

## PHYSIC FROM HEAVEN.

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

THE allegory is tripartite, and propounds, to our consideration, I. What is the *balm* ; II. Who are the *physicians* ; III. Who are *sick*. The balm is the *word*. The physicians are the *ministers*. The sick are the *sinner*s. For the first :—

I. The balsam-tree is a little shrub, never growing past the height of two cubits, and spreading like a vine. The tree is of an ash-colour, the boughs small and tender, the leaves are like to rue.

Isidore thus distinguisheth it : The tree is called *balsamum*, the root *orilo-balsamum*, the branches *xylo-balsamum*, the seed *carpo-balsamum*, the juice *opo-balsamum*.

Pliny saith the tree is all medicinale : the chief and prime virtue is in the juice, the second in the seed, the third in the rind, the last and weakest in the stock. It comforts both by tasting and smelling. It is most commonly distinguished by physicians into *lignum*, *semen*, *liquorem*,—the wood, the seed, and the juice. This is the nature of the balsamum.

This holy word is here called balm : and, *si fas sit magnis componere parva*, if we may compare heavenly with earthly, spiritual with natural things, they agree in many resemblances. The unerring wisdom of heaven hath given this comparison. There is no fear to build on God's ground, whiles the analogy of faith limits us. It is the builder's first and principal care to choose a sure foundation. The rotten, moorish, quicksandy grounds, that some have set their edifices on, have failed their hopes and destituted their intents. How many able wits have spent their times and studies to daub up the filthy walls of Rome with 'untempered mortar !' Ezek. xiii. 15. How well had they hunted, if they had not mistaken their game ! How rich apparel have they woven for a Babylonish harlot ! How well had they sailed, if Rome had not guided their compass ! But 'every man's work shall be made manifest ; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire ; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is,' 1 Cor. iii. 13. Happy is he that hath a rock for his ground, that no gusts, storms, winds, waves, may overturn his house ! Matt. vii. 24. Though 'other foundation none can lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ,' 1 Cor. iii. 11 ; yet blessed is he that ἐπιποδοῦμῃσε ἐπὶ τὸν θεμέλιον τοῦτον, hath builded safely upon this ground.

God hath here laid my ground ; I will be bold to build my speech on that whereon I build my faith. Only sobriety shall be my bounds. We may call God's word that balm-tree whereon the fruit of life grows ; a tree that heals, a tree that helps ; a tree of both medicament and nutriment ; like the 'tree of life, which bears twelve manner of fruits, and yieldeth her fruit every month,' Rev. xxii. 2. Neither is the fruit only nourishing, but even 'the leaves of the tree were for healing of the nations.' Now though the balm here, whereunto the word is compared, is more generally taken for the juice, now fitted and ready for application ; yet, without pinching the metaphor, or restraining the liberty of it, I see not why it may not so be likened, both for general and particular properties. It is not enough to say this, but to shew it. Let me say it now, shew it anon. For the balm, you have the tree, the seed, the juice. God's word will, not unfitly, parallel it in resemblances, transcend it in effectual properties.

The tree itself is the word. We find the eternal Word so compared : 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman,' John xv. 1. He is a tree, but *arbor inversa*, the root of this tree is in heaven. It was once 'made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,' John i. 14. Now he is in heaven. Only this Word still speaks unto us by his word : the Word incarnate by the word written ; made sounding in the mouth of his ministers. This word of his is compared and expressed by many metaphors : to leaven, for seasoning ; to honey, for sweetening ; to the hammer, for breaking the stony heart : Jer. xxiii. 29, 'Is not my word like as a fire ? saith the Lord ; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces ?' To a sword that cuts both ways : Heb. iv. 12, 'The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword,' &c. Another sword can but enter the flesh and pierce the bones, or at most divide the soul and the body ; but this the soul and the spirit, where no other sword can come, no, not the cherubims' fiery sword, that kept the passage of paradise, Gen. iii. 24.

It is here a *tree*, a balm-tree, a salving, a saving-tree. Albumasar saith, that the more medicinable a plant is, the less it nourisheth. But this tree *reddit ægrotum sanum, sanum vero saniozem*,—makes a sick soul sound, and a whole one sounder. It is not only physic when men be sick, but meat when they be whole. Treacle to expel, a preservative to prevent poison. It is not only a sword to beat back our common enemy, but a bulwark to hinder his approach.

It carries a *seed* with it, *carpo-balsamum*, an 'immortal and incorruptible seed,' 1 Pet. i. 13, which concurs to the begetting of a new man, the old rotting and dying away : for it hath power of both, to mortify and dead the flesh, to revive and quicken the spirit ; that seed which the 'sower went out to sow,' Matt. xiii. 3. Happy is the good ground of the heart that receives it ! That little mustard-seed, ver. 31, which spreads up into branches, able to give the birds of heaven harbour. *Discrimen hoc inter opera Dei et mundi*,—This difference is betwixt the works of God and of the world : the works of the world have great and swelling entrances, but, *malo fine clauduntur*, they halt in the conclusion ; the works of God, from a most slender beginning, have a most glorious issue. The word is at first a little seed ; how powerful, how plentiful are the effects ! how manifold, how manifest are the operations of it ! 'casting down the highest things, that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God ; and captivating every thought to the obedience of Christ,' 2 Cor. x. 5.

The *juice* is no less powerful to mollify the stony heart, and make it tender

and soft, as 'a heart of flesh.' The seed convinceth the understanding; the juice mollifieth the affections. All is excellent; but still *conspicuum minus, quod maxime est præclarum*, the root that yields this seed, this juice, is the power of God. A tree hath manifest to the eye, leaves, and flowers, and fruits; but the root, most precious, lies hidden. In man the body is seen, not the purer and better part of him, his soul. 'The king's daughter,' though 'her clothing be of wrought gold,' is most 'glorious within,' Ps. xlv. 13. In all things we see the accidents, not the form, not the substance. There are but few that rightly taste the seed and the juice; but who hath comprehended the root of this balm?

The balsam is a little tree, but it spreads beyond a vine. The virtue of it, in all respects, is full of dilatation. It spreads—1. largely for shadow, 2. pregnantly for fruit, 3. all this from a small beginning. So that we may say of it, as the church of her Saviour, 'As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste,' Cant. ii. 3.

1. It spreads. No sharp frosts, nor nipping blasts, nor chilling airs, nor drizzling sleet can mar the beauty or enervate the virtue of this spiritual tree. The more it is stopped, the further it groweth. Many interdictions rung peals of menaces in the apostles' ears, that they 'should speak no more in the name and word of Christ,' Acts iv. 17, 18; they did all rather, like bells, toll them into the church, to preach it more fervently. The princes of the nations would have hedged it in with their prohibitions; but the word of heaven and edict of God's spiritual court of glory scorched the prohibitions given by their temporary laws. They might easier have hedged in the wind, or pounded the eagle.

The Jews would have cut down this tree at the root; the Gentiles would have lopped off the branches. They struck at Christ, these at his ministers; both struck short. If they killed the messenger, they could not reach the message. The blood of the martyrs, spilt at the root of this tree, did make it spread more largely. There never died a preacher for Christ's cause, but almost every ash of his burned flesh bred a Christian. The old foxes of Rome studied, plotted, acted, by policies, stratagems, engines, to give a fatal, final subversion to the gospel; yet they lived to see it flourish, and, because it flourished, died fretting themselves to dust. 'So let thine enemies perish, O Lord,' Judg. v. 31, and burst their malicious bowels that have evil will at Sion, and despite this balm.

It grew maugre all the adverse blasts and floods which the billows of earth or bellows of hell could blow or pour out against it. Let them loose a Barabbas from prison, whiles they shut a Barnabas in prison; let them give Demetrius liberty, whiles they shackle Paul; and at once burn the professors and reward the persecutors of the word: behold, for all this, this balm flourisheth, and sends forth his saving odours. The Philistines shut up Samson in the city Gaza, Judg. xvi. 2; they bar the gates, watch and guard the passages, and are ready to study for the manner of his death. The Jews shut up Christ in the grave, they bar it, they seal it, they guard it; sure enough, thinks the Jew, hopes the devil, to keep him fast. The Gentiles shut the apostles in prison, chain them, beat them, threaten them with worse, that had felt already their bad usage: now they clap their hands at the supposed fall of the gospel. Behold, Samson carries away the gates of Gaza; Christ, the bands of death; the word, the bars of the prison.

What shall I say? Still this balm flourisheth. *Vivit, viget, liber est, supra hominem est.* As Joseph *incipit à vinculis ferreis, finit ad torquem*

*aureum*,—begins at iron, ends at golden chains; so this balsam, the more it is struck at with the cudgels of reproach and persecution, the faster, the fuller, the further it groweth. The vine but only nourisheth; the balm both nourisheth the good and expelleth the evil that is in man. These two are God's trees. When every god, saith the poet, chose his several tree,—Jupiter the long-lived oak, Neptune the tall cedar, Apollo the green laurel, Venus the white poplar,—Pallas (whom the poets feign to be born of Jupiter's brain, and mythologists interpret Wisdom) chose the vine. Our true and only God, that owneth all, hath more especially chosen the vine and the balm, one for preservation, the other for restoration of our health.

2. As it gives boughs spaciouly, so fruit pregnantly, plentifully. The graces of God hang upon this tree in clusters. 'My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi,' Cant. i. 14. No hungry soul shall go away from this tree unsatisfied.

It is an effectual word, never failing of the intended success. What God's word affirms, his truth performs, whether it be judgment or mercy. *Nec verbum ab intentione quia veritas, nec factum à verbo quia virtus*,\*—His word differs not from his intent, because he is truth; nor his deed from his word, because he is virtue. What he intends he declares, or rather what he declares he intends—he is just; and what he declares and intends he performs—he is powerful. This is that Delphian sword, that universal instrument, whereby he made, whereby he supports the world, Heb. i. 3. It is not a fruitless and ineffectual word, as man's. *Propter nostrum dicere et velle, nihil in re mutatur*, saith the philosopher,—Our speaking or willing puts no change into any subject. A man is starved with cold, famished with hunger; we advise him to the fire, to repast: is he ever the fuller or fatter for our word? Not unless, like a chameleon, he can live by air. But God's word is fruitful, it feeds. 'Man lives not by bread only, but by God's word,' Matt. iv. 4. Our word and will is like an idol's power: God's *volo* is sufficient. *Voluntas ejus, potestas ejus*,—His will is his power. One *fiat* of his was able to make that was not, but had else lien in everlasting infirmity; to constitute nature when it is not, to confirm or change nature when it is. When God was in the flesh, and went about doing good, a faithful centurion, for his servant so desperately sick, desired not the travel of his feet, nor a dram of his physic, nor so much as the imposition of his hands, but *dic verbum tantum*: 'Lord, say the word only, and my servant shall be healed,' Matt. viii. 8. This word is so effectual, that it shall never fail of the purpose it first was sped for. The sun and moon shall fail in their motions, day and night in their courses, the earth totter on her props, nature itself shall apostate to confusion, before God's word fall away unaccomplished, whether he dispenseth it to affect man's heart, or otherwise disposeth it to effect his will. Of so powerful efficacy is that word which the world despiseth.

3. As this balm spreads patently for shadow, potently for fruit, so all this ariseth from a little seed. God's smallest springs prove at length main oceans. His least beginnings grow into great works, great wonders. How stately the world begins, how lame it is at last! The tower of Babel is begun as if it scorned heaven and scared earth; how easy a stratagem from above overthrows it, though God never laid finger to it! Nebuchadnezzar begins with, 'Who is God?' and anon scarce reserves to himself the visible difference from a beast. Another Nebuchadnezzar exterminates all gods from the earth, that himself might reign (*solus Deus in solio*, who was rather *dæmon in folio*) only god: behold, a silly woman overthrows him in his

\* Bern.

great Holofernes. With such proud entrance doth the world begin his scenes ; with such ridiculous shame do they lag off. Our God from small beginnings raiseth mountains of marvels to us, of praises to himself. Even Joseph, that is in prison, shall ride in the second chariot of Egypt. Drowning Moses shall come to countermand a monarch. Christ, that was buried in a grave, shall 'bruise the nations, and break them with a rod of iron,' Ps. ii. 9. Peter, a fisher, shall catch whole countries ; a little balm heal a world of people.

Well, it spreads ; let us get under the shadow of the branches. Happy and cool refreshing shall the soul scorched with sins and sorrows find there. Never was shade more welcome to the sweltered traveller than this word is to the afflicted conscience.

It is fructual : let it be so to us in operation. It gives us the fruit of life ; let us return it the fruits of obedience. God's word is significative to all, operative to his.

It is a powerful voice, whether it give life or kill. Man and music have *virtutem vocis*, the power of voice ; God only reserves to himself *vocem virtutis*, the voice of power. 'Lo, he doth send out his voice, and that a mighty voice. Ascribe ye strength unto God,' Ps. lxxviii. 33, 34. I might speak of his thunders in Sinai ; but I turn to the songs of Sion, the sweet voice of his gospel, whereof I am an unworthy minister : the voice that speaks Christ and his death, Christ and his life, Christ and his salvation. He that was anointed *pro consortibus* and *præ consortibus*, for his fellows, and 'above his fellows ;' who is 'the way, the truth, and the life,' John xiv. 6. *Via sine devio, veritas sine nubilo, vita sine termino*,—The way with out error, the truth without darkness, the life without end. *Via in exilio veritas in consilio, vita in præmio*,—The way in exile, the truth in counsel, the life in reward. 'Oh, whither shall we go from thee ? Lord, thou hast the words of eternal life,' John vi. 68. All the word calls us to Christ. *Post me, per me, ad me*,—after me, by me, to me. After me, because I am truth ; by me, because I am the way ; to me, because I am life.\* *Qua vis ire ? Ego sum via. Quo vis ire ? Ego sum veritas. Ubi vis permanere ? Ego sum vita*,—How wilt thou go ? I am the way. Whither wilt thou go ? I am the truth. Where wilt thou abide ? I am the life.

