

HEAVEN AND EARTH RECONCILED.

They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.—DAN. XII. 3.

THESE words are prophetically spoken, and turn over to us a golden leaf, whose ink is nectar, and the pen from the wings of angels; I mean, the matter expressed is wholly celestial: what shall be the end of the righteous, and of them that make them so. *Porta patet celi, procul, oh procul este, profani.* I must in some sort open you the everlasting doors, and shew you the King of glory, and your glory in him. Let a holy reverence possess your souls, and say with Jacob, 'The place is fearful; none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven,' Gen. xxix. 17. Suppose that great Prince set on his throne of universal judgment, and upon all creatures that have borne the image of God, summoned before him, having passed an irrevocable sentence, will you hear what shall become of the just? Open your intellectual sanctified eyes, able, with Stephen, to pierce through the curled clouds, and with meditations rapt to the third heaven, behold them as here described: 'The wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.' A lofty metaphor, when the lowest part of it is not less high than the firmament, than the stars. Just men shall parallel the brightness of the azure sky, and ministers shall shine as stars in it; nay, they shall transcend both in glory. We shall then see the firmament and stars as far below us, as now our humbled mortality thinks them above us; and could they shine as bright as ever their creation left them, the righteous shall outshine them; for, 'they shall be fashioned to the glorious body of Christ,' Phil. iii. 21.

The words may be distinguished, *in opus, et mercedem*,—into the work, and the wages. Here is earth and heaven in this text; our way and our country, dishonour and honour, trouble and peace. Our earth, way, trouble, goes thus far: 'They that turn many to righteousness.' Our heaven, country, peace, follows: 'shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.'

I. We ministers on earth are not unfitly compared to logical copulatives, that must join together a subject and a predicate. 1. The subject we work on is *men, many men*. 2. The predicate we work them to is *righteousness*. 3. Ministers are the copulative, that unite these, *convertentes*, that make men and righteousness friends; which never naturally and heartily loved one another since that apple set our first parents' teeth on edge.

II. Our heaven follows ; and there is nothing but joy in it. 1. 'We shall shine ;' no more be counted dross and offscouring of the world, as Paul says ; no more be like low hedges, which every Nimrod, hunter, persecutor, treads down for his sport ; no more be like rejected and unthought-of things, which the eye of scorn looks over. We shall stand where we shall be seen ; 'we shall shine.' 2. Not meanly, and with a glimmering light, but 'as stars,' reserved to the Sun of righteousness his greater and chief glory ; 'we shall shine as stars.' 3. This 'for ever ;' not meteors, whiles a gross, spumy, squalid substance lasts ; nor like *stellæ cadentes*, falling stars, which seem fixed in some sphere, but are not, as St John saith, 'They went out from us, for they were not of us,' 1 Epist. ii. 19 ; but without passing the horizon of glory, without obscuring, without interposition of any clouds ; 'we shall shine for ever and ever.' This is our heaven ; but I must keep you on earth a while, though you long more for the other place.

I. 1. *The Subject.*—The subject we must exercise our skill on are men, tempered of the same mould, having a soul inspired from the breath of the same God, as dear to him as ourselves, bought with no worse blood than his Son's, guarded with angels, protected by the same providence, and compassed about with the same mercies that we are. God made man after his own likeness, that there might be *quoddam in terris Dei simulacrum*,—a certain image of himself on earth, wherein he might be delighted : as it is natural to every being to affect that which received derivation from it ; as Apelles was delighted with his tablets, Pygmalion with his ivory statue, Narcissus with his form in the fountain, a woman with her face in the glass, and parents with the offspring of their loins. Socrates then is composed of no better metal than his scholars, nor the minister than the people. Think not yourselves lords over them, 1 Pet. v. 3 ; all persons are equally respected of God. *Præsumus officio, pares sumus dignitate coram Deo*,—We are above them in office, not in dignity with God.

Let this meditation suppress our pride, either naturally born with us, or accidentally contracted by a self-opinion ; it is an easy fault, and soon incurred, for a minister to be proud of his gifts, of his place, as Miriam was of the Spirit, and to prefer himself to those he teacheth, nay, to his fellow-teachers. Let me have no need to remember you of that, *unum restat*, one thing is wanting—a humbled soul. Thou hast overcome many corruptions, subdued lusts, qualified infirmities ; take heed lest *vincenda superbia restat*,—pride remains yet to be overcome. He that contemns others, makes himself most contemptible. But, *Quorsum hæc ?*—To what end is this ? No such vice cleaves to us. I would it did not ; I would no star did envy the brighter shining of another. But alas ! pride is a subtle insinuating sin, ever conversant in good things ; it crept into paradise, nay, it stole into heaven. No sin is more saucy, none more bold with God, none less welcome. It took up lodging in the Pharisee, that was so precise in tithing, alms, prayer. Many a Pharisee is proud that he is not proud ; so subtle is that temptation of our adversary, when a man will be humble, to make him highly conceited of his humility : not unlike the Cynic, that condemned Plato's pride with a worse of his own. 'I thank God, I am not as others,' says that Pharisee. He was not indeed, but had little reason to thank God for it. The emptiest barrel makes the loudest sound. He that is truly learned hath learned this, not to boast it. It often befalls such, as it did that cardinal, who making a show of bringing much treasure into the land, one of his mules stumbled, and the portmantle broke, and there was a goodly show of moss, and straw, and stones. They that look so big upon their brethren, were their cabinet opened,

all the great supposed treasure within would appear to be mere husks, froth, and ignorance. The sun excels the moon in glory, yet both are stars, without emulation one of another. The highest cedar will suffer the lowest shrub to grow under it. He that digs the ground, hath his use in the garden, as well as he that draws the knot. Silver is metal as well as gold; and the beggar may be as good a subject as the lord. Christ gave his life for his sheep, as well as for his under shepherds. Despise not thy fellow-servants, lest the Master of us all despise thee.

This subject is set down indefinitely, 'many.' Whence observe, that the power of God is here perspicuous, that designs a few to convert many; nay, one man to have the charge of a congregation. Compare the minister with his charge, and think the difference: one man to a multitude; one without pomp to many mighty, wise, rich, noble; a weak man with a few leaves of paper, to those that are armed with a prejudicial opposition of nature against it; the message not promising liberty, ease, encouragement to lusts, but threatening persecution, cross, rod, trouble: yet to bind kings in chains, and nobles in fetters of iron; to recover the heathen from their ancient and national idolatries, and prostrate them to the name of Jesus; to make the drunkard sober, covetous merciful, malicious charitable; *hic digitus Dei*,—this is the finger of God. Thus, one Moses shall give precepts to six hundred thousand men able to bear arms; one Peter convert three thousand at a sermon; one minister (full of weakness) affect a great congregation, erect, depress, with either threats or promises, and persuade wild Japheth, as tame as a lamb, into the tents of Shem. Thus a dozen weak apostles passed once through legions of soldiers, prohibitions of laws, menaces of adversaries, oppositions of the flesh, pride, religions, Satan, into the courts of kings, and overcame them with the gospel. What shall we say? We admire the conquest of Alexander, that with forty thousand men subdued all Asia. If his army had been greater, his victory, his glory had been less. If he had achieved it with fewer, we would have doubled his honour; but if with twelve, deified him. Jesus Christ hath, and doth daily, make greater conquests with fewer soldiers; subduing souls, which is a greater victory than that of bodies, *sine vi et armis*, without military engines. Yet who apprehends the immenseness of his power, or admires the depth of his wisdom?

Indeed, it is admirable if any such thing be wrought in these days. Time was, one sermon could turn many; now many sermons cannot turn one. Many thirsty souls have drunk at one fountain, and been satisfied; infinite fountains are now open, and none will drink. They come indeed to Jacob's well, but they bring no pitchers with them,—no faith, no attention, no conscience. God hath set open the doors of his mercy, grace, glory; only our hearts are shut up: we may as well preach to these material walls, and move the seats, as your cauterised and numbed consciences. When we have studied our colour into paleness, our strength into weakness, our bloods to jelly, and spoke away our spirits into air, you are the same still, and your sins in the same strength; not a Mammon, Belial, Melchom, changes their lodgings, or is unroosted out of your hearts. You come before the pulpit, but your faith and conscience is left behind you. Your closets, shops, fields, nay, perhaps taverns and tap-houses, plead possession of your affections: and all the law that comes out of the chair of Moses cannot give the devil a defeasance.

What then? Shall we not shine in this glory, because so few have been turned by us? Nothing less; and we have precedent for it: 'Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord,' saith the

prophet, Isa. xlix. 5. Though when we have spent our strengths in Israel, the widow of Sarepta is more charitable. Though the altar hath enjoyed our labours, we not her privileges, yet for us 'is laid up a crown of glory,' 2 Tim. iv. 8. Though it cannot but grieve us to be a savour of death to many, and to rise up condemning witnesses against those that would not believe our report; yet since God is glorified in both heaven and hell, and we have faithfully discharged the duties of our callings and consciences, leaving the success to God, though we have turned few to righteousness, yet we shall shine as stars for ever and ever.

