

## ENGLAND'S SICKNESS.

(CONTINUED.)

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*Why is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered ?—*  
JER. VIII. 22.

II. WE have described the person, the church of Israel, as she is her own, as she is her owner's ; what in regard of herself, what in respect of her God. It remains now only to inquire how she is affected. She is sick ; which is necessarily implied from God's complaint : ' Why is not the health of my daughter recovered ? ' She was sick, and so sick that the prophet complains, ' Her wound is incurable, for it is come,' even to the heart, ' unto Judah,' Mic. i. 9 : incurable in regard of her own misery, not of her Saviour's mercy. She was low brought in the Babylonish captivity : ' Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and like unto Gomorrah,' Isa. i. 9. ' It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions,' though our obedience, ' fail not,' Lam. iii. 22. But her honour lay in the dust, when her apostasy had forfeited her happiness ; superstition taking the upper-hand of devotion, and the traditions of man getting the start and ascendancy of God's precepts ; when her disease grew to frenzy, and her sickness so far from all recoverable hope, that she had slain her physician, and killed him that should have cured her.

Whence it appears that a particular visible church might and may fall away from grace, and have the ' candlestick removed,' Rev. ii. 5. The Papists brag of their numerous multitude, and promontorious celsitude. Rome boasts that her church stands upon a hill, Matt. v. 14 : so it doth, on six hills too many, Rev. xvii. 9. She is mounted high enough, if this could justify her. She had better bate of her height, and rise in her goodness. There may be a local succession, but if not in faith and doctrine, *mole ruit sua*, her top-heavy weight overthrows her. May it not be said of her, as Jeremiah of Egypt, ' Go up into Gilead, and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt ; in vain shalt thou use many medicines, for thou shalt not be cured ? ' Jer. xli. 11. It is no wonder then, no wrong, if we depart from her that hath departed from the truth of the gospel and faith of Christ.

I will not descend into the view of her apostasy, though just occasion may seem here offered ; but turn my speech to ourselves, who are sound in

doctrine, sick in conversation ; but, I trust, not without good hope of recovery.

But so soon as the Romish malignancy hears me say, ' We are sick,' they instantly insult, reproaching our doctrine. But do men try the faith by the persons, or the persons by the faith ? It is a silly argument *à moribus ad doctrinam*, from the life to the doctrine. Yet, though we desire and strive to have our own lives better, we fear not to match them with theirs. Our sickness would be esteemed less, if we would go to Rome for a medicine. For the Papist may better steal the horse, than the Protestant look on. But so long as we have approved physicians at home, what need we walk so far to a mountebank ? It is a false rumour, that there is no sound air but the Romish. Is it not rather true, that thence comes ill infection ; and that they who have forsaken us to seek health there, have gone out of God's blessing into the warm sun ?

Our lives trouble them : this they object, this they exprobrate *ad nauseam usque*. But do they not stumble at our straws, and leap over their own blocks ? cavil at our motes, and forget, or justify, their own beams ? The swelling on the fox's head shall be a horn, if the Pope will so judge it ; a Catiline, Lopus, Garnet, Faux, an honest man, a catholic, a saint, if he will so interpret, so canonise him. If I should but prick this rank vein, how would Rome bleed ! Would not *hæc prodidisse* be *vicisse*, as Erasmus said of Augustine dealing against the Manichees,—the very demonstration of these things be a sufficient conviction ? Unnatural and hideous treasons ; conspiracies against whole kingdoms ; deposing, dethroning, touching with a murderous hand *Christos Dei*, the anointed of God ; oaths, uncleannesses, perjuries,—from whom are they produced, by whom practised, if not mostly, if not only by Papists ? They pry, search, deride, censure the forepart of their wallet, wherein they put our iniquities ; whiles their own sins are ready to break their necks behind them. The greatest evils we have are theirs ; fathered by those that will not be mothered of our church : *Hæc non ad frumenta Christi, sed ad eorum paleam pertinent*.—These belong not to Christ's wheat, but to the chaff of Antichrist. These are monsters bred of that viperous dam, that have shook hands with humanity, with civility, though they reserve the form of religion.

*Si quid in his possem, facerem sterilesce matrem*, as one of their own said,—It were well if either the children would forsake their kind, or the mother become barren. Yet must these men be saints, and stand named with red letters in the Pope's calendar ; red indeed, so dyed with the martyred blood of God's servants.

But I am not delighted to stand upon comparisons, if their exclamations had not put me to it ; that, like blown Pharisees, cry out with ostentation of sanctity, ' God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, or as this publican,' Luke xviii. 11. What age, people, church, were ever yet so holy, that the preachers found no cause of reproof, of complaint against it ? Chrysostom speaketh of his times : ' Christians now are become like pagans or worse.' Yet who will say that the religion of pagans was better than that of Christians. The priest and Levite had no mercy, the Samaritan had ; yet their religion was the true, and not the Samaritan's. If some Papists amongst us, and those very few, live in more formal and moral honesty, yet this commendeth not their whole church. They are now in the time of their persecution, as they take it, though their prosperity and numbers evince the contrary ; we are in our peace, and who knows not that an easy occasion of wantonness ?

I deny not that we have grievous offenders ; we mourn and pray for them. Do the Papists rejoice at this ? Woe to him that is glad of God's dishonour ! Let them brag their perversion of some which were ours, but such and so affected to viciousness. If we had lost more of atheists, sacrilegious adulterers, licentious hypocrites, we had as little reason to complain as they to be proud. We are the fewer, they not the better. We desire, endeavour, reprove, exhort, instruct all, with purpose of heart to save them in the day of the Lord Jesus ; if they wish not the same, we are content to differ as far from them in our desires as we do in our doctrines. If there were none sick, we might lay aside our physic ; but there are many, too many,—all in some measure, James iii. 2, some in all measure, beyond measure,—therefore we must proceed.

Sickness is the subject, and the observations that shall limit my short ensuing speech are quadruple :—1. The precious benefit of spiritual health, which we shall the better discern if we compare it with corporal ; 2. What sickness is incident to man ; 3. That the sickness of the soul is most dangerous ; 4. Lastly, who are the sick.

1. Health is precious : *chara est cuique salus*. Every man's health is dear to him. Exclude from this comparison the gifts of the mind, which are truly of a more pure and changeless condition, and then what earthly benefit will not give place to health ? It is one of the positive virtues, grafted in man's nature with the creation. Weigh it in the balance with some rivals.

(1.) Riches are the desire of many hearts, the special fruit which their hands reach to gather, (passing by all the better trees in God's orchard,) the object of most endeavours. How vain, how tedious, how odious, are they without health ! Let them bind gold to their aching head, drink Cleopatra's draught, (precious stones dissolved,) to ease their rasping stomach, involve and wrap their convulsed joints in furs and silks, empty their coffers in the physician's study ; if nature and her ordinator, God, deny health, how unvaluable are their riches, how unavailable their projects ! How complain they, after all experimented succours, their unabated anguish ! Therefore the son of Sirach truly saith, 'Better is the poor, being sound and strong of constitution, than a rich man that is afflicted in his body. Health and good state of body are above all good, a strong body above infinite wealth. There is no riches above a sound body, and no joy above the joy of the heart,' Eccles. xxx. 14–16.

'The poor man well, only admireth wealth ;  
The rich man sick, only commendeth health.'

Health gives means to be rich, riches give no means to be healthful. Nay, they are rather traitors and adversaries to it ; not scaffolds, whereby health is built up, but stairs to descend by to the grave. The rich man's quotidian delicacies rotted him for death. Where there is a full purse, and an ambitious appetite, there is a close and unsuspected conspiracy against the health. Thus we do not more eagerly pursue opulency in our soundness, than in our sickness we contemptibly despise, loathingly dislike it.

(2.) Is there any ascendancy in pleasure above health ? Will not that carry up a brave forehead without being beholden to it ? Alas ! cold is the entertainment of delight to a warish and sickly carcass. *Misera est voluptas, ubi periculi memoria adest*,—Pleasure is unpleasant to the memory guilty of instant danger. It is epicurean, profane, and idle physic to sorrow.

'The laying wine on cares to make them sink :  
Who fears the threats of fortune, let him drink.'

Why doth not then that Chaldean monarch continue his carousings, and wash away the characters of that fatal hand from his heart with floods of wine? Dan. v. 5. Alas! sorrow will keep a man sober, and restrain him from any drunkenness but its own. To omit that *mortem dabit ipsa voluptas*, and 'the end of mirth is heaviness,' what pleasure can fasten her slippery hold on the afflicted heart? It is loathed whiles it objects and prostitutes itself to our sight, courting and wooing our affections: the more greedily we draw on pleasure, the sooner it loseth the nature, and is turned into the contrary.\* Miserable comforter, (as Job's friends were justly called,) whose requested mitigation turns to the aggravation of our misery. When pleasure opens the shop of all her delectable wares, and prays the sick hand to choose what best affects it,—shows, perfumes, colours, wine, junkets, sports, company, music,—she is answered with nothing but 'Away with them, away with them!' They are no medicines for the headache, one dram of health is worth a talent of pleasure.

How dotingly do men (in their wanton days) take it up! Nay, how doth it take up them! as the philosopher truly: *Non nos voluptatem, sed voluptas nos habet; cujus aut inopia torquemur, aut copia strangulamur: miseri, si desiderimur ab illa, miserieores, si obruimur*;†—We possess not pleasure, but pleasure us; whereof we are either perplexed with the want, or strangled with the abundance: we are wretched if it leave us, more wretched if it overwhelm us. But sickness, when it comes, mars the relish of it to the mind, as of meats to the palate, and sends it away without a welcome, not without a check and defiance. Sickness, a stronger power (if weakness may be called strength) than pleasure, hath gotten possession of a man, and laughs at the vain endeavour of vanity to remove it. This is the time to say to 'laughter, Thou art mad,' and to esteem mirth a tedious, odious, irksome guest. They that *non voluptates sibi emunt, sed se voluptatibus vendunt*,—buy not pleasure to themselves, but sell themselves to pleasure, as Esau did his birthright for it, find in sickness the memory of what they do love and must leave, an addition to their present malady. So *felicitas* hath no more left but the first syllable, *fel*, gall; and pleasure hath no *plea* sure but this, that it is short during the sweetness, long in the bitterness necessarily following it. Health then is beyond pleasure also, without which it is either not delightful, or is not at all.