Now, there is no action without motion, no motion without will, no will without knowledge, no knowledge without hearing, Rom. x. 14. *Ignoti nulla cupido*,—There is no affection to unknown objects. God must then, by this word, call us to himself. Let us come when and whiles he calls us, leaving our former evil loves and evil lives ; for *mali amores* make *malos mores*, saith St Augustine. And let us shew the power of this balm in our confirmed healths. A sound conversion is proved by a good conversation. Perhaps these effects in all may not be alike in quantity ; let them be in quality. God hath a liberal, not an equal hand ; and gives geometrically, by proportion ; not arithmetically, to all alike. Only *magis et minus non tollit substantiam*,—the dimensions of greater or less do not annihilate the substance. Our faith may be precious, nay, 'like precious,' 2 Pet. i. 1, though less and weaker. Sanctification admits degrees, justification no latitude. Luther saith, we are as holy as Mary the virgin, not in life, which is active holiness, but in grace of adoption, which is passive holiness. Come we then faithfully to this balm ; so shall we be safe under the shadow, and filled with the fruits thereof. Thus in general ; let us now search for some more special concurrences of similitude.

\* 'Post me, quia veritas sum ; per me, quia via sum ; ad me, quia vita sum.'—August.

1. The leaves of the balsam are white ; the word of God is pure and spotless. Peter saith there is sincerity in it, 1 Pet. ii. 2. Perfection itself was the finger that wrote it : neither could the instrumental pens blot it with any corruption ; the Spirit of grace giving inspiration, instruction, limitation, that they might say with Paul, *Quod accepi à Domino, tradidi vobis*,—‘ I received of the Lord that which I delivered to you,’ 1 Cor. xi. 23 ; neither more nor less, but just weight. It is pure as gold fined in a sevenfold furnace, Ps. xii. 6. ‘ Every word of God is pure,’ saith Solomon, Prov. xxx. 5. There is no breath or steam of sin to infect it. The sun is darkness to it, the very angels are short of it. It is white, immaculate, and so unblemishable, that the very mouth of the devil could not sully it. Even the known father of lies thought to disparage the credit of the Scriptures, by taking them into his mouth ; he could not do it. They are too unchangeably white to receive the aspersion of any spot.

2. The balsam, say the physicians, is *gustu mordax et acre*,—sharp and biting in the taste, but wholesome in digestion. The holy word is no otherwise to the unregenerate palate, but to the sanctified soul it is sweeter than the honeycomb. The church saith, ‘ His fruit is sweet unto my taste,’ Cant. ii. 3. It is ‘ folly to the Jews, and a stumblingblock to the Gentiles ; but to the called, both of Jews and Gentiles, the power of God, and the wisdom of God,’ 1 Cor. i. 24. *Saluberrima raro jucundissima*,—Relish and goodness are not ever in the same material. The gospel is like leaven, sour to the natural spirit, yet makes him holy bread. It is said of the leaven, to which Christ compares the word, that *massam acrove grato excitat*,—it puts into the lump a savoury sourness. It is *acror*, but *gratus*,—sharp, but acceptable. The word may relish bitter to many, but is wholesome. There cannot be sharper pills given to the usurer than to cast up his unjust gains. The potion that must scour the adulterer’s reins makes him very sick. He that will let the proud man’s pleurisy blood, must needs prick him. To bridle the voluptuous beast, will make him stamp and fret. All correction to our corrupt nature runs against the grain of our affections. He that would bring Mammon to the bar, and arraign him, shall have judge, jury, sitters, and standers, a whole court and sessions, against him. These sins are as hardly parted with of the owners, as the eye, hand, or foot, necessary and ill-spared member. Forbid the courtly Herod his Herodias ; the noble Naaman his Rimmon ; the gallant Samson his Delilah ; the city Dives his quotidian feast ; the country Nabal his churlishness ; the rustical Gergesites their hoggishness ; the Popish Laban his little gods ; the Ahabish landlord his enclosings ; and you give them bitter almonds, that will not digest with them : like the queasy mass-priest, whose god would not stay in his stomach. But let God work the heart with the preparative of his preventing grace, and then this balm will have a sweet and pleasing savour.

There are too many that will not open their lips to taste of this balm, nor their ears to hear the word. But as one mocks the Popish priest celebrating the mass, (who useth one trick, amongst other histrionical gestures, of stopping his ears,) that he doth it lest he should hear the crackling of his Saviour’s bones—

‘Digitis tunc obserat aures,  
Ne collisa crepent Christi, quem conterit, ossa ;’—

so these become voluntarily deaf adders, and will not hear ‘ Christ crucified,’ the ‘ preaching of the cross of Christ,’ as Paul calls it ; which is able to kill our sins and quicken our souls, Phil. iii. 18, Gal. iii. 1. I have read it re-

ported that the adders in the east, and those hot countries, did so subtly evade the charmers thus : when she hears the pipe, she will couch one ear close to the ground, and cover the other with her tail. So do worldlings : they fill one ear with earth, as much covetous dirt as they can cram into it ; the other ear they close up with their lewd lusts, as the adder with her winding tail ; that they have none left for their God, for their good. And being thus deaf to holy and heavenly incantations, they are easily by Satan overreached, overruled, overthrown.

So unwieldy is Christ's yoke to the raging mule ; so heavy his burden to the reluctant horse, Ps. xxxii. 9 ; hard his law to the carnal Capernaite ; so sour his balm to the wicked palate ; though to the godly his ' yoke is easy, and his burden light,' Matt. xi. 30. ' Woe unto them, for they call sweet sour,' Isa. v. 20, God's balm distasteful ; and ' sour sweet,' the world's poison savoury. They are not more propitious to vice than malicious against goodness. For others, they love a Barabbas better than a Barnabas. For themselves, every one had rather be a Dives than a Divus ; a rich sinner than a poor saint. No marvel if the blind man cannot judge of colours, nor the deaf distinguish sounds, nor the sick relish meats. God's word is sweet, however they judge it ; and their hearts are sour, however they will not think it. ' My ways are equal, but your ways are unequal, saith the Lord of hosts,' Ezek. xviii. 25, 29.

3. They write of the *balsamum*, that the manner of getting out the juice is by wounding the tree : *Sauciata arbor præbet opobalsamum*. Provided that they cut no further than the rind ; for if the wound extends to the body of the tree, it bleeds to death. I have read no less of vines that are unjustly pruned ; they bleed away their lives with the sap. The issuing balm is called *opobalsamum*, as some from the Greek *opo*, which signifies a den, or rather of *ὄπος*, juice. A treble lesson here invites our observation :—

*Obs. 1.*—The balsam tree weeps out a kind of gum, like tears ; the word of God doth compassionately bemoan our sins. Christ wept not only tears for Jerusalem, but blood for the world. His wounds gush out like fountains, and every drop is blood. *Ecce in lachrymis, in sanguine locutus est mundo*. His whole life was a continual mourning for our sins. *Nunquam ridere dictus, flere sæpissime*. He may adjure us to repentance and obedience by more forcible arguments than ever Dido used to Æneas : *Ego vos per has lachrymas, per hos gemitus, per hæc vulnera, per corpus sanguine mersum*,—I entreat you by tears, by groans, by wounds, by a body, as it were, drowned in its own blood : by all these mercies of Christ, whereby we do not only persuade you of ourselves, Rom. xii. 1, but ' God doth beseech you through us,' 2 Cor. v. 20. If those tears, sighs, wounds, blood, move not our consciences, we have impenetrable souls. If the heart-blood of Christ cannot make thy heart to relent, and thy feet to tremble, when thy concupiscence sends them on some wicked errand ; thy hands, tongue, and all parts and powers of thee to forget their office, when thou wouldst sin obstinately ; thou art in a desperate case. These were the tears of this balm tree. The word doth in many places, as it were, weep for our sins, panting out the grievance of a compassionate God : ' Why will ye die, O ye house of Israel ?' Ezek. xviii. 31. What prophet hath written without sorrow ? One of them *threnos suspirat*, sighs out a book of *Lamentations*, which Greg. Nazianzen saith, *Nunquam à se siccis oculis lectos esse*,—that he could never read with dry eyes. The other prophets also *curas hominum gesserunt*, took on them the burden of many men's sorrows. Cyprian had so compassionate a sympathy of others' evil deeds, evil sufferings, that *cum singulis pectus meum*

*copulo, cum plangentibus plango*, saith he,—I join my breast with others, and challenge a partnership in their griefs. A minister, saith Chrysostom, *debet esse lugens sua et aliena delicta*,\* should be still lamenting his own sins, and the sins of his people. *Monachus est plangentis officium*,†—The office of a minister is the office of a mourner. All these are but as canes, to derive upon us the tears of this balm.

*Obs. 2.*—The way to get out the juice of balm from God's word is by cutting it, skilful division of it, which St Paul calls *ὑποτομώμενα τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας*, 'rightly dividing the word of truth,' 2 Tim. ii. 15. It is true that God's word is *panis vitæ*, 'the bread of life;' but whiles it is in the whole loaf, many cannot help themselves: it is needful for children to have it cut to them in pieces. Though the spice unbroken be sweet and excellent, yet doth it then treble the savour in delicacy when it is pounded in a mortar. All the balm-tree is medicinal, yet the effectual working is better helped by cutting the stock, by taking out the juice, and distributing to every man a portion, according to the proportion of his wants. With no less heedfulness must the word be divided, that some may receive it gentle and mollifying, and others as a sharper ingredient. As there is a double composition in men, pride and humility, so there must be a double disposition in preaching the word, of meekness, of terror. Aaron's bells must be wisely rung, sometimes the treble of mercy, sometimes the tenor of judgment, sometimes the counter-tenor of reproof, and often the mean of exhortation. There is no less discretion required to application than to explication. As physicians prescribe their medicines by drams or ounces, according to the patient's strength or weakness, so divines must feed some with milk, others with stronger meat. The learned should have deeper points, the simple plainer principles. How easy is it for many a weak stomach to surfeit even on the food of life, though the fault lies not in any superfluity of the word, but in the deficiency of his understanding! The absence of sobriety in the speaker is more intolerable than in the hearer. The people must take such meat as their cooks dress to them. Let none of Eli's sons slubber up the Lord's sacrifice or service. Let not good balm be marred by a fusty vessel. Seasonable discretion must attend upon sound knowledge. Wisdom without wit is meat without salt; wit without wisdom is salt without meat. Some wells are so deep that a man can draw no water out of them; these bury their gifts in the grave of sullen silence. Some are shallow pits, that run so long open mouth till their springs are quite dry; whiles they will be *prius doctores quam discipuli*,—masters that never were scholars, and leap into Paul's chair when they never sat at the feet of Gamaliel. There must be therefore wisdom both in the dispensers and hearers of God's mysteries; in the former to distribute, in the other to apportion their due and fit share of this balm.

*Obs. 3.*—The balsam tree being wounded too deep, dies; the word of God cannot be marred, it may be martyred, and forced to suffer injurious interpretations. The Papists have made, and called, the Scriptures a nose of wax; and they wring this nose so hard that, as Solomon says, they force out blood, Prov. xxx. 33. As Christ once, so his word often is crucified between two thieves—the Papist on the left hand, the schismatic on the right. These would ravish the virgin-pureness of the gospel, and adulterate the beauty of it. They cannot cut, except they cut a-pieces; nor distinguish, but they must extinguish. They divide fair, but they leave the quotient empty. They subdivide till they bring all to nothing but fractions, but factions. We may observe that among these, there are as few *unifici* in the church as

\* Homil. 10 in Matt. v.

† Jerom. Ep. 21



*munifici* in the commonwealth. They are commonly most miserable men of their purses, most prodigal of their opinions. They divide the word too plentifully to their turbulent auditors ; they divide their goods too sparingly to poor Christians. There are too many of such ill logicians, that divide all things, define nothing. As a modern poet well—

‘Definit logicus res, non modo dividit ; at nos  
Nil definimus, omnia dividimus.’

These pierce the balm too deep : not to strain out juice, but blood, and, in what they are able, to kill it.

4. When the balsam is cut, they use to set vials in the dens, to receive the juice or sap ; when the word is divided by preaching, the people should bring vials with them, to gather this saving balm. These vials are our ears, which should couch close to the pulpit, that this intrinsic balm may not be spilt besides. How many sermons are lost whiles you bring not with you the vessels of attention ! We cut, and divide, and sluice out rivers of saving health from this tree, but all runs besides, and so your health is not recovered. You come frequently to the wells of life, but you bring no pitchers with you. You cry on us for store of preaching, and call us idle drones, if we go not double journey every Sabbath, but still you go home with unfallowed, with unhallowed hearts, Hos. x. 12. Our Gilead affords you balm enough, yet you have sickly souls. You hear to hear, and to feed either your humours, or your opinions, or your hypocrisies. You shall hear a puffed Ananias cry, Alas ! for his non-preaching minister ; if, at least, he forbears his snarling and currish invectives of ‘dumb dog,’ &c. When, alas ! let many apostles come, with the holy conjuration of prayer and preaching, yet they cannot cast out the deaf devil in many of them. They blame our dumb dogs, not their own deaf devils. They would seem to cure us that are sent to cure them, if at least they would be cured. ‘We would have cured Babel ;’ nay, we would have cured Bethel, ‘but she would not be cured.’