2. *The Predicate.*—The predicate we work men to is righteousness. Righteousness is so fair an object, that a man would think there needs no great solicitation to it. What heart would not be enamoured on the beauty of righteousness if we saw it? Even the most unrighteous men have been convinced to approve of righteousness. Surely integrity is not loved, because it is not seen. The devil so takes up our eyes with the flourishes of sin, and gay colours of lusts, that we are blind to the sight of goodness; whose face if we could behold in that mirror of clearness wherein we were created, we would be in love with nothing else but God and that. But as an ill-affected stomach is best pleased with crudities, our poisoned and infected natures are dotingly taken with corruptions, and have no love to righteousness. No love, said I? No familiarity, no knowledge, no acquaintance; that if God should suffer our blinded souls so to go on to our deaths, we should scarce ever dream of righteousness. Therefore he hath given us helps, his word, and the vocal organs, to make it sound to us; his ministers, who may turn our hearts to righteousness. Here is offered to us this instruction.

The end of the ministry is to bring men to righteousness. Christ, 'when he had led captivity captive, gave gifts to men,' Eph. iv. What were they, and to what end? Paul declares both the gifts, ver. 11, 'He gave some to be apostles, some prophets,' &c. The end, ver. 12, 'For the repairing of the saints, and for the edification of the body of Christ;' a task hard enough. *Arts artium, regimen animarum*,—It is the cunning of all cunning to govern souls. It is no easy work to make men righteous. If they could retain covetise, licentiousness, vainglory, in their service, and withal be righteous, there were some hope: but when you tell them that carnal lust and righteousness are two ends that shall never meet; that 'flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven,' 1 Cor. xv. 50; when you bid them weep for and restore their injuries, usuries, sacrileges, charm their tongues from blasphemies, their hearts from vanities; you shall almost as good bathe a Moor in hope to whiten him. Men naturally love anything better than righteousness, and think any burden lighter than repentance. Hence it is that we are not so welcome as the ministers of Satan. Behold, thy minister mourns to thee in the pulpit, and persuades thee by the blood of Christ, not without his own tears, to have mercy on thy own soul; not to cast away all the hopes and comforts of a better world; to bewail and beware of sins, which will make a hell in thy bosom here, and sink thee to a worse hell hereafter: *nihil agit*, he cannot prevail. Let but a ruffian hold up his finger, thou art gone. All auditors are not ruffians, and so addicted,—God forbid that our Sardis should not have 'a few names left in her,'—but many are thus, and more of a different disposition, but a worse. The most attend the world: 'Who will shew us any good?' Ps. iv. 6. The minister's voice is not so audible as profit's; nor can divinity make so sweet music as the world. If to condole this were to help it, and the discovery of the dis-

ease were no less than the remedy, I should soon cure it. But shall I tell you? The general opinion of most in our parishes is this, (if the life do not belie the mind,) that a competent measure of righteousness is enough for heaven; and salvation doth not stand on so hard conditions as we teach. No bounds or measures of iniquity are enough, but a little righteousness serves. It is matter of amazement to see how the most live, as if they were neither in God's debt nor danger. Men strive who shall sin most, and give Jesus Christ the deepest wounds. They swear, bezzel,* covet, and laugh at him that tells them they sin. There is not so much shame left in their bloods as to give testimony of their guiltiness. If it were possible, they would annihilate their souls, and quench all difference betwixt themselves and beasts: 'Let us eat and drink, for we shall die.' It is soon said, and soon eaten; but not so soon digested. They advance the colours of Satan, blasphemies and lies, in the very face of God; as if they sent challenges to heaven, and dared their Maker to the combat. For the ministry of the word, whose intent is to beget in our souls righteousness, they make this the end of it, to pass the time, to keep holidays from sleep, and to move the hearts of idiots. They visit the temple for custom, as fools; for example, as apes; for necessity, as beasts; for praises, as hypocrites; or for peace, as politicians. How few think their minister placed over them to turn their hearts to righteousness!

I have shewed them the end of the ministry; we may not forget to apply it to ourselves. God's intent in sealing thee this commission is to work in men's hearts righteousness. Who knows not that? God grant none forget it! I am not worthy, fathers and brethren, to inform your understandings; *saltem concedatur refricare memorias*,—only give me leave to rub your memories. It is easy to propound sinister ends to our best, ordinate, and most regular works. There are five bitter herbs to spoil all the children of the prophets' pottage; five affections to distaste our ministry, I will not say to make it ineffectual: fame, flattery, ease, necessity, covetousness.

(1.) Are there none that catch at popular applause, and rather hunt themselves into fame than souls into heaven; *se predicantes, non Christum*,—preaching themselves, rather than Jesus Christ? *Mancipia popularis aure venalis*,—Creatures bred of the people's breath, whose excellencies consist only in opinion; rare men in their own judgments, and the flattered multitude's, that speak more desperately against doubted and questionable actions, than against known and manifest sins; that inveigh against some to please the rest; and even curry favour by speaking bitterly: of whom he spake truly that said, 'They care not to be condemned of the learned for ignorant, so they may be commended of the ignorant for learned.'

'Quid petitur sacris nisi tantum fama poetis?'

What gape these for but only fame? They intend not erection of hearts, direction of lives, correction of vices; but they have a strange kind of pleasure to hold men by the ears, as the fisher the pike by the gills, and neither takes him nor lets him go; there is in these more affectation of fame than affection of truth.

(2.) Are there none that mould their sermons with court dough, flattery? Cushion-chaplains that carry their mistresses' fans, to keep the heat of reproof from their painted faces; that cry it is either cold or hot, as their patron lists to feel it?

* That is, embezzle.—Ed.

'Si pranderet olus patienter, regibus uti
Nollet Aristippus; si sciret regibus uti,
Fastidiret olus,' &c.*

They get more by flattery than just men by their impartial censure. But it was Aristotle's : *Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, magis amica veritas*. Thy patron is thy friend, and the chief man of thy parish is thy friend ; truth is thy friend above all.

(3.) Are there none that leap out of the troubles of the world into the peace of the church, only to be fed at the altar and live idle ? that being entertained to build up God's house, and once sure of his pay, lay down their tools and fall to play ?

(4.) Are there none that make a virtue of necessity, and when all trades fail, turn priests, making that their last refuge that should be their best ? This is a rank custom among the Papists ; but I hope it hath not gotten over our seas. Oh, how vile is it, and an argument of a desperate mind, when divinity is made but a shift ! If to dig they are too lazy, to beg ashamed, to steal afraid, to cheat want wit, and to live means, then thrust in for a room in the church ; and once crept in at the window, make haste to shark out a living ; nay, and perhaps fly apace with the wings of golden ignorance into patrons' books, and presentations to good benefices, when learning is so ill horsed, riding upon penury, that the benefice is gone ere he comes. No matter how poor the stock of learning be, so the stock of money hold out, to the patron's content. Sometimes such beggars are made priests, when good priests are made beggars.

(5.) Are there none sick of the pearl in the eye ? A shrewd disease, and no less common ; whose souls are taken up by Mammon's commission, as Demas, that gave religion the bag, when the world offered him the purse, and vowed to serve Christ no longer for nothing. I have shewed you many oblique, indirect, and sinister ends ; but among all, this carries it for custom, for hatefulness. *Proh pudor !* that ever a minister should be covetous, as if we had lost all our former time, and were now to recover it with a preposterous emulation of the hungriest worldlings ! How should we reclaim others from the world, that cleave to it ourselves ? They must needs think we have a broader way to heaven than we teach others. It is observable that the creatures nearest to the earth are most greedy to accumulate. What creatures store up such heaps of provision as the ant ? But the birds of the air, that fly next heaven, 'neither sow, nor reap, nor carry into the barn,' saith our Saviour, Matt. vi. 26. We are next to heaven in profession ; let us hate to be furthest off in conversation.

These are all unblest and pernicious ends, and whereof, I trust, no soul is here guilty. I confidently use the words of Paul, 'I have persuaded myself better things of you, and such as accompany salvation, though I thus speak,' Heb. vi. 9. I hope the least feather can brush these dusts from our conscience. Let not fame, flattery, ease, necessity, covetousness, task our endeavours to this holy work. We are then but *adulterantes verbum*, such as adulterate God's word, 2 Cor. iv. 2 : as the fornicator makes lust his end, not generation, so such a minister intends not to beget souls to God, but fame or gain to himself. If we do thus, the worst is our own. 'Whiles some preach Christ of strife, some of good-will, yet so long as Christ is preached, I do joy, and will joy therein,' Phil. i. 15-18. It shall be the best for us that our intents sympathise with God's ; his ordinance with our performance, to turn souls to righteousness.

* Hor.