(3.) Both these have lost the prize; let us see if honour can win it. Alas! what is it to sit groaning in a chair of state? or to lie panting on a bed of down? It is little content to have many knees bow to thee, whiles thine bow to sickness; to have many uncovered heads attend thee, and thine own, though covered, find no ease. How wouldest thou be glad to change places with the meanest servant, on condition thou mightest change bodies with him! How much of thine honour wouldest thou lay out for a little of this health! He that lives in the height of honour and wealth repines at nothing more than to see the hungry labourer feed on a crust, whiles his own nice and squeasy stomach, still weary of his last meal, puts him into a study whether he should eat of his best dish, or nothing.

How poor, how weak, how nothing besides a name, is honour, when sickness hath dismounted it! when the coach is turned to a litter, the feather to a kerchief, public and popular magnificence to the close limits of a chamber, whither sickness (like a great commander) hath confined him, the imperious tongue fainting and failing in the wonted tunes of 'Go, Come, Do,' &c., as the centurion spake, Matt. viii. 9: the curious attire thrown by with

\* Sen. de Benef., lib. vii., cap. 2.

† Sen. de Beat. Vit., lib. i., cap. 14.

neglect ! Alas ! now what is honour but a mere property, a pageant, which health like the day sets out, and the night of sickness takes in again ? 'Sickness hides pride from a man,' saith Elihu, Job xxxiii. 17.

What inferior benefit shall we then match with health, that it may glory of equality, in comparison ? This is precious and desirable, whether to body or soul. To the soul simply ; to the body but *secundum quid*, in respect if it may not prejudice the health of the soul. For though corporal health be so good, that all other worldly good things are but troublesome without it ; yet it is often seen that the worse part draws away the better, and a vigorous, strong, able body without any difficulty makes a wanton and diseased soul.

*Bodily* health is generally desired far more than endeavoured ; it being an action of that natural propenseness, engrafted in all men, to their own good. Parents are provident to the bodies of their children, even those who set so slight a thought on their souls, shewing herein plainly that they brought forth their bodies, not their souls. Large and lavish is our indulgence at all parts to this frail tabernacle ; yea, so profuse, and not withholding, that whiles we seek more health, we lose that we had. *Querendo perdimus*, we seek it in full dishes, and behold there we lose it ; for *prohibent grandes patinæ*. Would we know how to preserve health ? I am no physician, nor will I wade further in this argument than divinity and reason leads me. Let us observe moderation, labour in our calling, abstinence.

(1.) Moderation. As the philosopher said that he never corrected himself with repentance for his silence, but often for his speech ; so our forbearing of junkets should not grieve us, but our immoderate devouring of them. *Hæc est sana et salubris forma vitæ, ut corpori tantum indulgeas, quantum bonæ valetudini satis est*,\*—This is a wholesome form of living, that the body be so far pleased as the health be not displeased. It is certain that surfeit kills more than famine. It was one of Hippocrates's aphorisms, 'All immoderations are enemies to health.' It was one of Plato's monsters of nature, that he found in Sicilia a man eating twice a day : a thing of so little admiration with us, that it is wonderful in him that doth not. Perhaps a breakfast goes before, and a banquet follows after both these. Neither is the variety less than the quantity. We plead, Nature bids us eat and drink : it is granted. Yea, a solemn festival invites us to more liberal feeding : it is not much denied, if rare, if seasonable for thy appetite, if reasonable for the measure. But many content not themselves only to steal the halter, except there be a horse at the end of it, as the shriven thief said in his confession to the priest,—only to feed and drink to pleasure, but to sleep, to surfeit, to ebriety, disabling themselves to any sober exercise. *Turpe est stomachum non nosse modum*,—It is vile, and worse than bestial, when the stomach knows no measure.

Seneca's rule is good, *Dandum ventri quod debes, non quod potes*,—Allow the belly what thou shouldest, not what thou mayest. I shame not to convince this error, even from the example of heathens ; that if religion cannot rule us as Christians, yet nature may correct us as men. While others, saith Socrates, *vivunt ut edant, ego edam ut vivam*, live to eat, I will eat to live. It is perhaps easy to find some that abstain, but how few for conscience of God's precept ! The sick, the poor, the covetous, the full, all moderate, but to what purpose ? The sick man for his health's sake, the poor man for his purse's sake, the covetous for miserableness, the full for the

\* Sen. Ep. 8, ad Lucil.

loathing of his stomach. But let us that are Christians moderate ourselves for conscience of God's commandment; because gluttony is a work of darkness, and the night is now past, Rom. xiii. 12, 13. So shall we at once provide well for our bodies, and better for our souls.

(2.) Labour in our callings is no small furtherance of our healths. The bread of him that laboureth, as Solomon says of his sleep, is sweet and relishable, 'whether he eat little or much,' Eccles. v. 12. Therefore 'drink waters out of thine own cistern,' Prov. v. 15: live of thine own labours; the bread thou hast earned shall never be gravel in thy throat. 'He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread,' Prov. xii. 11; whereas others shall either 'eat and not have enough,' Hag. i. 6, or have enough and not eat. Hence surfeits light so frequently on the rich, and the gentle blood grows so quickly foul, because they think themselves bound to no labours, so long as they may live on their lands. It was the father's charge to his eldest son, Matt. xi. 28, 'Son, go and work to-day in my vineyard.' The privilege of primogeniture must not exempt him from labour. He sends him to the vineyard, to dress it before he hath it; he will keep it the better when he hath it. Industry in our vocation is not only a means in nature, but even by the ordinance and blessing of God, to the conservation of health.

(3.) Abstinence. I mean more than moderation; that which we call fasting: *jejunium jejantis*, a free and voluntary fast, when the body refraineth such refectations as nature taketh pleasure in, and that only for health's sake. As the tree by a gentle shaking knits faster at the root, this moderate weakening begets strength. So that at once it may be a help to devotion, (for repentance comes not before God with a full belly, and meat between the teeth,) and a perservative to health; physic to defend from the need of physic, a voluntary medicine to prevent a contingent trouble.—Thus of the body.

The soul's sanity is not less precious, though more neglected. It was made in the image of the most high God; which image consisted in *lumine mentis, rectitudine cordis, affectuum moderatione*,\* as some,—in the brightness of the mind, rightness of the heart, and just governance of the affections. Or, as others, it was *libertas arbitrii, intellectus sapientiæ, et potentia obedientiæ*,—freedom of will, wisdom of understanding, kingdom or power of obedience; for here to serve was to reign. Herein consisted the health. The privation of these perfect habits is not less than the sickness of it. This health thus lost, cannot be recovered but by him that was sick to the death for us; neither is it hindered when he will bestow it. For grace is not refused of the hard heart, because it takes away the hardness of that heart it lights on. Christ made it with his water, and mollifies it with his blood, both which issued out of his side at one wound, and followed the murdering spear of a soldier, John xix. 34, to save them which fight under his standard.

Thus from man's sickness ariseth his better health, and he now stands surer by his first fall. Such is the greatness and goodness of God, such his power and mercy concurring, that it works health out of sickness, good out of evil. There is an infinite good, but not an infinite evil. For the good cannot by any means be diverted into evil, but the evil may be converted to good. By the conspiracy of Jews, Gentiles, Judas, devils, against Christ, is our salvation wrought. From the horrid and most unnatural treasons, God hath advanced his own glory, advantaged his children's safety. We labour of three diseases—birth, life, death; all these are cured by those three answer-

\* Bern.

able in Christ: our unclean birth is sanctified by his, so pure from the least spot of sin; our transgressing life is reformed by the virtue, informed by the example of his, so pure from the least spot of sin; that tyrannising, wounding serpent, death, hath the sting pulled out by his death, 1 Cor. xv., that we may embrace him in our secured arms. The conqueror of us all is conquered for us all, by him that foiled the giant in his own den, the grave. 'Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' ver. 55, 57. This is our insultation and holy triumph; provided ever, that he be believed of us, that hath thus relieved us. Believe and fear not. A good conscience is never failed of a good confidence, of a good consequence. Hence ariseth the soul's sanity.

What can endanger, endamage this health? No losses to the estate, no crosses to the flesh. The spiritually sound man values all the fortunes of the world less than the freedom and health of the mind. He that wants this armour is wounded by every blow of affliction. Other security is but a shield of wax against a sword of power. They cannot choose but fear, even 'where no fear is,' and testify their inward guilt and sickness by their pale and trembling looks. *Timida nequitia dat testimonium condemnationis, et semper præsumit sava, perturbata conscientia*,—Fearful wickedness gives testimony of its own damnation; and the troubled conscience imposeth and presumes to itself terrible things. But the health of faith is health indeed; yea, this health is life, a life angelical, a life evangelical, whether for obedience or peace: inspired, sealed, assured by the 'word of truth,' 'which is life to all that find it, and health to all their flesh.' No fear shall invade him, no troubles involve him so that he cannot be extricated. For 'the fear of the Lord tendeth to life, and he that hath it shall not be visited with evil,' Prov. xix. 23. His innocence may speed in the world, as deserts in a lottery—be rewarded with a blank. But he in whom he affies shall put the marrow of health into his bones, distil the sap of grace into his spirit.

Low in the world, lowly in himself, is his estimation. Who sees not that the clambering goats get upon rocks and promontory places, whiles the humble sheep feed in the bottoms and dejected valleys? Only one day the sheep shall be advanced above the sun and stars, and set in heaven with Christ; when the goats shall be cast down to the depth of depths. Rich Dives was well enough known to the world, yet nameless in the sacred records. So we brand our sheep, let the goats go unmarked; God sets his seal on his chosen,—*Novit qui sui sunt*, 2 Tim. ii. 19,—lets the wicked run without his cognisance.

