

# THE FATAL BANQUET.

---

## THE SECOND SERVICE.

---

*Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.*—PROV. IX. 17.

WE have already served in the first course at this *Fatal Banquet*, and feasted your ears with those waters, from which God keep your souls fasting. Some things are proposed to our practice, some things are exposed to our contempt and dislike. The more accurately the Scriptures describe sins, the more absolutely they forbid them; where wickedness is the subject, all speech is declamation. As no spectator at those horrid tragedies, where *Oedipus* is beheld the incestuous husband of his own mother, or *Thyestes* drunk with the blood of his own children, or at any of the bleeding banquets of the *Medea*, can receive those horrors at the windows of his senses, without terror to his bowels, and trembling to his bones: so when you hear the relation of the devil's cheer, all the flattering, petulant, insidious, nature-tickling dishes of delight,—the rarities of impiety, the surfeits of the world, horse-leeches to the blood, witches to the affections, devils to the consciences of men,—think that they are related that they may be rejected. To bestow upon the devil's cats his own names: the glory of pride, the satiety of epicurism, the gallantness of ebriety, the credit of murder, the greatness of scorn, the gracefulness of swearing, the bravery of the stigmatic fashion, the security of usury, the singularity of opinion, the content of superstition; *nunciantur, ut renunciatur*. Think not they are prescribed for you when they are described to you. *Monstrantur ut monstra*,—they are set forth as monsters, that they might be loathed; they are advanced as traitors' heads, *in terrorem futuri proditoris*,—to the terror of him that should be tempted to future treason.

God's intent in declaring this banquet of sin is to make you loathe it; and that which 'is written is for our instruction,' 1 Cor. x. 11, to deter, not to commend: as some of the heathen had a custom in their solemn feasts, to make a bond-slave drunk, and then set him forth as a ridiculous object to their children. This banquet, then, *perhibetur una et prohibetur*, is at once declared and declaimed, spoken of and forbidden; lest through ignorance you should like and eat it, you are more fully made acquainted with the vileness of it. Hence our royal preacher draws the curtain of the world, and

shews you all the delicacies of her table ; not to whet your appetites to feed on them, but to cool your courage, dishearten your opinions, alienate your affections ; giving you a true censure of their worth : ‘ All is vanity, and vexation of soul,’ Eccles. i. 14. They are detected, that they might be detested. Therefore if any of Gracchus’s brood shall like a Catilinary disposition the better because Tully hath indicted, interdicted, condemned it ; if any son of Belial shall more affectedly devour some morsel of damnation at this feast, because the preacher hath execrated it, and derive at once notice and encouragement from our terrifying censures, *testimonium sibi ferat condemnationis*,—let him bear in himself the evidence of his own condemnation. They are wretched men that most impetuously pursue what all good men dissuade ; running with Ahimaaz the more eagerly, because their friend Joab forbids them, 2 Sam. xviii. 22. So blasphemously spake the sacrilegious spoilers of Proserpine’s temple in Locria, whose ringleader was Dionysius : *Videtisne amici, quam bona navigatio ab ipsis diis sacrilegis tribuatur ?*\*—sailing home, and now arriving at the haven safe, ‘ See you not, my friends,’ saith Dionysius, ‘ how fair and fortunate a navigation the gods vouchsafe to sacrilege ?’ As if they therefore robbed the church because they were by the oracle expressly inhibited ; so *gens humana ruit in vetitum nefus*,—man’s nature precipitates itself into forbidden wickedness. This is a horrid sin : *peccatum primæ impressionis et sine nomine adæquato*,—a wickedness of that nature that there is no name significant enough to express it.

The manners of the heathen might justify, and exemplarily make good that verse :—

‘ Nitimur in vetitum semper, cupimusque negata ;’—

‘ We hunt for things unlawful with swift feet,  
As if forbidden joys were only sweet.’

But such a report among Christians is so strange, that *factum non factum esse videatur*,—it would seem rather a fable than a fact, a tale than a deed. 2 Sam. i. 20, ‘ Publish it not in Gath, nor tell it in the streets of Askelon,’ that any Israelite should the more desperately cleave to Baal because Elias hath cursed it. There are none such ; neither is there rain in the clouds. Indeed, charity would not believe it, for it is even the order of nature that *tarda solet magnis rebus adesse fides*,—slow faith is given to great reports ; but, alas ! we are forced to see, what we would not believe, such refractory recusants to all Christianity, living and speaking *κατὰ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας*, ‘ according to their own lusts.’ That would not be so ill, if they had not been taught to be better : *Quibus res divinæ lusus sunt, iis et voluptas pro vita, et libido pro ratione est*,†—They that play with divinity, and make religion a mock, guide their life by pleasure, and their reason by lust. Time was, ‘ the kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and men took it by strong hand,’ Matt. xi. 12 ; now it offers violence, and men by strong hand repel it : before it so was precious, that ‘ every man pressed and crowded into it, Luke xvi. 16 ; now it presseth upon us, and we are glad to be rid of it, as covetousness of poverty at his door. And as the fountains would not be so cold if the sun had not heated the air, and forced the contrary quality into such abstruse corners, many would have been less outrageous in their filthiness if the gospel of grace had not so universally spread his beams. Their whole life is a continual prevarication ; and it is the cordial physic to fat their spleens, that they can be cross to God.

But *lex in sermone tenenda*,—I speak to Christians, of whom we cannot

\* Valer. Max., lib. i., cap. 2.

† Marl. in 2 Pet. iii.

but hope better things. If there be any here that hath sold his faith for his pleasure, as Adam did his life for an apple, or Esau his birthright for a mess of pottage, and will venture himself a guest at the devil's banquet, maugre all devitation; let him stay and hear the reckoning, for there is a shot to be paid, which cannot be avoided. As Circe's cup turns men into beasts, so it brings them to a beastly end; it fats them against the slaughter-day of judgment.

(2.) We leave then the prescription of the waters, and come to the description of their natures: *stolen*. It is a word of theft, and implies, besides the action of stealth, some persons active and passive in this business: some that do wrong, and steal; some that suffer wrong, and are robbed. Robbery is a sin, literally forbidden only in one commandment, but by inference in all. What sin is committed, and some person is not robbed? Doth not idolatry rob God of his worship? Blasphemy of his honour? Sabbath impiety of his reserved time? Doth not irreverence rob our betters? Murder rob man of his life? Theft of his goods? False testimony of his good name or right? Doth not the harlot here knit the eighth precept to the seventh, and call *adulterium, furtum*,—the pleasure of a forbidden bed, 'stolen waters?' 'Let us solace ourselves with loves, for the goodman is not at home,' &c. Justice gives *cuique suum*: *Deo religionem, sibi munditiam, parentibus honorem, familiaribus providentiam, filiis correctionem, fratribus amorem, dominis subjectis benignitatem, æquitatem omnibus*.\*

Since, then, all sins are waters of stealth, it is an inevitable consequent that every sin robs some; let us examine whom. The parties robbed are God, man, ourselves; and there be divers sins rob either of these. Of every circumstance a little, according to the common liking; for some had rather hear many points than learn one: they would have every word a sentence, and every sentence a sermon; as he that wrote the Paternoster in the compass of a penny. Only I entreat you to observe, that this is a thievish banquet, where is nothing but stolen waters; all the cates be robberies: the guests cannot drink a drop but there is injury done. Accordingly, I will jointly proceed to describe the waters of sin at this feast; and withal, to prove them stolen waters, such as rob either our God, our brethren, or ourselves. I need not clear the feast from an opinion of coarseness, because the prime service goes under the name of waters; this alone doth enforce the delicacy. Neither is all water, for the bread of secrecy is one half of the banquet. Let us not be too nice in the letter and shadow: the substance is, the devil invites and tempteth men to feed on vanity, to feast on sin. Those sins I have laboured to display, so far as the metaphor would give me leave; only let your affections follow me, that as I fear not to make the iniquities hateful to your understandings, so I may hope they will be loathed of your hearts, eschewed of your lives: in confidence whereof I proceed.

The *first* course of these waters are such sins as more immediately rob God; and here, as it is fit, Atheism leads in the rest, a principal vial of these stolen waters.

[1.] *Atheism* is the highest theft against God, because it would steal from him not *sua, sed se*, his goods, but himself; proceeding further than '*Deus hæc non curat*,' to '*Deus non est*,'—than to say, 'God will not regard it,' Ps. x. 11–13; but, 'There is no God to regard it,' Ps. xiv. 1. These offer not only a wicked hand to their own conscience, to scrape out the deep-engraven and indelible characters of the Divinity there, but a sacrilegious hand to

\* *Ardens.*

heaven, as if they would empty it of a Deity, and pull Jehovah out of his throne, and make him a *non ens*. All, with them, is begun and done either by the necessity of fate or contingency of fortune. *Te facimus fortuna deam*. If any strange vice be committed, the planets shall be charged with it: Mercury told the lie, Mars did the murder, Venus committed the whoredom. Thus, by looking to the inferior causes, producing necessary effects, they rob God, who is *prima causa creans causas*,—the causing cause, and the original mover of all things. These are worse than the devil; for if at first he doubts and tempts Christ, yet seeing, feeling his power and miracles, he confesseth: only impudent Caiaphas saw and knew, yet tempts, Matt. xxvi. 63. Thus often the instrument excels the agent; and there be Machiavels, politicians, atheists, have tricks beyond the devil. The devil 'believes and trembles,' James ii. 19; these have neither faith nor fear. The devil quakes at the day of judgment: Matt. viii. 29, 'Torment us not before the time;' these deride it: 'Where is the promise of his coming?' 2 Pet. iii. 4. Strange! Even the father of sins comes short of his children; and that there should be atheists on earth when there is none in hell!