3. *The Copulatives*.—This for the predicate. The persons whom God hath deputed to at-one these two contrary natures, sinful men and righteousness, are the ministers. There is no weak contentation between these, and the labour is hard to reconcile them : ‘To us is committed this ministry of reconciliation,’ 2 Cor. v. 18. God hath honoured us to tie this knot, though it be indeed *dignus vindice nodus*, a sacramental bond for the hand of the most high God to perfect. Yet he vouchsafes this honour to us, as his instruments, that we in his name and power shall tie a double knot on earth ; a temporal knot of the husband to the wife, which none but the minister may do ; spiritual and eternal knot of the believing soul to her husband Christ : ‘I have prepared you for one husband, to present you a pure virgin to Christ,’ 2 Cor. xi. 2. He hath designed us to turn men to righteousness.

Is this possible? *Est Deus in vobis, &c.*,—God is in you if you can do this ; no power rules, constrains, converts the heart of man, but God only. I say again, thus is God pleased to honour us, that we shall be said to convert sinners. ‘He that converteth a sinner from going astray shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins,’ James v. 20. And Paul thus chargeth Timothy, ‘Continue in learning ; for in doing this thou shalt save thyself, and them that hear thee,’ 1 Tim. iv. 16. Yet, *absit*, far be it from us to think, or any superstitious soul to ascribe to us, that by our own arm we have gotten this victory. If the Psalmist denies power to any of rescuing his brother’s body from the grave, he much more excludes the redemption of his soul. This, then, is true : when the external voice of man and the internal operation of the Spirit jump together, then John Baptist ‘shall turn hearts,’ Mal. iv. 6 ; then ‘the priest shall make the soul clean,’ Lev. xvi., when the agent of heaven and instruments of earth do concur, or are comprehensively taken : but when they be either compared in opposing, or opposed in comparing, then all is in God, then ‘Paul can (but) plant, and Apollos water, God gives the increase,’ 1 Cor. iii. 6. Then John Baptist pours on water, and ‘Christ baptizeth with the Holy Ghost, and with fire,’ Matt. iii. 11. Will you hear them united? ‘God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself ; and hath committed to us the ministry of reconciliation,’ 2 Cor. v. 19 ; else there is no power in my perishable voice to affect your conscience. Break away this analogy and virtual association of the Spirit from our preaching, and you depart from the temple with as foul hearts as ever you came thither. No, beloved ; lift up your eyes higher than the pulpit, and know he dwells in heaven that pierceth the conscience : ‘Behold, I stand at the door, and knock,’ &c., Rev. iii. 20. I, says the Son of the eternal God. It is he that clears the eye, undeafs the ear, unlocks the heart, and shakes the inmost powers of the soul, as the thunder shakes the wilderness. Were we all Boanerges, the sons of thunder, we were not able without him to turn your hearts to righteousness. Indeed the word is ‘strong in operation, dividing the marrow and the bones,’ Heb. iv. 12 ; and our ministry is ‘not of the letter, but spirit,’ saith St Paul, thus far exceeding the external commandment of Moses, whereunto he could not convert his own soul, that it shall not only require faith, but give it. Yet still *virtus à Deo*,—the virtue, life, spirit, is from God.

This clears us from that Popish imputation, that we build our faith on a silly minister. We build it on the testimony of the Spirit, and the word of eternal truth, delivered to us by such an organ. The truth examined, they rather build their salvation on a silly minister. Thus far they and we go hand and hand : we agree that faith and conversion is wrought in the heart by an especial grace of God’s Spirit. But here we part ; they say, the Holy

Ghost useth the authority of the church to beget faith in our hearts. We say, he useth the ministry only, not the authority. Thus, whereas they raise the credit of the doctrine from the minister, we raise the credit of the minister from the doctrine : so that of both, Papists may be trulier said to build their faith on the credit of men ; yea, and such men as some of them have been, Sodomites, some conjurers, some murderers, and scarce inferior to devils, unless now perhaps they lie as deep and low in hell. Thus are their blinded souls bound to believe, not by their ministry as Christians, but by their authority as Pythagoreans.

I confess, the word carries authority with it in any lips which God hath touched with a coal from his altar, and woe to the soul that disobeys it ! There is an easy distinction betwixt the lawyer, the physician, and the divine. The lawyer begins with reason, and so descends to common experience and authority. The physician begins with experience, and thence proceeds to reason and authority. The divine begins with authority, and so to reason and experience. Our personal authority, then, is nothing ; the authority of God's word not to be withstood. These, then, are the copulatives, and this the means to bring you to righteousness, or else despair it. If thou, living within the sunshine of the gospel, wilt not be enlightened by it, thou must perish in darkness. If the preacher convert thee not to righteousness, God must work miracles, or thy soul is in hazard.

II. We should now come to our reward, our bliss, our heaven : ' shall shine as stars for ever and ever.' But I find it, Rev. i., ' The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.' Ministers shall be stars hereafter, saith the prophet Daniel ; they shall be stars here too, saith St John. Without question both speak truth, and there is a shining of this world goes before that of heaven. We must be stars in grace, that look to be so in glory. It was directed to the apostles, *Vos estis lux mundi*,—' You are the light of the world,' and, ' Let your light so shine before men,' Matt. v. 14, 16. So God hath disposed, that *lumen gratiæ antecedit lumen gloriæ*,—the light of grace shall precede the light of glory. And none shall shine hereafter that have been dark here. First, then, consider what kind of stars we are ; then what we shall be. Ministers are said to be stars in five respects : in name, substance, site, motion, effects.

1. In name. *Stella à stando dicitur*,—A star, *quasi* not stir, further than the orb carries it. God hath fixed them in their spheres, and confined them to stations. Like good soldiers, they know their ranks and their orders, and observe their *non ultra*. ' The sun knows his rising and his going down.' Ministers must be like stars fixed in their orbs ; ours is a stable profession, not a gadding ministry. It was St Peter's counsel, or rather the Holy Ghost's charge, ' Feed that flock that dependeth on you,' 1 Epist. v. 2. He spake merrily that said, the tribe of Levi must have no mind to the tribe of *Gad*. The apostles, indeed, went through the world, but they had their passport for it : ' Go, teach all nations,' &c. It must not be so with us ; not that you, which are full, should grudge the hungry souls some crumbs from your tables. How many are yet in this land that would be heart-glad of those sermons which you sleep out and despise ! How many would close the minister in the arms of joy, whom you condemn ! So easy is it for a full stomach to forget the benefit of meat ! The feet of those that bring good tidings of peace are nowhere less beautiful than in their most frequented streets. Never found prophet less honour, less welcome, than where his perpetual pains have best earned it. Like pampered children, you play with your meat. Give us leave to gratify with some comforts, I say not, with our

Saviour, the dogs, but the children of our own Father, which want them. Theodoret writes, that when Valens, with his Arian heresy, had bepestered the Christian world, and stroke a deep wound in the white bosom of the church, Aphraades, a certain monk, contrary to his order, came forth of his vowed and confining monastery to succour the endangered truth. Being asked by the offended emperor, what he did out of his cell? 'I did keep it,' saith he, 'so long as Christ's sheep were in peace; I cannot be cooped up and suffer them in hazard of ruin. If being a virgin, I were confined by my father to a closet, yet seeing the house on fire, I were bound to come forth to quench it.'

Thus it is when the affairs of the church call us forth; but our own may not find us so ready. They are wretched stars that will be fixed in no orb, admit of no certain charge: nay, not stars, but mere meteors, exhalations, *ignes fatui*; comets portending delusion to others, confusion to themselves; unstable lights, 'carried about with every wind of doctrine;' 'wandering stars,' as Jude saith, 'for whom is reserved,' not this shining in glory, but 'the black darkness for ever,' Jude 13. They were such stars that the red dragon with his tail swept from heaven and cast down to the earth, that had no true location in the orb of the church; *stellæ erraticæ*, following their own fantasies. Let us beware of such wanderings, lest it be said of us, as the poet of that star, *Etsi non cecidit, poterit cecidisse videri*,—Though we have not fallen away, yet we have seemed so. Let no storms blow us from our charges; menaces, miseries, gusts, waves, shall beat upon us, yet *si fractus illabatur orbis, impavidum ferient ruinae*,—let us stick close and fast to our spheres: when God's general afflictions of plague, famine, mortality, are most frequent, our counsels are most seasonable. Oh, when will the iron hearts of men bow, if not when they are heat in the flames of judgments? They are wretched stars, then, and incapable of this glory, that are *subito apparentes, subito disparentes, labantes et labentes*,—suddenly up and suddenly down; giving a glimmering, but no solid and certain light. Let no such stars shine in our firmament.