Thus different is the state of God's servants and the world's slaves. They think none sick but we: we know none sick but they. If equal crosses befall us both, our estate is soon descried. We differ as the camel and the camomile: the one is stunted, the other thrives by his burden. Afflictions that so scatter them, and loosen the joints of their vain hopes, do more knit and consolidate our healths. As sound as they take themselves, it is as easy to prove as to reprove their diseases. Though I confess, in the days of their joviality, he hath great wisdom that can make them sensible of their sickness. Were Solon, nay, Solomon, alive to declare it, they see it not, they will not feel it. If the want of health were perceived, how amiable, admirable would the benefit appear! *Gratior est sanitas reddita, quam retenta; vix aliter quam perdendo cognoscimus*,—Returning health is more welcome than if it had not been lost. We scarce know what health is but by the

want. Let others spend their times, wits, treasures, to procure health to their bodies, which I embrace when it is offered, and would not lose by my own errors ; give me a sound and clear conscience, and let me not want this health, till I envy theirs.

2. Thus having inquired what health is, leaving a while the consideration thereof as it is in itself, let us descend into it as respectively ; casting an oblique eye on that which is diverse from it or adverse to it. This is a significant and delightful demonstration or commentary, which one contrary nature gives to another, when they are diametrically opposed. The day would not seem so clear if the departing sun should not leave night to follow it. The foil adds grace to the jewel. It no less than glorifies learning, that the malicious tongue of ignorance barks at it. He knows the benefit of heat that hath felt the sharpness of a freezing cold. If there were no sickness to trouble us, health itself would be thought sickness. The very enmity of these repugnances helps the beholder's judgment either to embrace or reject them. Even their opposition is an exposition of their natures ; deformity, darkness, sickness, sin, all those privative, corruptive, destructive things, may illustrate their contraries. So that if any lewd, vain, ill-judging, worse-affecting mind shall still love the desolation of sin rather than the consolation of spiritual health, it may appear to be, not because this object is not wretched, but because he is blind and bewitched.

There is a twofold sickness incident to man—(1.) In sin ; (2.) For sin. The former of these is only spiritual ; the latter is not only corporal, but sometimes spiritual also : and of all the vials of God's wrath, holden to the mouth of miserable men by the hand of justice, it is the sorest, when sin shall be punished with sin, and the destitution of grace shall permit a lapse to impenitency.

(1.) The sickness in sin is double, according to the cause, which is a defect either of right believing or straight living ; a debility of confidence, a sterility of good works ; lack of faith, wreck of charity. These effects, or rather defects, are produced by two errors in the soul's diet ; the one excessive, the other deficient : [1.] By fasting too much from Christ ; [2.] By feeding too much on the world. In what we would affect, we are abstinent ; in what avoid, very indulgent.

[1.] The first cause is, by forbearing that sacred meat, living and life-giving bread, which 'came down from heaven,' John vi., to translate thither those that eat it. This is the Son of the most high God, not disdaining to become the food of the affamished sons of men. 'Out of the strong came sweetness ;' the mighty is become meat ; the lion of Judah yields honey such as never came out of any earthly hive, Judg. xiv. 14. He is our invincible captain ; to him we supplicate, as distressed Nerva to Trajan :—

'Telis Phœbe tuis lachrymas ulciscere nostras.'

O Saviour ! defend and keep us. Yet he that is *victor*, a conqueror for us, is also *victus*, food to us. But this is *cibus non dentis, sed mentis*,—meat for our faith, not for our teeth ; *manducamus intus, non foris*,—we eat it inwardly, not outwardly. Christ is verily *panis verus, non panis merus*,—true, not mere natural bread. Thus our feeder is become our food, our physician our medicine. He doth all things for us—guide, feed, mediate, medicate ; let us meditate on him, and not disappoint the intention of his mercies by our averseness. No hope but in him, no help but in him. The law could not satisfy our hunger, (not through its own, but our insufficiency ;) the gospel gives not only present satisfaction, but even impossibility of future



famine, John vi. 35. There is no abiding the law, except the gospel be by; not of that thunder, without this rain of mercy to quench it.

Who gives this food to us but he that gave himself for us? That shepherd that feeds his lambs, not on his grounds, but with his wounds—his broken flesh and sluiced blood. Hence from this great parliament of peace (made in that once-acted, and for ever virtual sacrifice) derive we pardon for our sins, without impeachment to the justice of so high a judge as we had offended. Thus the King of eternal glory, to the world's eye destating himself, (though indeed not by putting off what he had, but by putting on what he had not,) was cast down for us, that we might rise up by him. 'Learn of me to be humble,' Matt. xi. 29; wherein he gives us a precept and a pattern; the one requiring our obedience, the other our conformity. The pelican, rather than her young ones shall famish, feeds them with her own blood. Christ, for the better incorporating of his to himself, feeds them with his own flesh, but spiritually. So that we eat not only *panem Domini*, as the wicked, but *panem Dominum*,—not only the bread of the Lord, but the bread the Lord, in a sacramental truth.

They that have ransacked the riches of nature, searched earth, sea, air, for beasts, fishes, birds, and bought the rarest at an inestimable price, never tasted such a junket. The fluid, transient, passing, perishing meats of earth neither preserve us, nor we them, from corruption. This banquet of his flesh, richer than that Belshazzar made to his thousand princes, Dan. v. 1; this cup of his blood, more precious than Cleopatra's draught, shall give *vitam sine morte*, life without death, to them that receive it. We perceive a little the virtue of this meat.

Now then, as the withdrawing of competent meat and drink from the body lesseneth that radical moisture, (which is the oil whereon the lamp of life feeds,) and makes way for dryness, whence the kindly heat, (which, like other fire, might be a good servant, must needs be an ill master,) getting more than due and wonted strength, for want of resistance, tyranniseth; and not finding whereupon to work, turns on that substantial vividness, exsiccating and consuming it; this oversparing abstinence wastes, weakens, sickens the body, dangers it to a hectic or some worse disease, of no less hurt than too great repletion: so when the soul, either through a mad frenzy of wickedness, or dull melancholy darkness of ignorance, or sensual perverseness of affections, forbears, forbids herself, to feed on that sacred and vital substance, Jesus Christ; the vivid sap of grace and virtue, which keeps true life and soul together, stilled into the heart by the Holy Ghost, begins to dry up, as a morning dew shrinking at the thirsty beams of the risen sun, Hos. vi. 4, and the fire of sin gets the predominance. Now where that unruly element 'reigns in a mortal body,' Rom. vi. 12, it hazards the immortal soul to death. There is then no marvel if the soul descends into the fall of sickness, into the valley of death, when she shall refuse the sustentation, health, and very life thereof, her Saviour; who is not only *cibus*, but *ipsa salus*, meat, but health itself, as Paul calls him *ipsam vitam, qua vivimus, quam vivimus*,—the very life whereby we live, which we live. We live in Christ, Acts xvii. 18; we live by Christ, nay, we live Christ, for our very life is Christ. 'Now live not I, but Christ liveth in me,' Gal. ii. 20.

This is he that once 'suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God,' 1 Pet. iii. 18. He 'suffered for our sins,' the cause most odious; 'the just for the unjust,' the persons most unequal; 'that he might bring us to God,' the end most absolute. How well, then, may we yield—and if there be any pride or glory in us, it should be in our sufferings

—to 'suffer for him!' The apostles did so rejoicing, Acts v. 41. *O Jesus, si adeo dulce est flere pro te, quam dulce erit gaudere de te?*—O Christ, if it be so happy to suffer for thee, what will it be to rejoice in thee? It cost him much—oh, how much!—trouble, sorrow, beating, grinding, before he became bread for us. There may be a scarcity of other bread; there is none of this, to those that rightly seek it. It is dear in regard of the preciousness,—they that have it will not part with it; not dear in regard of the price,—we pay nothing for it but faith and love. Though thousands pray at once with the disciples, 'Lord, evermore give us this bread,' John vi. 34, Jesus's storehouse can never be emptied. Joseph's may: 'Lest the world perish through famine,' Gen. xli. 36. He only *nec accipiendo proficit, nec dando deficit*,—grows not rich with receiving, neither grows poor with giving. Rejoice then, beloved, *in dono, in Domino*,—the Lord is the giver, the Lord is the gift. Let not your souls be starved with these inferior things, which are *pauca, parva, prava*,—few in number, small in measure, bad in nature, 'whiles there is bread enough in your Father's house,' Luke xv. 17. Why should we sicken our spirits in a voluntary want, and fast from that which is able to feast a world of faithful guests?—This is the first degree of our spiritual sickness.

[2.] The excessive occasion to procure ill health to our souls is By feeding too heartily, too hastily, on the world. This is that too much oil which quencheth our lamp. For as in a body overcharged with immoderate quantity of meats or drinks, when the moisture swells, like a tide above the verges, and extinguisheth the digestive heat, that their kindly embraces are turned to conflicts, and the superfluities want their former dissolution and egestion, the necessary event is distemperature and sickness; so the affections of the soul, overladen with the devoured burden of worldly things, suffer the benign and living fire of grace to be quenched, 1 Thess. v. 19. Hence the fainting spirits of virtue swoon and fall sick, and after some weak resistance, as a coal of fire in a great shower, yield the victory to the floods of sin, and are drowned. Neither are the affections only (which they call the nether part of the soul, as if this dropsy were only in the feet) thus diseased; but the sickness taketh the head of the soul, the understanding, and the heart of it, the conscience, that faith (which is religious reason) is impaired, and the instrument, the tongue, the organ of God's praise, is hindered. As we see in these corporal effects by drunken men, the feet are too light, and the head too heavy; the legs cannot stand, the tongue cannot speak: so both understanding and affections are stifled in this deluge, inward faith and outward profession falling sick to the death.

For how can it be otherwise, that the soul (of so high and celestial a creation) should thrive with the gross and homely diet of vanity? Man is, saith the philosopher,\* *συγγενής Θεοῦ*, God's kinsman. And Paul, taking such a sense from the poet,† makes of a conceit of nature a sanctified truth: *Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν*,—'For we are also his offspring,' Acts xvii. 28. And Peter saith that (though not really, but in regard of renovation) 'we are partakers of the divine nature,' 2 Pet. i. 4. Why, then, condemn we not, with a holy disdain, the rude, crude, and unwholesome morsels of the world—sensual pleasures? If we considered aright the natures either *τῶν τροφόντων* or *τῶν τροφόμενων*, of the things nourishing or things nourished, we should strive *aut non admittere, aut cito emittere*, either not to let in or soon to throw out such unsavoury repast. For the nourishment of the body, if it be *alienum*, it is *venenum*,—if strange and contrary to nature, it is as poison to

\* Plato.

