

THE RAGE OF OPPRESSION.

Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.—PSALM LXVI. 12.

THIS verse is like that sea, Matt. viii. 24, so tempestuous at first that the vessel was covered with waves; but Christ's rebuke quieted all, and there followed a great calm. Here are cruel Nimrods riding over innocent heads, as they would over fallow lands; and dangerous passages through fire and water; but the storm is soon ended, or rather the passengers are landed: 'Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.'

So that this strain of David's music or psalmody consists of two notes—one mournful, the other mirthful; the one a touch of distress, the other of redress: which directs our course to an observation of *misery* and of *mercy*, of grievous misery, of gracious mercy. There is desolation and consolation in one verse: a deep dejection, as laid under the feet of beasts; a happy deliverance, 'brought out into a wealthy place.'

In both these strains God hath his stroke: he is a principal in this concert. He is brought in for an *actor* and for an *author*; an actor in the persecution, an author in the deliverance. 'Thou causest,' &c.; 'Thou broughtest,' &c. In the one he is a causing worker, in the other a sole-working cause. In the one he is joined with company, in the other he works alone. He hath a finger in the former, his whole hand in the latter.

We must begin with the *misery*, before we come to the *mercy*. If there were no trouble, we should not know the worth of a deliverance. The passion of the saints is given, by the hearty and ponderous description, for very grievous: yet it is written in the forehead of the text, 'The Lord caused it.' 'Thou causedst men to ride,' &c.

Hereupon some wicked libertine may offer to rub his filthiness upon God's purity, and to plead an authentic derivation of all his villany against the saints from the Lord's warrant: 'He caused it.' We answer, to the justification of truth itself, that God doth ordain and order every persecution that striketh his children, without any allowance to the instrument that gives the blow. God works in the same action with others, not after the same manner. In the affliction of Job were three agents—God, Satan, and the Sabbeans. The devil works on his body, the Sabbeans on his goods; yet Job confesseth a third party: 'The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away.' Here

oppressors trample on the godly, and God is said to cause it. He causeth affliction for trial, (so, ver. 10, 11, 'Thou hast tried us,' &c.) they work it for malice: neither can God be accused nor they excused.

In a sinful action there be two things, the material and the formal part; which we commonly distinguish into the act and defect. The material part is of God, from whom is all motion; the formal is from the pravity of the agent. Persecutors could not accuse us maliciously, if God gave not motion to their tongues; nor strike us wrongfully, if he denied strength to their hands. Thought, sight, desire, speech, strength, motion, are God's good gifts; to turn all these to his dishonour is the wicked person's fault.

God hath another intent than man hath, even in man's work. The Chaldeans steal Job's wealth to enrich themselves; the devil afflicts his body in his hatred to mankind; God suffers all this for the trial of his patience. Man for covetousness, the devil for malice, God for probation of the afflicted's constancy, and advancing his own glory. In the giving of Christ to death, as Augustine observes, Epist. xlviij., the Father gave the Son, the Son gave himself, Judas betrayed him, and the Jews crucified him. In one and the same tradition, God is to be blessed and man condemned. *Quia in re una quam fecerunt, causa non una ob quam fecerunt*,—Because in that same thing they all did, there was not the same cause why they all did it. God's end was love; Judas's, avarice; the Jews', malice.

The covetous extortioner taketh away the goods of his neighbour; that robber spoileth. He could have no tongue to plead, nor wit to circumvent, nor hands to carry away, without God; from him he hath those creatures, together with the notion of mind and motion of body. But to pervert all these to damnify others, and to damn himself, ariseth from his own avarous and rancorous pravity. His intent is wicked; yet not without God's wisdom to raise profit from it. Perhaps the oppressed had too good a liking to the world, and began to admit a little confidence in their wealth: the Lord hath benefited them in taking away these snares, to save their souls.