2. In substance. *Stella est solida et pellucida materies, non vetustate, non putredine corrumpenda, non casu ullo dissipanda*,—A star is a more solid part of his orb, every way round, light, simple, and most pure. A minister must for substance be a star, possess a star-like and substantial light, not a flash of lightning, but a continual lamp of learning, which, like the fire of the sanctuary, must never go out. 'You are the light of the world,' saith our Master; 'but if the light be darkness, how great is that darkness?' Light, as well as place in the firmament, is essential to a star; and learning, as well as office, is requisite for a minister. They that handle the two-edged sword of the Spirit must have skill when to strike with it, when but to shake it, and when to sheathe it. An unlearned scribe, without his treasure of old and new, is unfit to interpret God's oracles. 'The priests' lips shall preserve knowledge,' Mal. ii. 7, is no less a precept to the minister than a promise to the people. We are unfit to be seers, if we cannot distinguish between Hagar and Sarah, but Ixion-like, take a cloud for Juno. We are poor stars, if light enough comes not from us whereby to distinguish of colours, to discern the manna of Israel from the enchanted cup of Babel. A minister without learning is like a mere cipher, which fills up a place, and increaseth the number, but signifies nothing. There have been some niggardly affected to learning, calling it man's wisdom; they thrust out the use of arts, as if, with Julian, they would shut up the school doors, and send all human knowledge into banishment. If the moral says of a poet, or a philosopher, or perhaps some golden sentence of a father drop from us, it is straight called *venenata*

facundia, a poisoned eloquence; as if all these were not the spoils of the Gentiles, and mere handmaids unto divinity. They wrong us; we make not the pulpit a philosophy, logic, poetry-school; but all these so many stairs to the pulpit. Parnassus waits on Zion, Helicon on the fountain of grace. Secular learning hath use, if it be washed in the soap of the prophets. Will you have it? The fox dispraiseth the grapes he cannot reach. If they could beat down learning, they might escape censure for their own ignorance. For shame; let none that have borne a book dispraise learning; she hath enemies enough abroad, though she be justified of her children at home. Let Barbary disgrace arts, not Athens.

The Papists brag much of their scholarship, though indeed all the salt of their learning cannot keep their doctrines from stinking. I should hardly be held an impartial judge, if I should censure them; therefore I will be silent. Yet in one thing I cannot but commend them. They have one kind of learning beyond ours, and it consists in arguing; their disputing is strong, victorious, and full of desperate valour. That argument of his was but hereby: 'God rules the church triumphant in heaven; therefore the Pope rules the church militant on earth;' and so as once *divisum imperium cum Jove Cæsar habet*,—Cæsar is half with Jupiter,—the Pope is joined purchaser with Christ; but he will be sole possessor. This was but reasonably audacious, that holds from heaven to earth, from God to the Pope. They dispute with us yet stronglier; by a demonstrative argument, *quod ex veris primis sed non necessariis secundis consistit*,—which consists of true principles, but not of necessary consequences; a syllogism in *Barbara*, a very barbarous one. I will shew you how, as the Jews reasoned with Stephen:—

Every blasphemer deserves to be stoned:
But Stephen is a blasphemer: *ergo*,
Stephen deserves to be stoned.

Stephen grants the proposition that a blasphemer is worthy to be stoned; but denies the assumption, and says, I am no blasphemer, therefore not to be stoned. They prove it, take up stones, and knock him on the head—an invincible argument. So the Papists with us:—

All heretics deserve to be burned:
All the Protestants are heretics: *ergo*,
All the Protestants deserve to be burned.

We stand not much upon the major, but resolutely and truly deny the minor, and say, We are no heretics, therefore deserve not to be burned. They prove it; tie us to strong stakes, lay on wood, put to fire, and burn us to ashes—an unanswerable syllogism. Yet we have answered it, and overcome it, *et fortiores ignibus facti sunt*,—our martyrs were stronger in faith than the fire in heat; and though, Lord, 'for thy sake we were killed all the day long, and counted as sheep for the slaughter; yet in all these things we were more than conquerors, through him that loved us,' Rom. viii. 36, 37.

But otherwise for the substantial light of learning, our stars shall compare with the stars of Rome; yet, oh that there was no fault in us of this nature, worthy to be censured, deplored! Take the district eye of a true-judging God, *καὶ πρὸς ταῦτα τίς ἱκανός?* and 'who is sufficient for these things?' 2 Cor. ii. 16. All our learning, dexterity, sincerity, diligence, comes short of the required perfection. Let us treasure up what we can, and produce it to the edification of others. Do we think it enough to have learning, and not to shine in this dark world? They are strange stars that will give no

light : if not here, then not hereafter. They are deep wells from which can be drawn no water, 2 Pet. ii. 17. 'Woe unto me, if I preach not the gospel !' If thou be called, and endued with answerable gifts, and wilt bury thy talent, Luke xix. 22, I need not tell thee the danger. I cannot say, *Ex ore tuo*, Out of thine own mouth, for thou sayest nothing ; but, *Ex silentio tuo*, By thy silence, because thou sayest nothing, God will judge thee. If it may be said of him that would and cannot preach, He is a dumb dog, it may as fitly and justly be said of him that can and will not preach, that he is a dumb devil. It is not enough to wear a decent surplice, &c., (though some out of their curiosity think that too much,) when the people's souls are starved for the bread of heaven. There be good injunctions for the comely ceremonies of the church, to preserve us in peace, in unity ; so also good orders for weekly sermons : *hec fecisse, illa non omisisse justum est*. 'These ought you to have done, and not to leave the former undone,' Luke xi. 42. Let not the first be true canons, whiles the latter are only pot-guns.

A double beam, then, you must expect from your stars, your ministers—preaching and praising God, the means and the end ; both, I say, not one only. Some of you are all for prayers, and care for no preaching ; some all for preaching, and care for no praying ; if there be no sermon, they will sit still, and serve God at home, as if he had promised his presence to the chimney corner sooner than to the temple. Indeed saith St Paul, 'Despise not prophesying,' 1 Thess. v. 20 ; but, for aught I see, he allows nowhere the vilipending of public prayers, but rather seems to intimate, 'Magnify praising God,' for he prefixeth, if not preferreth, 'Pray continually,' and, 'In all things give thanks,' &c., ver. 17, 18, adding under them, and 'Despise not prophesying.' I speak it not to vilify preaching, so principally a necessary means for our salvation ; 'I would ye did all prophesy,' was the speech of Moses, Num. xi. 29, and Paul. Neither would I hearten the common disestimation and contempt of public prayers : both are necessary ; yet is the last best, if I be not deceived, so far as the end transcends the means. Your health is more precious than the physic that recovers you, though it come as far as the East. All our preaching labours and aims at this, to beget in you a knowledge and a conscience how to serve and praise God. Preaching is the work of our way ; praising God, of our country : in heaven there shall be no sermons, but even then hosannahs and hallelujahs. We shall spend the time, nay, that eternity, in praising our Creator, and Saviour, and Sanctifier, when there shall be none to preach to us. Love then preaching, and do not despise praying ; both are the lightful and delightful beams that come from your stars, your ministers.

3. In situation, the stars are placed in their orb, and thereof being circularly and regularly carried, do finish their course in a determinate space of time. Philosophy saith, that the sun doth partly enlighten the stars of heaven. But divinity saith, the Sun of righteousness, Mal. iv., doth wholly enlighten his stars of the church. The stars are placed high, the more commodiously to shine to us. God hath put ministers in an eminent place, that their light might be more perspicuous. Candles once accensed, are not to be thrust into abstruse corners. If then Paul requires it of others, then much more of us that are stars, 'to have our conversation in heaven,' Phil. iii. 20. It is not required of the firmament to shine so bright as the stars : more holiness is expected of us than in the ordinary station of a Christian ; whiles other men's places are less notable, their vices are less notorious ; we run not in a common line, but are set forth as copies of sanctification ; every blot in us is so much more dangerous, as it is more observable ; every learner is

apt to tax his precedent, if faulty; he hath need to be circumspect that saith to others, 'Be ye followers of me, and look on them that walk so as you have us for an ensample,' Phil. iii. 17. We have all infirmities, if not enormities; and let St Paul himself refer you to the most absolute pattern, and reserve to your imitation certain limits: 'Follow me, as I follow Jesus Christ.' We must follow thee, O Saviour, and strive to be 'holy as thou art holy.'

This is our seat, in heaven; and we should be like the stars, if it were possible—free from elementary corruptions. To speak by rote of repentance, faith, new birth, is seldom profitable, when no such thing is felt in our own bosoms or manifested in our lives. We, rather, trust our health into those physicians' hands whose drugs have recovered themselves. If thou hast an angel's tongue, and a devil's heart, thou art no better than a post in the cross-way, that rots itself to direct others; or a torch that, having pleased others with the light, goes forth itself in smoke and stench. To speak well and do ill, is to build up heaven with the voice, hell with the conversation: *Sic dicamus, ut quæ fuerunt verba, sint opera*,—Let us so speak that those which have been our words may be our deeds. Indeed, it should be thus: *Si bene dixerimus, vestrum est*,—If we have said well, it is your good; *Si bene vixerimus, nostrum est*,—If we have done well, it is our own good. And for ministers' words, *dicunt, quæ Dei sunt*,—they speak that which is God's: for their lives, *faciunt quæ sua sunt*,—they do that which is their own; but our persons are in their sight, when our words are gone from their ears; and withal—

'Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures,
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus;—'