These monsters are in the wilderness! No, they burrow in Zion: if sedition such as say, 'There is no God,' yet frequent that call religion a fable, or at least testify no less of it in their lives; for *quorum est commune symbolum, facillimus est transitus*,—How many make that their gospel which they can spell into their purses, and embrace no other creed than their lord and master's humour! That turn articles of piety to particles of policy; and sophisticate old singleness into new singularity! If a Seminary's argument shall be more gold-weighty than the best sermon of ours, they are for Rome the next tide: any religion that can enrich their coffers shall have their applauses. What differ these from atheists, or that Pope\* who, hearing Cardinal Bembo speak of the gospel, burst forth into this blasphemy: *Quantum nobis ac nostro cœtui profuerit ea de Christo fabula, satis est omnibus seculis notum*,†—How gainful the fiction or tale of Christ hath been to us and our crew, the whole world may know and witness? All religion is with them a fable, or at best fallible. They would fit religion to their own humours, as Procrustes dealt with his guests: ‡ for all that came he had but one bed. If they were shorter than his bed, he racked them out to make them long enough; if longer, he would cut them shorter till they were fit. These are cruel thieves, that would rob God of himself.

[2.] The second vial is *Heresy*: a dangerous water, because it soon tickles the brain, and makes the mind drunk. This sin robs God of his truth. There are many of these thieves, though contrary among themselves, whose opinions are as cross one to another as Samson's foxes, but their tails meet to scatter the fire of dissension in the church. No lawyers wrangle more in public, nor more lovingly feast one another in private with the gains of their dissimulation. How bitterly the Brownists on the right hand, the Papists on the left, rail at each other! how friendly agree they, like Herod and Pilate, to afflict Christ! How in effect do they sing both in one tune, to build up devotion with ignorance, to wrangle with the prince for his supremacy!

In elder times, you had Cerinthus and Arius robbing Christ of his divinity, Manichæus and Marcion of his humanity, the Nestorians of the unity of both natures in one person. They are dead; oh, bury them, bury them! Let their heresies rot. Alas! how are the spirits of them all, by a kind of transanimation, come into Romists! Christ is there robbed of his truth, of

\* Leo X.

† Baleus.

‡ Met., lib. vii.

his garments, of his peace, of his life, as well as at Jerusalem; and that without show of being his enemies: *Spoliastis amici*,—You are my friends, yet rob me. Bones rob Christ of his adoration, stones of his prayers, the Pope of his power. Remission of sins, validity of merits, ease of pains, the Pope must give—who would give the world that he had them for himself. Too much shall be given to the name of Jesus, more than he would have: that a wicked man shall by it cast out devils; to whom, if the devils reply not, as they did once to the audacious sons of Sceva, Acts xix. 15, ‘Jesus we know, and Paul we know, but who are ye?’ yet God answers them, *Quis hæc, &c.*,—‘Who hath required this at your hands?’ Isa. i. 12. Too little to the truth of Jesus: man’s merits shall share with him in justification, penance in satisfaction, angels and saints in intercession. These are subtle thieves, that have their bodies for a communion, their consciences for a mass, their voices for the prince, their hearts for the Pope, their souls for anybody.

[3.] The third vial of this course is *Sacrilege*: a water like some winding Meander, that runs through our corn-fields, and washeth away the truth, God’s part. This sin robs God of his goods: Mal. iii. 8, ‘Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.’ Oh that none among us durst drink of these stolen waters! But, alas! what law can be given to rob-altars? If *Blind Asinus* be a man of gifts, so justified by the sensible presenter, what should cross his admission? Is not a *Quare impedit* his special friend? Yes: and yet not more than a *Prohibition* is often a good minister’s foe. Hence now there is little difference betwixt serving at the altar and starving at the altar. Ministers have *multos laudatores, paucos datores*,—many praisers, few raisers; many benedictors, few benefactors.

Plead not that they are not stolen, because conveyed by the ministers’ consent; for the right is originally in God. *Spoliastis me*,—‘You have robbed me,’ saith the Lord. The incumbent consenting is not robbed, God is. They zealously require a learned ministry, when themselves embezzle the rewards of learning: they complain of an ignorant, not of a beggarly clergy. They are content we should stand in the pulpit, so long as they may sit in a tithe-shock; and seem wonderfully affected with the oraculous voice of their minister, but the creaking noise of a tithe-cart into their own barn is better music. Oh the fearful cry of this sin in the ears of God against this land! He hath sprinkled some drops of his angry vial for it: droughts, blastings, witherings are but his *Distringis*. He destroys all, because we will not pay some: *Si domino decimam non dederis, ad decimam reverteris*,\*—He doth justly take away the nine when we deny him the tenth. Indeed, I confess that many an Eliashib compacts with Tobiah to steal holy things, Neh. xiii. 5: a Gnostic patron, a Paphian priest; so the one have ease, let the other take benefit. Tobiah must have the tithe-corn, the glebe land, and perhaps the very house for a dairy; and his cousin Eliashib shall have the tithe-geese and the eggs at Easter. ‘Shall not the Lord visit for such wickedness as this? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation?’ Jer. v. 9.

Whiles the rewards of knowledge are diverted to profane uses, God and his heaven is robbed of thousand thousand souls. Oh, pray we, (*quid enim nisi vota supersunt?*)—pray we, with that most reverend bishop,† that God would rather convert; if not, confound those that rob him of his goods, the church of her right, the people of understanding. But if no contestation of

\* Augustine.

† B. Babing in Gen., cap. 47.

God, nor protestation of man, can stint their swallowing these stolen waters, let some good Nehemiah be revived, to reinforce from their felonious hands that holy rent which God hath from every tenant of his reserved : let the zeal of some Phinehas turn away God's wrath from our Israel. *Decimate, quibus debetis, et divites fietis*,—Pay your tithes to whom you should pay them, and you shall be enriched. Mal. iii. 10, 'Bring ye all your tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.' Read and ponder Heliodorus's deed and doom, 2 Macc. iii., and quake at it. You cannot steal waters from the living God, but they will poison you.

[4.] The fourth vial is *Faction* : a water of trouble to the drinker ; this robs God of his order and peace. The waters of schism are stolen waters ; yet such as many a separatist loves to drink of : they steal peace from the church. *Christi tunica* must be *unica*,—Christ's coat was without seam, his truth must be without rent : we must be all at one, lest at all none. Let us not plead so hard for parity in the church, till we bring anarchy into the commonwealth. Let our dispositions be like Abraham's, Gen. xiii. 8, 'I pray thee, let there be no strife between me and thee, for we are brethren.' Let not God's *eutasy*, order, by our frivolous scruples be brought to *atary*, confusion. Let Calvin's rule overrule our turbulent and refractory spirits : *Omnia indifferentia in ecclesie libertate posita sunt*,\*—All indifferent things are put to the disposition and ordering of the church. O you, whom Christ hath made fishers of souls, fish no longer in troubled waters ! Let us not wrangle any more about colours, as the Constantinopolitans did once in the days of Justinian, about blue and green, till they were all neither blue nor green, but red ; the streets swimming in blood, and the emperor himself endangered. So the factions of the *Bianchi* and *Neri*, about the two colours of black and white, cost the dukedom of Florence dear, even the beauty and peace of the country. What, have we all been deceived ? Hath God been a stranger to us all this while ? John xiv. 9, 'Have I been so long time with you, and have you not known me ?' saith Christ to Philip. Hath the truth been hid in corners, that we must grope for it in a sectary's budget ? Or are not such men rather sick of Donatism ? That every novelist with a whirligig in his brain must broach new opinions, and have those made canons, nay, sanctions, as sure as if a general council had confirmed them ! Wretched men, that shake off the true, comely habit of religion, to bespeak them a new-fashioned suit of profession at a humorist's shop ! Oh that their sore eyes could, before they left us, have seen what sacrilegious breaches they have made into God's freehold ; robbing his church of her peace, and waking 'the spouse of Christ' with their turbulent noises ! Factions are stolen waters.

[5.] The last vial of this first course is *Profaneness* : a compounded water, whereout no sin is excluded. There was no poison the devil could think on left out when he tempered this water. It robs God of his glory. We are born to honour God ; it is his due, and that he will have, either *a te* or *de te*,—by thee or upon thee. Irreligion robs him of his honour, *solummodo hoc habet*, &c. ; only he hath this to help himself, that he can make it shine in thy just confusion. So Menahem destroyed Tipsah, because they would not open unto him, 2 Kings xv. 16 ; but these will open to Christ knocking, if he will be content—

\* Instit., lib. iv., cap. 17, sec. 43.

Stramineas habitare casas,' &c. ;—

'Basely to dwell in the divided part  
Of the foul, sluttish, and polluted heart.'