Yet without toleration, countenance, or help to the wicked. The usurer hath done thee good; by making thee poor in purse, helped thee to the riches of grace; yet he goes to hell for his labour. They that do God service against their wills, shall have but shrewd wages. It cannot be denied but the devil did God service in trying Job, winnowing Peter, buffeting Paul, executing Judas; yet shall not all this ease the least torment of his damnation. For trial here are these oppressors suffered to ride over the godly's heads, and to drive them through fire and water; when these have, like furnaces, purged them from dross and corruption, themselves shall be burnt. For it is usual with God, when he hath done beating his children, to throw the rod into the fire. Babylon a long time shall be the Lord's hammer to bruise the nations; at last itself shall be bruised. Judas did an act that redounds to God's eternal honour and our blessed salvation, yet was his wages the gallows. All these hammers, axes, rods, saws, swords, instruments, when they have done those offices they never meant, shall for those they have meant be thrown to confusion.

I will now leave God's justice to himself, and come to the injustice of these oppressors, and the passion of the sufferers. And because the quality of these latter shall add some aggravation to the cruel malice of the former, I will first set before your eyes the martyrs. The psalm being written by David, and the sufferers spoken of in the first person plural,—*we, us, and our*,—it follows that it was both David and such as David was: beloved of God, holy, saints.

And whom doth the world think to ride over but saints? Ps. xlv. 22. Who should be appointed to the slaughter but sheep? The wolf will not prey on the fox, he is too crafty; nor on the elephant, he is too mighty; nor on a dog, he is too equal; but on the silly lamb, that can neither run to escape nor fight to conquer. They write of a bird that is the crocodile's tooth-picker, and feeds on the fragments left in his teeth whiles the serpent lies a-sunning; which when the unthankful crocodile would devour, God hath set so sharp a prick on the top of the bird's head, that he dares not shut his jaws till it be gone. And they speak of a little fish that goes bristling by the pike, or any other ravenous water creature, and they dare not for his pricks and thorns touch him. Those whom nature or art, strength or sleight, have made inexorable to easy ruin, may pass unmolested. The wicked will not grapple upon equal terms; they must have either local or ceremonial advantage. But the godly are weak and poor, and it is not hard to prey upon prostrate fortunes. A low hedge is soon trodden down; and over a wretch dejected on the base earth an insulting enemy may easily stride. Whiles David is down, (or rather in him figured the church,) 'the plowers may plow upon his back, and make long their furrows,' Ps. cxxix. 3.

But what if they ride over our heads, and wound our flesh, let them not wound our patience. Though we seal the bond of conscience with the blood of innocence, though we lose our lives, let us not lose our patience. Lactantius* says of the philosophers, that they had a sword and wanted a buckler; but a buckler doth better become a Christian than a sword. Let us know, *non nunc honoris nostri tempus esse, sed doloris, sed passionis*,—that this is not the time of our joy and honour, but of our passion and sorrow. Therefore 'let us with patience run the race,' &c., Heb. xii. 1.

But leave we ourselves thus suffering, and come to speak of that we must be content to feel, the oppression of our enemies. Wherein we will consider the *agents* and the *actions*.

The *AGENTS* are *men*: 'Thou hast caused men to ride,' &c. Man is a sociable-living creature, and should converse with man in love and tranquillity. Man should be a supporter of man; is he become an overthrower? He should help and keep him up; doth he ride over him and tread him under foot? O apostasy, not only from religion, but even from humanity! *Quid homini inimicissimum? Homo*,†—The greatest danger that befalls man comes whence it should least come, from man himself. *Cetera animantia*, says Pliny, *in suo genere, probe degunt*, &c.,—Lions fight not with lions; serpents spend not their venom on serpents; but man is the main suborner of mischief to his own kind.

It is reported of the bees, that *ægotante una, lamentantur omnes*,—when one is sick, they all mourn. And of sheep, that if one of them be faint, the rest of the flock will stand between it and the sun till it be revived. Only man to man is most pernicious. We know that a bird, yea, a bird of rapine, once fed a man in the wilderness, 1 Kings xvii. 6; that a beast, yea, a beast of fierce cruelty, spared a man in his den, Dan. vi. 22. Whereupon saith a learned father, *Feræ parcunt, aves pascunt, homines æviunt*,‡—The birds feed man, and the beasts spare him, but man rageth against him. Wherefore, I may well conclude, with Solomon, Prov. xvii. 12, 'Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly.'