There is a quicker perspicuity in the eyes, and a better retention of the received object, than in the ears. The thunder first breaks the cloud, and lets forth the lightning; yet is the latter seen before the former is heard. Hence it is that examples teach soonest: *Longum iter per verba, breve et compendiosum per exempla*,†—It is a long way by precepts, a short by examples. The force of a hundred good sermons is lost by one enormity; so easy is it to weave Penelope's web. Let us, then, have some respect to our life as our doctrine. The credit is a thing next tender to the conscience, *qua semel amissa, postea nullus eris*, which once shipwrecked, thou art undone. It is a great difficulty to play an after-game of reputation. It was an excellent exhortation of Paul, 2 Tim. iv. 5, and implied no small difficulty to Timotheus, 'Cause thy ministry to be thoroughly liked of;' adorn it with a pure and holy conversation. His charge was no less to Titus, chap. ii. 15, 'See that no man despise thee.' Say they did; can Titus help that? Paul's meaning is, Give just cause to no man to despise thee. Let them, then, murmur till their tongues are hoarse with contumelies, so long as thou canst applaud thyself in the conscience of thy well-deservings, and say with that persecuted, maligned, reviled, yet holy Psalmist, 'O Lord, thou knowest mine innocence.' Calumnies against the minister are facile, frequent. If austere with John Baptist, they are censured precise; if sociable as Christ, dissolute. Our merriment is thought madness, when others' madness is but merriment. It is guiltiness enough to us to be but ill reported: they will believe a scandal raised against us sooner than against a ruffian; and what they dream is so, no arguments shall evade it. Men are glad of colour to despise us; and great ones, at once to save their credits and their purses, pick quarrels with their minister. When all tricks fail to shake off him that hath earned thy love and bounty, this shall do it: accuse him to be

* Horat.

† Senec.

thine enemy, and so excuse thyself from being his friend. It is hard if the eye of malice cannot spy a mote in a black coat ; or at least, say it is a mote, though it be but a white one, a work of honest simplicity. I fear I am too plain with the times, that are so subtle with us. I comfort myself and all my partners in this common misery, *Male de me dicunt, sed mali*,—They speak evil of me, but they are evil men, and would speak better of me if I were worse. It hurts not to have no grace of them that have no grace. Let us proceed in the integrity of our conscience, that ‘when they speak evil of us, as of evil-doers, they may’ in the end ‘be ashamed which slander our good conversation in Christ,’ 1 Pet. iii. 16. Let us live well, the success to God ; a good word hath the time when to be spoken. There is a season to benefit, and a season to hurt by our speech ; therefore it is preposterous in men to be consonants when they should be mutes, and mutes when they should be consonants. But a good life is never out of season. A high place, and a low and base life, have no analogy or correspondence. Our seat is in heaven like stars ; let not our conversation be on earth like beasts. Other men’s indifferences are our rank evils ; that which is scarce worth notice in others, in us is censured, taxed, condemned.—This for the site.

4. The motion is fourfold—circular, incessant, swift, orderly.

(1.) Circular. The stars move roundly, according to their orbs. Our motion, that are ministers, is not unlike : *à Deo cœpimus, in Deo claudimus*,—we begin from God, in God we end ; Jehovah called us, and we strive to bring souls to him. As we are pastors, we must compass about our flocks, as watchmen surround the city, to fortify the breach : ‘Satan compasseth the earth,’ by his own testimony, Job i. ‘The roaring lion goeth about,’ by the description of Peter, ‘watching whom to devour,’ 1 Pet. v. 8. Let our diligence match his, with a saving intent, that the tempted may have our antidotes, the doubtful our counsels, the erring our convictions, and the languishing our encouragements.

(2.) Incessant. Our motion is without intermission ; for the adversary never gives truce, or admits conditions of peace, without his sensible advantage. Therefore our calling allows us no time to sit still and sing *requiems* to our souls under our fig-trees of peace. A soldier should die in the wars standing, and a minister in the pulpit preaching. It was the Lord of the vineyard’s reproof, ‘Why stand ye here all the day idle?’ It is not permitted to us to stand still. What ! and all your day, and idle too ? Paul’s example was other, and that excellent : ‘I cease not to admonish every one night and day with tears,’ Acts xx. 31. ‘I ceased not,’ *ecce laborem*, behold his labour ; ‘to admonish,’ *ecce officium*, behold his duty ; ‘every one,’ *ecce amorem*, behold his love ; ‘night and day,’ *ecce vigilantiam*, behold his watchfulness ; ‘with tears,’ *ecce compassionem*, behold his pity.

(3.) Swift and speedy. *Nescit tarda molimina Spiritus*,—The Holy Ghost cannot abide delays. We may give warning too late, when the enemy hath surprised the city. It was the master of the feast’s charge, Luke xiv. 21, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes,’ &c. The angels are said to have wings for their speedier expedition of God’s hests ; and ‘cursed is he that doth God’s business negligently,’ says the prophet. Indeed we may run too fast when God sends us not. Jonah made preposterous haste when he took Tarshish for Nineveh ; and they run *curvo pede*, with a swift, perhaps, but with no straight foot, that are in Moses’s chair ere they be aware, and wonder too late how they came thither. I cannot call this motion speedy, but hasty ; and much haste is seldom encountered with good success. The stars move swiftly, but not madly. They that fly into the ministry without

wings, run without legs,—I mean, without knowledge,—move short of their own benefit, of others' expectation. The clouds pour down no rain till they have first sucked it up. *Præpropera praxis, præpostera lectio*,—To practise first, study afterwards, is an ill habit in action, and no good figure in rhetoric. They that will so run that they may attain, have neither too many feet, nor too few. If they abound, as the monsters the sons of Anak, that had six toes on a foot, *impediuntur necessariis auxiliis*,—their necessary helps are their hindrances. If they be defective, they can but limp. Therefore, in our motion, let zeal further discretion, that not too slow; discretion moderate zeal, that not too fast: but having thy commission, and being placed by God in thy orb, be not unwilling to move. Practice is like a wheel, the more it is turned, the better it goes.

(4.) Orderly. We must keep, as the stars do, our known and equal distance: it is not to thy praise to run into other orbs, desiring there *ostendere*, nay, *ostentare lucem tuam*,—to shew, yea, to boast thy light, with a proud conceit, to darken the star which God hath there placed. Such an emulation is odious; and thou mayest flash out, like a meteor, for a time, but at last God will ask thee, 'Who sent thee thither?' Let every star be loved of his own orb, though 'one star differs from another star in glory,' 1 Cor. xv. Nothing better becomes us than order; for our God is the God of order, and our ministry is called by the name of orders. Contention disables us, and enervates our ministry. So long as the water is stirred, the fisher can catch no fish. Love is the master-vein of the soul, and peace knits the joints, Eph. iv. 12. Are we called to put the luxate members of the body of Christ into their places, and shall ourselves be disjointed? Our peace is the milk of our land; let not our strife, like rennet, turn it to curd. When the people were together by the ears, a fellow, as thick as long, got up into the theatre, and advancing himself, they began all to laugh. Go to, quoth he, laugh and spare not; I have a wife at home rounder than myself; (at this they laughed louder;) yet when we agree, one bed can hold us; when we are at variance, the whole house is too little for us. You can apply it.

5. The last circumstance of our similitude to the stars consists in the effects. These are three: *influendi, illuminandi, ornatu delectandi*,—our influence, our light, our delight.

First, Influence. Philosophy teacheth us, that the stars in elements, and elemental bodies, do stir up the first qualities, hot, cold, moist, and dry; and cause other effects, serving to the inclination of man. Surely as we are stars, all the influence we can derive to men of ourselves is to incline them by our charity. This is no weak persuasion, but one of those three feedings that at least they expect. If they find not hospitality the porter at our gates, they straight censure us for dark stars. Many of our people liked Popery well, for nothing else but because they were fatted with the superfluities that fell from their libertine feasts. Now these that measure religion by their bellies will be tempted with handfuls of barley and morsels of bread to speak well of us. As the Jews once in the prophet, so these cry now, 'When we served the queen of heaven, and might pray to our lady, we had bread enough. Now they have pleaded so hard for faith, they have forgotten charity.' They say, we set faith at our own tables, but thrust charity out to dine with our servants. These are the scandalous clamours of their invincible ignorance, who, as many of the Jews did Christ, follow the gospel only for their bellies; they consider not in whose hands abbeyes, and monasteries, and the best parsonages are. He was a friend to us that told the beggar, beating hard at the vicar's door for relief, that he knocked at the

wrong door : Here dwells, quoth he, the spawn, but yonder the pickerel. The Pope and his heirs* have got all ; we have not the tenth of the tenth, the very interest left ; yet they claim as much of us as of them that have the principal. Well, our reward is in heaven ; let us give them what influence we can, and having fed their souls, spare also some relief to their bodies.