If Christ will dwell with Belial, and share part of the conscience with wickedness, let him come, and welcome ; but he scorns to be an inmate, and let Satan be lord of the house. He that accepted a stable for his presence-chamber in his humility, doth justly disdain such abodes now in his glory. Though the walls be but clay, if the furniture be good, humility and repentance, and the cheer answerable, faith and charity, he will enter in and feast, Rev. iii. 10. But as his womb was wherein born, and his tomb wherein buried, so must his temple be now he is glorified. He was conceived in a womb where none else was conceived, received into a tomb where none else was interred ; so he will temple himself in a heart where no affected sin shall be his equal. The profane among the heathen were thrust from their sacrificial solemnities :—

'Immocui veniant : procul hinc, procul impius esto,  
Casta placent superis ; pura cum mente venite ;'—

'Pure, innocent, and spotless sprites  
Are welcome to these holy rites :  
To the profane and sensual state,  
Be ever shut the temple-gate.'

But now our profane save that labour ; they thrust from themselves all pious rites. They sing not with the church, a *Tenebo te, Domine*, I will hold thee fast, O Lord, Cant. iii. 4 ; but with Simeon, a *Nunc dimittis*, though with another spirit : they are glad to be gone. Christ is as welcome to them as Cæsar's taxers to the Jews, or the beadle to the brothel-house ; so the Gergesites tell him to his face, Matt. viii. 34 : Sir, to be plain with you, you are no guest for us ; our secure lives and your severe laws will never cotton.

Men live without considering themselves : *unde, ubi, quomodo, quo*,—whence they are, *where* they are, *how* they do, *whither* they go : that all these mathematical lines have earth for their centre. Whence are we ? From earth. Where are we ? On earth. How live we ? Unworthy of the earth, or any blessing upon it. Whither go we ? To earth. *Terram terra teget*,—'Earth to earth.' We are composed of four elements, and they strive in us for mastery ; but the lowest gets the better, and there is no rest till earth have the predominance. These men live as if there was neither earth to devour their bodies, nor gulf lower than earth to swallow their souls.

This is profaneness. The world is rank and manured with sin. Atheism grows up as a tree, error and ignorance are the leaves, profaneness and rebellion the fruit, and the end is the axe and the fire, Matt. iii. 18. Their best is verbal devotion, seconded with actual abomination. *Dividunt opera à fide, et utrumque perimuntur*,—They separate works from faith ; they divide the child and kill it. Works are dead without faith, and faith is not alive without works. They take away that visible distinction betwixt Christians and infidels, whiles they live as honest men. Oh that I could cut this point short, and yet keep my discourse but somewhat even with the subject ; but the world drinks too greedily of these profane waters, which rob God of his glory. Most men are no longer tenants to the devil, and retailers of his wares, but proprietaries ; perverted and perverse persons, they strive to be as deep sharers as himself. Machiavel will no longer work journey-work with the devil ; he will now cut out the garment of damnation himself. The vices

of these men are so monstrous, that they no less benumb in all good men the tenderness of affection, than in themselves the sense of all humanity. *Vox faucibus hæret*,—It is a shame to utter, an amazement to hear, yet they blush not to commit such execrable impieties. Impudence is only in fashion, and there is no forehead held so graceful as that the prophet calls graceless, and ‘harlot’s forehead,’ that cannot blush, Jer. iii. 3. Swearing swaggers out admonition; drunkenness guzzles down sorrow and penitence; usury flouts at hell.

It was epitaphed on Pope Alexander’s tomb, *Jacet hic et scelus et vitium*,—Here lies wickedness itself; it could not be so buried up. He was vile enough: *Thais Alexandri filia, sponsa, nurus*. Lucrece was his daughter, his whore, his son’s wife. Horrid! that viper went not to hell issueless. What is the common profession but infidelity and atheism, though not *in antecedente*, yet *in consequente*,—if not verbal, yet real; under the ‘form of godliness,’ an implicit renegation of ‘the power,’ 2 Tim. iii. 5. *Multi adorant crucem exterius, qui crucem spiritualem per contemptum conculcant*,\*—Many superstitiously adore the crucifix that are ‘enemies to the cross of Christ,’ Phil. iii. 18, and ‘tread his holy blood under their scornful feet,’ Heb. x. 29. Nay, they are not wanting that brag with Pherecidas,† that they have as much prosperity, though they never sacrifice, as they that offer whole hecatombs. They will be wicked, if it be for nothing else, to scape the rod of affliction, Job xxi. They make sport with the book of God, as Daphias with the Delphic oracle,‡ who inquired of it whether he should find the horse which he had lost, when indeed he had none. The oracle answered, *inventurum quidem, sed ut eo turbatus periret*,—that he should find a horse, but his death withal. Home he is coming, joyful that he had deluded the oracle; by the way he fell into the hands of the wronged King Attalus, and was by his command thrown headlong from a rock called the *Horse*, and so perished. As fabulous as you may think it, the moral of it will fall heavy on the deriders of God.

These are the sins that immediately rob God, fitly called by our whorish sorceress ‘stolen waters,’ which shall be carried away without account. The *second* sort of stolen waters are those sins which mediate rob God, immediately our brethren, depriving them of some comfort or right which the inviolable law of God hath interested them to; for what the law of God, of nature, of nations, hath made ours, cannot be extorted from us without stealth, and may be, even in most strict terms, called stolen waters.

[1.] Here, fitly, *Irreverence* is served in first: a water of stealth that robs man of that right of honour wherewith God hath invested him. Even Abimelech, a king, a Gentile king, revered Abraham, Gen. xxi.; even stately Herod, poor John Baptist, Mark vi. Yes, let reverence be given to superiority, if it be built on the basis of worthiness; and to age, if it be ‘found in the way of righteousness,’ Prov. xvi. 31. Indeed it should be so, that *seniores annis* should be *saniores animis*, and *præfectus, perfectus*,—that eminency of place and virtue should concur, that greatness and goodness should dwell together; but the ‘conscience of reverence’ is fetched from God’s precept, not man’s dignity, Rom. xiii. 5, and therefore the omission is a robbery. The neglect of honour to whom it belongs is a stolen water. Prov. xxx. 17 ‘The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother,’—doth he think them worthy, or not?—‘the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles eat it.’ But, alas! these are those unreverent days, where *infelix lolium, et steriles dominantur avenæ*,—invectives, railings,

\* Guid. Carthus.

† Ælian. Var. Hist., lib. iv.

‡ Cic. de Fato.



calumnies, grow up among sober and wholesome admonitions : the same ground produceth both herbs and weeds, and so nourisheth both sheep and serpents.

'Terra salutiferas herbas, eademque nocentes  
Nutrit, et urticæ proxima sæpe rosa est.' \*

The nettle grows up with the rose, and the lamb must graze in the wolf's company. These are like furious beasts, that, ranging for their prey, and being hampered in the snare, when they cannot break loose to forage, they lie down and roar.

From this foul nest have fluttered abroad all those clamorous bills, slanderous libels, malicious invectives, seditious pamphlets, whence not only good names have been traduced, but good things abused. Self-conceit blows them up with ventosity ; and if others think not as well of them as they of themselves, straight like porcupines they shoot their quills, or like cuttles vomit out ink to trouble the waters. That impudent and insolent claim is made ordinary in these days : 'With our tongue we will prevail ; for our lips are our own,' Ps. xii. 4. When the eagle in the air, panther in the desert, dragon in the deep, leviathan in the ocean are tamed, yet 'the tongue can no man tame ; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison,' James iii. 8. It is fired, and with no weaker fire than hell's, ver. 6. Their hearts are ovens, heated with malice, and their tongues burning peels ; they are never drawn but there is a batch for the devil. These are not only the geese in the Capitol, to gaggle at statesmen in the commonwealth, but foxes also about the temple, that, if they be seen stealing the grapes, fall a-biting their decriers by the shins. Because the church hath not heretofore given some the keys of her treasure, nor called for them when bishoprics and promotions were a-dealing, they will indict her of incontinency with Rome. Miserable sons, to slander their mother with adultery ! What they would and cannot do themselves, they blame in others ; with Korah, Num. xvi. 3, 'Ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi.' Libels are stolen waters.

[2.] *Murder* usurps the second room : red water, that robs man of his life. Whether they be Popish commissions to cut throats, for the whore of Babylon can drink nothing but blood ; or the monstrous illuminations of the Anabaptists, deriving revelation from the spirit of horrid murder, that the brother should cut off the brother's head by a command from heaven, the father and mother standing by,—Luther calls this a gross devil, *Est hæc rudis cacodæmonis technæ* ; or the sudden quarrels of our age, where evidences of pusillanimity, or, at best, inconsiderate fury, are produced as arguments of valour, a cross word is ground enough for a challenge : and what issue hath streamed from these devils, who can think and not quake ? 'The land is defiled with blood,' Ps. cvi. 38 ; not shed by an alien hand,—God hath been content *talem nobis avertere pestem*, to free us from that plague,—but civil, uncivil broils. We fall out for feathers ; some lie dead in the channel, whiles they stood too much for the wall. Others sacrifice their hearts' blood for the love of a harlot. Not to pledge a health is cause enough to lose health and life too. Oh, who shall wash our land from these aspersions of blood ? Murder is but manslaughter, and manslaughter no more than dog-slaughter. *Parce civium sanguini* should be our condition of life, as it is a sanction of nature to spare the blood of citizens, connatural, collateral, connational with ourselves ; but now it is not spared *sanguini vel civium vel sanctorum*,—to spill the blood of either citizens or saints. Yet

\* Ovid. de Remed. Amor., lib. i.