It will be said that most hearers bring with them the vials of attention. Yield it ; yet, for the most part, they are either without mouths or without bottoms. Without mouths to let in one drop of this balm of grace ; or without bottoms, that when we have put it in, and look to see it again in your lives, behold, it is run through you, as water through a sieve, and scarce leaves any wet behind it. And, to speak impartially, many of you that have vials with bottoms,—ears of attention, with hearts of retention and of remembrance,—yet they are so narrow at the top that they are not capable but of drop by drop. Think not yourselves so able to receive at the ear and conceive at the heart innumerable things at once. You are not broad glasses, but narrow-necked vials ; and then best receive this balm of life when it is stilled from the limbec of preaching with a soft fire, and a gentle pouring in. So saith the prophet : ‘Line must be added to line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little.’ When a great vessel pours liquor into a strait-mouthed vial, the source must be small and sparing, fit to the capacity of the receiver, that in time it may be filled. It is often seen that when this juice comes with too full and frequent a stream, almost all runs besides. I do not speak this *vel prohibendi, vel cohibendi animo*, to curb the forwardness of godly ministers, or persuade the rarity of sermons,—God still, of his mercy, multiply ‘labourers into,’ and labours in, ‘his harvest !’—but to correct your obstreperous clamours against us : not to chill the heat of your zealous hearing, but to enkindle the fire of your conscionable obeying. Do

not stand so much upon sacrifice, that you forget mercy. Be not so angry for want of two or three sermons in a week, when you will not obey the least doctrine of one in a month. You bless your Samuels in the name of the Lord, with protestation of your obedience to the will of the Lord: we reply, 'What means then the bleating of the sheep, and the lowing of the oxen in our ears?' 1 Sam. xv. 13, 14,—the loud noise of your oaths, injuries, oppressions, frauds, circumventions? You come with books in your hands, but with no book for God's Spirit to write obedience in. A Bible under the arm, with many, is but like a rule at one's back, whiles all his actions are out of square. The history of the Bible is carried away easier than the mystery.

Philosophy saith that there is no vacuity, no vessel is empty; if of water or other such liquid and material substances, yet not of air. So perhaps you bring hither vials to receive this balm of grace, and carry them away full, but only full of wind; a vast, incircumscribed, and swimming knowledge, a notion, a mere implicit and confused tenency of many things, which lie like corn, loose on the floor of their brains. How rare is it to see a vial carried from the church full of balm, a conscience of grace! I know there are many names in our Sardis; I speak not to dishearten any, but to encourage all. Only, would to God we would shew less, and do more, of goodness! Yet shew freely, if you do godly. I reprehend not shewing, but not doing. We preach not to your flesh, but to your spirits; neither is this balm for the ear, but for the soul. Therefore I sum up this observation with a father: *Quantum vas fidei capax afferimus, tantum gratiæ inundantis haurimus*,\*—Look, how capacious a vessel of faith we bring with us to the temple, so much of this gracious and flowing balm of life we receive. Consider that this balm is *animæ languentis medicina*,—the physic for a sick soul. Come to it like patients that desire to be cured. *Quidam veniunt ut nova perquirant, et hæc curiositas est; quidam ut sciantur, et hæc vanitas est*,†—They abuse this word that search it only for news, and this is curiosity; or to get themselves a name, and this is vanity; or to sell the truth, and this is simony; or to jest on it, and this is profaneness; or to confute it, and this is atheism.

You do well condemn, first, them that prefer Machiavel to Moses, Ishmael's scoffs to Jeremiah's tears, Jericho to Jerusalem, the tower of Babel to the gates of Bethel. Or, secondly, those that put away the ministry as a superfluous office, and think they know enough to save themselves.

'Dux ero, miles ero, duce me, me milite solus  
Bella geram;'

They will be their own captains and their own soldiers, and without calling the assistance of man or angel, prophet or apostle, they will bandy with the devil and all his army, hand to hand. Or, thirdly, those that, like the collier, dance in a circular measure, and hang all their faith on the hooks of others' belief, exercising all their religion by an exorcising mass, whiles they count the Old and New Testaments books of controversy, and that it is peremptory sacrilege to meddle with the Scriptures. You do well to abhor these dotages; but still look that all be well at home. Love the word, and that with an appetite. *Beati esurientes*,—'Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied,' Matt. v. 6. But as you have love to it, so live by it. *Non scholæ, sed vitæ discendum*,—We learn not only to know good, but to live well. *Audiatis ut sciatis*, saith St Bernard,‡ *sciatis*

\* Cypri. apud Granat. Conc. i.

† Hug. in Introd. Sacr. Scrip., cap. xiii.

‡ Serm. in Cant.

*ut ædificemini, et hoc integritas est; ut ædificetis, et hoc charitas est.*—Hear to know, know to edify yourselves, this is integrity; to edify others, this is charity. Bring then to this balm vials of sincerity, not of hypocrisy, lest God fill them with the vials of his indignation. It is not enough to have ears, but ‘ears to hear.’ Idle auditors are like idle gods, which have members not for use but show; like glass windows upon stone walls, to give ornament, not to receive light.

5. The balsam tree was granted sometimes to one only people—Judea, as Pliny\* testifies. It was thence derived to other nations. Who that is a Christian doth not know and confess the appropriation of this spiritual balm once to that only nation? ‘He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with other nations: and as for his judgments, they have not known them,’ Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20. Now, as their earthly balm was by their civil merchants transported to other nations; so when this heavenly balm was given to any Gentile, a merchant of their own, a prophet of Israel, carried it. Nineveh could not have it without a Jonah; nor Babylon without some Daniels; and though Paul and the apostles had a commission from Christ to preach the gospel to all nations, yet observe how they take their leave of the Jews: Acts xiii. 46, ‘It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.’ Other lands might brag of their natural and national benefits; only Jewry of both the balms. *Non omnis fert omnia tellus. Nihil est omni parte beatum.*†

‘India mittit ebur; molles dant thura Sabæi;  
Totaque thuriferis Panchaia dives arenis.’

Hiram had store of timber, Moab of sheep; Ophir was famous for gold, Chittim for ivory, Bashan for oaks, Lebanon for cedars; Flascon ‡ had the best wines, Athens the best honey, Persia the best oil, Babylon the best corn, Tyre the best purple, Tharsis the best ships; the West Indies for gold, the East for spices: but of all, Jewry bore the palm for bearing the balm. Such grace had Israel for the temporal, much more for the spiritual balm, that all nations might make low courtesy to her, as the ‘queen of the provinces,’ and be beholden to her for the crumbs that fell from her table, as the Syro-phenician desired of Christ. Yet she, that transcended all in her blessings, descended lower than all in her disobedience. And as she lift up her head and gloried in her special privileges, so she might hang down her head for shame at her extraordinary wickednesses.

For it is observed, that there are sins adherent to nations, proper, peculiar, genuine, as their flesh cleaveth to their bones. That as for the climate of heaven, their bodies differ; so for the custom of their lives, their dispositions vary from others. So that many countries are more dangerous, either for sins or calamities. For of necessity they that live among them must either imitate them and do ill, or hate them and suffer ill, since *amicitiæ pares aut quærunt aut faciunt*,—cohabitation of place seeks or makes coaptation of manners. St Paul notes the Cretians for liars, Titus i. 12; St Luke the Athenians for news inquirers and bearers, Acts xvii. 21. The Grecians were noted for light, the Parthians for fearful, the Sodomites for gluttons, like as England (God save the sample!) hath now suppld, lithed, and stretched their throats. If we should gather sins to their particular centres, we would appoint pride to Spain, lust to France, poisoning to Italy, drunkenness to

\* Lib. xii, cap. 17.

† Horat.

‡ Qu. Falernus!—Ed.

Germany, epicurism to England. Now it was Israel's wickedness and wretchedness that they fell to idolatry. Not that other nations were not idolaters, but Israel vilest, because they alone were taught the true worship of God.

Josephus holds that the Jews were the best soldiers of the world, both for ability of body and agility of mind, in strength, in stratagem. Divers people are now excellent fighters one special and singular way. The Romans fight well in their councils, I had almost said fence-schools; the Italians in their shops, the Spaniards in their ships, the Frenchmen in a hold, the Scot with his lance, the Irishman on foot with his dart. But the Jews were, saith Josephus, every way expert. Alas! their victory came not from their own strength; the Lord fought for them. So one of them chaseth ten of his enemies, a hundred chase a thousand. They had the shield of God's protection, the sword of his Spirit, the word of God; defence and offence against their carnal and spiritual enemies. And if ever they received wound to their flesh or spirits, they had here both the sovereign balms to cure them. But, alas! they that were so every way blessed, lost all by losing their balm, and treading it under feet. For this cause their balm is given to us; their aversion, their eversion, is our conversion. They were God's vine, but they lost their sweetness, Isa. v. 4. They were God's olives, but they lost their fatness, Rom. xi. 20. Therefore God took away his balm.

6. Pliny affirms, that even when the balsam tree grew only in Jewry, yet it was not growing commonly in the land, as other trees, either for timber, fruit, or medicine; but only in the king's garden. The prepared juice, or *opobalsamum*, was communicated to their wants; but the trees stood not in a subject's orchard. He saith further, that it grew in two orchards of the king's, whereof the greater was of twenty days' a-ring.\* I force no greater credit to this than you will willingly give it, (which yet is not improbable,) but this I build on, and propound for truth, that this spiritual balm grows only in the garden of the King of heaven. 'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God,' Rev. ii. 7. It grows in the paradise or heavenly orchard of God. The root of it is in heaven: there sits that holy tree 'at the right hand of his Father,' Col. iii. 1. His fruit, his seed, his balm he sends down to us, written by his prophets and apostles, read and preached by his ministers.

Mohammed would challenge this balm to grow in his garden, and bids us search for it in his Alcoran. The apostate Jews affirm it to grow in their synagogue, and point us to the Talmud. The Russian or Muscovitish turn us over to their Nicolaitan font, and bid us dive for it there. The Pope plucks us by the sleeve, (as a tradesman that would fain take our money,) and tells us that he only hath the balm, and shews us his mass-book. If we suspect it there, he warrants the virtue from a general council. If it doth not yet smell well, he affirms, not without menacing damnation to our mistrust, that it is even in *scrinio pectoris sui*,—in the closet of his own breast, who cannot err. 'Tut,' saith he, 'as it grows in God's garden simply, it may poison you;' as if it were dangerous to be meddled withal till he had played the apothecary, and adulterated it with his own sophistication.

Well, it can grow in one only garden, and that is God's. There is but one truth, 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism,' &c., Eph. iv. 5. Even they that have held the greatest falsehoods, hold that there is but one truth. Nay, most will confess that this balsam tree is only in God's garden; but they presume to temper the balm at their own pleasure, and will not minister

\* That is, circumference.—ED.

it to the world except their own fancy hath compounded it, confounded it with their impure mixtures. No false religion, no fundamental heresy, but reserves to appropriation to God of the balm ; but they take to themselves the ministration, the adulteration of it. So in effect, they either arrogate the balm to themselves, or take it out of God's garden (as it were, whether he will or no) to plant it in their own. So they brag every one of this balm. But who will not suspect the wares out of a known cozeners shop ? It is unlawful and wicked to offer to God's church either another balm, or after another fashion, than he appoints.

But as Clusius writes of new balms, *Peruvianum et balsamum de Tolu*,—from Peru and Tolu ; so demonstration is made us of new balms, some rather logical than theological. Germany knows my meaning. Others produce us balms of piety made up with policy ; the coat of religion put upon the back of state, where there may be some balm, but it is so mixed that it is marred. For, to a scruple of that, they put in whole ounces of other ingredients : an ounce of *oleum vulpinum*, fox-like subtlety ; as much *oleum viperis*, poisonous opinion ; and no less *oleum tartari*, &c. A whole pound of policy, an armful of stinking weeds, frivolous and superstitious relics ; all these are put to a poor dram or scruple of balm. Nay, and all these shall be dashed and slubbered together by a mass-priest, an idle and unskilful apothecary. And when any conscience is known sore, by auricular confession it shall have a plaster of this stuff.

Perhaps this is that they call their holy oil, which is said to heal the sick body, if it recovers, or to cure the soul of her sins, at least of so many as may keep a man from hell, and put him into purgatory, where he shall have house-room and firewood free, till the Pope, with soul-masses and merits, can get him a plat of ground in heaven to build a house on. How shameful is it to match their oil with God's balm ! to kneel to it as God, to ascribe events to it which God works, and, to help the glory of it, to call those works miracles, whereas they might find fitter use for it about their boots ! Though it be newly invented, and every day more sophisticate than other, yet they make their patients believe that it is ancient, and derived from Holy Scriptures ; and enter the lists with the champions of God's truth, to maintain the purity and antiquity of it.

A great while they kept God's balm, the word, wholly from the people ; now, because the cursings of the people have a little pierced their souls for engrossing this balm and denying it to their sores, they have stopped their mouths with the Rhemish Testament. But as they erst did curse them for hoarding God's grain, so now their just anger is as sharp against them for the musty, mildewed, blasted stuff they buy of them. Their wickedness is no less now in poisoning them, than it was before in starving them. Before, no balm ; now, new balm. Before, no plaster to their wounds ; now, that which makes them rankle worse. So they have mended the matter as that physician did his patient's health, to whom, because he was urged to minister somewhat, he gave him a potion that despatched his disease and life at once. Thus the Popish balm is, as Renodæus calls one, *vulgare balsamum, exoletum, inodorum, viatum, rancidum*,—stale, unsavoury, rammish, rank, vile.

Such is the sophisticate doctrine of superstitious heretics ; speaking for God's precepts their own prescripts ; preaching themselves, and in their own names, for ostentation, like the scribes ; delivering falsehoods, and fathering them on the Lord—'He hath said it ;' abusing men's ears with old wives' tales and old men's dreams, traditions of elders, constitutions of Popes, precepts of men, unwrit'en truths, untrue writings, either 'withholding the

truth in unrighteousness,' or 'selling the word of God for gain,' or 'corrupting it,' 2 Cor. ii. 17, and dealing with it as adulterers do in their filthiness; for as these respect not issue, but lust, so the other, not God's glory, but their own wantonness; ministering medicines which God never prescribed to them. How can their 'feet seem beautiful,' Rom. x. 15, when, like monsters, they have too many toes on them, as the giant's son, 2 Sam. xxi. 20, or too few, as Adonibezek and those whom he maimed, Judg. i. 7, offending either in excess or defect? But it is God's fearful protestation in the end of the book, summing and sealing up all the curses that went before it: 'If they add,' he that hath power to add plagues with an everlasting concatenation, will multiply their miseries without number or end. 'If they diminish,' he that can abate his blessings so low that not the least scruple shall remain, will return them their own measure, Rev. xxii. 18. And for you, my brethren, hear the Apostle: 'Let no man beguile you with philosophy and vain deceit,' Col. ii. 8, or please you with false balm. You may say of their natural learning, as Albumazer of boleno, henbane: Whiles it grows, saith he, in Persia, it is venomous; but if transplanted and growing in Jerusalem, it is not only good medicine, but good meat. Well, if it were possible that 'an angel from heaven should preach another gospel, than that which God hath delivered and his apostles preached, *anathema sit*, let him be accursed,' Gal. i. 8; the true balm comes only from the garden of the King of heaven.

