them out? Did not those pray against her, and prey upon her? Would they not as willingly have sacrificed through the fire, to their Moloch of Rome, the whole church, as those principal pillars of it they plotted to blow up? They wanted not will, but power. They would have swelled their vengeance till it had run over the verges, and comprised in one work *mille actus vitiosos, et mille picula*,—innumerable stratagems, the easiest whereof was the intention of murder,—till they had made a catholic end with a heretic church, as they call it. But the God of Jerusalem prevented the children of Edom: who is blessed for ever! It appears then, regicides are no less than regnicides, Lam. iv. 20; for the life of a king contains a thousand thousand lives; and traitors make the land sick which they live in.—This is the second dangerous blow of persecution.

[3.] The third is, seducing a church's seers, and perverting the children of the prophets, which is most commonly done rather with error than with terror; by beguiling than affrighting them. I have read, that Julian's cruellest persecution was with rewards. How many have been wafted over the seas with golden hands! Promotion rather than devotion hath cast many on the shores of Rome. There lies an exorcism, an enchanting power in gold, that conjures many weak spirits into that superstitious circle. Then at last home they come, and prove calthrops, to wound the country's sides that bred and fed them. Antichrist's spell is gold, and they that will worship a piece of red earth will not stick to adore that glorious beast. Self-conceit blows them up with a swelling imagination of their own worth, and if our church doth not *et numerare et munerare inter dignissimos*,—give regard and reward, estimation and recompense according to their proud desires, they will shift realm and religion too for a hoped guerdon. You will say, there is little loss to the body in dropping off of such rotten members. It is true that the damage is principally their own; yet what mother doth not grieve at the apostasy of her children? There is some hope whilst they are at home, little when revolted to the enemy. Meantime, let it not be denied but the seducers are persecutors, and great enemies to the church's health.

(2.) Thus may a church be outwardly sick by man's *persecution*: she may be sick also by God's affliction. This is diverse, accordingly as our sins deserve, and his judgment thinks fit to punish us: [1.] By war; [2.] By famine; [3.] By pestilence: the easiest of them heavy enough, and able to

deprive a church of health. Though the first might seem to be man's weapon, and so fitter to have been inserted among the former persecutions, as Israel termed her enemies, 'Our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of the heaven: they pursued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness,' Lam. iv. 19: yet because God calls Ashur his rod, and it is he that sends either peace or war, and no adversary sword can be lifted up against us but by more than his permission, for he hath a punishing hand in it; let us see how he can make his church of Israel sick:—

[1.] *War* is that miserable desolation which finds a land before it like Eden, and leaves it behind like Sodom and Gomorrah, a desolate and forsaken wilderness. Happy are we that cannot judge of the terrors of war but by report and hearsay; that never saw our towns and cities burning, while the flame gave light to the soldiers to carry away our goods; that never saw our houses rifled, our temples spoiled, our wives ravished, our children bleeding dead on the pavements, or sprawling on the merciless pikes! We never heard the groans of our own dying, and the clamours of our enemies' insulting, confusedly sounding in our distracted ears; the wife breathing out her life in the arms of her husband; the children snatched from the breasts of their mothers, by the terror of their slaughters to aggravate the ensuing torments of their own. We have been strangers to this misery in passion; let us not be so in compassion. Think you have seen these miseries with your neighbours' eyes, and felt them through their sides.

Let it somewhat touch us that we have been threatened. *Octogesimus octavus mirabilis annus*.—Have we forgotten the wonderful year of '88? An enemy of a savage face and truculent spirit; whose arms were bent to harms, to ruin, to blood, to vastation; whose numbers were like locusts, able to lick up a country, as the ox grass; the ensigns of whose ships were assurance and victory; while they cast lots upon our nation, and easily swallowed the hope of our destruction: a mortal enemy, an implacable fury, an 'invincible navy.' Lo, in the heat and height of all, our God laughed them to scorn, sunk them, drunk them up with his waves; tottered, scattered them on the waters, like chaff on the face of the earth, before the wind and tempest of his indignation. All their intentions, their contentions, their presumption of conquest were disappointed, dissolved, discomfited. These things, though they have not seen, let our children's children, to the last generation that shall inhabit this land, never forget, that we and they may praise God, who 'hath made fast the bars of our gates, and hath settled peace in our borders,' Ps. cxlvii. 13, 14.

[2.] *Famine* is a sore outward sickness, an affliction sent by the immediate hand of God. For it is he that withholdeth the influence of heaven, and the kindly heat of the sun, and the nourishing sap of the earth: Amos iv. 6, 'I have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places, saith the Lord.' As it is his blessing that 'our valleys are covered over with corn,' Ps. lxxv. 13, so it is his plague that 'we have sown much, and bring in little,' Hag. i. 6; that the 'mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom,' Ps. cxxix. 7. When he is pleased, 'he will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and wine, and oil; and they shall hear us,' Hos. ii. 21. England hath felt the smart of this sickness, and she, that out of her abundance hath been able to lend others, hath also been glad to borrow of her neighbours. The 'fat kine of Bashan,' Amos vi., rich gormandisers, have not been acquainted indeed with this misery, and therefore have not 'sorrowed for the affliction of Joseph.' But the poor, the poor have grieved, groaned

under this burden ; whiles cleanness of teeth and swarthinness of look were perceived in the common face. Whiles these 'arrows of famine' wounded our sides, Ezek. v. 16, and our staff of bread, whereon our very life leans, was broken, we could then cry, *Hic digitus Dei*,—Here is the finger of God. In our plenty, saturity, satiety of these earthly blessings, we acknowledge not *manum expansam*, his whole hand of bounty opened to us ; though then we confessed *digitum extensum*, his finger striking us, and bewailed the smart.