'precious in the sight of the Lord is the blood of his saints,' when the blood of his enemies shall not be impunely shed.

There is not a drop of blood thus spilt upon the earth but swells like an ocean, and nothing can dry it up till it be revenged. The most excellent of God's creatures on earth, the beauty, the extract, the abstract, or abridgement of the world, the glory of the workman, the confluence of all honour that mortality can afford, and, what is above all the rest, the image of the almighty God, with pain born, with expense nurtured, must fall in a moment; and by whom? One son of Adam by another. The proverb is exiled, *Homo homini deus*,—Man is a god to man; nay, it is rare, saith the philosopher, to find a man to man. For want of using reason, how many are beasts! and for not using it well, how many devils! Hear the law, ye lawless brood of Cain, that 'slay a man in your anger:' 'Blood for blood.' You think to scape with a pardon, but there is no pardon of earth can ease the bleeding conscience. 'Let none kill Cain,' that so every day kills himself. As in that great plague on Egypt, all the waters in their rivers, streams, ponds, pools, vessels were changed into blood, Exod. vii. 19, so shall it be in the conscience of the murderer. His eyes shall behold no other colour but red, as if the air were of a sanguine dye; his visions in the night shall be all blood; his dreams sprinkling blood on his face; all his thoughts shall flow with blood. If any David scapes the wounds of man's sword to his body, or God's to his soul, let him thank the blood of the crucified Jesus, whose wounds must intercede for his, and procure a pardon. This is that blood which doth *κρείττονα λαλεῖν*, 'speak better things,' Heb. xii. 24, and stint the ceaseless cry of 'the blood of Abel.' But all this to none but those that bleed in soul for those sins.

Purge the land of this blood, ye magistrates; for 'the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of them that shed it,' Num. xxxv. 33.

'They that in spilling blood such pleasure have,  
Let them not go but bleeding to their grave.'

Purge it, then, lest God in revenge make his arrows 'drunk with blood.' Fear not to find them, ye jurors, lest whiles you save a murderer, you expose, object, hazard your own throats to his sword. Hear this also, ye physicians; think it is the life of man is questioned. The epigram comes here to my mind:—

'Furtum non facies; juristæ scribitur hæc lex  
Hæc, non occides, pertinet ad medicum;—

'Thou shalt not steal, the lawyers' square to right them;  
Thou shalt not kill, is the physician's item.'

Sell not insufficient drugs, nor pitch so high a price on your ignorance. Let it not be true of you that *pessimus morbus est medicus*,—the worst disease is the physician. That emperor (Adrian) found it true, by a mortal experience, that *turba medicorum interfecit regem*,—physicians killed him. Blood is precious, let it be preserved.

[3.] *Adultery* knows her place: a filthy water, yet in special account at this feast. It may well be called a stolen water; for it robs man of that comfort which the sacred hand of heaven hath knit to him; unravels the bottom of that joy which God hath wound up for him; suborns a spurious seed to inherit his lands; damps his livelihood, sets paleness on his cheek, and impastures grief in his heart. It is that special instance of wickedness whereby

Solomon here expresseth all the rest. The whorish woman calls the pleasures of a forbidden bed, stolen waters. Woe is to him that is robbed,—I mean the bitter woe of a temporal discontent, which is an inseparable consequent of conjugal affection wronged,—but more woe to the robber, who, besides the corporal strokes of heaven's angry hand in this life, shall feel the fearful addition of an eternal woe in hell : Heb. xiii. 4, 'Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.' If a present punishment be suspended, the future shall never be dispensed with. Our firmament hangs too full of these falling stars, Jer. xxiii. 10 ; corrupt meteors, wandering planets, that only glimmer in the night, when the sun of vigilancy is set. This cursed weed begins to grow almost as rank in England as in Italy ; only no authority gives toleration to it : they are here *aque surreptitice*, waters of stealth ; but there, *invitant adaperta viros male limina spurcos*,—the open doors invite their entrance, whiles the law doth not only wink but warrant. There is no hope to keep out Venus, when Drunkenness, her gentleman-usher, and Dice, her old company-keeper, are let in. Many nightingales have sung sad lamentations, woe and ruin against these rapes and whoredoms ; but the unclean sparrows, chirping the voice of lust on the house-tops, are suffered to have nests in the roof, when the good nightingale is driven to the woods.

There are not wanting by report, (and those no beggars,) that justify this, and clear it from sin by arguments ; strong wits, and those sublimed ; the wittier, the wickedder. I will give them a double answer, which no distinction shall evade. God hath charged, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' Hazard thyself to dispute against and enervate God's prohibition, and try if the second confute thee not—the black poison of thy own conscience, which is set on fire by lust here, and though it have the fire of hell added to it, shall never be wasted. The devil was modest when he came to Eve with *Præcepitne Deus*, &c., 'Hath God charged you not to eat?' &c., Gen. iii. 1. Now bluntly, *Non præcepit Deus*, 'God hath not concluded adultery a sin.' *Inaudita oracula fundit*. Impudence in the highest degree, to give God the lie, and except against the absoluteness of his precept.

I intend brevity in the broaching these stolen waters ; the matter forceth me to prolixity against my will. Lust hath many friends in these days ; many promoters whereby she insinuates herself to the world. Among all, those in print do most mischief ; *Libri Sybaritici*, as the same-sin-guilty Martial calls them ; books of epicurism and sensuality. Ovid's *Amatorias* have bright and trite covers, when the book of God lies in a dusty corner. The devil plays with us, as Hippomenes with Atalanta ; seeing us earnest in our race to heaven, throws us here and there a golden ball, an idle pamphlet. If Cleanthes open his shop, he shall have customers. Many a traveller there sets down his staff, though he pulls off his eyes with Ovid's dole, *Cur aliquid vidi, cur noxia lumina feci ?*\*—Why have I so covetously beheld these vanities ? *Paucis de philosophia gustandum*, was the old charge,—Let few drink at the fountain of philosophy ; but we are drunk with that which all philosophy condemned. The stationer dares hardly venture such cost on a good sermon as for an idle play ; it will not sell so well : wicked days the whiles ! Oh that they were all condemned to an Ephesian fire ! Acts xix. ; that we might say, as Alcibiades of that Athenian heap of burning scrolls, *Nunquam vidi ignem clariorem*,—We never saw a clearer fire.

[4.] *Thievery* needs no more than the name to prove it a 'water of stealth.' This robs man of his goods, those temporal things whereof God hath made him a proprietary : a sin which usurers and moneymongers do bitterly rail

\* Trist. 2.

at. They that are of no religion, yet plead religion hard against thieves ; they can lay the law to them, that have no conscience themselves ; they rob a country, yet think themselves honest men, and would hang a poor petty robber for forty pence. Let him answer them in the Satire—

‘O major, tandem parcas, insane, minori.’

As no theft can scape condemnation, so yet different degrees shall be punished with different torments. Extortion, usury, fraud, injustice, are not less thefts because less manifest. Antiochus could make a black horse which he had stolen seem white, and a white black ; so these thieves have tricks to make ‘evil good, and good evil,’ Isa. v. 20 ; especially *tacente lege*, so long as the law holds her peace. But as the other escape not the gallows, so one day *dabit Deus his quoque funem*,—God will give these also condign punishment. They say that the dung of the blackbird falling on the oak turns into slime ; of that slime is made birdlime ; of that birdlime is the bird herself snared. So these grand thieves twine a cord of three strings, injury, usury, fraud. Covetousness twists them into a rope, the devil makes the noose, and of this cord they are strangled ; ‘A threefold cable is not easily broken.’ Whiles they steal from others the interest, they rob themselves of the principal, their souls. They please the world with their baits, ready money ; but there is a hook under the bait :—

‘Munera magna quidem misit, sed misit in hamo ;  
Sic piscatorem piscis amare potest.’\*

I have read of an Athenian, such another fisher, that he had in an apparition a net given him to catch whole cities in ; but for all that, he died a beggar. These thieves have such nets to catch whole towns, commons, churches, steeples, and all ; but in the end the net breaks, and the fisher topples into the deep, whence he never comes out again ; for these swine so root into the earth, till they eat themselves into hell.

I do not spare with connivance the junior thieves, because I bring their fathers to the bar first. He that shall with a violent or subtle hand, lion-like or fox-like, take away that which God hath made mine, endangers at once his body to the world’s, his soul to heaven’s, sword of justice ; and shall pass from a temporal bar to the judgment tribunal of Christ. Let not misconstruction hear me : there are more of these die honest men than of usurers ; for one usurer’s repentance I will produce you ten executed thieves’. Only here it is, the great thieves agree one with another : ‘Claw me, and I will claw thee ;’ wink at mine, and I will not see thy faults. They tune like bells, and want but hanging. For these thieves, I might indeed be silent and spare my breath to the conversion of more hopeful sinners ; but we must free our consciences from the guiltiness of not reproving, lest they curse us on their death-beds, as that usurer made his will, wherein he bequeathed his soul to the devil for extorting, his wife for inducing, his deacon for enduring, or not reproving. Though every usurer makes account to walk to hell,—yet since both hell and heaven be equally set to his choice, why should he choose the worst way ?—let not his minister, for silence, bear him company.