7. They write of the balsam tree, that though it spread spaciouly as a vine, yet the boughs bear up themselves; and as you heard before that they must not be pruned, so now here, that they need not be supported: God's word needs no undersetting. It is firmly rooted in heaven, and all the cold storms of human reluctance and opposition cannot shake it. Nay, the more it is shaken, the faster it grows. The refractory contentions of worldlings to pluck it down, have added no less strength than glory to it. Nor can the ministerial office of the dispensers of it be called an aid or underpropping to it. It is not the balm, but you, that stand in need of our function. He that owns it is powerful enough to protect it. You cannot apply it to yourselves without the physician's help. If you could, or did not more want us, than that doth, you should see it flourish and spread without us. He that 'supports all by his mighty word,' Heb. i. 3, asks no supporter for that word.

The church of Rome challengeth more than the church of God—that she bears up the word; and because she assumes to carry the keys, she presumes that the door of heaven hangs upon her hinges. They say, the church is a pillar: we may join issue with them, and yield it, as a reverend divine said. For a pillar, as it upholds something, so is upholden of something. If then the church be a pillar, Christ is the rock whereon it stands: now, take away the rock, down comes the pillar. The rock is well enough without the pillar, not the pillar without the rock. They that would build all on their church, yet build their church on Peter; and not only on Peter, that was weak, but on his feigned successor, who is weaker. Now this heir built on Peter, and this church built on this heir, must uphold the word, as they say Atlas did the world. But, alas! if the word do not bear them, they will fall, like water spilt on the ground, not to be saved or gathered up. These are miserable, arrogant, impudent wretches, that think God's word could not hold up the hands,—like Moses, unless Aaron and Hur helped him,—if the Pope and his councils were not: forcing all our credit to the gospel for this, because their church allows it. God's word must then stand or fall at man's approbation or dislike. O indignity to the stable ordinance of an eternal majesty!

It is enough for the laws of a temporal prince to have some dependence on his officers' promulgation. He that took no man nor angel to his counsel when he made it, demands the succour of none to preserve it. He is content to propagate the sound thereof through us his trumpets : if it had never been preached by man, it should not have lost the effect. Heaven and earth shall sooner run, like scorched skins, to heaps, than any iota, as small a character as the alphabet affords, shall ineffectually perish. If a man could deny his office, God could speak it by angels, by thunder, by lightning, confusion, terror ; by frogs, lice, caterpillars, blasting, plague, leprosy, consumption ; as he hath sometimes, holding his peace, preached actually to the world. It is his own balm, and shall spread to his pleasure, and hath no weakness in it, to need man's supportance. Blessed are we under the shadow of the branches, and wise if we build our salvation on it.

8. Physicians write of *balsamum*, that it is *paratu facile et optimum*,—easy and excellent to be prepared. This spiritual balm is prepared to our hands : it is but the administration that is required of us, and the application of you. Not that we should slubber it over, as the sons of Eli, in preaching ; nor that you should clap it negligently to yourselves in hearing. A mortal wound is not to be jested withal, though the physician hath in his hand the balm that can cure it. Your constitutions of body are not more various, and often variable, than your affections in soul. There must be some wisdom in us to hit the right box, and to take out that physic which God hath made fit for your griefs. We are sure the shaft that shall kill the devil in you is in God's quiver ; indiscretion may easily mistake it, misapply it. This balm is ready, soon had, and cheaply : let not this make you disesteem it. Gallant humours vilipend all things that are cheap. But if in God's mart you refuse his wares, because their price is no greater, you may perhaps one day, when they are gone, curse your withstanding your markets ; and being past obtaining, prize it the higher, because in the days of your satiety you did undervalue it. The guests in the gospel, bidden to a supper *gratis*, make light of it : when the feastmaker had protested against them, that they 'should never taste of his supper,' Luke xiv. 24, they doubtless would have been glad if their money could have purchased it, though it cost one his farm, and the other his oxen.

9. Balm is *utilis ad omnium morborum expugnationem*,—good against all diseases. The receipt that Linus, Hercules's schoolmaster, gave him, when he taught him wrestling, was only a balm. Darius, saith Renodæus, so esteemed it, that *non modo inter pretiosissimam suppellectilem reponeret, sed cunctis opibus præponeret*,—he did not only lay it up amongst his richest treasures, but even prefer it before them all. This spiritual balm is far more precious in itself, and fructuous to all men, if they apprehend it in knowledge, apply themselves to it in obedience : possessing it in science, in conscience. Philosophers, poets, physicians, historians have reported some one extraordinary thing exceeding all the rest in their observations. They talk of *cornucopia*, that it supplied men with all necessary food. They hammer at the philosopher's stone, which they affirm can turn baser metals into gold. Vulcan's armour, saith the poet, was of proof against all blows. Physicians tell us, that the herb *panaces* is good for all diseases, and the drug *catholicon* instead of all purges ; as both their names would seem to testify. They are all short of this spiritual balm. It hath in deed and perfection what they attribute to those in fiction. Panace is an herb, whereof Pliny thus testifieth : *Panace, ipso nomine, omnium morborum remedia promittit*,—The very name of it promiseth remedy to all sicknesses. It is but a weed to our

balsam ; which is a tree, a tree of life, a complete paradise of trees of life, flourishing and bearing every month, the fruit being delectable, the leaves medicinable. It is a true purging virtue, to cleanse us from all corruption of spirit, of flesh. 'Now are ye clean, through the word which I have spoken unto you,' John xv. 3. Catholicon is a drug, a drudge to it. It purifieth our hearts from all defilings and obstructions in them. A better cornucopia than ever nature, had she been true to their desires and wants, could have produced : the bread of heaven, by which a man lives for ever. A very supernatural stone, more precious than the Indies, if they were consolidate into one quarry ; that turns all into purer gold than ever the land of Havilah boasted. A stronger armour than was Vulcan's, to shield us from a more strange and savage enemy than ever Anak begot, the devil, Eph. vi. 11. It is a pantry of wholesome food, against fenowed traditions ; a physician's shop of antidotes, against the poisons of heresies and the plague of iniquities ; a pandect of profitable laws, against rebellious spirits ; a treasure of costly jewels, against beggarly rudiments.

The aromatical tree hath sometimes good savour in the rind, sometimes in the flower, sometimes in the fruit. So it fareth in the cinnamon, that is a rind ; the mace is the flower, and the nutmeg the fruit. According as the dry and earthy part, mingled with the subtle watery matter, hath the mastery in any tree, more or less, that part smelleth best ; as in common flowers, which savour in the flower, when from the stalk or root ariseth nothing. Only the balm smells well in every part. So the word is in every respect the sweet savour of life ; though to some, through their own corruption, it becomes the savour of death. We may say of the word, as of the lamb, it is all good : the fleece to clothe, the flesh to eat, the blood for medicine. Thus 'all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,' 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. *His salubriter, et corriguntur prava, et nutriuntur parva, et magna oblectantur ingenia*.\*—Evil wits are corrected, simple are enlightened, strong are delighted by the word. And, *In his quotidie proficerem, si eas solas ab ineunte pueritia, usque ad decrepitam senectutem, maximo otio, summo studio, meliore ingenio conarer addiscere*.—In these I should continually profit, if from the first day of my understanding, to the last of my old age, I should be conversant with them.

Other things may have in them *salubritatem quandam*, a certain wholesomeness ; but from this balm, *sanitas et ipsa vita petitur*, health and life itself is derived. Human writings may, like the *Aliptæ*, put blood in our cheeks, but this is the true physic to cherish our spark, to maintain our life. Other herbs, and plants, and roots may be *toxica*, and poison the broth ; this is Elisha's salt, that only sweetens it. *Lignum crucis* is *lignum vite*, like Moses's wood, to put a healthful taste into the bitter waters of human knowledge. These are the two Testaments of God, which no man shall interline without certain judgment ; like the two pillars of smoke and fire, one dark like the Old, the other bright as the New, only able to conduct us from Egypt to Canaan, and to furnish us with all necessities by the way, if we depend thereon ; the two cherubims, that look directly toward the mercy-seat, both pointing to Jesus Christ ; the treasure, that hath both old and new in it, sufficiently able to 'instruct the scribe to the kingdom of heaven,' Matt. xiii. 52. This is that *medicamentum medicamentorum*, as Petrus Apponensis saith of the balm, *ubi nihil deficit, quod in salutem sufficit*,—where there is

\* Aug. Ser. 139 de Temp.



no want of anything requisite to salvation : *cujus plenitudinem adoro*,\*—whose fulness I reverence and admire.

This is that light which can justly guide our steps ; this is that measure of the sanctuary that must weigh all things ; this is that great seal that must warrant all our actions. This gives at one sermon balm sufficient to heal divers diseases. Peter had auditors of divers nations, 'Parthians, Medes, Elamites, &c., Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians,' Acts ii. 9 ; and no question but their affections were different, yet were three thousand won at one sermon, ver. 41. So the multitude, the publicans, the soldiers, had all their lessons at one time, Luke iii. 10 : so many in number, and such manner of men in nature, had their remedies together, and their several diseases healed, as it were, with one plaster. The people had a doctrine of charity, ver. 11 ; the publicans, of equity, ver. 13 ; the soldiers, of innocency, ver. 14. This was prophesied by Isaiah, fulfilled here, and often in Christ's kingdom : 'The wolf is turned to the lamb,' Isa. xi. 6, when the soldiers are made harmless ; 'the leopard into a calf,' when the publicans are made just ; the 'lion and bear into a cow,' when the multitude is made charitable.

Water searcheth, and wind shaketh, and thunder terrifieth even lions, but the word only is strong to convert the heart of man. Some, indeed, both in sense and censure, judge it weak ; but they, alas ! shall find it, if weak to save them, yet strong to condemn them. If it cannot plant thee, it will supplant thee. This then is that sovereign balm, medicinable to all maladies. Physicians ascribe many healing virtues to their balsam : many, and almost what not ? This metaphysical doth more properly challenge that attribution.

1. They say that balm, taken fasting, *asthmaticis valde confert*, is very good against short-windedness. Truly, God's word lengthens and strengthens the breath of grace ; which otherwise would be short, the conscience, as the lungs, being soon obstructed with iniquities. For goodness soon faints where the word is not. Without the gospel, the health of obedience loseth, and the disease of sin gathers strength.

2. They say that balm, taken inwardly, dissolves and breaks the stone in the reins. But Jeremiah, in God's physic-book, saith that our balm is as 'a hammer to break the stone in the heart,' chap. xxiii. 29. The stone in the reins is dangerous, in the bladder painful, but none so deadly as the stone in the heart. This balm supplies the stony heart, and turns it into a 'heart of flesh.'

3. They commend their balm for a special ease to the anger of a venomous biting. But our balm is more excellent *in aculeum draconis, imo mortis*,—against the sting of that great red dragon, nay, of death itself : 'O death, where is thy sting ?' 1 Cor. xv. 55. Three serpents give us venomous wounds : sin first stings us, the devil next, and death last. This balm of Christ fetcheth out all their poisons.

4. Others say of this balm, that it is good against the obstructions of the liver. I have heard the liver in the body compared with zeal in the soul. The liver, according to the physicians, is the third principal member wherein rest the animal spirits. In the soul two graces precede zeal—faith and repentance. I say not this *in thesi*, but *in hypothesi*, not simply, but in respect, and that rather of order than of time. For a man is begotten of immortal seed by the Spirit at once. Now, as the liver heats the stomach, (like fire under the pot,) and thereby succours digestion, so doth zeal heat a man's works with a holy fervour ; which are, without that, a cold sacrifice

\* Tertul.

to God. A soul without zeal doth as hardly live as a body without a liver. Haly calls the liver the well of moisture: we may say of zeal, it is the very cistern whence all other graces issue forth into our lives. The liver is called *hepar* and *jecur*, because it draweth juice to itself, turneth it into blood, and by veins serveth the body, as the water-house doth a city by pipes. Nay, it ministereth a surging heat to the brain, to the eyes, to the wits, saith Isidore. The pagan necromancers sacrificed only livers on the altar of their god Phœbus, before his oraculous answers were given. In the soul, other graces, as faith, hope, charity, repentance, did first rather breed zeal; but zeal being once enkindled, doth minister nutrimental heat to all these, and is indeed the best sacrifice that we can offer to God. Without zeal, all are like the oblation of Cain.

Now, if any obstructions of sin seem to oppress this zeal in us, this balm of God's word is the only sovereign remedy to cleanse it. For zeal is in danger, as the liver, either by too much heat or too much cold, to be dis-tempered. To overheat the liver of zeal many have found the cause of a perilous surfeit in the conscience: whiles, like the two disciples, nothing could content them but fire from heaven against sinners. 'If ever bishop was in the time of Popery, away with that office now! If ever mass was said in church, pull it down!' Though some depopulators have now done it in extreme coldness, nay, frozen dregs of heart, making them either no churches or polluted ones; whiles those which were once temples for God's shepherds are now cots for their own: yet they in unmeasurable heat wished what these with unreasonable cold livers affected. Such miserable thieves have crucified the church, one by a new religion in will, the other by a no religion in deed. They would not only take away the abuse, but the thing itself; not only the ceremony, but the substance. As the painter\* did the picture of King Henry the Eighth, whom he had drawn fairly with a Bible in his hand, and set it to open view against Queen Mary's coming in triumph through the city; for which being reproved by a great man that saw it, and charged to wipe out the book, he, to make sure work, wiped out the Bible and the hand too; and so in mending the fault, he maimed the picture.