Secondly, Light. This the second effect, to enlighten them ; the substance and nature of a star hath already taught us this duty ; I will sparingly urge it. We illuminate them by speech, by conversation. Our doctrine is the light ; life, the lantern. If we carry the light without the lantern, the wind of malice will strive to blow it out. He went not far from this allegory that prescribed a minister's duty, *Tonare voce, fulminare vita*,†—Our words, thunder ; our lives, lightning. If we be lightful in preaching, darksome in living, we do, as it were, propound our doctrines as impossible to be kept. If we have knowing minds, and dissolute affections, it may be said of us, as of that stigmatic Roman emperor, Galba, who was both deformed and witty, that a good instrument is put in an evil case. If we live within compass, and say nothing, we have an orb and seem stars, but are none ; for God, sure, never placed stars in the firmament that give no light. Whether they be idle, or unable, like Æsop's hen, too fat to lay, they are but a burden to our orb, a disgrace to our church. Only do thou take heed (thy star not shining so bright as others) lest thy clouds darken it. The people's sins are not seldom the cause of the prophet's darkness ; to himself be his own negligence, 'He stands or falls to his own master.' Perhaps there is yet more in it than so ; God hath his special work in all events. It may be, in thy minister's insufficiency thy sin is plagued, and God strikes thee through him. This is no light, though insensible, stroke : thou hast slighted his sacred and majestic word ; behold, as to a swine unworthy of this pearl, he denies, withholds it. 'The prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad, for the multitude of thine iniquity,' Hos. ix. 7. Go, then, and bewail thy sins, and pray that 'the door of utterance may be opened to him,' Col. iv. 3, lest whiles he shines not, thou perish in darkness.

Thirdly, Delight. The stars are the grace of the sky ; so are ministers of the church, when they all move in peace and unity, *ordine quisque suo*,—every one in his own order. We often see the stars ; their contemplation, their benefit is never tedious : no more is the society of ministers, to them that desire to read in those books, the constellations of heaven, the mysteries of salvation, and to know how to govern their souls and their bodies. God gave man an upright countenance, directing his mind together with his looks to the stars : *erectos ad sidera tollere vultus*. Look on them which walk like us, saith St Paul, Phil. iii. 17 ; not as some star-gazers, that stare on us only to entrap us : to whom we reply, as Diogenes did to him that so subtly disputed of the stars : 'How long is it since you came down from heaven ?' Let them beware a success like Thales, who gazed so long at the stars above him, that he fell into the ditch below him. If, then, you look on us, keep the cripple's intent at the Beautiful gate of the temple : Acts iii. 5, 6, 'Give heed to us, trusting to receive something of us ;' and then, 'Though silver and gold we have none, yet what we have we give you : In the name, and by the virtue of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,' better things are derived from us. Fables and toys content us with a transient glance—

'Videtur
Fabula, quas posci vult, et spectata reponi,'—

* For so are impropiators.

† Greg. Naz.

A fable requires no more but to be seen and then thrown by. But here *non satiatur oculus visu*,—the eyes are not satisfied with seeing : such joy is the minister to the good man's soul, that he could be content to have him ever in his sight.

You have heard how we are called stars ; I would direct the application of this to three sorts of people—patrons, laity, ministers.

1. To speak much of patrons you will hold it frivolous : they hear not, being absent ; neither would they believe, being present. But let not sin be balked, though it be not by to answer for itself. Many of them care not whom they present, if his purse can speak learnedly, though his tongue ignorantly. Ignorance, superstition, and simony, were once proper to the Romish see ; I know not what unfortunate wind hath blown the last into our land, and defiled the pure professors of reformation. But you will say, there is no simony wherein the minister is not one party. It is too true ; woe to us the while ! I mean not only the woe of misery, fatally forced on us by these evil days ; but the woe of judgment, which we voluntarily call on us by this wickedness. I will not speak to excuse us *à toto*, *sed à tanto : durum telum, necessitas*. You that are the donors have the things consecrated to piety and faith committed to you upon trust, and you have sworn it a law in your bosoms, which you more strictly observe than the law of your Maker, that we shall buy them at your hands or go without them. Christ threw out of the temple, not only the buyers, but—let me say *rather*—the sellers : and though the law of the land makes you *pares poena*, equal with us in the punishment, yet the law of heaven shall find you *pares culpa*, in equal fault. I think I might boldly say, under correction, you are in greater damnation ; as it had been more heinous in St Peter to exact money of Magus than in Magus to offer it. The reason is impregnable : you sin through a voluntary covetousness, we through extreme necessity ; being constrained either to beg with our families, or study evasions for so strict and religious a law. If we therefore be condemned as simonists, your easiest censure is to be esteemed infidels.

Methinks I hear them reply, There is enough left to satisfy all, if there might be an equal division ; but some have all, some nothing. To whom I will but report the answer of a grave divine : ' Thus their fathers have played the thieves, and they come to compound the matter.' If we speak of this, we are censured for covetous, but how lewdly ? Is this covetise, to desire our own ? I say not the church's superfluities, which they called once *bona pauperum*, the goods of the poor ; but even the church's necessities, which are *bona Christi*, the goods of Christ ; which now *laici possident*, profane men enjoy : for gentlemen have cut out their gallant suits out of the church's broadcloth, and left the church herself nothing but mere shreds. Shall I say, Who have more done it than they that stand so for the beauty of the church ? None more deface it than they that most pretend to adorn and polish it. Let them undo two or three ministers by their impropriations, and they will reward one (of their own humour) with the plasters of their bounty. Such corrupted patrons are of Dionysius's mind, that robbed his god of his golden coat, as more fit for himself. They say, Nero and Agrippa came into the world with their feet forward ; and what monsters proved they ? Sure, never worse to the commonwealth of Rome than simoniacal patrons to the church of England. Well, if bribery, fraud, simony, will not carry them to hell, let them hope still to be saved : but (I would they heard me !) if they be saved so living, and so dying, there is hope for the devil to be saved. It is granted sin, but they may repent : true, but did ever man repent that, having time and means, could and would not restore ? Let them restore their ex-

torted money they have cruelly gotten by simoniacal contracts, to the poor minister, or if he be dead, to his wife and children ; or I will sooner believe that Judas repented. Judas restored, yet repented not truly ; and shall they repent truly that restore not ? Let them brag of their gains, that have thus oozened God, the church, their own souls. If ever they come with simony on their backs into heaven, I may be of the Indian's mind, who dying under the Spanish cruelty, and admonished to prepare for heaven and to escape hell, asked to what place the Spaniards went. They answered, to heaven. Then, quoth the Indian, let me never come there. For surely simonists and honest men do not belong to one house. There are three P's in a line of relation—*patrons, priests, people*. Two of these P's are made lean to make one P fat. Priests have lean livings, people lean souls, to make patrons have fat purses. I accuse not all in general, no one in particular, *namque mihi nec equos, mihi nec rapuere juvencos* ; but 'for Zion's sake I cannot hold my peace,' Isa. lxii. 1, which is so sick of this disease, that she lies at the mercy of God for recovery.

2. Let me speak yet more particularly to you, over whom God hath placed a minister as a star, 'despise him not' at your peril ; you despise God himself, and shall not go scot-free : on your souls be it, that hear me this day, whose table-talk is furnished up with jests, with invectives against ministers. Whatsoever thou art, God hath honoured the poorest minister above thee, and taken him as worthy to serve at his own table, but not thee, nor thy father's house. Were his head gold, his treasure richer than Hezekiah's, and every room in his house better furnished than Solomon's, he may stand in need of the minister : as great a potentate as Pharaoh was, and as despicable as he thought Moses, yet his courtiers often heard him, 'Send for Moses : ' so was Themistocles ever banished in peace, but sent for home in war. We are passed over in the days of pride, as superfluous creatures of whom no use ; but when the wrath of God falls on the naked conscience, then the minister is thought on ; and the soul receives some comfort, while he feels the sick-beating pulse, or leans on the groaning pillow, speaking from us to heaven the humble devotions of a penitent heart, and from heaven to us the comfortable things of Zion, and the never-failing mercies of a tender Saviour. Thus, like some fruit-trees, in fair weather you throw cudgels at us ; in foul, run to us for shelter.

I will not speak affirmatively to you, in these rotted days of ours, wherein nothing but privations are in force and frequent. Despise not, afflict not, impoverish not your stars ; I will not say magnify, bless, enrich them, because I cannot hope it : yet, oh, for shame, do not their contraries !