† Aratus.

him that eats it : *quæ nutriuntur, familiaribus et naturalibus rebus nutriuntur, contrariis corrumpuntur*,—for creatures that live by nourishment, with natural and familiar things are nourished; corrupted with their contraries. Otherwise the food makes work for the physician, and his elder brother, death.

Spiritual and celestial delicacies, the diet of grace and sanctification, nourish and cherish the soul's health, and put the good blood of holiness into her veins, give her a fresh and cheerful look; roses and lilies (the pride of nature in their colours) make not so beautiful a mixture: but the world-affected and sin-infected delights pale her cheeks, drink up her blood and sap of virtue, dim her intellectual eyes, lame her feet, the affections, craze her health, crush her strength, and, (which is most wonderful,) for *morte carent animæ*, even kill her immortality.

Now they are not simply the things of this world that thus sicken the soul, but our extravagant desires and corrupt usage of them; for all these were made for man's delight and comfort in the second place,—yield them immediately for the Maker's glory,—and we offend not to serve our necessities in them; it is their abuse which brings this sickness. It is with nutritive things to the soul, in some sort, as with all meats to the body. They are of three kinds: *contraria, naturalia, neutralia*,—contrary, natural, indifferent. Contraries hurt, natural and kindly help, neutral or indifferent either hurt or help as they are received. Food merely contrary to the soul is sin—this kills; natural and proper to it is grace—this saves; indifferent, or of a middle nature, are the inferior things of this world, house, lands, riches, &c.—these either hinder or further our souls' health, as they are used or abused: they may be consolations, they may be desolations, ladders of ascent or stairs of descent, as our regenerate or degenerate minds shall embrace them. Now the reason why earthly things do neither strengthen our spirits nor lengthen our joys is double—they be transitory, and they be not satisfactory.

*First*, They be transient. Meats of a washy and fluid nature, that slip through the stomach and tarry not for concoction, do no more feed a man's health than almost if he lived on air. They that have no other sustentation to their souls but such light, slight, and empty food, except they live by miracle, cannot be, like David, *ore rubicundo*, nor, like Daniel, of a fresh hue and cheerful complexion; I mean the constitution of their soul cannot thrive. The soul fed only with the frail, circumfluous, humid, cloudy vanities of this world, is so far from remaining sound and retaining health, that she pines, languisheth, dwindleth away, as a tree whose life-feeding sap is dried up. So perishable are all the things of this world! 'Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away like an eagle toward heaven,' Prov. xxiii. 5. Not like a tame bird, that returns; nor like a hawk, that will shew where she is by her bells; but like an eagle, whose wings thou canst neither clip nor pinion. *Aut deserunt, aut deseruntur*,—Either they forsake, or are forsaken. All their certainty is in their uncertainty, and they are only stable in this, that they cannot be stable.

'Riches are not for ever; and doth the crown endure to every generation?' Prov. xxvii. 24. Hence they are called 'riches of the world,' 1 John iii. 17, which is a bar in the arms of riches, to demonstrate their slippery hold; for the world itself being transitory, they must needs savour of the soil, 1 Tim. vi. 17. Our judgments must of necessity be convinced to confess this, though our affections will not yield it. Wherefore tend all those writings of covenants, if these earthly things were not uncertain? What are those labels

and appendances but bands and ties to keep close to us mad and starting riches? We plead, it is for the mortality of men; but we mean the mortality of riches. If, then, these earthly things will boast of anything, let them boast, as Paul did, their frailties, 2 Cor. xi. 30. 'They are either in 'journeying,' not got without labour; or ventured on 'the sea,' yea, together with goods, bodies, and souls too, to make such ill merchants full adventurers; 'in peril of robbers,' public and notorious thieves; 'in peril of false brethren,' secret and tame thieves, lawyers, usurers, flatterers; fire 'in the city,' freebooters 'in the wilderness,' pirates on the sea: for 'weariness, painfulness, watchfulness,' &c., who doubts the miserable partnership betwixt them and riches?

Could the world be thought thy servant, (which is indeed thy master, O worldling! as Christ's maxim inferreth, 'No man can serve two masters;,' none indeed, for he that hath God for his obeyed master, hath for his obeying servant the world,) yet is it but a vagrant and runagate servant. It hath a madding mind and a gadding foot. And though by the greatness of the stature and proportion, it may promise able service, yet it will be gone when thou hast most need of it. Neither will it slip away empty, but rob thee of thy best jewels; carry away thy peace, content, joy, happiness, soul, with it. Behold the cosmopolite, Luke xii. 17, planting, transplanting, rebuilding, studying for room to lay up his fruits. *Non in visceribus pauperum*,—Not in the bowels of the poor, but in the enlarged barns, if ever their capacity could answer his enlarged heart. He builds neither church nor hospital,—either *in cultum Christi*, or *culturam Christiani*, to the service of Christ or comfort of any Christian,—but barns. He minds only *horreum suum, et hordeum suum*,—his barn and his barley. Behold, at last he promiseth his soul peace, ease, mirth, security; but when his chickens were scarce hatched, whereon he long sat, and thought to sit long brooding, he hears a fatal voice confiscating his goods and himself too: ver. 20, 'Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?' No marvel, then, if the soul be famished, when she is only fed with such fugitive meat, which vanisheth like Tantalus's apples or Ixion's cloud in the poet; and like medicines rather than food, or like poisons rather than medicines, wash away the good they find, and leave the bad, made yet worse by their accession, behind them.

*Secondly*, They be not satisfactory, and therefore confer no true content to the mind, no more than the dreamed bread of the sluggard, Mic. vi. 14, who 'wakes with an empty stomach.' Thou shalt eat, but not be satisfied: 'All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing,' Eccles. i. 8. There is nothing but emptiness, vanity, vacuity in them. *Simul oruntur et moriuntur*,—They at once are born and die, as Plutarch said of the lightning, as Jonah found in his gourd. Like the mermaid—

'Virgo formosa superne,  
Desinit in turpem piscem malesuada voluptas;—'

'Face-flattering pleasure, that so much deludes,  
Like that sea-monster, with sad ruth concludes.'

The motion of the mind, following these wandering planets of earthly delights, is ever errant, ever incessant. Ahab is sick of his neighbour's field, though he have a whole kingdom to walk in; and Alexander, finding himself lord of the whole world, is discontent, as if he wanted elbow-room. The poor man is not more perplexed because he hath neither barn nor grain, than

the covetous wretch because he hath not barns enough for his grain, Luke xii. 17. What cosmopolite ever grasped so much wealth in his gripulous fist as to sing to himself a *Sufficit*? 'He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase,' Eccles. v. 10. His cares fill up as fast as his coffers. He hath much in his keeping, yet doth neither enjoy it nor joy in it.

It breeds a disease in the soul, like that in the body which they call *caninum appetitum*, an immoderate desire of meat; whereafter the body looks thin, wan, sickly, as if it were starved. The cold, feculent, viscous, vicious humours of covetousness desire an unreasonable quantity of worldly goods, yet leave the soul more weak, warish, sickly than if she neither had, nor had will to do, anything. This is the infallible effect of these coveted vanities; *vel sequendo labimur, vel assequendo lædimur*,—the soul either falls in the seeking, or fails in the finding. She is not the better, nay, she is the worse, for her longing after them.

'Luxuriant animi rebus plerunque secundis,'—\*

The mind may riot and grow rank for a while with these puffings up, but how soon doth a tabe and consumption take it down, when the joy answers not the expectation of the heart! The world may set such a man in high estimation: 'The rich hath many friends; but the poor is separated from his neighbour,' Prov. xix. 4.

'Aspicias ut veniant ad candida tecta columbæ,  
Accipiet nullas sordida turris aves.'

But all this while others are more satisfied with the sight than he with the possession of his own. Still his soul is hungry, and he knows not how to appease it.

I persuade not all abjuration of the world, as if it could not be used but it must be abused. As the philosopher of old, that threw his money into the sea, purposing to drown that, lest that should drown him; or as the new found and fond votaries that profess a voluntary want, as if all coin were diseased, and had for the circumscription a *Noli me tangere*: so the empiric, to cure the fever, destroys the patient; so the wise man, to burn the mice, set on fire his barn. Is there no remedy, but a man must make his medicine his sickness? I speak of things as they are, not as they should be. He that feeds too hungrily on the world, falls with much ease to neglect Christ: as he that was once following him no sooner heard of his father's death, but presently left him; thinking perhaps that he should get more by his father's executorship than by his Saviour's discipleship; and therefore would leave to minister in Christ's service, that he might administer on his father's goods. Hence fall many souls into this spiritual sickness, when they forsake the solid and substantial nutriment of Jesus Christ, to gape for the fugitive and empty air of worldly riches: which, if they do carry to their deaths, yet they must then leave all, *exuendo, expuendo, donec nihil vel intus vel foris manserit*,—by putting off, by spuing up whatsoever their covetousness hath devoured. Nature shall turn them out naked and empty. Thus 'the righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul; but the belly of the wicked shall want,' Prov. xiii. 25. They are not satisfactory.

In a word, that we may a little perpend the effects, as we have perceived the causes, all spiritual sickness is either in faith or conversation.

First, In *faith*. This is a general and dangerous sickness. *General*:

\* Ovid.