This is the effect of preternatural heat, to make of a remedy a disease. Thus whiles they dream that Babylon stands upon ceremonies, they offer to raze the foundations of Jerusalem itself. Well, this balm of God's word, if their sick souls would apply it, might cool this ungentle heat of their livers. For it serves not only to enkindle heat of zeal in the overcold heart, but to refrigerate the preposterous fervour in the fiery-hot. This is the saving balm that scours away the obstructions in the liver, and prevents the dropsy; for the dropsy is nothing else, saith the philosopher, but the error of the digestive virtue in the hollowness of the liver. Some have such hollowness in their zeal, whiles they pretend holiness of zeal, (as was in the iron horns of that false prophet Zedekiah, 1 Kings xxii. 11,) that for want of applying this balm, they are sick of the dropsy of hypocrisy.

Innumerable are the uses of balm, if we give credit to physicians—*vel potum, vel inunctum*. It strengthens the nerves, it excites and cherisheth the native heat in any part, it succoureth the paralytic, and delayeth the fury of convulsions, &c.; and, last of all, is the most sovereign help either to green wounds or to inveterate ulcers. These, all these, and more than ever was untruly feigned or truly performed by the balsam to the body, is spiritually fulfilled in this happy, heavenly, and true intrinsic balm, God's word. It

\* Acts and Mon.

heals the sores of the conscience, which either original or actual sin have made in it. It keeps the green wound, which sorrow for sin cuts in the heart, from rankling the soul to death. This is that balsam tree that hath *fructum uberrimum, usum saluberrimum*,—plenteous fruit, profitable use,—and is, in a word, both a preservative against, and a restorative from, all dangers to a believing Christian. It is not only physic, but health itself, and hath more virtue, saving virtue, validity of saving virtue, than the tongues of men and angels can ever sufficiently describe.

You have here the similitudes. Hear one or two discrepancies of these natural and supernatural balms. For as no metaphor should of necessity run like a coach on four wheels, when to go, like a man, on two sound legs is sufficient; so earthly things, compared with heavenly, must look to fall more short than Linus of Hercules, the shrub of the cedar, or the lowest mole-bank of the highest pyramids.

1. This earthly balm cannot preserve the body of itself, but by the accession of the spiritual balm. Even angels' food (so called, not because they made it, but because they ministered it) cannot nourish without God's word of blessing. For 'every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer,' 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5. If the mercy of God be not on our sustenance, we may die with meat in our mouths, like the Israelites. If his providential goodness withhold the virtue, were our garments as costly as the ephod of Aaron, there is no benefit in them. When many are sick, they trust to the physicians, as Asa, 2 Chron. xvi. 12, or to this balm, fastening their eyes and hopes on that; whereas balm, with the destitution of God's blessing, doth as much good as a branch of herb-John in our pottage. Nature itself declines her ordinary working, when God's revocation hath chidden it. The word without balm can cure; not the best balm without the word.

2. So this natural balm, when the blessing of the word is even added to it, can at utmost but keep the body living till the life's taper be burnt out; or after death, give a short and insensible preservation to it in the sarcophagal grave. But this balm gives life after death, life against death, life without death. 'To whom shall we go? Lord, thou hast the words of eternal life,' John vi. 68. The Apostle doth so sound it, the saints in heaven have so found it, and we, if we believe it, if we receive it, shall perceive it to be the word of life. And as Augustine\* of God, *Omne bonum nostrum vel ipse, vel ab ipso*,—All our good is either God, or from God; so all our ordinary means of good from God are *vel verbum, vel de verbo*,—either the word, or by the word.

*Obs.*—The prophet derives the balm from the Mount Gilead, demanding if Gilead be without balm. It seems that Gilead was an aromatical place, and is reckoned by some among the mountains of spice. It is called in some places of Scripture Galeed, and by an easy varying of the points in the Hebrew writing, Gilead, Gen. xxxi. This mountain was at first so called by Jacob, by reason of that solemn covenant which he there made with his father-in-law, pursuing Laban. Though it be called Mount Gilead before in the chapter, ver. 21, 23, 25, 'He set his face toward Mount Gilead,' &c., yet it is by anticipation; spoken rather as the hill was called when the history was written by Moses, than as it was saluted and ascended by Jacob, who abode in it till Laban overtook him, where the pacified father and the departing son made their covenant. Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed, ver. 47. It signifies 'a heap of witnesses,' a name imposed by

\* Lib. i. de Doct. Christ., cap. 31.

occasion of the heap of stones pitched for the league between them : 'Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed,' ver. 48. There was one 'Gilead, son of Machir, son of Manasseh,' of whom, because it is said that 'Machir begat Gilead,' Num. xxvi. 29, and of Gilead came the family of the Gileadites, some ascribe the attribution of this name to Mount Gilead. But this mount had the name long before the son of Machir was born. This appears, Num. xxxii. 39, 40. We read of it that it was, (1.) A great mountain ; (2.) Fruitful ; (3.) Full of cities ; (4.) Abounding with spices.

(1.) It was a *great* mountain, the greatest of all beyond Jordan, in length fifty miles. But as it ran along by other coasts, it received divers names. From Arnon to the city Kedar it is called Gilead ; from thence to Bozra it is called Seir ; and after, Hermon ; so reaching to Damascus, it is joined to Libanus. So Hierome conceiteth on these words of God 'unto the king's house of Judah : Thou art Gilead unto me, and the head of Lebanon,' Jer. xxii. 6 ; and therefore Lebanon is the beginning of Gilead.

(2.) *Fruitful* ; abounding with great variety of necessities and delights, yielding both pleasure and profit. This every part and corner thereof afforded, even as far as Mount Seir, which the Edomites, the generation of Esau, chose for a voluptuous habitation. This the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, when they saw the land of Gilead, that the place was a place for cattle, Num. xxxii. 1, desired of Moses and of the princes of the congregation that they might possess it,—'for it is a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle,'—the condition that Moses required being by them granted, that 'they should go armed with their brethren,' till the expulsion of their enemies had given them a quiet seat in Canaan : ver. 25, 'Thy servants will do as my lord commandeth. Only our little ones, our wives, our flocks, and all our cattle, shall be in the cities of Gilead,' Josh. i. 12, 13. The fertility of Gilead contented them, though with the separation of Jordan from their brethren. Our Saviour describing the beauty of his spouse, Cant. iv. 1, 2, 'Behold, thou art fair, my love, behold thou art fair,' inwardly fair with the gifts of his Spirit, and outwardly fair in her comely administration and government : 'thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks,' thy eyes of understanding being full of purity, chastity, simplicity ; he adds withal, that 'her hair,' her gracious profession, and appendances of expedient ornaments, are as comely to behold 'as a flock of well-fed goats,' grazing and appearing 'on the fruitful hills of Gilead,' which made them so pregnant, that, 'like a flock of sheep, every one brings out twins, and none is barren among them,' Cant. iv. 5, 6. The same praise is redoubled by Christ, chap. vi., &c.

(3.) It was *full of cities* ; a place so fertile, that it was full of inhabitants. 'Jair, the Gileadite, who judged Israel, had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities, which are called Havoth-jair unto this day, which are in the land of Gilead,' Judg. x. 4. It was as populous as fructuous, and at once blessed with pregnancy both of fruits for the people and of people for the fruits. It was, before Israel conquered it, in the dominion of the Amorites, Num. xxxii. 39 ; and more specially of Og, king of Bashan, that remained of the remnant of the giants, Deut. iii. 11, whose 'bedstead was a bedstead of iron, nine cubits long, and four cubits broad, after the cubit of a man.' It was not only full of strength in itself, but guarded with cities in the plain : 'All the cities in the plain, and all Gilead, and all Bashan,' &c., Deut. iii. 10. So the inheritance of Gad is reckoned by Joshua, 'Their coast was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead,' chap. xiii. 25.

It appears, then, that Gilead was full of cities, so blessed as if the heavens had made a covenant of good unto it, as Jacob did erst with Laban upon it. A hill of witness indeed, for it really testified God's mercy to Israel. God calls it his own : 'Gilead is mine, Manasseh is mine,' Ps. cviii. 8. The principal or first name of kingdom, that usurping Ishbosheth was by Abner crowned over, was Gilead : 'And he made him king over Gilead, and over the Ashurites,' &c., 1 Sam. ii. 9.

(4.) It was, lastly, a mountain of *spices*; and many strangers resorted thither for that merchandise. Even when the malicious brethren, having thrown innocent Joseph into the pit, 'sat down,' in a secure neglectfulness, 'to eat bread : behold'—surely the Lord sent and directed—'a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels, bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh,' Gen. xxxvii. 25. By which it appears to be *mons aromatum*, a hill of spices. Therefore God here, 'Is there no balm in Gilead?'

*Obs.*—The Jews were near to Gilead, it was but on the other side of Jordan. The fetching over their merchandise was no long and dangerous voyage. Yet was this spiritual balm nearer to them; it lay like manna at their doors. *Venit ad limina virtus*. 'The kingdom of heaven is among you,' saith Christ. There needed no great journey for natural physic, but less for spiritual comfort. Behold, God himself gives his vocal answers between the cherubims. Yet, alas! as it was once justly reprov'd on the monks, and such spiritual or rather carnal convents, in that night of Popery, that the nearer they were to the church the further from God; so it was even verified of the Jews, that by how much they were of all next to the sanctuary, by so much of all remotest from sanctity. And therefore, he that once said, 'Gilead is mine,' Ps. lx. 7, and of the temple in Judah, 'This is my house, called by my name,' Jer. vii. 10, afterward left both the hill of Gilead, and the Mount Zion, and the holy sanctuary, a prey to the Romans; who left not 'a stone upon a stone' to testify the ruins of it, or for succeeding ages to say, 'This was the temple of God.' Thus saith the prophet Hosea : 'Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity, and is polluted with blood,' chap. vi. 8. Therefore God turned that 'fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwelt therein,' Ps. cvii. 34. For not content with the fertility of their soil, they manured it with blood, saith the prophet. Hence no marvel if it became at last like the cursed mountains of Gilboa, that drank the blood of Saul and Jonathan, 2 Sam. i. 21.

II. You have heard the balm; the next subject that offers itself to our speech is the *physicians*. 'Is there no balm at Gilead; is there no physician there?' The prophets are allegorically called physicians, as the word is balm. So are the ministers of the gospel in due measure, in their place. To speak properly and fully, Christ is our only physician, and we are but his ministers, bound to apply his saving physic to the sickly souls of his people. It is he only that cures the carcase, the conscience.

1. No physician can heal the body without him. The woman with the bloody issue was not bettered by her physicians, Mark v. 26, though she had emptied all her substance into their purses, till Christ undertook her cure. The leper in the 8th of Matthew, ver. 3, was as hopeless, as hapless, till he met with this physician; and then the least touch of his finger healed him. Physicians deal often, not by extracting, but protracting the disease; making rather diseases for their cure, than cures for diseases; prolonging our sicknesses by art, which nature, or rather nature's defect, hath not made so tedious. Therefore, as one saith wittily, the best physic is to take no physic; or, as another boldly, our new physic is worse than our old sickness. But when

our diseases be committed to this heavenly doctor, and he is pleased to take them in hand, our venture is without all peradventure, we shall be healed. The least touch of his finger, the breath of his mouth, can cast out the evil in us, can cast out the devil in us; he can, he will cure us.

2. No minister can heal the conscience where Christ hath not given a blessing to it. Otherwise he may lament with the prophet, 'I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought,' Isa. xlix. 4; or, as the Apostle, 'I have fished all night, and caught nothing; yet at thy command,' &c. 'Who then is Paul, or who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase,' 1 Cor. iii. 5, 6. If any be blind, he is the oculist; if any be lame, he sets the bones; if any be wounded, he is the chirurgeon; if any be sick, he is the physician.

They write of the Indian physicians, that they cure the wound by sucking the poison. Christ heals after a manner, I know not whether more loving and strange, by taking the disease upon himself: 'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree,' 1 Pet. ii. 24. 'He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, and with his stripes we are healed; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all,' Isa. liii. 5, 6. As the scape-goat was said to 'bear upon him the sins of Israel,' Lev. xvi. 22, so saith the prophet of his antitype, Christ, *morbo portavit nostros*, 'he hath borne our griefs,' Isa. liii. 4; too unsupportable a burden for our shoulders, able to sink us down to hell, as they did Cain and Judas, if they had been imposed. *Tulit Jesus*,—'Christ carried our sorrows.' Never was such a physician, that changed healths with his sick patient. But he was humbled for us. Man's maker is made man, the world's succourer takes sick, the 'bread' is hungry, the 'fountain' thirsty, the 'light' sleepy, the 'way' weary, the 'truth' accused, the 'judge' condemned; health itself is become sick, nay, dead, for our salvation. For man's sake (such was our weakness) Christ descended, (such was his kindness,) and took on him to cure us, (such was his goodness,) and performed it, (such was his greatness.) It was not Abana nor Pharpar, nor all the rivers of Damascus, not the water of Jordan, though bathing in it seventy times, not Job's 'snow-water,' nor David's 'water of hyssop,' not the pool of Bethesda, though stirred with a thousand angels, that was able to wash us clean. Only *fusus sanguis medici, factum medicamentum phrenetici*,—the blood of the physician is spilt, that it may become a medicine of salvation to all believers. This is the pelican, that preserves her young with her own blood. This is the goat, that with his warm gore breaks the adamant of our hearts. This is 'that Lamb of God,' that with his own blood 'takes away the sins of the world,' John i. 29. When the oracle had told the king of Athens that himself must die in the battle, or his whole army perish, Codrus, then king, never stuck at it, but obtruded his own life into the jaws of inevitable death, that he might save his people's. The King of heaven was more freely willing to 'lay down his,' for the redemption of his saints, when the eternal decree of God had pronounced him the choice. Is there no means to recover the sick world, but I must die that it may live? Then take my life, quoth Life itself. Thus *pro me doluit, qui non habuit, quod pro se doleret*,\*—he was made sick for me, that I might be made sound in him.

This then is our physician, in whom alone is saving health. As Sybilla sung of him—

\* August.

Πάντα λόγῳ πράττων, πᾶσαν τε νόσον θεραπεύων.