God hath hewn us all out of one rock, tempered all our bodies of one clay, and spirited our souls of one breath. Therefore, saith Augustine, sith we proceed all out of one stock, let us all be of one mind. Beasts molest

* De Falsa Sapient., lib. iv.

† Sen.

‡ Cypr., Ser. vi.

not their own kind, and birds of a feather fly lovingly together. Not only the blessed angels of heaven agree in mutual harmony, but even the very devils of hell are not divided, lest they ruin their kingdom. We have one greater reason of unity and love observed than all the rest. For whereas God made nor all angels of one angel, nor all beasts of the great behemoth, nor all fishes of the huge leviathan, nor all birds of the majestic eagle, yet he made all men of one man. Let us then not jar in the disposition of our minds, that so agree in the composition of our natures. You see how inhuman and unnatural it is for man to wrong man; of his own kind, and, as it were, of his own kin.—Thus for the agents.

The ACTION is amplified in divers circumstances, climbing up by rough stairs to a high transcendancy of oppression. It ariseth thus—1. In riding. 2. In riding over us. 3. In riding over our heads. 4. In driving us through fire and water.

1. *They ride.* What need they mount themselves upon beasts, that have feet malicious enough to trample on us? They have a 'foot of pride,' Ps. xxxvi. 11, from which David prayed to be delivered; a presumptuous heel, which they dare lift up against God; and therefore a tyrannous toe, to spurn dejected man. They need not horses and mules, that can kick with the foot of a revengeful malice, Ps. xxxii. 9.

2. *Over us.* The way is broad enough wherein they travel, for it is the devil's road. They might well miss the poor: there is room enough besides; they need not ride over us. It were more brave for them to jostle with champions that will not give them the way. We never contend for their path; they have it without our envy, not without our pity. Why should they ride over us?

3. *Over our heads.* Is it not contentment enough to their pride to *ride*, to their malice to *ride over us*, but must they delight in bloodiness to ride over our *heads*? Will not the breaking of our arms and legs, and such inferior limbs, satisfy their indignation? Is it not enough to rack our strength, to mock our innocence, to prey on our estates, but must they thirst after our bloods and lives? *Quo tendit sæva libido?*—Whither will their madness run?

But we must not tie ourselves to the letter. Here is a mystical or metaphorical gradation of their cruelty. Their riding is proud; their riding over us is malicious; and their riding over our heads is bloody oppression.

1. *They ride.* This phrase describes a vice compounded of two damnable ingredients, pride and tyranny. It was a part of God's fearful curse to rebellious recidivation, Deut. xxviii., that their enemies should ride and triumph over them, and they should come down very low under their feet. It is delivered for a notorious mark of the great 'whore of Babylon's' pride, that she 'rides upon a scarlet-coloured beast,' Rev. xvii. 4. St Paul seems to apply the same word to oppression, 1 Thess. iv. 6, 'that no man oppress his brother.' The original *ὑπερβαίνειν*, to go upon him, climb on him, or tread him under foot.

O blasphemous height of villany! not only, by false slanders, to betray a man's innocence, nor to lay violent hands upon his estate; but to trip up his heels with frauds, or to lay him along with injuries, and then to trample on him! And because the foot of man, for that should be soft and favouring, cannot despatch him, to mount upon beasts, wild and savage affections, and to ride upon him.

2. *Over us.* This argues their malice. It were a token of wilful spite for a horseman, in a great road, to refuse all way, and to ride over a poor

traveller. Such is the implacable malice of these persecutors. Isa. lix. 7, 'Wasting and destruction are in their paths;' yea, wasting and destruction *are* their paths. They have fierce looks and truculent hearts: their very path is ruin, and every print of their foot vastation. They neither reverence the aged, nor pity the sucking infant; virgins cannot avoid their rapes, nor women with child their massacres. They go, they run, they stride, they ride 'over us.'