Well, the thief knows his doom, a double banishment—out of the territories of earth, out of the confines of heaven ; therefore, Eph. iv. 28, ‘let him that hath stolen steal no more.’ Repentance shall be sure of mercy. And let not the great thief think to scape ; as he is a gallimaufry of all sins, so he shall have a rendezvous of all punishments. His house is the devil’s

\* Mart. Epig.

tavern ; the guests have sweet wine, but a sharp reckoning. The devil's fence-school ; all the stabbings, woundings, hackings, rackings, which torture the commonwealth, are there experimentally taught. The devil's brothel-house ; where the usurer is the bawd, and his moneys the harlots : only they differ from harlots in their pregnancy and teeming, for they lay, like pigeons, every month. Marry, because the devil is landlord, his rent eats out all their gains.

[5.] *Slander* is a water in great request ; every guest of the devil is continually sipping of this vial. It robs man of his good name, which is above all riches, Prov. xxii. 1. There be some think to scape this censure ; though they speak evils of others, yet true evils ; but Ham is cursed for declaring his father's nakedness, though true, Gen. ix. 22-25. These are like vultures, *ad male olentia feruntur*,—they pass over meadows and flowers to fall upon carrions ; like flies, they leap over all a man's good parts and virtues to light upon his sores. If Noah had not been once drunk, Ham had lost his sport. There are many of these Ziphims, 1 Sam. xxiii. 19, that to curry favour with Saul betray David ; but in my opinion, Doeg's truth, 1 Sam. xxii. 19, was worse than Rahab's lie, Josh. ii. 5. A man's good name is dear. *Plerique famam qui non conscientiam verentur*,—Many stand upon their credit that neglect their conscience. *Vilium est hominum alios viles facere, et qui suo merito placere non possunt, placere velle aliorum comparatione*,—It is the part of vile men to vilify others, and to climb up to unmerited praise by the stairs of another's disgrace. This is no new dish at some novelist's table, to make a man's discredit as sauce to their meat ; they will toss you the maligned's reputation, with the rackets of reproach, from one to another, and never bandy it away till they have supped. If they want matter, jealousy is fuel enough ; it is crime enough for a formalist, (so they term him,) that he is but suspected guilty. But the matron of the cloister would never have sought the nuns in the vault if she had not been there herself. It was Publius Clodius's best policy, lest Cicero should accuse him justly of sacrilege, to step in first and tell the senate that Tully profaned all religion in his house. Thus he that hath most corrupt lungs soonest complains of the unsavoury breath of others.

The calumniator is a wretched thief, and robs man of the best thing he hath, if it be a true maxim that the efficacy of the agent is in the apt disposition of the patient ; whiles thou deprivest man of his credit, thou takest from him all power to do good. The slanderer wounds three at one blow : *uno ictu, uno nictu*—(1.) The receiver, in poisoning his heart with an uncharitable conceit. (2.) The reputation of the slandered : for a man's name is like a glass, if it be once cracked it is soon broken ; every briar is ready to snatch at the torn garment. (3.) The worst blow lights on his own soul ; for the arrow will rebound : *maledixit sibi*. The slandered scapes best : 'for God shall bring forth his righteousness as the light,' &c., Ps. xxxvii. 6.

These are those hogs in a garden, which root up the flowers of a man's good parts. But if there were no receiver there would be no thief ; men would not so burden themselves with the coals of contumely, if they had nowhere to-unload them. It were well for Mephibosheth that Ziba dwelt a good way from court. If Saul were deaf, or Doeg dumb, no matter which ; for these are two whelps of that litter that must go to hell ; one hath the devil in his ear, the other in his tongue. It is a good general rule of St Bernard, to govern our tongues by : *Sint verba tua rara, vera, ponderosa : rara, contra multiloquium ; vera, contra falsiloquium ; ponderosa, contra vaniloquium*,—Let thy words be few, true, substantial : many words, false words, vain words, become not a Christian's lips. Invectives against other

men are ever evil, but then worse when they be false. A man may sin even in speaking the truth, when just circumstances forbid it ; but he cannot but sin in lying, and there is no circumstance can clear him. *Cor lingue fœderat naturæ sanctio, veluti in quodam certo connubio ; ergo cum dissonent cor et locutio, sermo concipitur in adulterio*,—Nature hath knit the heart and the tongue together in the bands of marriage ; that which the tongue brings forth without (or contrary to) the heart is the birth of adultery. Speak then ‘the truth from thy heart,’ but wrong not thy brother with a needless truth. Thus calumnies are stolen waters ! Beware then, you *diaboli*, accusers of your brethren, dogs with arrows in your thighs, that are troubled with sore mouths, and cankers in your teeth ; you drink stolen waters, and minister them to others also ; both physician and patient shall die for it.

[6.] The last vial of this course is *Flattery*, a water taken out of Narcissus’s well ; whereof when great men drink plentifully, they grow mad in their own admiration : and when self-love hath once befooled the brains, the devil himself would not wish the train of consequent sins longer. This is a terrible enchantment, that robs men with delight ; that counts simplicity a silly thing, and will swear a falsehood to please a Felix. This man outruns the devil : he is the ‘father of lies,’ yet we never read that he swore to a lie ; for he that swears acknowledgeth the being that he swears by greater than himself, which the devil scorns to do. The flatterer, in announcing a lie and swearing to it, hath a trick beyond the devil. The superlative titles of these men cause others to overvalue themselves. Pride derives her encouragement from the flatterer’s artificial commendations. Thou art far in debt, and fearest arrests ; he that should come and tell thee thou art rich, able to purchase, swimmer in a full and flowing stream, thou givest no credit to him, though he would give too much credit to thee. Thy soul’s state is more beggarly, broken, bankrupt of grace, and run in arrearages with God, Rev. iii. 17 ; yet the flatterer praiseth the riches of thy virtues, and thou believest him. It is a fearful and fanatical blindness for a man to carry his eyes in a box, like Plutarch’s Lamia, and only look into himself by the eyes of his parasites ; as if he desired to read the catalogue of his own good parts through the spectacles of flattery, which makes the least letter of a great show, and sometimes a cipher to be mistaken for a figure. The sycophant’s language is a false glass, and represents thy conscience white when thou mayest change beauty with the Moor, and lose not by the bargain. Let Herod be as hollow as a kecks, and as light as air, yet weighed in his parasites’ balance, he shall poise with solid virtue, nay, with God himself.

Oh for some golden statute against these Aristophanes’ fawners and Herodian pickthanks, that cry, ‘Ev, Ev, and *Vox Dei*, like the churchwardens’ bills, *Omnia bene*, everything is as it should be, when ‘all the foundations of the earth are out of course :’ these Italianate apes, and French parrots, that can spin themselves silken suits, *ex assentando*, on the voluble wheels of their pleasing tongues ! Oh that we could think, when these beasts play and skip above their wont, that there is some tempest a-coming ! The flatterer is a delightful cozenage, smooth perjury, rumour’s friend, conscience’s adversary, honesty’s murderer. He allures to vice unkennd ; colours vice perpetrated ; the horriest sin is but an error in his verdict. He can ‘bless and curse with one mouth,’ James iii. ; laugh and cry with one look ; kiss and betray with the sign, Luke xxii. 48. Bion compares him to a beast ; Plato to a witch ; all to a thief ; some to a devil. *Plus nocet lingua adulatores quam manus persecutoris*.\* There is no foe to the flatterer. The gram-

\* August. in Psal. lvi.

marians fitly, *mobile cum fixo*; like the adjective, he varies case and gender with his substantive. A chameleon *tetigit quoscunque colores*, to all colours, except red and white, saith Pliny; red signifying modesty, white innocence.

'Natio comœda est: rides? majore cachinno  
Concutitur,' &c.;—\*

If thou sayest it is hot, he wipes his forehead; if cold, he quakes of an ague. As in the Delphic oracle, Pythia did never prophesy but when she was set on a trivet and the wind blew intelligence into her; so this devil's prophet is dumb till you set him on the tripod of ease, credit, gain, and stroke him on the head like a spaniel, and then he will lick your hand, and fill your ears with the oracles of hell. He is *sibi natus, multis notus, omnibus nocuus*; *mundi nothus, inferni nixus*,—He is born to himself, known to many, hurtful to all; the world's bastard, hell's true-born child. *Patitur dum potitur*,—He suffers much that he may put up somewhat; when he speaks of the absent, he knows no case but the accusative, loves none, from his patron, but the dative. *Hic laudes numerat, dum ille munerat*,—He will multiply thy praises, if thou wilt divide to him thy goods. There is a monstrous fable in the Alcoran, that the earth is placed upon the sharp end of an ox's horn, the weakness whereof is the cause of earthquakes; but he that fixeth his estate on a flatterer's sharp tongue will put an earthquake into it, and soon run to ruin. Our chronicles report of Canutus, that when his flatterers styled him ruler of sea and land, he commanded his chair of estate to be brought to the sea-side; and when the waves beat on him, he cried, 'I command you to return;' the sturdy waves, scornful of such a control,—as the devils were of the sons of Sceva, Acts xix. 15, 'Jesus we know, but who are ye?' God we know, calming floods, quieting the winds, but who art thou?—beat on him more furiously. Then, Lo, saith Canutus, what a goodly god I am; and behold my command! convincing his flatterers. Oh that some strong west wind would rid our land of these locusts! Exod. x. 19.