‘Virgineus partus, magnoque æquæva Parenti  
Progenies, superas coeli quæ missa per auras,  
Antiquam generis labem mortalibus ægris  
Abluit, obstructique viam patefecit Olympi.’

‘He wrought all things with his word, and healed every disease with his power.’ To him let us resort, confessing our sores, our sorrows. ‘They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick,’ Matt. ix. 12. ‘Foolish men, because of their iniquities, are afflicted; that their soul abhorreth all manner of meat, and they draw near to the gates of death. Yet they cry unto this physician, and he delivers them from their distress,’ Pa. cvii. 17–19. So he hath promised in the Testament, both of his law and of his gospel: ‘Call on me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee,’ Pa. l. 15. ‘Come to me, all that are laden, and I will give you rest,’ Matt. xi. 28. There never went sorrowful beggar from his door without an alma. No marvel if he be not cured, that is opinionated of his own health. They say that the tench is the physician of fishes; and they being hurt, come to him for cure. All the fishes that are caught in the net of the gospel come to Christ, who is the King of physicians, and the Physician of kings. Come then to him, beloved, not as to a master in name only, as the lawyer, Matt. xxii. 36, but as to a Saviour indeed, as the leper, Matt. viii. 2, ‘Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.’ *Non tanquam ad Dominum titularem, sed tanquam ad Dominum tutelarem*, as one elegantly.

Ministers are physicians under Christ, sent only with his physic in their hands, and taught to apply it to our necessities. Neither the physician of the body nor of the soul can heal by any virtue inherent in, or derived from themselves. We must take all out of God’s warehouse. God hath a double box—of nature, of grace; as man hath a double sickness—of flesh, of spirit.

1. The first box is mentioned Ecclus. xxxviii., ‘The Lord hath created medicines out of the earth, and he that is wise will not abhor them.’ God hath not scanted earth of drugs and minerals, the simples of physic, for such as tread on it. And howsoever our vanity in health transport our thoughts, earth hath no more precious thing in it than, as sustenance to preserve, so medicine to restore us. You that have digged into the entrails of the dead earth, and not spared the bowels of the living earth, the poor, for riches: you that have set that at your heart which was cast down at the apostles’ feet, money, Acts iv. 35, as fit only for sanctified men to tread upon in contempt: you that have neglected heaven, which God hath made your glorious ceiling, and richly stuck it, like a bright canopy, with burning lights, and doted on your pavement, made only for your feet to tread upon; fixing your eyes and thoughts on that which God hath indisposed to be your object; for man’s countenance is erect, lessening his soul to a just and holy aspiration: you that have put so fair for the philosopher’s stone, that you have endeavoured to sublimate it out of poor men’s bones, ground to powder by your oppressions: you that have buried your gods so soon as you have found them out, as Rachel did Laban’s in the litter, and sit down with rest on them, saying to the wedge, ‘Thou art my confidence,’ Job xxxi. 24;—when your heads ache, dissolve your gold, and drink it; wallow your crazy carcase in your silver, wrap it in perfumes and silks, and try what ease it will afford you. Will not a silly and contemptible weed, prepared by a skilful physician, give you more comfort? Doth not the common air, which you receive in and breathe out again, refresh you better? How eager are our desires of

superfluities, how neglectful of necessities ! This box of treasures hath God given us, and endued some with knowledge to minister them, lest our ignorance might not rather prejudice than succour our healths. No physician, then, cures of himself, no more than the hand feeds the mouth. The meat doth the one, the medicine doth the other ; though the physician and the hand be unspared\* instruments to their several purposes. Thus God relieves our health from the box of nature.

2. The other box is grace ; whence the divine draweth out sundry remedies for our diseases of soul. This is not so common as that of nature. Once one nation had it of all the world, now all the world rather than that nation. But it is certain they have it only to whom the gospel is preached. It is indeed denied to none that do not deny their faith to it. Christ is 'that Lamb, that takes away τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου, the sin of the world,' John i. 29. But many want the physicians to teach and apply this. 'And how shall they preach except they be sent ?' Rom. x. 15. Now, where these physicians are, is the people healed by any virtue derived from them ? Is it the perfumer that gives such sweet odours, or his perfumes ? 'Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk ?' Acts iii. 12. 'Be it known to you all, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth doth this man stand whole before you,' chap. iv. 10. 'Therefore,' saith St Paul, concluding this doctrine so thoroughly handled, 'let no man glory in men ; for all things are yours, whether Paul, &c. ; 'all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's,' 1 Cor. iii. 21, &c. It is the tidings we bring that saves you, not our persons. Moses, that gave the law, could not frame his own heart to the obedience of it. It lies not in our power to beget faith in our own souls. 'The heart of the king is in the hands of God, as are the waters in the south.' The souls of all, prince and people, prophets and Nazarites, preachers and hearers, learned and ignorant, are converted by God, by whom they were created. It was the voice even of a prophet, 'Turn us, O Lord, and so shall we be turned.'

*Use.*—This consideration may serve to humble our hearts, whom God hath trusted with the dispensation of his oracles. It is a sacrilegious sin for any spiritual physician to ascribe God's doing to his own saying, and to make his glory cleave to earthen fingers. As Menecrates, a natural one, wrote in a certain epistle to Philip of Macedon : 'Thou art king of Macedon, I of physic. It lies in thy power to take health and life from men, in mine to give it.' So monstrous was his pride, yet so applauded by the besotted citizens, that he marched with a train of gods after him : one in the habit of Hercules, another of Mercury, a third in the form of Apollo ; whilst himself, like Jupiter, walked with a purple robe, a crown of gold, and a sceptre ; boasting that by his art he could breathe life into men. Foolish clay ! he could not preserve himself from mouldering to dust. Ostentation in a spiritual physician is worse, by how much our profession teacheth us to be more humble. It is a high climbing pride in any pharisee, and injurious to the throne of God, to arrogate to himself a converting power. As in the fable, the fly sitting on the coach-wheel at the games of Olympia, gave out that it was she which made so great a dust. Or as that malecontent in a deep melancholy, who hearing the winds blow furiously, thought it was only his breath which made all that blustering. It is God only that can turn the heart and turn the tongue, heal the body and help the soul. Let the instruments have just respect, God alone the praise. 'Honour the physician with the honour due unto him : for the Lord hath created him,' Eccclus.

\* That is, indispensable.—ED.



xxxviii. 1; and 'count the well-ruling elders worthy of double honour,' 1 Tim. v. 17. But let God be glorified, as the author of all, above all, for all.

It hath pleased God to call his ministers by this title, physicians: many duties hence accrue to our instruction. I cannot, I need not, dwell much on them; for every one can lesson us that will not be lessoned by us. Not that we refuse knowledge from any lips,—since nothing can be said well but by God's Spirit, who sometimes reproves a Jonah by a mariner, a Peter by a silly damsel, a Balaam by an ass,—but because they whose lips God hath seasoned, sealed to preserve knowledge, are held contemptible, and their feet foul that bring the fairest message; so the frantic patient beats the medicine about his ears that brings it. The prophets would have cured Jerusalem, behold Jerusalem killeth them! You kill us still, though not in our natural, yet in our civil life, our reputation. We feel not your murderings, but your murmurings. Ishmael's tongue made him a persecutor, as well as Esau's hands. Only our God comforts us, as he did Samuel: 'They have not cast thee away, but they have cast me away, saith the Lord.' A word or two, therefore, concerning their care of your cure.

1. The physician must apply himself to the nature of his patient: so the minister to the disposition of his hearer; leading the gentle, and drawing the refractory; winning some with love, and 'pulling others out of the fire; having compassion on some, and saving others with fear,' Jude 22, 23. *Medicamenti dosis pro coeli et soli natura mutanda*,—The prescription of the medicine must be diversified according to the nature of the soil and the air. He shall never cure men's consciences that looks not to their affections, 'making a difference.' Paul testifieth of himself, 'I became to the Jews as a Jew, &c.; to the weak as weak, that I might save the weak: I am made all things to all men, that by all means I might save some,' 1 Cor. ix. 20–22. We must vary our speech to their weak understandings; 'judgment to whom judgment, mercy to whom mercy belongs.'

And you, beloved, must also apply yourselves to us; not scorning your own preacher, and running with itching ears to others, delighting rather in the variety of teachers than in the verity of doctrines. It fares with ministers as with fish, none so welcome as the new come. Set aside prejudice. The meanest preacher whom God hath sent you can shew you that which, if you obediently follow, shall effectually save your souls. The word is powerful, what instrument soever brings it; and God's 'strength is made manifest in our weakness.' Hear all, despise none. And as we are bound to 'feed that flock whereof the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers,' Acts xx. 28; so do you content yourselves with that pastor whom God hath sent to feed you. Factions have thus been kindled, and how hardly are they extinguished! Whiles one is for Paul, another for Apollos, a third for Cephas: or rather, (for these preserved one analogy of truth in their doctrine, and only differed in plainness and eloquence of speech,) when some are for Cephas, and others for Caiaphas; some for apostles, and others for apostates; some for sincere preachers, others for schismatical sectaries; thus observing rather the diversity of instructors than the unity of truth;—there arise, in the end, as many minds as men, as many sects as cities, as many gospels as gossips.

2. The physician must not commit his patient's health to the apothecary. God hath trusted thee with his people's welfare, whom 'he hath purchased with his own blood:' thou must not be at thy man, and impose all on him. It was the reason that the Roman's horse was so ill tended, himself so well: *Ego curo meipsum, Statius vero equum*,—I look to myself, but my man looks

to my horse. The like reason sometimes makes fat shepherds and lean flocks. God hath placed us as mothers, to bear children unto him : now as we must not be barren, and bring forth none, Gal. iv. 19, so we must not, when we have them, put them forth to nurse. It is not more unkind in a natural, than unnatural in a spiritual mother. There is a necessary use of the apothecary, so of the reader. He that digs the ground is not to be despised, though a more exquisite gardener draws the knot. But it is dangerous to trust all on him, and do God's business by an attorney. God hath given thee the milk, that thou shouldest feed his sheep, and not put them over to an hireling, John x. 12, who suffers the wolf to enter and tear the lambs, never breaking his sleep for the matter. Not but that preaching may yield to a more weighty dispensation. When the vaunts of some heretical Goliath shall draw us forth to encounter him with our pens against whom we cannot draw the sword of our tongues ; when the greater business of God's church shall warrant our non-residence to the inferior ; when one is called from being a mariner, and running about, to the office of a pilot, to sit still at the helm : then, and upon these grounds, we may be tolerated by another physician to serve our cures,—for so I find our charges, not without allusion to this metaphor, called,—a physician, I say ; that is, a skilful divine, not an illiterate apothecary, an insufficient reader. That mere reading of the Scriptures hath, and may save souls, who ever doubted ? But that preaching with reading is more effectual, can it be denied ? Oh, then, that any of the ' sons of the prophets,' whom God hath blessed with knowledge of his heavenly physic, should sit down on the chair of security, or shut themselves in the cells of obscurity, or chamber themselves perpetually in a college, or graze on the private commons of one man's benevolence, as Micah had his Levite to himself, whiles their gifts are not communicated to the church of God !

Every spiritual physician must keep his right *ubi*. It is well observed by Aretius, upon the occasional calling of Peter and Andrew when they were fishing, that God is wont to bless men especially when they are busied in their proper element : working, as the father charged his son, ' in his vineyard,' Matt. xxi. 28. Not in the wilderness of the world, nor in the labyrinth of lusts, nor in the field of covetousness, nor in the house of security, much less in the chamber of wantonness, or in the tavern of drunkenness, or theatre of lewdness, but in God's vineyard, their general or particular calling. Our vocations must be kept and followed ; not making ourselves magistrates in foreign commonwealths, bishops in others' dioceses, scalding our lips in our neighbours' pottage. When those shepherds heard the first glad tidings of Christ, they were ' attending their flocks by night in the field,' Luke ii. 8. Saul, going honestly about his father's business, met with a kingdom. And David was at the folds when Samuel came with the holy oil. We say, *Pluribus intentus, minor est ad singula sensus* ; and, *Miles equis, Piscator aquis, &c.*

' Quod medicorum est  
Promittunt medici, tractant fabrilis fabri ; '—\*

Let none prescribe physic but practitioners in that faculty ; none plead at the bar but lawyers. Let the shoemaker look to his boot, the fisher to his boat, the scholar to his book. The husbandman *in foro*, the minister *in choro*.

' Omnia cum facias, miraris cur facias nil ?  
Posthume, rem solam qui facit, ille facit ; '—†

\* Horat.

† Martial. Epig., lib. iii.

He that would comprehend all things, apprehends nothing. As he that comes to a corn-heap, the more he opens his hand to take, the less he graspeth, the less he holdeth. Who would *in omnibus aliquid*, shall *in toto nihil scire*. When a man covets to be a doctor in all arts, he lightly proves a dunce in many. Let the natural physician apply his ministering, the spiritual his ministry. *Quid enim in theatro renunciator turpium,\** &c.,—The idle sports of the theatre, the wicked crafts in the market, the gallant braveries of the court, must not hinder us, either to say service in the temple, or to do service for the temple. *Clericus in oppido, piscis in arido*, as I have read. Rather, from the words of that father, if it be God's will that when Christ comes to judgment, *inveniat me vel precantem vel prædicantem*, he may find me either praying, or preaching his holy word.

Well, we have every one our own cures; let us attend them. Let us not take and keep livings of a hundred or two hundred pounds a-year, and allow a poor curate (to supply the voluntary negligence of our non-residence) eight or (perhaps somewhat bountifully) ten pounds yearly—scarce enough to maintain his body, not a doit for his study. He spoke sharply, (not untruly,) that called this usury, and terrible usury. Others take but ten in the hundred, these take a hundred for ten. What say you to those that undertake two, three, or four great cures, and physic them all by attorneys! These physicians love not their patients, nor Christ himself, as he taught Peter; which St Bernard thus comments on: 'Unless thy conscience bear thee witness that thou lovest me exceeding much, that is, *plus quam tua, plus quam tuos, plus quam te*,—more than thy goods, more than thy friends, more than thyself,—thou art not worthy to undertake this office.' † God hath made us superintendents of our charges, and bound us, as Paul adjured Timothy: 'I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead at his appearing, to preach the word, and be instant,' &c., 2 Tim. iv. 1. Many are content with presidence, not with residence; *ac si victuri essent sine cura, cum pervenerint ad curam*,—as if they had forgotten all care, when they have gotten a cure. This is not *dispensantis, sed dissipantis officium gerere,‡*—to be a steward, but a loiterer in God's family. The physician sleeps in his study; the apothecary, for want of judgment, takes a wrong medicine, or no medicine for the sick. The pastor is absent; the hireling very often either preacheth idly or negligently, or not at all. And thus God's 'people are not recovered.'