*Egrotat fides jam proxima morti*,—Faith is so sick, that it is ready to die. These are those last and apostate times, wherein faith is become so little, that the scarcity gives expectation of the general doom. We swear away our faith at every trifle, and then no marvel, being so prodigal of such oaths, if our stock of faith be sworn and worn out. *Dangerous*: We affy the world, which we have vowed to defy; and losing that confidence we should live by,—for ‘the just lives by faith,’ Heb. x. 38,—how can it be but the soul must become sick? Whiles ‘the shield of faith’ is lost, we lie naked to ‘the fiery darts of Satan,’ Eph. vi. 16; and many wounds will let out the life-blood. The sun in the heaven passeth through twelve signs of the zodiac. Christ is our sun, Mal. iv. 2, the twelve articles of our creed, the twelve signs; faith is our zodiac. Do you wonder why, in this day of the gospel, the sunbeams of grace live in so few hearts? They have lost their zodiac. Their faith is form, and the clouds of infidelity have eclipsed those signs. They believe not beyond the extension of sense; they have a sensual, a senseless faith. It is the sorest shipwreck which the vast sea of this world and the pirates of sin can put them to, the sinking of their faith. It was Paul’s happy triumph that he had ‘kept the faith,’ 2 Tim. iv. 7, though ‘he bare about in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus,’ Gal. vi. 17. Needs must the soul be sick, whose faith is not sound.

Secondly, The other degree of our spiritual sickness is in *conversation*. Our lives are diseased: the ill beating of those pulses shew we are not well. The fruits manifest the tree, Matt. vii. 20. *Ubi caro est repugnans, peccatum est pregnans*.—Sins are rife where the flesh reigns; plentiful effects will arise from such a working cause. In vain (and not without the more hazard) do we plead for our soundness, when the infallible symptoms of our disobedience evince the contrary. Saul stands upon his observation of God’s charge. ‘What then,’ saith Samuel, ‘meaneth the bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?’ 1 Sam. xv. 14. Whence flow those streams of impiety, merciless oppressions, church-devouring sacrileges, bestial luxuries, cunning circumventions, detracting slanders, heaven-threatening blasphemies, malicious fires of rage and hatred, monstrous treacheries, behaviours compounded of scorn and pride, close atheism, open profaneness, gilded hypocrisy? Whence are these vicious corruptions, if not from our ulcerous conversations? Shame we not to call sickness health, and to maintain the atheistical paradox, pseudodox, ‘which judgeth evil good, and darkness light?’ Isa. v. 20. If thy life be so unsound, suspect thyself; thou art not well.

(2.) Now (not unfitly) after the sickness of sin, follows the sickness for sin; which distributes itself into a double passion, corporal and spiritual:—

[1.] All corporal sickness is for sin. The sick man heard it from his heavenly physician: ‘Go thy ways; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee,’ John v. 14. So sung David in the psalm: ‘Fools because of their iniquities are afflicted; their soul abhorreth all manner of meat, and they draw near to the gates of death,’ Ps. cvii. 17, 18. This Elihu grounds against Job, that sin causeth sickness: ‘So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat. His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen stick out,’ chap. xxxiii. 20, 21. Weakness proceedeth from wickedness; if the soul had not sinned, the body should not have smarted. Indeed this blow is easy, if we respect the cause that drew it on us. For if ‘the wages of sin be death,’ Rom. vi. 23, sickness is a gentle payment. Sickness is the malady of the body, death is the malady of sickness. But such is God’s mercy, that he is content to punish

sometimes *corporaliter, non mortaliter*; and to put into our hearts a sense of our sins, by casting us down, and by casting us away. But whether the affliction be *quoad introitum*, or *quoad interitum*,—a more gentle entrance, or more piercing to death, all is produced by our sin.

You will say, that many afflictions, wherewith God scourgeth his children, are the 'fatherly corrections of love,' Heb. xii. 6; yet they are corrections, and their intention is to better us. Now, what need the bestowing such pains on us to make us good, if sin had not made us evil? Still sin is the cause, whether it be sickness, 'Therefore I will make thee sick in smiting thee, because of thy sins,' Micah vi. 13; or whether more despairful calamity, 'I will wail and howl, I will make a wailing like the dragons, mournings as the owls; for her wound is incurable,' Micah i. 8, 9. Still the reason is, ver. 5, 'For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel.' Oh that our sick bodies, when the hand of visitation hath cast them down, would convey this lesson to our souls—all is for our wickedness! Our stomachs loathe the meat because we have overburdened them with God's abused blessings. We have made the creatures, ordained for our comforts, 'an occasion of our falling,' Ps. lxxix. 22. And now, lo, we abhor to be cheered by those things wherewith we have erst oppressed ourselves: that 'delicates poured upon a mouth shut up, are as messes of meat set upon a grave,' Ecclus. xxx. 18.

Our sins, that remain unpurged by repentance in our bosoms, are not only diseases themselves to our consciences, but vigorous and rigorous enough to engender diseases in our carcases. We are framed and composed of four elements—fire, air, water, earth; and have the kindly concurrence of those four original and principal qualities, heat and cold, moisture and dryness, to our making up. Their harmony and peaceful content preserve our little world in health; but if those brethren of one house fall at variance with themselves, their strife will undo us. So easy is it for God to take rods from our own bodies wherewith to whip us! Though those outward elements, fire, water, and the rest, forbear to lay on us the strokes of vengeance, yet we have those primordial humours within us, whose redundancy, defect, or distemperature are means able enough to take our breath from us. How evident is this, when—

Some have been burned in the pestilent flames of their hot diseases; the violence whereof hath set their blood on fire, wasted their bowels, scorched their veins, withered away their vital spirits, and left the whole body *flagrantem rogam*, as it were a burning pile.

Some have been choked with the fumes and vapours ascending from their own crude and corrupted stomachs, and poisoned their spirits no less than with the contagion of infected airs. How many obstructed lungs suck in far better air than they breathe out!

Others have been drowned with a deluge of waters in their own bodies, a flood running betwixt their skin and bowels, glutting and overcharging nature so violently, that the life hath not been able to hold up her head; and the soul, like Noah's dove, returns unto God, the 'ark of her strength,' as not able to set her foot dry in her former habitation.

And yet others have buried themselves alive in the grave of their own earthly melancholy; which casteth such a thick fog and dark obscurity over the brain, that it not only chokes up the spirits of life, like the damp in a vault that extinguisheth the lights, but even offers offensive violence to the soul. Melancholy men are, as it were, buried before they be dead; and, as not staying for a grave in the ground, make their own heavy, dull, cloudy,

cloddy earthen cogitations their own sepulchres. From what sink arise all these corrupt steams, but from the sins in our own selves, as proper and fit to engender these sicknesses as these sicknesses are to bring dissolution! It is our own work to make 'death better than a bitter life, or continual sickness,' Ecclus. xxx. 17; that our meat gives no more scent nor savour than an 'offering doth to an idol,' ver. 19. 'He that sinneth before his Maker, let him fall into the hands of the physician,' Ecclus. xxxviii. 15.

[2.] Spiritual sickness for sin is yet far more perilous and mortal; nay, well were it for some thus sick if it were mortal. If the disease would cease, the soul might revive and live. It varies (as some diseases do in the body, according to the constitution of the sick) thereafter as the soul is that hath it; whether regenerate or reprobate. The malignancy is great in both, but with far less danger in the former.

*First*, In the elect, this spiritual sickness is an afflicted conscience, when God will suffer us to take a deep sense of our sins, and bring us to the life of grace through the valley of death, as it were by hell-gates unto heaven. There is no anguish to that in the conscience: 'A wounded spirit who can bear?' Prov. xviii. 14. They that have been valiant in bearing wrongs, in forbearing delights, have yet had womanish and coward spirits in sustaining the terrors of a tumultuous conscience. If our strength were as an army, and our lands not limited save with east and west; if our meat were manna, and our garments as the ephod of Aaron; yet the afflicted conscience would refuse to be cheered with all these comforts. When God shall raise up our sins, like dust and smoke in the eyes of our souls, and the 'arrows of his displeasure drink up our blood,' Job vi. 4, and 'his terrors' seem to 'fight against us;' when he buffets us from his presence, and either hides his countenance from us, or beholds us with an angry look; lo, then, if any sickness be like this sickness, any calamity like the fainting soul! Many offences touch the body which extend not to the soul; but if the soul be grieved, the sympathising flesh suffers deeply with it. The blood is dried up, the marrow wasted, the flesh pined, as if the powers and pores of the body opened themselves like so many windows to discover the passions of the distressed prisoner within. It was not the sense of outward sufferings, (for mere men have borne the agonies of death undaunted,) but the wrestling of God's wrath with his spirit, that drew from Christ that complaint, able to make heaven and earth stand aghast: 'My soul is heavy unto the death,' Matt. xxvi. 38.

There is comfort even in death, when the clock of our life runs upon her last minutes; but is there any ease during the torments of a racked conscience? This wearisome guest doth God often lodge with his own children, suffering the eye of faith to be shut, and the eyes of flesh and blood open; that sorrow is their bread, and tears their drink, and the still perplexed mind knows not where to refuge itself: always preserving to his children that never-dying grace of his Spirit in their hearts; 'a substance of blessing in the oak,' Isa. vi. 13, though it hath cast the leaves, though the barrenness of the boughs, dryness of the bark, give it for dead and withered. Faith being in a swoon, may draw the breath inwardly, not perceived; but 'destroy it not, for there is a blessing in it,' Isa. lxxv. 8.

Neither is this sickness and trouble of conscience properly good in itself, nor any grace of God, but used by God as an instrument of good to his, as when by the 'spirit of bondage' he brings us to adoption. So the needle that draws the thread through the cloth is some means to join it together.



This is the godly soul's sickness for sin, full of sharp and bitter ingredients, but never destitute of a glorious event and victorious triumph. I may say of it as physicians speak of agues, (which make a man sick for a while, that he may be the sounder a long time after,) This sickness is physic to procure better health.

*Secondly*, Spiritual sickness for sin in the reprobate hath other effects. To restrain their number, they principally appear in two diseases, or disasters rather—impenitency and despair.