First, Despise not. Why should I entreat this ? We might imitate the fashion, *spernere se sperni*,—scorn them that scorn us ; but I persuade you for your own sakes, since it is not possible you should honour the message of God, and despise him that God hath chosen to bring it. We shall be your good ministers till unpleasing things drop from us, and then farewell good conceit ; as Tertullian spake merrily of the heathen : 'Unless God please man, he shall be God no longer. Now man must be propitious to God.*' Reproofs are good physic, though not so well relished. Indulgence is sweet, and you may think it better cheer ; but you will not be well after it. In these misjudging days, it is exceeding hard to overreach the devil : if we let sin alone, his kingdom flourisheth ; if we strike at him, and hit not the bough he sits on, we move him not ; if we do, we are judged partial, per-

* 'Nisi homini Deus placuerit, Deus non erit : homo jam Deo propitius esse debet.'—*Tert.*

sonal, and wreakers of our own spleen. There is scarce a man that can read English, scarce a woman that can make herself ready to church, but will presume to teach the minister; and either we must preach what you will hear, or you will not hear what we preach. In Heliogabalus's time, there was a senate of women: we have also such convocations; they consulted about tires, ours about religion. Let us take heed, it is one of the devil's subtlest and shrewdest tricks, to make us so zealous in religion that we grow wanton; and this sin is so much the more dangerous, as it endures not the reproving. Thus if a holy impatience arm the minister's tongue to speak too smart against your sins, he is straight said to rage: so Shemaiah said of Jeremiah, Jehu of Elisha, the Jews of Christ, and the Gentiles of Paul. Of those that never will be sober, we are called bedlams. But St Augustine well clears this, under the person of David, *Insanire videbatur, sed regi Achis insanire videbatur, id est, stultis et ignorantibus*,—David seemed mad, but he seemed so to King Achish. We are called madmen, but of none save madmen. Their common exceptions against us, and contempts of us, are these four:—(1.) They say, we are men; why doth not God send by worthier messengers, as by angels? They had best teach him: 'Send by whom thou shouldest send,' Exod. iv. 13. (2.) They say, we are simple men: as the apostles were fishermen, and Amos a herdman. Gallants scorn that a clown should teach them their duties. They call us idiots, innocents, *ἀναγιῶτες*. The word signifies such as do no hurt, but taken for fools, that do neither good nor harm. (3.) They say, we die like men; we can neither keep ourselves from sin, nor our bodies from death. (4.) They say, all we say is but words. So Gallio called the gospel 'a question of words,' Acts xviii. 15. I answer—

(1.) Men indeed;—but men of God: so were the prophets received and called; and, 'Let a man so think of us as of the ministers of Christ,' 1 Cor. iv. 1. We are intelligent creatures by nature, but of divine understanding by grace: 'The things which no eye hath seen,' &c., 'hath God's Spirit revealed to us,' 1 Cor. ii. 10. 'Surely the Lord will do nothing, but he revealeth his secrets to his servants the prophets,' Amos iii. 7. Thou braggest thou hast two eyes as well as thy minister: thou hast indeed—one eye of nature, and that is *nequam*, a wicked one; another of reason, and that is *necquicquam*, a blind one; the one naught, the other naughty; and standest in need of the minister's eye to guide thee. Thou demandest a worthier messenger; but when God spake to Israel in thunder, when by angels, they cried, 'Oh, let man speak to us, lest we perish.' If an angel or a man say, 'Christ is born,' it is not more true in the angel than in the man.

(2.) Simple men;—yet is the word powerful. The Jews thought they knew Christ and his breeding: 'Is not this the carpenter's son?' Yet, 'he taught as one having authority, not as the verbal scribes,' Matt. vii. 29. You think it shame enough, and extreme disgrace against us, to say you know our beginnings: yet is God able to turn the proudest of you, by the simplest of us; or if not convert, as the savour of life, yet convince, as the savour of death, and make your *mittimus* to that common jailor, 'deliver your incorrigible souls to Satan,' 1 Cor. v. 5; for whom we 'bind on earth are bound in heaven.'

(3.) We die like men;—but our words live. The prophets told the Jews, that they should go into Babylon captives: 'The high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the temples of Israel destroyed,' &c., Amos vii. 9. Behold, the prophets die, but their words live. 'Judah is carried away captive, she dwelleth among the heathen,' Lam. i. 3. And 'by the rivers of Babel, they sit and weep when they remember Zion,' Ps. cxxxvii. 1. So we de-

nounce the judgments of God against the obstinate, and tell the usurer, maugre his pile of bonds, heap of pawns, bags of coin, mortgages of lands, that his seed shall inherit the wind, and his hoards are no other than the gathering of the clouds, which once full, promise the dispersion of the greater showers. Behold, we are laid low in our graves, yet our sayings have their timely proofs, the seed of the covetous come to ruin. Behold the riotous heir, sick and diseased through his intemperance, his intemperance bred of the fulness of his state, his full estate begot by his father's parsimony, miserableness, nay, perhaps, injustice. Behold (I say) this man glad of a room in the hospital for necessity, which his father built of his superfluity. Thus the word we preach passeth not, but is more immortal than the heaven.

(4.) All we say is but words, mere talk ;—so you may condemn all the works of God, and say it was but talk that made the world ; for, ‘by his word he made it,’ John i. 1. This is a common slander when the hell-hound (the covetous wretch) pincheth on the priest's side : ‘No matter, let him talk for his living.’ Yes, and have none. The time may come, if they call it talking, they may talk for mercy too, and have none. If they call God's speaking to them talking, what is their speaking to God ? There is difference betwixt speaking, talking, and saying : speaking comes by nature, talking by custom, saying by art. Children speak, fools talk, learned men say. All that have the organs of voice can speak and talk, but not say. *Solius est oratoris dicere, vulgi loqui.* Tully could affirm it, that an orator only says ; the common people talk.* Our preaching is not then talking, but saying, a sententious and deliberate speech, uttered to purpose, composed by study and the direction of God's Holy Spirit, who with our words worketh deeds, shutting where we shut, and opening where we have opened.

Secondly, Afflict not. Is this possible ? Can lambs be among wolves, and not be bitten ? *Ecce mitto vos, &c.*,—‘Behold, I send you as lambs among wolves :’ he said so, that foreknew our usage. *Amara est veritas, et qui eam prædicat repletur amaritudine*,—Bitter is the truth, and he that preacheth it shall be filled with bitterness. The cause of the world's hatred of Christ, John vii. 7, is *ὅτι ἐγὼ μαρτυρῶ*, ‘because I witness against it that the works thereof are evil.’ It is written of the Christians in the life of Nero, that they preserved the state ; yet dogs must devour them : they made Aurelius's army to prosper, and by their prayers obtained thunder to destroy the enemies ; yet *Christianos ad leones*,—Throw the Christians to the lions. It hath ever been the poesy of the church, *facere bonum, et habere malum*,—to do good, and to suffer evil. So Christ himself sped : he healed, and was hurt ; he pitied, and was mocked ; he saved others, himself was killed. The colour of our livery on earth is either black, mourning ; or red, persecuted. The arms of the church is the cross, and her perpetual song in her militant state, like that oppressed servant's,† *Θλιβομαι, θλιβομαι*, ‘I suffer, I suffer.’ This is Christ's dish, and the apostles' sauce. Behold, O minister, the strait thou art in ; neither wonder, nor weep, nor faint : this thou mightest have prevented, by keeping out ; it cannot be avoided, now thou art in. If we do our duty, the world will hate ; if not, God will curse us : by the first we are in danger to lose our goods, good names, lives ; by the second, our souls, our heaven, our God.

‘At pretium pars hæc corpore majus habet.’

Our worldly losses may be dear to us, yet dross, and trash, and rubbish, in

* Cicer. Orat. :—‘Satis eloquentiæ, eloquentiæ parum.’

† Aristoph.

regard of God and bliss. Woe unto us that suffer ; more woe to you that make us.

Thirdly, Impoverish not. I do not say, make us rich by your own poverty, as your progenitors did by our predecessors ; but at least give us our own. The old Pharisee was an honest man in this, for he thought it a true position, *Decima ut dives fias*,—Tithe, and be rich : but we think, tithe, and be poor. And to ‘communicate with our teacher in all our goods,’ is not Scripture, though Paul himself speak it, Gal. vi. 6. Competency will serve ; they are wiser than God. Their competencies have brought us to impotencies. A stool, a cruise, and a candlestick, and a small room, are superabundance for a priest. We need not, with that order of the Popish priests, pull on ourselves a voluntary beggary, for gentlemen (we thank them for it) have enforced us to it on necessity. I will not dispute whether tithes be due to us *jure divino*, by the law of God ; or whether the withholders come within the compass of that curse, ‘Ye are cursed with a curse, because ye have spoiled me in tithes and offerings,’ Mal. iii. 8, 9 ; since the law present allows no power to sue such, on an action of detiny. To omit that Melchizedek had tithes, and that of Abraham ; and even by the law of nature, besides the Levitical of the Jews, which they say is abrogated, that would say no less of the moral law of God, for an advantage : yet Paul’s ἐν πᾶσι ἀγαθοῖς, ‘in all his goods,’ Gal. vi. 6, must needs evince, that the minister must have some share in his people’s substance. If any, why not that portion which in all ages and churches hath been given them ? If they be consecrated to Jesus Christ, I say not by blinded superstition, but by true and warrantable devotion, before the Pope ever put out his apparent horns, who dares rob our Saviour of them, that never passed fine of his royal prerogative to any purchaser ? If they were his, whose are they ? Let them prove he hath assigned them to gentlemen, and I will clear them from that menace of Solomon, Prov. xx. 25, ‘It is a destruction to devour holy things,’ &c. Ministers were once held angels ; now, unless they do bring angels in their purses, *ibi Homere foras* ; for all their music they are shut out of doors. They say, the Italian ducats make their priests dukes, princes, captains, brave fellows. The Spanish pistolets make their priests terrors to be feared, the word signifying *tormenti genus*, a kind of torment ; witness the Inquisition. The French crowns crown their priests with wealth and dignity ; but *angelorum Anglicorum*, the want of English angels leaves our ministry in the dust. The words of so reverend and honourable a prelate* come here to my mind : ‘Time was, religion did eat up policy, and the church devoured the commonwealth ; but now policy eats up religion, and the commonwealth devours the church.’ Men are professed politicians : *Floreat respublica, copius referta*, &c., *et quid ad nos ?*†—Let the commonwealth prosper, and what care we for the church ? If we had no souls, this might be some shadow of equity ; but seeing we have, it is the substance of rank impiety.