3. Physicians must not deal too much with that they call *blandum medicamentum*, which physicians thus describe: *Blandum dicitur, quod mediocri tantum quantitate sumptum, alvum pigre et benigne movendo, pauca dejicit*. Spiritual physicians must beware how they give these soothing and supple medicines, which rather confirm the humours than disperse the tumours, or purge the crudities of sins in their patients. *Robustum corpus, multis obstructionibus impeditum, blanda imbecillaque medicamenta aspernatur*. A soul settled, like Moab, 'on the lees,' or frozen in the dregs of inveterate and obstinate sins, is not stirred by fair and flattering documents. God complains in this chapter against those: ver. 11, 'They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace.' Such are described, Ezek. xiii. 10, 'They have seduced my people, saying, Peace, and there is no peace: and one built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar.' God gives a terrible and universal threatening: ver. 15, 16, 'I will accomplish my wrath upon the wall, and upon them that have daubed it with untempered mortar, and will say unto

\* August.

† Serm. 76 in Cant.

‡ Bern.

you, The wall is no more, neither they that daubed it.' He proceeds to command Ezekiel 'to prophesy against the women that prophesy to Israel : Woe to the women that sew pillows to all arm-holes,' &c. This is shameful in a preacher, to wink at idolatry in Bethel, because it is the king's chapel ; and not to reprove the iniquity of Gilgal, the country of oppression, because himself feeds at an oppressor's table. Some are so weak that (as *mulieres, quia molliores, et pueri, quia teneri, et ex longo morbo resurgentes, blandioribus egent medicinis*) they cannot digest too strong a potion of reproof. Therefore, *flecte quod est rigidum, fove quod est frigidum, rege quod est devium*,—bend the refractory, warm the cold, direct the wandering.

I have read in a physician, that among many sophistications of this balm, sometimes they feign it with water, and then it runs above the water like oil ; sometimes with honey, which is thus perceived—if you put a drop thereof into milk, it runneth to curds ! When ministers shall adulterate God's pure and sacred word with the honey or oil of their own flatteries, and give it to a sick soul, it is so far from nourishing, as the sincere milk of the gospel should do, that it curdleth in the stomach, and endangers the conscience worse. It is enough for physic if it be wholesome. Not pleasant taste, but secret virtue, commends medicines. The doctrine that is sweet to flesh and blood hath just cause of suspicion. It is, without question, harsh to the appetite of either soul or body, that heals either. Not that we should only blow a trumpet of war against opposers, but sometimes, yea, often also, pipe mercy and gospel to those that will dance the measures of obedience. We must preach as well liberty to captives, as captivity to libertines ; and build an ark for those that desire salvation, as pour forth a flood of curses against them that will perish ; and open the door to the penitent knockers, as keep the gate with a flaming sword in our mouths against the obstinate. If we harp somewhat more on the sad string of judgment, know that it is because your sins are riper and riper than your obedient works. We must free our souls, that we have not administered soothing sermons, lest at once we flatter and further you in your follies. You are apt enough to derive authority for your sins from our lives, and make our patterns patronages of your lewdness. As I wish that our life were not so bad, so withal that you would not outgo, outdo it in evil. You go dangerously far, whiles you make our weakness a warrant to your presumption. But if you fasten so wickedly on our vices, you shall never find countenance from our voices. We condemn our own ills, and you for adventuring your souls to Satan on so silly advantage. Stand forth, and testify against us. Did we ever spare your usuries, depopulations, malice, frauds, ebriety, pride, swearing, contempt of holy things and duties ? Could any Pharisee ever tie our tongues with the strings of Judas's purse, and charm our connivance or silence with gifts ? Wretched men, if there be any such, guilty of so palpable adulation ; *qui purpuram magis quam deum colunt* ! Call them your own common slaves, not God's servants, that, to gain your least favours, are favourable to your greatest sins, and whilst they win your credits, lose your souls.

We must follow our Master, who gave us a commission, and gives us direction to perform it. He came once with *Pax vobis*,—'Peace be unto you,' Luke xxiv. 36 ; at another time with *Vae vobis*,—'Woe be unto you !' Matt. xxiii. 13. We must be like him, (who was that good Samaritan,) putting into your wounds as well the searching wine of reprehension, to eat out the dead flesh, as the oil of consolation, to cheer your spirits : sometimes, with Jeremiah's hammer, chap. xxiii. 29, bruising your strength of

wickedness; though here, with Jeremiah's balm, binding up your broken hearts.

And for you, my brethren, know that the things which cure you do not evermore please you. Love not your palates above your souls. Thou liest sick of a bodily disease, and callest on the physician, not for well-relished, but healthful potions: thou receivest them spite of thy abhorring stomach, and being cured, both thankest and rewardest him. Thy soul is sick; God, thy best physician, unsent to, sends thee physic, perhaps the bitter pills of affliction, or sharp prescripts of repentance, by his word: thou loathest the savour, and wilt rather hazard thy soul than offend thy flesh; and when thou shouldest thank, grumblest at the physician. So far inferior is our love of the soul to that of our body, that for the one we had rather undergo any pains than death; for the other, we rather choose a wilful sickness than a harsh remedy.

Give, then, your physician leave to fit and apply his medicines; and do not you teach him to teach you. Leave your old adjuration to your too obsequious chaplains, if there be any such yet remaining, *Loquimini placentia*,—‘Prophecy not unto us right things: speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits. Get you out of the way,’ &c., Isa. xxx. 10, 11. Threaten your priests no longer with suits, and queeles, and expulsions from their poor vineyards, which you have erst robbed, because they bring you sour grapes, sharp wine of reproofs. Do not colour all your malice against them with the imputation of ill life to them, when you are indeed only fretted with their just reprehension of your impieties. Bar not the freedom of their tongues by tying them to conditions, This you shall say, and this not say, on pain of my displeasure. You may preach against sins, but not meddle with the Pope; or you may inveigh against Rome and idolatry, so you touch not at my Herodias; or you may tax lust, so you let me alone with Naboth's vineyard. As if the gospel might be preached with your limitations, and, forsaking the Holy Ghost, we must come to fetch direction from your lips.

Jonah spared not great Nineveh, nor the great king of great Nineveh: why should we spare your sins that would save your souls? You will love us the better when you once love yourselves better. If any gain were more valuable than that of godliness, or any means more available than spiritual physic to your salvations, we would hearken to it and you. He that is wisest hath taught us it; we are rebels, if we not obey it. Your exulcerated sores cannot be healed with incarnative salves.

4. Spiritual physicians, no less than the secretaries of nature, must have knowledge and art. Empirics endanger not more bodies than idiotish priests souls. He that cannot pour healthful moisture and juice of life into the gasping spirit, and fill the veins that affliction hath emptied, deserves not the name of a spiritual physician. Arts have their use, and human learning is not to be despised, so long as, like an obedient Hagar, she serves Sarah with necessary help. Only let the book of God stand highest in our estimation, as it is in God's elevation, and let all the sheaves do homage to it. But empirics cannot brook Craterus, saith the proverb; sottish enthusiasts condemn all learning, all premeditation. This is to tie the Holy Ghost to a pen and inkhorn, &c. They must run away with their sermons, as horses with an empty cart. But now he that will fly into God's mysteries with such sick feathers, shall be found to flag low with a broken pinion, or soaring too high, without sober direction, endanger himself. Barbarism is gross in an orator, ignorance in a physician, dulness in an advocate, rudeness in a minister. Christ chose fishermen, but made them fishers of men; gave them a

calling, and virtues for it. Shall therefore any fantastical spirit think that Christ's singular action is our general pattern? As if men were the more faulty, the more fit; the more silly, the more sufficient. Christ so furnished his with knowledge and language, Acts ii. 6, that the people 'wondered at their wisdom,' and knew, or rather 'acknowledged, that they had been with Jesus,' chap. iv. 13.

It is said of empirics that they have but one medicine for all diseases. If that cure not, they know not how to do it. But the 'scribe instructed from heaven,' and instructing for heaven, 'draws out his treasure, both old and new,' which he hath carefully laid up by his former study. High points for forward scholars; easier lessons for those in a lower form. To children, milk; such things as may nourish, not oppress—*apta, non alta*: to the profound, as Demosthenes said he desired to speak, *non modo scripta, sed etiam sculpta*,—matters of weight and diligence. The truth is, that we must preach Christ, not ourselves, and regard the people's benefit more than our own credit, being content to lose ourselves to win others to God. And to this purpose is required learning: as a physician is not less knowing because he gives an easy and common receipt to a certain patient, but rather out of his judgment finds that fittest for him. It is no small learning to illustrate obscurities, to clear the subtleties of the school, to open God's mysteries to simple understandings, to build up the weak, and pull down the confident in their own strengths. This shall discharge a man from the imputation of illiterature, as well as to preach riddles and paradoxes, which the people may admire, and not apprehend, and make that frivolous use of all, 'This was a deep sermon.' Learning is requisite, or thou art but an empiric. How many Paracelsian mountebanks have been the worst diseases to the commonwealth they live in, whiles they purge away the good humours and leave the bad behind them! Your Popish teachers were such ill purgers, draining out the good blood of religion from the veins of the land, and pouring in feculent corruptions, ridiculous fopperies, magical poisons instead thereof; giving a mass for a communion, an image for the Bible, stage-apishness for a sober sermon; allowing either no Scripture or new Scripture; so suppressing the words and stifling the sense, that hiding away the gold, they throw their people the bag.

5. Good physicians must not aim more at their own wealth than their patients' health. Indeed the spiritual 'labourer is worthy of his hire;' but if he labour for hire only, he may make himself merry with his reward on earth, heaven hath none for him. That good is well done that is done of conscience. The pastor feeds Christ's sheep for his own gain: the sheep are fed; Christ gives him no thanks for his labour. Peter made three manner of fishings: he caught fish for money, fish with money, fish without money. The first was his temporal trade; the second, a miraculous and singular action; the last, his spiritual function. Some are of all these sorts: the worst now is, to fish for the twenty pence. *Piscantur ut adipiscantur, non homines, sed hominum*,—They labour hard to take, not men, but men's, 2 Cor. xii. 14. Peter's successors called, Simon's\* successors not doubted, have so fished this many a hundred years, not with the draw-net of the gospel, but with the purse-net of avarice. There are too many such silver-fishers, that angle only for the tributary fish; too many of those physicians, that set up their bills and offer their service and cure, not where the people are sickest, but where they are most liberal. Some will not practise except they have three or four parishes

\* i.e., The Popes call themselves successors of Peter; we acknowledge them to be successors of Simon Magus.—E.R.

under their cure at once : these are physicians, not for church, but steeples. Some are wandering empirics, that when they come to minister, spend all the time in a cracking ostentation of their cures, or demonstration of their skill in pictures and tables, never approving it to their credulous patients : these are bragging physicians.

Some minister only opium to their people, and so lull them in their sick security : these are dull physicians. Some minister medicines, not to ease their stomachs of the burden of their sins, but to put lightness into their brains, scaring religion out of the wits : these are schismatical physicians. Some minister antichristian poisons, to breed the plague of idolatry among the people : these are Seminary physicians. Others of this sect, living from us by a sea-division, yet send over venomous prescripts, binding princes' subjects to treasons and homicides : these are devilish physicians. Some will sell their knowledge for a meal's meat : these are table-physicians. Some minister in this place, in that place, in every place, in no place : these are ubiquitary physicians. Some minister nothing but what they glean from others' precepts, wanting skill to apply it : these are like physicians, but are none. Some ring the changes of opinions, and run a serpentine course ; abjuring now what yesterday they embraced and warranted ; winding from error to error, as dolphins in the water ; turning like vanes on the house-top, with every new blast of doctrine ; reeds shaken with every gust, contrary to the testimony of John Baptist : these are gadding, madding physicians. Some will minister nothing but what comes next into their heads and hands : these are enthusiastical physicians. Some again,—I will not say many,—practise only for commodity, and to purge others' wealth into their own purses : these are mercenary physicians.

Avarice, saith a grave divine, is a sin in any man, heresy in a clergyman. The Papists have an order that profess wilful poverty ; but some of them profess it so long, till they sweep all the riches of the land into their own laps. The purse is still the white they level at, as I have read them described : the Capuchins shooting from the purse, the Franciscans aiming wide of it, the Jesuits hitting it pat in the midst. So with long, or at least tedious prayers, as the Pharisees, they prey upon the poor, and devour their houses. Spiritual physicians should abhor such covetous desires. *Sunt qui scire volunt, ut scientiam suam vendant, et turpis quæstus est.*\*—They that get knowledge to sell it, make a wretched gain. *Non vitæ docent, sed crumenæ.* Seneca affirms that the commonwealth hath no worse men : *quam qui philosophiam, vel ut aliquod artificium venale, didicerunt.*† Miserable men, that look to their own good more than the church's ; serving God in their parts, themselves in their hearts ; working, like those builders in the ark, rather for present gain than future safety. But as they desire rather *nostra quam nos*, so they preserve rather *sua quam se* ; winning, like Demas, the world, and losing, like Judas, their souls. I have read in the fable of a widow, that being thick-sighted, sent to a certain physician to cure her : he promiseth it to her, and she to him a sum of money for satisfaction. The physician comes and applies medicines, which being bound over her eyes, still as he departs he carries away with him some of her best goods ; so continuing her pains and his labour till he had robbed the house of her best substance. At last he demanded of her, being now cured, his covenanted pay. She looking about her house, and missing her goods, told him that he had not cured her : for whereas before she could see some furniture in her house, now she could perceive none ; she was erst thick-sighted, but now

\* Bern. in Cant.