The *third* and last sort of vials served in at this course are stolen waters which immediately rob ourselves. The devil finds us cheer at our own cost; and with cates stolen from our own possessions, he makes us a bounteous feast. Truth is, every cup of sin we drink of is a water that, at least indirectly, robs ourselves: neither can we feed on atheism, heresy, sacrilege, murder, adultery, but we rifle our souls of grace, our consciences of peace; for the devil's banquet never makes a man the fatter for his feeding. The guests, the more they eat, the more lean and meagre they look: their strength goes away with their repast, as if they fed on nothing but sauce; and all their sweet delicacies in taste were but fretting in digestion, like vinegar, olives, or pulse; neither doth batten and cherish, because it wants a blessing unto it. Only it gets them a stomach: the more heartily they feed on sin, the greater appetite they have to it. Though custom of sin hath brought them 'past feeling,' Eph. iv. 19, and they have long since made a deed of gift of themselves into the hands of licentiousness, yet behold in them still an eager prosecution of sin, even with greediness. Though mischief was the last thing they did when they went to bed, nay, the only action of their bed, yet 'they rise early, so soon as the morning is light, to practise it,' Micah ii. 1. They may be sick of sin's incurable surfeit, yet feel themselves hungry still; that the cup of their wickedness may be filled to the brim, and so receive a portion and proportion of torment accordingly. Thus as the *gyrovagi equi, molam trahentes, multum ambulant, parum promovent*,—the mill-turn-

\* Juven. Sat. iii.

ing horse, conjured into his circle, moves much, but removes little ; or as the poet of Ixion, *Volvitur Ixion, qui se sequiturque fugitque* : so the more these guests eat, the more unsatisfied they rise up : Micah vi. 14, 'Ye shall eat, and not be satisfied ; ye shall drink, and not be filled ;' as he that dreameth of good cheer, but awakes with an hungry soul. All the delights of sin put not the least drop of good blood into the veins, nor bless the heart with the smallest addition of content. They browse like beasts on these sweet boughs, but they look thin after it, as if they had devoured their own bowels.

[1.] The first vial of this nature is *Pride* : a stolen water indeed, but derived from thine own fountain. It may strike God, offend thy brother, but it doth immediately rob thyself. The decoration of the body is the devotion of the substance : the back wears the silver that would do better in the purse. *Armenta vertuntur in ornamenta*,—The grounds are unstocked to make the back glisten. Adam and Eve had coats of beasts' skins, Gen. iii. 21 ; but now many beasts, flesh, skins, and all, will scarce furnish a prodigal younger son of Adam with a suit. And as many sell their tame beasts in the country to enrich their wild beasts in the city, so you have others that to revel at a Christmas will ravel out their patrimonies. Pride and good husbandry are neither kith nor kin ; but Jabal and Jubal are brethren, Gen. iv. 20, 21 : Jabal, that dwelt in tents, and tended the herds, had Jubal to his brother, who was the father of music, to shew that Jabal and Jubal, frugality and music, good husbandry and content, are brothers, and dwell together. But Pride and Opulence may kiss in the morning, as a married couple, but will be divorced before sunset. They whose fathers could sit and tell their Michaelmas-hundreds, have brought December on their estates, by wearing May on their backs all the year.

This is the plague and clog of the fashion, that it is never unhampered of debts. Pride begins with *Habeo*, ends with *Debeo* ; and sometimes makes good every syllable *gradatim*. *Debeo*, I owe more than I am worth. *Beo*, I bless my creditors ; or rather, bless myself from creditors. *Eo*, I betake me to my heels. Thus England was honoured with them whiles they were gallants ; Germany or Rome must take them, and keep them, being beggars. Oh that men would break their fasts with frugality, that they might never sup with want. What folly is it to begin with *Plaudite*, 'Who doth not mark my bravery ?' and end with *Plangite*, 'Good passenger, a penny !' Oh that they could from the high promontory of their rich estates foresee how near pride and riot dwell to the Spital-house ! Not but that God alloweth both garments for necessity, Gen. iv. 21, and ornaments for comeliness, Esther vi. 11, according to thy degree ; but such must not wear silks that are not able to buy cloth. Many women are *propter venustatem invenuste*, saith Chrysostom,—so fine that they are the worse again. Fashions far-fetched and dear-bought fill the eye with content, but empty the purse. Christ's reproof to the Jews, Luke xi. 47, may fitly be turned on us, 'Why do ye kill the prophets, and build up their tombs ?' Why do ye kill your souls with sins, and garnish your bodies with braveries ? The maid is finer than the mistress, which, St Jerome saith, would make a man laugh, a Christian weep to see. Hagar is tricked up, and Sarah put into rags ; the soul goes every day in her work-day clothes, unlighted with graces, whiles the body keeps perpetual holiday in gayness. The house of Saul is set up, the flesh is graced ; the house of David is persecuted and kept down, the spirit is neglected.

I know that pride is never without her own pain, though she will not feel it ; be her garments what they will, yet she will never be too hot nor too cold. There is no time to pray, read, hear, meditate ; all goes away in



trimming. There is so much rigging about the ship, that, as Ovid wittily, *pars minima est ipsa puella sui*,—a woman for the most part is the least part of herself. *Fœmina culta nimis, fœmina casta minus*,—Too gaudy bravery argues too slender chastity. ‘The garment of salvation,’ Isa. lxi. 10, is slighted; and the ‘long white robe,’ Rev. vii. 9, of glory scorned; the Lord Jesus Christ, a garment not the worse, but the better for wearing, Rom. xiii. 14, is thrown by; and the ridiculous chain of pride, Ps. lxxiii. 6, is put on. But *ornamentum est quod ornat*; *ornat, quod honestiorem facit*,—that alone doth beautify which doth beatify or make the soul happy; no ornament doth so grace us as that we are gracious. Thus the substance is emptied for a show; and many rob themselves of all they have to put a good suit on their backs.

[2.] The next cup of these stolen waters is *Epicurism*: a water which whiles we sup of, we suck ourselves; a sin that whiles men commit it, it commits them, either to the highway or the hedges; and from thence, either by a writ or a warrant, an arrest or a *mittimus*, to the prison. Solomon saith, Prov. xxi. 17, ‘he shall not be rich.’ The gut is a gulf that will easily swallow all his comings in. Meat should be, as wise Agur prayed, ‘food convenient for thee,’ or as the Hebrew phrase is, the food of thy allowance. This dish is to feed on all dishes that may please the appetite, or rather may delight surfeit, for appetite dares not lodge in an epicure’s house. This sin is *instar omnium*, like the feast itself, save that the glutton feeds on God’s good creatures corporally; but on Satan’s mystical board is set nothing but what is originally evil, and absolutely baneful. So that here, gluttony, that feeds on all dishes, is but a private dish itself, and though perhaps for the extent and largeness it takes up the greater room, yet for the number it is but one.

It is most rank idolatry, says Paul; and so near to atheism, with a *no God*, that it makes a carnal god, Phil. iii. 19. *In mea patria Deus venter*: as profound and profane as the Babylonians’ sacrifice; they to their Bel, these to their belly. Perhaps, you will say, they are more kind to themselves; not a whit, for they wrap up death in their full morsels, and swallow it as pills in the pap of delicacy. They overthrow nature with that should preserve it, as the earth that is too rank mars the corn. They make short work with their estates, and not long with their lives; as if they knew that if they lived long, they must be beggars: therefore at once they make haste to spend their livings, and end their lives. Full suppers, midnight revels, morning junkets, give them no time to blow, but add new to their indigested surfeits. They are the devil’s crammed fowls, like Æsop’s hens, too fat to lay, to produce the fruits of any goodness. They do not *dispendere*, but *dissipare bona Domini*—wisely dispense, but blindly scatter the gifts of God. They pray not so much for daily bread as for dainty bread; and think God wrongs them, if they may not, Dives-like, ‘fare deliciously every day.’ Sense is their purveyor; appetite their steward. They place paradise in their throats, and heaven in their guts. Meantime, the state wastes, the soul pines, and though the flesh be puffed and blown up, the spirits languish; they love not to live in a fen, but to have a fen in them.

It is not plague enough that God ‘withal sends leanness into their souls,’ but their estates sink, their lives fall away; they spin a web out of their own bowels: worse than the *ἀνθρώπινοι*, men-eaters, they are *αὐτῶπαγοι*, self-eaters. They put a pleurisy into their bloods, a tæbe and consumption into their states, an apoplexy into their souls. ‘The meat that perisheth not,’ John vi. 27, is fastidious to their palates; that they may feed on that which

feeds on them : and so at once devour and be devoured ; drink of a cup that drinks up them.