First, Impenitency, the symptom of an obdurate and remorseless heart. 'Who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness,' Eph. iv. 19. St Paul calls it 'a reprobate mind,' Rom. i. 28 : a death rather than a sickness. He that labours hereof is rather deceased than diseased. This is a heart so hard and impenetrable, that all the holy dews of instructions cannot soften it ; all the blows of God's striking rod put no sense into it. It is invulnerable to any stroke save that which makes a fatal and final end with it. 'Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved,' &c., Jer. v. 3. It is just with God, but fearful on whomsoever this judgment lights, to plague sin with sin, that *peccatum sit pœna peccantis*. For there is evermore some precedent impiety in those ungracious persons, procuring God to deal thus with them. 'For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie : that they all might be damned that believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness,' 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. First Pharaoh hardens his own heart, &c. God all this while holds his peace, gives him the hearing and looking on. In the end he saith, 'I will harden Pharaoh's heart ;' and then puts iron to iron, adamant to adamant, and there is perfected a relentless, repentless obduracy.

This is that retaliation of sin, which God returns into their bosoms that foster it ; that since 'they loved cursing, it shall be unto them,' Ps. cix. 17. So David in the psalm, (though indeed it was not in him *preccantis votum*, but *prophetantis vaticinium*,—he did not desire it to be so, but he knew it would be so,) 'Add iniquity to their iniquity,' Ps. lxxix. 27. Neither doth God this by infusion of wickedness, but by subtraction of his Spirit. He is *causa deficiens, non efficiens* : as the revoking of sun from us causeth darkness ; the privation of grace, the position of all ungodliness. It is in him not *peccatum, sed judicium*,—not sin, but judgment. When he leaves us to ourselves, it is no wonder if we fall into horrid and prodigious sins. *Peccatum est malum in se : effectum prioris mali, et causa subsequentis : est et supplicium, et causa supplicii* ;—Sin is evil in itself, the effect of former evil, the cause of future : it is both punishment itself, and the cause of punishment. In all the storehouse of God's plagues there is not a greater vengeance. With other punishments the body smarteth ; the soul groaneth under this. Hence sins multiply without limits, that the plagues may be without end. Every affliction is sore that offends us ; but that is direful which withal offends God. Such do at once act and suffer : it is both an active and a passive sin. The punishment they suffer is (in them) sin ; the sin they do is (from God) a punishment.

There is nothing more wretched than a wretched man not recking his own wretchedness. *Miserius nihil est misero se non miserante*. Either they do not feel, as blocks, or they will not feel, as Stoics. You know, a seared conscience is not sensible ; and usual whipping makes some careless of the rod, except it be a stroke that shall fetch blood of the soul. Indeed we are all of one mould, but some are more cloddy and hard, others more soft and re-

lenting. The best in their sorrows may be more than conquerors, not more than men. And let the Stoic brag his tetrical conclusions to the world, that no pain can bring sorrow to a wise man, &c. Let him, being put into that torturous engine of burning brass called the horse, bite in his anguish, smother his groans, sigh inwardly, and cry to the spectators, *Non sentio*, I feel not. The wicked may laugh out lighter punishments; and like the dead rocks of the sea, not regard the waves of easier judgments beating on them, letting fall no tears of repentance for so many blows. But when God sees that thou digestest his physic as diet, and, with a strange kind of indulgence, wilt neither grieve that thou hast offended nor that thou art offended, he will strike home, and sharpen at once both his blow and thy sense. Now thou shalt feel; even thy seared heart shall bleed. In a word, the wicked may be senseless Stoics, they cannot be insensible stones. There is in all men an impossibility of impassibility.

But these remorseless wretches, so spiritually sick, not of the stone in the reins, but in the heart, at least regard not to offend God, whiles God forbears to offend them. 'They speak loftily; they set their mouth against the heavens,' Ps. lxxiii. 9. The reason is, 'They are not in trouble, nor plagued as other men,' ver. 5. At first they liberally sin and spare not. God lets them alone: lo, now they sin and care not. Impiety, impunity, impenitency, thus swiftly follow one at the heels of another. There are some sick of this disease, but not so far gone; of whose recovery there is a little, and but a little, more hope. These have, by the clidings of their accusing conscience, a notion, a relish, a guess of the number and nature of their own sins, which because they suspect to be monstrous, they would by no means admit a sight of. Hence they fly the temple, the society of the good, the voice of exhortation, whencesoever it soundeth, lest it should call the soul's eye home, to glance at its own estate, and so leave it amazed. Hence he hath *animum inscium, inscitur*, an ill-sighted mind.

So timorous is this patient, that because he knows his wound deep, he will not suffer the surgeon to search it; willing rather to kill his soul than to disquiet it. Such is the folly of his partial indulgence to his conscience, that whiles he would foster it, he doth fester it. They write of the elephant, that, as if guilty of his own deformity, and therefore not abiding to view his snout in a clear spring, he seeks about for troubled and muddy waters to drink in. This sick wretch, without question induced by the like reason, refuseth to look into the glass of the law, or to come to the clear springs of the gospel, or any perspective that may represent his evil conscience to his eyes, but seeks to muddy and polluted channels,—taverns, theatres, societies of sin,—to drown the thought of former iniquities with floods of new. And if he be enforced to any such reflection, he spurns and tramples that admonition, as apes break the glass that represents their deformity. He runs himself prodigally into so deep arrearages and debts, that he cannot endure to hear of a reckoning. Whiles he despairs of sufficiency to pay the old, he recks not into what new and desperate courses he precipitates himself. And as it was in the fable with the blind woman and the physician: the physician coming often to her house, ever carried away a portion of her best goods; so that at last recovered, by that time her sight was come again, her goods were gone: so this wretch will not see the ransacking of his soul, and spoil of his graces, till his conscience be left empty, and then he sees, and cries too late, as Esau for his blessing.

Secondly, That other spiritual sickness for sin, befalling a reprobate soul, is final and total desperation. This is that fearful consequent which treads

upon the heels of the former sickness. Presumption goes before, despair follows after. Cain's fratricide, Judas's teachery, presumptuous, aspiring, heaven-daring sins, find this desperate catastrophe, to cut themselves off from the mercy of God. This is *insanabilis plaga*, when the physician promising help of the disease, the patient shall thrust his nails into it, and cry, 'Nay, it shall not be healed.' As if the goodness of God, and the value of Christ's all-sufficient ransom, were below his iniquity. As if the pardon of his sins would empty God's storehouse of compassion, and leave his stock of mercy poor. This is that agony, whose throbs and throes, restless, turbulent, implacable cogitations, cannot be quieted. Let rivers of those waters of comfort which 'glad the city of God' run with full streams unto it, they are resisted and driven back.

This is that sin which not only offers injury and indignity to the Lord of heaven and earth, but even breaks that league of kindness which we owe to our own flesh. To commit sin is the killing of the soul; to refuse hope of mercy, is to cast it down into hell. Therefore St Jerome affirms that Judas sinned more in despairing of his Master's pardon than in betraying him; since nothing can be more derogatory to the goodness of God, which he hath granted by promise and oath—two immutable witnesses—to penitent sinners, than to credit the father of lies before him. *Januas æternæ felicitatis spes aperit, desperatio claudit*,—Hope opens the door of heaven, desperation shuts it. As faith is heaven before heaven, so despair is damnation before the time.

Shall the blood and death of Christ put sense into rocks and stones, and shall man tread it under his desperate feet, enervate his cross, annihilate his ransom, and die past hope? Did he raise three dead men to life,—one newly departing, another on the bier, a third smelling in the grave,—to manifest that no degree of death is so desperate that it is past his recovery; and shall these men, as if 'twice dead, and pulled up by the roots,' Jude, ver. 12, deny to the grace and glory of God a possibility of their reviving? *Μὴ γένοιτο*,—God (and the unfeigned repentance of their own hearts) forbid it!

3. Thus we have heard the malignancy of spiritual sicknesses, whether in sin or for sin. Now let us take a short consideration how far spiritual sicknesses are more dangerous than corporal.

The soul is at all parts more precious than the body. It is that principal, most divine, and excellent half of man. *Dum vivificat, anima; dum vult, animus; dum scit, mens; dum recolit, memoria; dum judicat, ratio; dum spirat, spiritus; dum sentit, sensus*,—It is called for quickening, a soul; for knowing, mind; for remembering, memory; for judging, reason; for breathing, spirit; for feeling, sense. When the soul is sick, all these are sick with it. The soul is compared to heaven, the body to earth. The heaven is glorious with sun, moon, stars; so the soul with understanding, memory, reason, faith, hope, &c. The body, like the earth whereof it was made, is squalid with lusts. The earth hath no heat nor nourishment but from heaven, nor the body comfort but from the soul. How then? Oh, how terrible is the soul's sickness or death!

How indulgently should we tender the health thereof! We keep our chicken from the kite, our lamb from the wolf, our fawn from the hound, our doves from the vermin; and shall we yield our darling to the lions, our soul to those murdering spirits which endeavour to devour it? The soul may be well when the body is full of griefs; but ill goes it with the body when the soul is sick. Nay, even corporal diseases are often a means to procure spiritual soundness. Therefore one calls it *optabile malum, cum*

*mali remedium sit maioris*,—a happy evil, which is the remedy of a greater evil. We may say of many healthful bodies, *tutius ægrotassent*, they might with less danger have been sick. *Nusquam pejus quam in sano corpore, æger animus habitat*,\*—A sick mind dwells not rightly in a sound body : but to find a healthful and sound soul in a weak sickly body is no wonder ; since the soul (before smothered with the clouds of health) is now suffered to see that through the breaches of her prison which former ignorance suspected not.

Corporal sickness is a perpetual monitor to the conscience, every pang a reproof, and every stitch reads a lesson of mortality, ready ever to check for evil, or to invite to good ; which duly weighed, a man hath less reason to be over-fearful of sickness than over-glad of health. The spiritual detriment that may ensue on health is more dangerous than the bodily pain that pursues sickness. If a man fear not death, what power hath sickness to make him miserable ? *Tolerabilis est morbi presentia, si contempseris id quod extremum minatur*,—Sickness hath little terror in it, if thou shalt condemn that which it threateneth—death. If it teach thee by the sight of the first death instant, to prevent the fury of the second, behold it makes thee blessed. Such good use may the wise soul make of the body's enemy. I have read it said, that *singulus morbus, parvula mors*,—every disease is a little death. Therefore God sends us many little deaths to instruct our preparation for the great death. The oftener a man dies, the better he may know to die well.