And let me say, if men would imagine and plot a course to lose the souls that Christ hath bought, they could not find a director. For if learning beg, study arts that list, will be the general voice : ‘If there be none to preach, there will be no believing ; if no believing, no saving,’ Rom. x. Never plead your faith in the gospel, whiles you reward it not. Perhaps you can afford desert some bare and naked commendations ; but we are not chameleons, to live on the air of commendations. It is certain and invincible truth, not relieve the gospel, not believe the gospel. God grant that our corruptions

* Lord Bishop of London, in his lectures on Jonah.

† Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. ii., cap. 2.

this way bring not paganism, and flat atheism in the end! Needs must you lose *con et sci*, devotion and knowledge, when you take from us *entia*, our livings. It is a shame that we should cease studying of sermons, and be driven to study for bread to put in our mouths, and the mouths of our families. It was a sin in the old law to destroy *matrem cum filiis*,—the old with the young; and can it be less in conscience to pine to death those two fruitful mothers, the Universities, and starve the children in their bosoms? At which two fountains of learning, before we are suffered to drink, how many miserable and weary a day do we pass over in the inferior schools! Then, not without much pain to ourselves, cost to our parents, we are sent to one of those glorious suns, to ripen our buds; the exhibition they there allow us, they charge us to take for our patrimony, to expect no further means at their hands. We restrain our thoughts, I say, not only from pleasure, (whereof to have no* small measure is some unhappiness under the sun,) but even from competent experience in the world, who had need be wise as serpents in these Machiavellian days. We subject our bodies to many diseases, and groan out our remaining days under the burden of some wasting sickness; at last, *crura thymo plena*, having stored ourselves with the riches of art, we come into our country to exchange them for their riches of earth; and yet how unworthy a thing is it, *cœlestibus mercari terrena*, to buy corporal things with spiritual, and chop heaven for earth? After all this, how hardly is anything attained, without paying to the patron, either a fine, or an annual rent, or reservation of his own tithes, or (some way) above the rate of a copyhold, to have a lease during a sickly and spent life! Were the goods of the church for this entrusted to gentlemen and lords of the manors, that they should set them to sale, and turn the benefits into their own purses? Why were not the donations in the hands of the poor, who have more need? It is supposed, gentlemen by nurture well instructed can make the fittest choice for God's glory, and for their private gain. Must we then run, *per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum*,—through so many dangers, and difficulties, and troubles, and in the end arrive at beggars' haven, a necessary and enforced penury? Oh! *invitatus ad hæc, aliquis de ponte negabit*,†—a beggar in the highway will in the end scorn to be a minister. There is no vocation in the land (honest in itself, and industriously followed by the professor) wherein a man may not live well, except only in the ministry; and here, like the Jews under the tyranny of Egypt, when we should make brick, (work in our profession,) we are forced to gather straw, (labour for sustenance.)

But in vain we speak; the sons of Zeruiah will be too hard for us. There is small hope to stanch this bloody issue till Christ touch their hearts by faith. But you will say, many of the clergy are rich. They are few; if any, one of these four sorts:—(1.) Either enriched by some patrimony, or gift of friends. (2.) Or else such as distil a dry rose-cake for water; I mean by parsimony and miserableness, get something out of gentlemen's leavings, like the gleaner after the vintage, for others carry away the crop. (3.) Or else such as have lighted on the ruined things of this land, which stood out of the Pope's way, and in that sickness of superstition, escaped the plague of impropriation; benefices which the devil's surgeon, sacrilege, hath not let blood, by custom, composition, enclosing, depopulation. 'Though the grape-gatherers come, would they not leave some grapes? if thieves come in the night, they will but destroy till they have enough,' Jer. xlix. 9. (4.) Or, lastly, they are those *antiqui heroes, nati melioribus annis*, that came to their livings when that good Queen Elizabeth came to her crown; at which time

* Qu. so?—Ed.

† Juven.

benefices went a-begging, as ministers do now. As for the rest, that have livings, they are scarce live-ones, or enough to keep themselves and their families living; and for those that have none, they may make themselves merry with their learning if they have no money: for they that bought the patronages must needs sell the presentations,—*vendere jure potest, emerat ille prius*; and then if Balaam's ass hath but an audible voice, and a soluble purse, he shall be preferred before his master, were he ten prophets. If this weather hold, Julian need not send learning into exile, for no parent will be so irreligious as with great expenses to bring up his child at once to misery and sin. Oh, think of this, if your impudence have left any blood of shame in your faces; cannot you spare out of all your riot some crumbs of liberality to the poor, needy, and neglected gospel? Shall the Papists so outbid us, and in the view of their prodigality, laugh our miserableness to scorn? Shall they twit us, that our *Our Father* hath taken from the church what their *Paternoster* bestowed on it? Shall they bid us bate of our faith, and better our charity? Indeed, where heard you of a Papist that cuts short his minister? where see you a Protestant that doth not? I speak not to commend the religion of the Papist above the others, no more than Christ preferred the religion of the Samaritan to the priests and Levites, when he praised his charity; but to apply that to us which Christ once to the Jews, 'Tyre and Sidon shall condemn you.' So the Papists shall judge us. The Papist comes with *Omnia dabo* to his priest,—I will give all; the Protestant with *Omnia eripiam*,—I will take away all. Do the Alps bar up all reward from us? Cannot bounty creep over those frozen thresholds? *Flere licet, reparare vetatur*.

I may perhaps be censured, to speak so home, in the respect of some particular advantage; and losers may have leave to speak. I confess, it would be a joyful day to me to see the breaches of Jerusalem made up again; yet He is my witness that doth now search, and shall hereafter judge all hearts, that the present theme, the wants of the church, the poverty of ministers, and the hard hearts of their oppressors, together with the commiseration of the students yet unborn, that shall feel this burden heavier as the world grows, at once and inseparably more old, more covetous, have been occasions only to induce this speech. For I not without cause fear that, as we may say of the church in this our age, *Omnia ad ruinam*,—All things are going to ruin; so our children in the next generation may justly cry with the poet, *Etiā periere ruinæ*,—Even the very ruins are ruined. Though I cannot but hope, that so long as our royal and religious Jacob, (whose days God make as the days of heaven!) and his seed shall bear rule in our Judah, he and they will make good that deserved title, and be 'defenders of the faith,' and not give leave and authority to any violence further to forage the church. God also put into his subjects' hearts to love the gospel, and then it shall not decay for want of encouragement and reward. But for the detainers of the poor ministers' right, let them hear their reward: 'Woe to him that heapeth up that which is none of his!' You that have taken away the unction, and left us nothing but the alabaster-box, the shreds, the sherds, the scrapings of our own, as happy and rich as you think yourselves, when you have summed up your gains and cast your accounts at the end, if ever you be the richer for that you have stolen from your stars, let me come a-begging to your doors. Judas sold his Master for thirty pence: he might put his gains in his eye; his losses stuck by him when his money was gone; he lost a God, a heaven, a soul, but he threw away his cash. Take heed, lest you cry one day with him, 'We and our extortions are both perished.' Remember you

must give account of your stewardships ; a fearful bill of reckoning that many shall put up at that day to God : *Item*, so many scores of pounds in malice and suits at law. *Item*, so many hundreds of pounds spent in lusts and vanities. *Item*, so many thousands in building Eglon's parlours. *Item*, to the poor in a year, threepence. *Item*, to the minister, just nothing. Nothing to God ; and nothing from God shall be your reward.

3. Let me end with ourselves, and all to comfort : *Ploramus nostris non respondere favorem speratum meritis*,—We lament on earth the ill success and worse reward of our labours ; but, *sat erit meruisse*, it is enough that we have deserved. As dark as the world keeps us and thinks us, 'we shall shine ;' and that with no ordinary glory, but 'as the stars ;' and this not for a time, but 'for ever and ever.' If I had been in heaven, I would describe this glory to you, 'You shall shine.' I would shew you the differences of glory which are here implied : good men shall shine 'as the firmament,' but good ministers 'as the stars.' If I be not deceived, the stars have a brighter glory than the firmament. Lastly, if I had ascended above the wheel of time, where nothing but eternity dwelleth, I would strive to make you conceive the length of your glory, 'for ever and ever ;' but *hæc meditanda potius quam dicenda*,—your meditations are better able to conceive these things than my weak tongue to express. And so I cease to speak of that which you shall never cease to enjoy, ending my sermon, not my text, and commending you to the Father of peace ; who, as he hath called us to so troublesome an office for a time, will reward us with glory beyond all time, even for ever and ever. This God grant for his mercies' sake, Jesus Christ for his merits' sake, the Holy Ghost for his name's sake ; to whom, with, and from whom, be all glory, honour, and praise, now and for ever ! Amen.