[3.] The third vial is *Idleness* : a filching water too, for it steals away our means, both to get goods and to be good. It is a rust to the conscience, a thief to the estate. The idle man is the devil's cushion, whereupon he sits and takes his ease. He refuseth all works, as either thankless or dangerous. Thus characterized, he had rather freeze than fetch wood ; he had rather steal than work, and yet rather beg than take pains to steal ; and yet in many things rather want than beg. *Ignavi sunt fures*, saith Melancthon,—sluggards are thieves ; they rob insensibly the commonwealth, most sensibly themselves : ' Poverty comes on him as an armed man,' Prov. xxiv. 34. The Idlesby\* is poverty's prison ; if he live without a calling, poverty hath a calling to arrest him. When the cistern of his patrimony is emptied, and seems to invite his labour to replenish it, he flatters himself with enough still, and looks for supply without pains. Necessity must drive him to any work, and what he cannot *auferre*, he will *differre*—avoid, he will delay.

Every get-nothing is a thief, and laziness is a stolen water. If the devil can win thee to ply hard this liquor, he knows it will whet thy stomach to any vice. Faction, thievery, lust, drunkenness, blood, with many birds of this black wing, offer themselves to the idle mind, and strive to prefer their service. Would you know, says the poet, how *Ægistus* became an adulterer ? *In promptu causa est ; desidiosus erat*,—The cause is easy, the answer ready : *he was idle*. He that might make his estate good by labour, by idleness robs it. This is a dangerous water, and full of vile effects ; for when the lazy have robbed themselves, they fall aboard and rob others. This is the idle man's best end, that as he is a thief and lives a beast, so to die a beggar.

[4.] The fourth cup is *Envy* : water of a strange and uncouth taste. There is no pleasure in being drunk with this stolen water ; for it frets and gnaws both in palates and entrails. There is no good relish with it, either in taste or digestion. Only it is like that *acidula aqua* that Pliny speaks of, which makes a man drunk sooner than wine. Envy keeps a register of injuries ; and graves that in marble which Charity writes in the dust, wrong. It cannot endure that any should be conferred with it, preferred to it.

' Nec quemquam jam ferre potest Cæsarve priorem,  
Pompeiusve parem ;'—

Cæsar can brook no greater, Pompey no rival. John Baptist was of another spirit : John iii. 29, when he heard that the people had left him to follow Christ, he spake with the voice of content, ' My joy is fulfilled. He must increase, and I must decrease.' *Invidus non est idoneus auditor*,†—The envious man is an incompetent hearer ; his ears are not fit to his head. If he hears good of another, he frets that it is good ; if ill, he is discontent that he may not judge him for it. If wronged, he cannot stay God's leisure to quit him : he is straight either a Saul or an Esau ; by secret ambushes, or by open hostility, he must carve himself a satisfaction. No plaster will heal his pricked finger, but his heart-blood that did it ; if he might serve himself, he would take unreasonable pennyworths. St Augustine would cool his heat. *Vis vindicari, Christiane ?*—Wilt thou be revenged of thine adversary, O Christian ? Tarry a while : *nondum vindicatus est Christus*,—thy Lord and Saviour is not yet avenged of his enemies.

Malice is so mad, that it will not spare friends to wreak vengeance on foes. So Garnet told the powder-traitors, that some innocent might be destroyed

\* I suppose, a place for the confinement of idlers and vagrants.—Ed.

† Arist.

with many nocent, if the public good could not otherwise be perfected. His instance was, that in a town besieged, though some friends were there, yet no wrong nor offence, at advantage to cut all their throats. Hence, if there had been Papists in the Parliament-house, yet rather than lose so holy a massacre, they must have flown up with others. Call you these saints? *Tantæne animis celestibus iræ?* It was God's reservation in the Old Testament, for accursed Sodom, Gen. xviii. 32, *Si decem justi*,—‘If ten righteous persons be found there,’ &c. It was Christ's suspension in the New, Matt. xiii. 29, ‘Let the tares alone till harvest, lest the wheat be plucked up withal.’ Theodosius was taxed that *insontes una cum sontibus trucidasset*,—that he had slain the good with the guilty, and might not be suffered to enter into the temple. In the primitive church the bishops stayed process against the Priscillian heretics, *ne catholici cum illis perirent*,—lest some good Christians should perish with them. Jehu, intending due destruction to the worshippers of Baal, made a special search that ‘none of the Lord's servants were amongst them,’ 2 Kings x. 23. But malice is ever blind, to see what sequel attends her courses. The envious man is content to lose one eye of his own, so he may put out both his neighbour's; nay, which is worse, he will lose both his own to put out one of his. The least trespass shall not pass without suit. The devil can send him on a very slight errand to Westminster Hall. Be the case never so broken, if the lawyers' wit can stitch it together, that it may hold to a *nisi prius*, it is enough. I may, with a little inversion, read his destiny from the poet—

‘Hunc neu dira venena, nec hosticus auferet ensis,  
Nec laterum dolor, aut tussis, vel tarda podagra;  
Garrulus hunc quando consumet;’—

Let him not fear domestical poison, nor foreign sword, nor a stitch in his sides, nor a cough in his lungs, nor the gout in his joints: *Hunc proprius livor consumet*,—He will fret himself to dust. His *præcordia* are steeped in vinegar. Prov. xiv. 30, ‘A sound heart is the life of the flesh; but envy is the rottenness of the bones.’ The drunkard rots his flesh, the malicious his bones; he burns up his blood in the furnace of hatred.

‘Insanit; cum aliena nequit, sua pectora rodit;’—

‘Mad, that his poison will not others kill,  
He drinks it off himself, himself to spill.’

Envy is thrown like a ball of wild-fire at another's barn; rebounds and fires thine own. The swallow having crossed some lands and seas returns next summer to her old chimney; the arrow of malice shot far off turns upon his heart that set it flying. Bless yourselves; you know not whither you will be carried if once you be horsed on the back of the envious man. Forbear, then, this water, as thou lovest thy health, blood, life, and peace.

[5.] The fifth cup is *Drunkennes*: a vial of the waters of stealth, a liquid food literally taken. For that which ebriety sins withal is wine and strong drink. *Væ fortibus ad potandum!*—‘Woe to them that are mighty to devour drink!’ Isa. v. 22; and strong to carry it away, for their hability encourageth their more frequent sinning. But drunkennes, as it is a cup of this service, is a special water of itself at the devil's banquet. This sin is a horrible self-theft; God hath passed his word against him: ‘The drunkard and the glutton shall come unto poverty, and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags,’ Prov. xxiii. 21. He that drinks more in a day than he can earn in a week, what will his gettings come to at the year's end? There is no

remedy; he must shake hands with beggary, and welcome it into his company. How many, in the compass of our knowledge, have thus robbed themselves, and been worse enemies to their own estates than the most mischievous thieves! Thieves cannot steal land, unless they be Westminster Hall thieves, crafty contenders that eat out a true title with a false evidence; but the drunkard robs himself of his lands. Now he dissolves an acre, and then an acre, into the pot, till he hath ground all his ground at the malt-quern, and run all his patrimony through his throat. Thus he makes himself the living tomb of his forefathers, of his posterity. He needs not trouble his sick mind with a will, nor distrust the fidelity of executors. He drowns all his substance at the ale-fat, and though he devours much, is the leaner every way. Drunkenness is *regius morbus*, a costly sin. It is like gunpowder, many a man is blown up by it. He throws his house so long out at windows, till at last his house throws him out at doors. This is the tippler's progress: from luxury to beggary; from beggary to thievery; from the tavern to Tyburn; from the alehouse to the gallows.

[6.] The last vial of these self-stolen waters is *Covetousness*: a dish of drink at this banquet which more come for than for all the rest. The covetous is a cruel thief to himself, worse than the devil, for the devil would give much for a soul. How much would he give for himself? The covetous man loves money better than his own soul. This mercenary soldier is fit for any office in the devil's camp. There is no sin so ugly, so hideous, but sent to the covetous man's door in a golden vizor, it shall have entertainment. This sin is like a great beast, which, violently breaking upon God's freehold, makes a gap wide enough for the whole herd to follow. *Fruitur mundo, utitur Deo*,—The covetous possesseth the world, and makes use of God; but if a man cannot serve 'God and Mammon,' he can much less serve 'Mammon and God.' God scorns to be set after the world. He heavens himself on earth, and for a little pelf cozens himself of bliss. He steals quiet from his own bones, peace from his conscience, grace from his soul. Is not this a thief?

How much of fame, liberty, peace, conscience, is laid out to purchase gold! Some for love of it would pluck down heaven, and empty it of a Deity; others, to overtake it, run quick to hell. And they that seek it find it; for if a man will sell heaven for pelf, he shall not fail of his purchase. Hence Mammon is the god of no beggars, but the merchants, and gentles, and cormorants, and usurers, and chuffs. 'The idols of the heathen were silver and gold.' It is but inverting the sentence. Their idols are silver and gold, and silver and gold are our idols.