I yield, if in sickness we contract and narrow up the powers of our souls, and direct them (as our finger) to the grief of our bodies only, forgetting either that God strikes us, or that we have first stricken God,—either flying to ill means, or affixing to good means more than to God,—our sickness may be deadly to body and soul too. Asa was sick but of his feet, 2 Chron. xvi. 22: his feet stood far from his heart, yet because he relied more on his physicians than on his Maker, he died. Or if there shall be no less confusion and hurly-burly in the faculties of the soul than there is distemperature in the parts of the body ; when reason, which should be the queen, and dwell in the highest and choicest room, is deposed from her government ; when the senses, which are court-guards and the princess's attendants, that give all admission into the presence, are corrupted ; when the supreme faculties, which are the peers, are revolted ; and the affections, which are the commons, perverted ; and all this insurrection and disturbance, dethroning the queen, corrupting the guard, drawing from fealty the peers, and the commons from allegiance, wrought by those violent passions which are refractory and headstrong rebels, having once gotten head,—alas, how far is this miserable distemper and perturbation of these spiritual parts above the distress or distraction of the corporal members ! Neither is the future peril hereof only more full of prodigious desolation, but even the present sense is also more tetical, piercing, and amazing with horror.

We shall find the perplexity of this spiritual sickness, how far exceeding the corporal, if we either compare them generally, or particularly by instance in any special disease.

*First ; generally.* The excellency of health is measured according to the life which holds it, and the dignity of life is considered by the cause that gives it. The life of the plant is basest, because it consists but in the juice which is administered by the earth to the root thereof, and thence derived and spread to the parts. The life of the brute creature excels, because it is

\* Plutarch.

sensitive, and hath power of feeling. The life of man is better than both, because it is reasonable, conceiving and judging of things by understanding. The life of a spiritual man is better than the former, and it hath two degrees: the life of inchoate regeneration, and it consists in grace; and the perfect life of imputed righteousness, conferred and confirmed by Jesus Christ. The life of glory exceeds all, whereof there are also two degrees: the fruition of glory in soul; and the full possession in the union of the body to it. These two last sorts of life transcend the former in two main respects: because the other may die, must die; these have a patent of eternity sealed them: and because the other have transient causes; these have the grace and glory of God.

Now as by all consent the life of reasonable man is better than the vegetable of plants, or sensitive of beasts, so the health of man must needs be more precious; and as that virtue excels in goodness, so doth the defect exceed in miserableness. Respect man distinctively, as he is a body only; and then to be sick and die are common to him with plants and beasts; and what suffering is there in the one more than in the other, save that as the beast is more sensible of pain than the tree, so man is more apprehensive than the beast? The bodies of all 'return to the earth;' but man hath a soul, wherein his reason is placed, which fainting or sickening through sin, or the punishment for sin, there is offered a passion and grief whereof the other are not capable. Death to the rest is not so terrible as this sickness. The goodlier the building is, the more lamentable the ruin.

*Secondly*; particularly. This will best appear if we single out some special disease, and confer the perplexity it can offer to the body with the sickness of the soul. Take, for instance, the plague of the leprosy. It was a fearful and unsupportable sickness, every way miserable, as you may find it described, Lev. xiii. 45, 46: 'His clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean. He shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be.'

(1.) The leprosy infected their very garments and houses, sticking contagion in the very wool and walls. But our leprosy of sin hath (with a more vast extension) infected the elements, air, earth, beasts, plants, &c., sticking scars on the brow of nature, and making the whole 'creature groan' under the burden of corruption, Rom. viii. 22.

(2.) The leprosy was violent in spreading, running eftsoons over all the body, as in Gehazi, and making it all as an ulcer; yet could it not penetrate and enter the soul; the mind might be clean in this general defiling of the carcase. Behold, the leprosy of sin hath not content itself to insult, pollute, and tyrannise over the body, but it defiles the soul also, and turns that purer part of man into a lazar. 'Our righteousness is become filthy rags,' Isa. xlvi. 6; our heart is poisoned, 'our consciences defiled,' Titus i. 15.

(3.) The leprosy was an accidental disease, casual to some, whiles other escaped it. It was God's pursuivant to single out and arrest some for their sin, his mercy sparing the rest. But the leprosy of sin is *hereditarius morbus*,—an hereditary sickness. We derive it from our great sire Adam, with more infallible conveyance than ever son inherited his father's lands. It is original to us, born with us, born before us. So that *natalis* would be *fatalis*, the birth-day would be the death-day, if the blood of that immaculate Lamb should not cleanse us.

(4.) The leprosy was a dangerous disease, yet curable by natural means; but ours is by so much the worse, as it admits not man as physician, nor

nature itself as physic, sufficient to cure it. The medicine is supernatural ; the ' blood and water ' of that man who is God. Faith must lay hold on mercy ; mercy alone can heal us.

(5.) The leprosy is a sore disease, so entering and eating that it is even incorporate to the flesh ; yet still *cum carne exiit*,—it is put off with the flesh. Death is a physician able to cure it. *Mors una interimit et leprosum et lepram*,—Death (the best empiric) kills at once the leper and the leprosy. But the leprosy of sin cleaves so fast, not only to the flesh, but to the soul, Heb. xii. 1, that if spiritual death to sin do not slay it, corporal death shall neither mend it nor end it. It shall not fly from the soul when the soul doth fly from the body, but as it accompanies the one to the judgment-seat of God, so it shall meet the other in hell, if they both cannot be rid of it, through Christ, on earth.

(6.) The leprosy makes man loathsome to man, that *seorsim habitaturus sit*,—he must dwell alone. So was the law : Lev. xiii. 46, ' He is unclean : he shall dwell alone ; without the camp shall his habitation be.' Yea, though he were a king, he must content himself with an unvisited and removed lodging, 2 Kings xv. 5 ; yet what is it to be secluded from man's, and not to be destitute of the Lord's company ? God forsakes not the ' clean heart,' Ps. lxxiii. 1, though man abhors the leprous flesh. God alone is a thousand companions ; God alone is a world of friends. He never knew what it was to be familiar with heaven that complains the lack of friends whiles God is with him. Were thy chamber a prison, thy prison a dungeon, yet what walls can keep out that infinite Spirit ? Even there the good soul finds the sun of heaven to enlighten his darkness, in comparison of whom all the stars in the sky are the snuff of a dim candle. Every cloud darkens our sun ; nothing can eclipse that. But the leprosy of sin separates a soul from God's fellowship, from the company of angels. 1 John i. 6, ' We lie if we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness.' ' Your sins have separated betwixt me and you, saith the Lord of hosts.' They unhouse our hearts of God's Spirit, and expel him from the temple of our souls, who will no longer stay there when the Dagon of sin is advanced, adored. It is customary with men to eschew the society of their poor, maimed, afflicted, diseased brethren, and to shew some disdain by their averseness ; but to keep company with drunkards, adulterers, swearers, usurers, &c.—of whom alone we have a charge, *de non tangendo*,—they reckon not. ' Eat not with them ; turn away from them,' saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. v. 11, 2 Tim. ii. 5, from those so diseased in soul, not in body. But now *melior est conditio vitii, quam morbi*,—the estate of sin is better than of sickness. But God looks unto, and is with, Lazarus living, and takes him into his bosom dying, though he was full of sores ; and lets healthy, wealthy, flourishing Dives go by, unnamed, unaccepted.

(7.) The leprosy kept men both from the fading city, terrestrial Jerusalem. This leprosy, unpurged by repentance, restrains men from that ' Jerusalem which is above,' a city built upon jaspers, and sapphires, and precious stones, flowing, instead of milk and honey, with bliss and glory. For ' into it shall enter nothing that defileth, nor whatsoever worketh abomination or lies,' Rev. xxi. 19. Now as the pleasures and treasures of this city are more, so much worse is the cause hindering our entrance. You may judge by this taste how far spiritual sickness is more bitter than corporal. Every circumstance before hath reflected on this ; but *nunquam satis dicitur, quod nunquam satis addiscitur*,—it is never taught enough that is not enough learned.

4. I should now, lastly, inquire who are the sick, wherein, as the philoso-

pher said of men, *Non ubi sunt, sed ubi non sunt, facile demonstratur*—I can easily shew you where they are not, not where they are.\* It is a small matter to find out the sick, the difficulty is to find any sound. I know 'there are a few names in our Sardis that have not defiled their garments,' Rev. iii. 4; but they are so few that it is hard to find them. 'Run to and fro through the streets, and seek in the broad places of our cities, if you can find a man, if there be any that executes judgment, and seeketh the truth,' Jer. v. 1. The whole world is very old and sick, given over, as man in his dotage, to covetousness.

'Hujus adest ætas extrema et ferrea mundi,  
Alget amor dandi, præceps amor ardet habendi;—

'Needs must the world be sick and old,  
When lust grows hot, and charity cold.'

Wonder you at this? Wonder is the daughter of ignorance, ignorance of nature. God hath foretold it, event hath fulfilled it. St Paul gives the symptoms of this general sickness: 'Redeem the time, for the days are evil,' Eph. v. 16. Our Saviour premonisheth the great decay of faith and love to ensue the apostasy of the latter times. His apostles testify no less. Paul to Timothy, 'Know that in the last days perilous times shall come. Men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud,' &c., 2 Tim. iii. 1. Read and observe. Peter, with others, to make up a cloud of witness, prophesieth the like, if not with addition; that men shall be so debauched, as even to deride and scoff at goodness, as a thing rather derisory than necessary, 2 Pet. iii. 3, Jude 18. The plague of sin rankles, and, helped with fit instruments of dispersion, infects the times.

The scribe points to the publican, and thinks that destruction comes on the city for his sake. The ungodly Protestant lays the fault on the profane gallant that the days are evil, and says that pride devours all. The proud on the covetous churl, the well-conceited hypocrite on the dissolute, the dissolute on the hypocrites. Even the wicked think the godly the cause, but the godly know the wicked the cause. Atheists will live as they list. *Loquuntur grandia*. They 'lift up their mouths against heaven,' and acknowledge no other deity than their own guts. If good cheer be their sickness, they care not though gluttony be their grave. Grace is fain to give place to wantonness, religion to idolatry, honesty to profaneness. Many live, as the apostle saith of Hymeneus and Philetus, as if 'the resurrection was past,' 2 Tim. ii. 18, or would never come.