Famine is terrible enough of itself ; more dire and tetrical in regard of the company she brings along with her. For—

'*Sæva fames semper magnorum prima malorum*
Est comes,'*—

Raging famine is the prime companion of many fellow-mischiefs. *Ex uno grano oritur acervus*,—Of one grain of this starving misery ariseth a whole heap of lamentable woes. The attendants of famine are murders, robberies, rapes ; killing of children, that the same vessels become the wombs and tombs of little ones ; and innumerable stretchings of conscience, to the revoking of former, and provoking of future judgments. No marvel if hunger disregard the mounds and fences of God's laws and man's, when it breaks through stone walls. The poet describes famine—

'*Quæsitamque famem lapidoso vidit in antro*,' &c.,—†

Behold hunger in her stony den, tearing up the grass with her long nails and sharp teeth, her neglected hairs grown rough and tangled, her eyes hollow, her cheeks pale, her skin rugged and swarthy, left only as a thin scarf to hide her lank entrails ; nothing clean about her but her teeth ; her dry bones starting up, her breasts hanging over in the air, her joints swollen big and huge, her sinews shrunk, as unwilling to hold her limbs together. This is that monster that turns men into cannibals, unnaturally to devour one another's flesh. I have read that at Turwyn‡ in France, the famine was so deadly that man's flesh was sold for food. This sickness is worse than death. Happy are we that God's mercy hath banished this plague from our land ; oh, let not our iniquities revoke it !

[3.] The *pestilence* we better know, as one that hath but a little while been kept out of our doors, and watcheth when our iniquities shall again let him in. He skulks about, and will not be rid away till repentance hath made our coast clear. This is God's pursuivant, that hath rode circuit in our land, and to whomsoever God hath sent him, he never returned with a *non est inventus*, but always brought, *si non corpus, tamen animam cum causa*,—if not the body, yet the soul, with the cause, before his judgment-seat. This is he that 'rides on the pale horse,' Rev. vi., and 'catcheth men as with a snare,' perhaps when they have most hasted from him. How hath this plague left the very streets of our cities empty, when they seemed to have been sowed with the seed of man ; how astonished the living, frightened the dying, disjoined the mutual society and succour of friend to friend, and that in a time when comfort would have been most seasonably welcome ; trembling hands pulling dead bodies into the graves with hooks, or rolling them into pits !

Turn back your eyes, that now live in the Appenine height of peace and health, and think you see the lamentable state of your country, as few years past discovered it. Imagine you behold the hand-wringing widows beating

* Lucan, lib. iv.

† Metam., lib. viii.

‡ Terouenne.—Ed.

their bosoms over their departing husbands ; the distracted mothers falling into swoons, whiles they kiss the insensible cold lips of their breathless infants ; poor desolate orphans, that now mourn the untimely loss of their parents, as being made by years more sensible of their want than when death's pestilential hand took them away ; the loud groans and struggling pangs of souls departing ; servants crying out for masters, wives for husbands, parents for children, children for mothers ; grief in every house striking up alarums ; bells heavily tolling in every place, ringing out in another ; numbers of people, that not many hours before had their several chambers delicately heightened, now confusedly thrust together into one close room, a little noisome hole, not twelve feet square. They have marble bosoms that will not be shaken with these terrors, and have sucked tigresses in the wilderness that cannot compassionate these calamities. How did they grieve a church to feel them, when they affect, afflict, and make us sick to hear them !

I know you have long looked for an end ; I never delighted in prolixity of speech. What remains, but the more terrible we conceive these sicknesses of a church, the more we bless God for the present health of ours ? Let not our sins call back these plagues ; let us not provoke our God, lest earth, air, heaven, renew their strokes upon us. Wars and famines from the earth, plagues from the air, judgments from the clouds ; they are all restrained at our repentance, let loose at our rebellions. Oh, serve we the Lord our God with fear and obedience, that he may delight to do us good, and we to praise his name ! that we ourselves, and our children after us, and the generations yet unborn, may see the 'peace of Jerusalem' all their days ! that the golden bells of Aaron may be freely rung, and the trophies of victory over all antichristian enemies may still be seen amongst us ! even till this Easter and Feast of the Resurrection of our Saviour Jesus overtake the resurrection of all his saints !

Grant this, O Father, for thy mercies ; O Christ, for thy merits ; O blessed Spirit, for thy holy name's sake : to whom, three Persons in glorious trinity, one only true and immortal God in unity, be all power, praise, majesty, and mercy, acknowledged for ever ! Amen.