† Sen., lib. xix., ep. 1.

purblind. You can apply it without help. Well, those spiritual physicians are only good that propound to themselves no gain but to heal the broken, recover the lost, and bring home the wandering lambs to the sheepfolds of peace; jeoparding a joint to save a sick conscience; with Moses and Paul, not respecting the loss of themselves, whiles they may replenish the kingdom of Christ.

III. These are the physicians. It remains that I should shew who are the *sick*; for whose cause God hath prepared balm, and inspired physicians with skill to minister it. But the time runs away so fast, and you are as hasty to be gone as it; and this subject is fitter for a whole sermon than a conclusion; and, lastly, I have evermore declined your molestation by prolixity: therefore I reserve it to another opportunity. If you shall judge this that hath been spoken worthy your meditation,—laying it affectionately to your hearts, and producing it effectually in your lives,—that God who gave me power to begin this work, will also assist me to finish it, without whom neither my tongue can utter, nor your ear receive, any saving benefit of instruction. A word or two for exhortation, and then I will leave all in your bosoms, and yourselves in the bosom of God. First, for us, the physicians; then for you, the patients, only so far as may concern you in the former point. For us—

1. We must administer the means of your redress which our God hath taught us, doing it *in dilectione*, with love, with alacrity. Though it be true that the thing which perisheth shall perish, John xvii. 11, and they which are ordained to perdition cannot by us be rescued out of the wolf's jaws; yet spiritual physicians must not deny their help, lest *dum alios perdant, ipsi pereant*,—whiles their silence damnifieth others, it also damneth themselves. 'When I say unto the wicked,' saith the Lord, 'Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him no warning to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand,' Ezek. iii. 18. The physician knows, that if the time of his patient's life be now determined by God, no art can preserve his taper from going out; yet because he knows not God's hidden purpose, he withholds not his endeavour. To censure who shall be saved, who damned, is not *judicium luti, sed figuli*,\* the judgment of the clay, but of the potter, 'who only hath power of the same lump to make one vessel to honour, another to dishonour,' Rom. ix. 21. We know not this, therefore we cease not to 'beseech your reconciliation.' Nay, 'we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God doth beseech you by us; and we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God,' 2 Cor. v. 20. Thus having applied our physic, we leave the success to God, who alone can make his word the savour of death or of life, preserving or condemning, destructive to your sins or yourselves, as his good pleasure wills it.

2. The physician that lives among many patients, if he would have them tenderly and carefully preserve their healths, must himself keep a good diet among them. It is a strong argument to persuade the goodness of that he administers. The clergyman's strict diet of abstinence from enormities, of fasting and prayer against the surfeits of sin, of repentance for errors, is a powerful inclination to his people to do the like. *Habet, quantacumque granditate dictionis, majus pondus vita dicentis*,†—The preaching of life is made more forcible by the good life of the preacher. *Prava vita est quodam machina ad subruendum mœnia, &c.*,—An evil conversation is an evil engine to overthrow the walls of edification. *Citharisante abbate, tripudiant monachi*,—When the abbot gives the music of a good example, the monks dance

\* Aug.

† Aug. de Doctr. Christ.



after him ; as was their proverb : *Plene dixit, qui bene vixit*,—He hath spoken fully that hath lived fairly. There are four sorts of these physicians :—

(1.) That neither prescribe well to others, nor live well themselves : these are not physicians indeed, but Italian quack-salvers, that having drunk poison themselves, minister it to the people ; and so destroy the souls that God hath bought with his blood. Wretched priests, that are indeed the worst diseases ; allowing in precept, and approving in practice, the riot of drunkenness, or the heat of lustfulness, or the baseness of covetise, or the frenzy of contention. These, instead of building up Christ's church, pull it down with both hands ; not *lux*, but *tenebræ mundi*,—not the light, as ministers should be, but the darkness of the world, as the sons of Belial are. A foolish shepherd is God's punishment to the flock : 'Lo, I will raise up a shepherd which shall not visit those that be cut off, nor seek the young one, nor heal that which is broken ; but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces,' Zech. xi. 16.

(2.) That prescribe well in the pulpit, but live disorderly out of it ; so making their patients believe that there is no necessity of so strict a diet as they are enjoined, for then sure the physician himself would keep it ; since it cannot be but he loves his own life, and holds his soul as dear to himself as ours are to us. Thus like a young scribbler, what he writes fair with his hand, his sleeve comes after and blots it ; this priest builds up God's tabernacle with one hand, and pulls it down with the other. Though this physician can make very good bills, preach good directions, yet, as sick as he is, he takes none of them himself.

(3.) That prescribes very ill, preacheth seditiously and lewdly, yet lives without any notorious crime, or scandalous imputation. This is a hypocritical trick of heretical physicians. 'Beware of false prophets, that come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves,' Matt. vii. 15. Thus the Popish friars, like the false visionists in Zechariah's prophecy, will 'wear a rough garment to deceive withal,' chap. xiii. 4. Their austerity shall be stricter than John Baptist's, but not with intent to bring one soul to Christ. This cautious demureness in them so bewitcheth their patients, that they receive whatsoever these administer, though it poisons them. Thus covered over with the mantle of sobriety and zeal, as a crafty apothecary vends his drugs, so they their dregs, without suspicion. To keep the metaphor : as a natural physician, out of honest policy, covers the bitter pill with gold, or delays the distasteful potion with sugar, which the abhorring stomach would not else take ; so this mystical one (for he is a servant to the mystery of iniquity) so amazeth the people with a fair show of outward sanctimony, that while they gaze at his good parts with admiration, they swallow the venom of his doctrine without suspicion.

(4.) That teacheth well, and liveth well : prescribeth a good diet of obedience, and keeps it when he is well ; or a good medicine of repentance, and takes it when he is sick ; thus both by preaching and practice recovering the health of Israel. We require in a good garment that the cloth be good, and the shape fitting. If we preach well and live ill, our cloth is good, but not our fashion. If we live well and preach ill, our fashion is good, but our cloth is not. If we both preach well and live well, our garment is good ; let every spiritual physician weave it, and wear it.

This for ourselves. For you, I will contract all into these three uses, which necessarily arise from the present or precedent consideration :—

1. Despise not your physicians. You forbear indeed (as the Pagans at first, and the Papists since) to kill, burn, torture us—whether it be your

good-will, or the law you live under, that prevails with you, God knows,—yet you proceed to persecute us with your tongues, as Ishmael smote Isaac ; to martyr us with your scorns in our civil life, our good names. In discountenancing our sermons, discouraging our zeals, discrediting our lives, you raise civil, or rather uncivil, persecutions against us. By these you exercise our patience, which yet we can bear, whiles the blow given us, by a manifest rebound, doth not strike our God. But *per nostra latera petitur ecclesia, impetitur Christus*,—when as through our sides you wound the church, nay, Christ himself, it is stupidity in us to be silent. Christ, when the glory of his Father was interested, and called into question by their calumniations, took on him a just apology : ‘ I have not a devil, but I honour my Father,’ John viii. 49. ‘ If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil ; but if well, why smitest thou me ? ’ chap. xviii. 23.

We have comfort enough, that we can suffer this martyrdom for Christ’s sake, being blessed by the peace of our times from a worse. The courtier cares not so much for the estimation of his fellows, so his prince approves and loves him. Let God be pleased with our innocency, and your base aspersions of scandals against us shall not much move our minds. ‘ The ministers of God must approve themselves in much patience, in afflictions,’ &c., 2 Cor. vi. 4. Our war is *ferendo, non feriendo*. The mitre is for Aaron, not the smiter. We must encounter with beasts in the shape of men, 1 Cor. xv. 32 ; with wolves in the coats of sheep, Matt. vii. 15 ; with devils in the habit of angels ; with unreasonable and wicked men, 2 Thess. iii. 2 ; therefore ‘ we have need of patience,’ Heb. x. 36. Indignities that touch our private persons may be dissembled, or returned with Isaac’s apology of patience, of silence. As Augustine answered Petilian : *Possumus esse in his pariter copiosi, nolumus esse pariter vani*,—You do in event not so much wrong us as yourselves. You ‘ foam out your own shame,’ and bewray your wretched, I had almost said reprobate, malice ; for such are ‘ set down in the seat of the scornful,’ Ps. i. 1, which the prophet makes a low step to damnation. God shall ‘ laugh you to scorn,’ Ps. ii. 4, for laughing his to scorn ; and at last despise you, that have despised him in us. *In expuentis recidit faciem, quod in cœlum expuit*,—That which a man spits against heaven shall fall back on his own face. Your indignities done to your spiritual physicians shall not sleep in the dust with your ashes, but stand up against your souls in judgment.

2. If your physician be worthy blame, yet sport not, with cursed Ham, at your father’s nakedness. Our life, our life is the derision that sticks in our jaws, till you spit it out against us. I would to God our lives were no less pure than are—even these our enemies being judges—our doctrines. Be it freely acknowledged that in some it is afault. Our life should be the counterpart of our doctrine. We are vines, and should, like that in Jotham’s parable, ‘ cheer both God and man,’ Judg. ix. 13. The player that misacts an inferior and unnoted part, carries it away without censure ; but if he shall play some emperor, or part of observation, unworthily, the spectators are ready to hiss him off. The minister represents, you say, no mean person, that might give toleration to his absurdities, but the Prince of heaven ; and therefore should be ‘ holy, as his heavenly Father is.’ Be it confessed ; and woe is us, we cannot help it. But you should put difference betwixt habitual vices, nourished by custom, prosecuted by violence, and infirm or involuntary offences.

The truth is also, that you, who will not have ears to hear God’s word, will yet have eyes to observe our ways. How many of you have *surdas*

*aurēs, oculos emissitios*, adders' ears, but eagles' eyes; together with critical tongues and hypocritical looks! You should (and will not) know, that our words, not our works, bring you to heaven. Examples are good furtherances, but *ex præceptis vivitur*,—we must live by precepts. If you have a Christian desire of our reformation, cease your obstreperous clamours and divulging slanders, the infectious breathings of your corruption and malice; and reprove us with 'the spirit of meekness,' to our foreheads. If we neither clear ourselves from imputed guiltiness, nor amend the justly reprov'd faults, nor kindly embrace your loving admonitions, proceed to your impartial censures. But still know, that we are nothing in ourselves; though we be called *lux mundi*, 'the light of the world,' yet *solummodo lex est lux*, God's word is the light that must conduct your believing and obeying souls to the land of promise. Did we live like angels, and yet had our lips sealed up from teaching you, you might still remain in your sins. For it is not an ignorant imitation of goodness, but a sound faith in Christ, never destitute of knowledge and obedience, that must save you in the day of the Lord Jesus.

3. Lastly, let this teach you to get yourselves familiar acquaintance with the Scriptures; that if you be put to it, in the absence of your physician, you may yet help yourselves. We store our memories, and (perhaps not trusting them) our books, with divers receipts for ordinary diseases. Whom almost shall you meet, whiles you complain of an ague, of the toothache, of a sore, but he will tell you a salve or a medicine for it? Alas! are our souls less precious, or their wounds, griefs, sicknesses easilier cured, that we keep the closets of our consciences empty of medicines for them? The Jews were commanded to write the laws of God on their walls, &c. God writes them on the Christian's heart, Heb. viii. 10. So David found it: 'Thy law is within my heart.' This is true acquaintance with it. It is our Master's charge, if at least we are his servants: 'Search the Scriptures, for in them is eternal life,' John v. 39. We plead that our faith is our evidence for heaven; it is a poor evidence that wants the seal of the Scriptures.

It was the weapon that the Son of God himself used to beat back the assaults of the devil. Many ignorant persons defy the devil,—'They will shield themselves from Satan, as well as the best that teach them; the foul fiend shall have no power over them,'—yet continue an obstinate course of life. As if the devil were a babe, to be outfaced with a word of defiance. It is a lamentable way, to brave a lion, and yet come within his clutches. He will bear with thy hot words, so he may get thy cold soul. The weapon that must encounter and conquer him is 'the sword of the Spirit, the word of God.' No hour is free from his temptations, that we had need to lodge with God's book in our bosoms. Who knows where he shall receive his next wound, or of what kind the sickness of his soul shall be? The minister cannot be present with every one, and at every time. Satan is never idle; it is the trade of his delight to spill souls. Lay all these together, and then, in the fear of God, judge whether you can be safe whiles you are ignorant of the Scriptures. This is the garden of Eden, whence run those four rivers: of *wisdom*, to direct us; of *oil*, to soften us; of *comforts*, to refresh us; of *promises*, to confirm us.

As lightly as you regard the word, and as slightly as you learn it, you shall one day find more comfort in it than in all the world. Lie you on your deathbeds, groan you with the pangs of nature-oppressing death, or labour you with the throbs of an anguished conscience, when neither natural nor spiritual physician stands by you to give you succour,—then, oh then,

one dram of your old store, taken from the treasury of the Scriptures, shall be unto you of inestimable comfort! Then well fare a medicine at a pinch, a drop of this balm ready for a sudden wound, which your memory shall reach forth, and your faith apply to your diseased souls, afflicted hearts. Think seriously of this, and recall God's book from banishment and the land of forgetfulness, whither your security hath sent it. Shake off the dust of neglect from the cover, and wear out the leaves with turning; continually imploring the assistance of God's Spirit, that you may read with understanding, understand with memory, and remember with comfort; that your soul's closet may never be unstored of those heavenly receipts which may ease your griefs, cure your wounds, expel your sicknesses, preserve your healths, and keep you safe to the coming of Jesus Christ. Trust not all on your ministers, no, nor on yourselves, but trust on the mercies of God, and the merits of our blessed Saviour. Nothing now remains but to shew you in what need you stand of this physic, by reason of your ill healths, and the infected air of this world you breathe in. Meantime, preserve you these instructions, and God preserve you with his mercies! For which let us pray, &c.