Many a wretched father plays the thief with himself, and starves his own carcase to leave wealth to his babe. He lives on roots that his prodigal heir may feed on pheasants; he keeps the chimney corner that his heir may frequent ordinaries; he drinks water that his heir may drink wine, and that to drunkenness. Though he be richer than Dives, he lives like an alchymist. Miserable fathers make wretched sons; none often have more undone them than they that have done most for them. They make heritages, but God makes heirs: the children of such churls seldom roast what their fathers 'took in hunting,' Prov. xii. 27. Now, what thief can more spoil another than such a man doth himself? He cannot find in his heart to put a good morsel into his belly. He dares not eat an egg lest he should lose a chicken. A poor beggar is in better estate than a rich miser. He wants many things, but this wants all things. *Corpus extenuat, ut lucrum extendat*,—He wrinkles and contracts his body that he may enlarge and replenish his purse. He pincheth his carcase to stuff his cap-case. No marvel if that he hear not

the moans of the poor, when he is deaf to the complaints of his own belly. Whereas, Prov. xvi. 26, 'He that laboureth, laboureth for himself, for his mouth craveth it of him.' It is the voice not only of God's Spirit, that so it should be, nor of reason only, that so it must be, but even of nature, that so it is; unless in such unreasonable beasts as the covetous, or rather—worse than beasts, for *they* serve the necessity of nature—unnatural wretches, dressing, like cooks, much good meat, and not vouchsafing to lick their own fingers. 'There is an evil,' saith Solomon, 'under the sun,'—and such an evil that the sun can scarce see a worse,—'a man to whom God hath given riches,' and that so abundantly 'that he wanteth nothing of all that his soul can desire, yet God giveth him not the power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this is vanity, and an evil disease,' Eccles. vi. 1, 2. A disease it is, and fitly called the dropsy.

Thus the covetous man pines in plenty, like Tantalus, up to the chin in water, yet thirsty. He that hath no power to take part of God's blessings, which he keepeth, plays the thief finely, and robs himself. His extortion hath erst stolen from others, and now he plays rob-thief, and steals from himself. They say the rule of charity should be fetched from home. He that is miserable to himself will never be liberal to others; he that pines himself, God bless me from begging at his door! It is miserable living at this man's finding, for, like a chymist, he turns everything into silver, what he should wear and what he should eat, and so robs both back and belly of warmth, of sustenance. All to conjure a little money into the circle of his purse, which he will do, though he fetch spells from the devil to do it; yet keeps it only to look on, not to use. *Nemini bonus, sibi pessimus*,—As he is good to none, so, let it be his plague, he is worst to himself. He is ever in debt to his belly; the purest metal is for his coffer; the coarsest meat is good enough for his stomach. He doth so cross the vanity of pride, which esteemeth the dearest things the best, that he thinks nothing sweet but what is cheap. If ever he satisfy his complaining stomach with a good morsel, it shall be from his neighbour's trencher.

He hath not so much idle time as to sleep, but either he dreameth of his gold or riseth to see if the doors be fast. So Claudian, amongst others, describes the covetous's dream: *Et vigil elapsas quærit avarus opes*,—He seeks that in his sleep which he could not find waking. The covetous give better ear to the priests of Janus than to the apostles of Jesus. *Querenda pecunia primum est*,—First seek money, hath thrust out *Quærite primum regnum Dei*,—'First seek the kingdom of God,' Matt. vi. 33. They will hear us willingly, if our text be commodity, and our sermon policy. A bill that contains the sale of a lordship, or the news of a mortgage, or the offer of good security for ten in the hundred, is more heeded than a book on the stationer's shop with *The Way to Heaven* for the title. Neither let us, as is said, judge him only to drink of this water that extorts from others, but even him that pincheth himself. So St Augustine, *Non solum avarus est qui rapit aliena, sed qui cupide servat sua*,—He is not only covetous that raketh from others, but he also that taketh from himself. The niggard's looks to his entering guests are like Diana's image in Chios, which frowned with a lowering countenance on all that came into the temple, but looked blithe and smiled on them that departed. This is he that thinks there are no such angels as his golden ones; no such paradise as in his counting-house. He cares not to run quick to the devil of an errand, so gain sends him, and pays him for his pains. He is a special guest at the devil's board, and never misseth his ordinary, which he affects the more because he pays nothing.

The more he devours, the hungrier he is ; a full supper of profit gives him the more eager appetite to his morrow's breakfast, Mic. ii. 1. All he eats is like physic to him ; he looks thinner after it. He takes great pains to go to hell ; whither since he will go, he might do it with more ease. He hath no heaven, neither present nor future ; and having sold bliss for riches, as Æsop's dog did the flesh for the shadow, behold he loseth both. Other sinners, for their damnation, have somewhat which they call delightful : the covetous man buys hell with hell ; eternal, with present anguish. Thus he robs himself of all content ; and when all is done he is a man undone, and 'pierced through with many sorrows,' 1 Tim. vi. 10.

We have now ended the service of the waters with, (1.) The prescription of their being, *waters* ; and, (2.) The description of their natures, *stolen*. The vices which under this smooth name the devil tempts his guests to surfeit on, are to your hearing odious. I will step no further to fetch in application than from the word *stolen*.

All stolen things are accountable for ; the law of all nations hath provided that *cuique sum*, every man may enjoy his own. God is a just judge, a retributor of every man his own. No thief can scape the apprehension of his pursuivants, the appearance to his sessions, the penalty of his sentence. He hath appointed a general assizes, a day 'wherein he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained,' &c., Acts xvii. 31. To which there is a necessity of appearance : 'For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body,' &c., 2 Cor. v. 10. At which time an account is not avoidable : 'God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil,' Eccles. xii. 14. What, then, will be the success of these stolen waters ? We carry out our robberies now without question ; we invade our brethren, we evade the law : but behold 'at evening-tide trouble ; and before the morning he is not. This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us,' Isa. xvii. 14.

Felony is the indictment, a rebellion against our Sovereign's crown and dignity. Ambitious thieves in the court, simoniacal thieves in the church, hollow-hearted thieves in the city, oppressing and men-eating thieves in the country—all must be summoned, their debts summed, their doom sentenced. The impartial conscience from the book of their lives shall give in clear evidence. There is no retaining of counsel, no bribing for a partial censure, no trick of demur, no putting off and suspending the sentence, no evading the doom. The cursed generation of thefts are now easily borne, and borne out. Subtlety can give them the help of a conveyance, and money purchase a connivance. But then, alas ! what shall become of them, and of many souls for them ? What shall become of all the traitors, gory murderers, impudent atheists, secret church-robbers, speckled adulterers, rusty sluggards, nasty drunkards, and all the defiled wretches that have sucked damnation from the breasts of black iniquity ? An impenetrable judge, an impleadable indictment, an intolerable anguish shall seize upon them. Mountains of sand were lighter, and millions of years shorter, than their torments, Rev. vi. 16.

Oh, think, think of this, ye sons of rapine, that with greediness devour stolen waters : you cannot rob God of his glory, man of his comfort, yourselves of your happiness, but God, man, your own souls, shall cry against you ! What thunder can now beat into you a fear of that which then no power shall ease you of ? Why strive we not, Nineveh-like, to make the message of our overthrow the overthrow of the message, and so work, that,

according to Samson's riddle, 'the destroyer may save us?' Wherefore are we warned, but that we might be armed? and made acquainted with hell in the speculation, but that we may prevent the horror of it in passion? Let me tell you, ye thieves that sit at Satan's board, there is a thief shall steal on you, steal all from you: 2 Pet. iii. 10, 'The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise,' &c.;—*κλέπτῃς*, a thief; *ἀπὸ τοῦ κλέπτειν*, to take away privily, or by stealth; or *ἀπὸ τοῦ καλύπτειν*, of hiding or covering. *Fur à furuo*, *quia in obscuro venit*,—a thief as well for stealing on us, as for stealing from us. He comes in the dark, when nobody sees; treads on wool, that nobody hears; watcheth an hour, that nobody knows.

This thief shall steal on you, perhaps, banqueting at this feast of vanity, as the flood came on the old world whiles they ate and drank, and were merry, Luke xvii. 27. 'Watch therefore, for you know not what hour your Lord doth come,' Matt. xxiv. 42. So Chrysostom on that place, from our Saviour's comparison of the Goodman of the house: *Non læderetur ille furto, si sciret venturum: vos scitis, paratiores esse debetis*,\*—The thief should not hurt him, if he knew of his coming: you know he will come, prepare for his welcome. We are all householders: our bodies are our houses; our souls our goods; our senses are the doors and windows; the locks are faith and prayer. The day of our doom will come as a thief; let our repentance watch, let it never sleep, lest we perish. *Si præscirent homines quando morituri sint, diligentiam super eam rem ostenderent*,—If men foreknew the time of their death, they would shew carefulness in their preparation: how much more being ignorant? But, alas! ignorance covenants with death; and security 'puts far away the evil day, and causeth the seat of violence to come near,' Amos vi. 3. When the prophets of our Israel threaten judgments, you flatter yourselves with the remoteness,—Ezek. xii. 27, 'The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are far off,'—as if it concerned you not what ruin laid waste the land, so 'peace might be in your days.' But, Isa. lvii. 21, 'There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.' Our rosebuds are not withered, our dances are not done: sleep, conscience; lie still, repentance. Thus, with the sentence of death instant, and in a prison of bondage to Satan present, saith St Augustine, *maximo gaudio debacchamur*,—we are drunken, we are frantic with pleasures. There may be other, there can be no greater, madness.

Lo the success of these stolen waters. You hear their nature: time hath prevented their sweetness. God of his mercy, that hath given us his word to inform our judgment, vouchsafe by his Spirit to reform our consciences, that we may conform our lives to his holy precepts! For this let us pray, &c.

'What here is good, to God ascribed be,  
'What is infirm belongs of right to me.'

---

\* Hom. 78.