I know there was never age not complained of, not judged as worst. *Laudamus veteres*, &c. We see what is, not what hath been, Eccles. vii. 10. Some times have been evil, others worse, ours worst of all. We are so much worse than all, because we have more means to be better. We have atheists that serve no God, mammonists that serve their money, idolaters that serve creatures, apostates that forsake God, worldlings, temporisers, neutrals, that serve many, serve all, serve none. Love is banished, temperance gives place to drunkenness, humility stoops to pride, hope yields to sense, and religion itself is used either for a show of good or for a cloak of evil. Men's words disagree from their deeds, their hearts from their words. If any say this world is not so sick as we give it, I durst tell them that they are a great part of the sickness; and but for such we had less need to complain.

Satan's violence now doubling his forces, shews it to be the last and worst time. For the devil then rageth most, when he knows he shall rage but for

\* Rather 'where they are, not where they are not.'—Ed.

a while. The world is sick, 'the days are evil.' You hear what makes them so. Shortly, either doing or suffering ill; sin originally, misery by consequent. If we would bate of our sins, God would decrease our miseries. What plagues the world with the sword, but malice and ambition? What turns the poor from their right, but injustice? What brings famine but covetousness? Proud courtiers make rich merchants, and both make miserable commons. We multiply sins against God; God, punishments upon us: the former from our unrighteousness, from his righteousness the latter; both together make the world sick, the days evil. I would hope it were vain now to bid you loathe the world. Is he less than mad that can love and dote on such a cheek? The beauty of it is black without by the miseries, and more foul within by the sins; if any wretch shall now make it his choice, he is not worthy of envy, if of pity.

'There's only one way left not to admit  
The world's infection, to be none of it.'

*Conclusion.*—Seeing we are thus sick, why speed we not to means of recovery? It was the son of Sirach's counsel to use physic before thou be sick; being sick, it is madness to neglect it. Yet as the physician is often fain to entreat his froward patient to admit of the potion; so let me beseech you, nay, whiles I stand in the circle of your loves, let me conjure you, to accept of God's physic. God is our best physician. The soul cannot mis-carry that is under the tender hands of her Maker. His crosses are his medicines. As therefore in bodily sickness we can be content to be let blood in the arm or the foot, for the curing of the head or the heart; the health of the principal part is more joy to us than it is grief to be troubled in the inferior. Thy sound limbs carry a sick soul; God fits thee with proper recuring, recovering physic; afflictions, a singular medicine for diseased affections. Thou sayest, they are unpleasant; true, they are physic: who respects pleasure, but wholesomeness, in medicines? Thou art happily displeased with the relish, when thy sick heart is thereby eased of the pangs. Wilt thou love thy palate above thy health? Wilt thou refuse the unpalatable receipt of crosses, because they go against the grain of thy affections, and prefer thy lusts to thy soul? Let him die that will rather choose a wilful sickness than a harsh remedy.

This great physician hath some substitutes under him, ordained to minister to our sick souls. For besides the ministers of his word, applying that saving balm of the gospel, before largely specified, magistrates are his physicians, (of what degree soever,) to whom he hath committed the sword of justice, as lancets to cut the ulcers of our souls, and to let out the imposthumate matter of our corruptions. Good laws are the physic, and the just execution of them is the ministration. This *aqua fortis* is fit for these iron days, to grave some characters and prints of goodness in them. Our knotted sins, like beds of eels, cannot be dissolved but by the thunder. You speak of all, if you say that the noise of this thunder can waken us. At first these laws may be, like the log which Jupiter in the fable threw down to the frogs *regem petentibus*, to be their king, with much awe and reverence feared; but afterwards, they get up and ride them in contempt. Subordinate officers are afraid to execute what the higher have wisely enacted.

I wish that no laws, like Draco's, should be writ in blood; yet withal, that the loosing of the reins of justice may not give encouragement to the already impudent fury of sin. Why should you fear to do right? Is it the lewdness of the time? whereof we may say, as it was once said of Rome,



that they could neither endure an ill governor, nor obey a good one. Is it because a great person is the offender? Shall therefore any deputed justicers, which should shine in the orb of this country like the seven stars, basely degenerate into the cowardly darkness of the seven deadly sins, partaking of others' wickedness? A great man undoes the commons, depopulates towns, encloseth fields, breaks, like a great beast, through all the hedges and fences of God's law and man's; treads justice, religion, honesty, conscience, under his proud feet. Will you, like beasts of the herd, follow him, and pass through the breaches and gaps of offence he hath made, and not oppose your strength to his oppressions? A great man is popishly addicted; he havocs the church, abuseth the ministers, revileth religion, maintains the Seminary, countenanceth secret treason, admits no tenants but those that will be tenants to Rome, and puts not his own livery upon any back but that which withal accepts the Pope's—the mark of the beast—together with his cognizance. Dare you not oppose, hinder, stop, his wickedness? I say unto you, 'Your life shall go for his life, if you let him scape,' 1 Kings xx. 42. 'If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment in a province, marvel not at the matter; for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they,' Eccles. v. 8.

What hinders you? God, the supreme Magistrate, the law, religion, conscience, is on your side. You cannot want seconds, whiles these take your part. Why should you fear the looks of man, who is dust and ashes, whiles you tremble not to disobey the Lord? So a little dog running in the field amongst a whole flock of sheep, scares them all away; and when he is gone, they turn again and stare on him as if he were some fearful monster. So the little birds are afraid of the cuckoo, because he looks like a hawk. Because these tyrannous oppressors and Papists look as if they had horns of iron, like Zedekiah, 1 Kings xxii. 11, shall the arms and armour of justice be timorous to encounter them? But as in a diseased body, if the sickness once take the heart, how shall the members find comfort?—how should the distressed commonalty be succoured in these oppressions, eased of these burdens, when the magistrates, which are as the heart, are infected with the same enormities? Beloved, spare not your hands when God calls for them; your remissness and connivance is not love, but hatred. He that binds the frantic, and rouseth him that is sick of a lethargy, angers, but loves, both. It is a happy necessity that enforceth to goodness.

Neither is this physician-office imposed only on the magistrates; every man must be medicinal to another. Who, but a Cain, is not his 'brother's keeper'? Reasonable exhortation, seasonable reproof, good example, ever timely and available, are mutual remedies to this sickness. 'Exhort one another daily, whiles it is called To-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,' Heb. iii. 13. There is first, *debitum charitatis*, the due of charity, 'exhort one another;' then *temporis opportunitas*, the fitness of season, 'whiles it is called To-day;' then *periculum obstinationis*, the danger of obstinacy, 'lest you be hardened;' and, lastly, *calliditas hostis*, the subtlety of the enemy, 'through the deceitfulness of sin.'

Every man must be a physician to himself, as being best acquainted with his own heart. If age hath ripened thy discretion, thou art to thyself, saith the proverb, *aut stultus aut medicus*,—either a fool or a physician. Thou knowest where the soul's sickness lies; by one receipt make way to another, as physicians use, and by all to thy health: by repentance to faith, by faith to virtue, &c. And in those works of devotion, medicinal intentions to the cure of thy soul, (as physicians prescribe in sweats and exercise,) do not

cease over suddenly. Let not thy prayer, meditation, hearing of the word be broken off at the call of every vanity.

Good diet is in the next place necessary to physic. In vain doth the potion work our recovery, if our evil behaviour after it shall draw on us a relapse. Recidivation is so much more dangerous than our first sickness, as our natural strength is then the more feebled, and unable to endure means of restoring. If the potion of repentance hath purged your hearts, you must observe the strict diet of obedience, which consists in refraining from the corrupt meats whereon your souls have surfeited; in restraining yourselves to the bread of heaven, the body and blood of Christ, the object of your faith; and doing the will of God, the object of your conversation, which Christ calls his meat and drink.

The first is that spiritual fast which especially pleaseth God, Isa. lviii. 6, and which he calls 'a fast to himself,' Zech. vii. 5. This is that *magnum et generale jejunium*,—that lent of abstinence, which we must all keep, consisting in holiness of life. God hath ever from the beginning dieted our bodies, keeping in his own hand (as a master in his own house) the disposition of his creatures, for the use of man, that man might depend on his provident Maker for all needful blessings. In the first age, he appointed him for meat, 'every herb bearing seed, and every tree yielding fruit, upon the face of all the earth,' Gen. i. 29; whether he gave him liberty to eat flesh or no, we hold it uncertain. After the flood, the Lord renewed his grant, and gave free use of his creatures, with free liberty to eat flesh, but restraining the flesh of the unclean, and the blood of all, Gen. ix. 3. At Christ's coming, he enlarged our patent, and gave license to eat all kinds of flesh, Acts x. 15; only, now, he restrains sin, allowing the use, and forbidding the abuse of all. 'Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if received with thanksgiving,' &c., 1 Tim. iv. 4. Sin, then, sin is the only thing from which we must perpetually fast: the hands fasting from oppression, robbery, blood; the feet from perverse and erring ways; the ears from sucking in slanderous tales; the eyes from gazing after vanities; the thoughts from impurity. Let the blasphemer fast from oaths, the covetous from greediness, the malicious from hatred, the drunkard from his full cups, every sinner from his lust-pleasing iniquities.

They shall not repent this forbearance. The soul shall not starve when it hath lost these acorns. Behold, for the other respect, 'there is bread, and bread enough in your father's house,' Luke xv.; if that content you not, lo, the fat calf is killed, Christ is crucified; this banquet is eaten with music, mirth, and joy of heart; new garments are put on your souls, and a fresh blee will arise in your cheeks. The world's gross food could not give you true content; but 'hunger and thirst' after this diet, and 'blessed are you, for you shall be satisfied,' Matt. v. 6. Our God is abundantly merciful; let not us be wanting to ourselves. Every one mend one, so shall the general health of all be perfected. Which health the Physician of heaven, for his mercies' and merits' sake, vouchsafe unto us! Amen.