The language of their lips is that which Babylon spake concerning Jerusalem, Ps. cxxxvii. 7, 'Down with it, down with it, even to the ground. Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof.' Desolation sits in their eyes, and shoots out through those fiery windows the burning glances of waste, havoc, ruin: till they turn a land into solitude, into a desert, and habitation for their fellow-beasts, and their worse selves. O unmerciful men! that should be to mankind as God, but are more ragingly noxious than wolves. They have lost the nature, let them also lose the name of men.

'Vix reperit unum,
Talibus à multis, hominem consultus Apollo.'

But it is ever true, *optimi corruptio pessima*.—the fairest flowers putrefied, stink worse than weeds: even an angel falling became a devil; and man debauched strives to come as near this devil as he can. They should put their hands under our falling heads, and lift us up; but they kick us down, and ride over us.

3. *Over our heads.* This notes their bloodiness, unpacifiable but by our slaughters. The pressing, racking, or breaking of our inferior limbs contents not their malice: they must wound the most sensible and vital part, our heads. The Lord be blessed, that hath now freed us from these bloody tidings, and sent us peace with truth! Yet can we not be forgetful of the past calamities in this land; nor insensible of the present in other places. The time was when the Bonners and butchers rode over the faces of God's saints, and maddened the earth with their bloods, every drop whereof begot a new believer. When they martyred the living with the dead; burnt the impotent wife with the husband, who is content to die with him with whom she may not live, yea, rejoicing to go together to their Saviour: when they threw the new-born (yea, scarce-born) infant, dropping out of the mother's belly, into the mother's flames; whom, if they had been Christians, they would first have christened, if not cherished;—this was a fiery zeal indeed, set on fire with the fire of hell. They love fire still: they were then for faggots, they are now for powder. If these be catholics, there are no cannibals. They were then mounted on horses of authority, now they ride on the wings of policy.

Our comfort is, that though all these, whether persecutors of our faith or oppressors of our life, ride over our particular *heads*, yet we have all one *Head*, whom they cannot touch. They may massacre this corporal life, and spoil the local seat of it, whether in head or heart; but our spiritual life, which lies and lives in one Head, Jesus Christ, they cannot reach. No hellish stratagems nor combined outrages, no human powers nor devilish principalities can touch that life; for it is 'hid with Christ in God,' Col. iii. 3.

Indeed this Head doth not only take their blows as meant at him, but he even suffers with us: Acts ix. 4, 'Saul, why persecutest thou me?' Saul strikes on earth; Christ Jesus suffers in heaven. There is more lively sense in the head than in other members of the body. Let but the toe ache,

and the head manifests by the countenance a sensible grief. The body of the church cannot suffer without the sense of our blessed Head. Thus saith Paul, 2 Cor. i. 5, 'The sufferings of Christ abound in us.' These afflictions are the showers that follow the great storm of his passion: Col. i. 24, 'We fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in our flesh.' We must be content for him, as he was for us, to weep, and groan, and bleed, and die, that we may reign. If we sow not in tears, how shall we look to reap in joy? Ps. cxxvi. 5. How shall we shine like stars in heaven, if we go not through the fiery trial? or land at the haven of bliss, if we pass not the waves of this troublesome water?

You see riders; but you will say, What is this to us? We have no such riders. Yes, many, too many; even so many as we have oppressors, either by tongue or hand. Shall I name some of them?

The malicious slanderer is a perilous rider; and he rides, like death, upon a pale horse, Rev. vi. 2, *Envy*. Thus were the Pharisees mounted when they rode over Christ, even the Head of our heads. If Jesus will not be a Pharisee, they will nail him to the cross. These venomous cantharides light upon God's fairest flowers, and strive either to blast them with their contumelious breaths, or to tread them under their malicious feet.

The griping usurer is a pestilent rider; and he is mounted on a heavy jade, *Mammon*, or love of money. Every step of this beast wounds to the heart, and quasheth out the life-blood. Oh that this sordid beast of usury, with all his ponderous and unwieldy trappings,—bills, obligations, pawns, mortgages,—were thrown into a fire temporal, that the rider's converted soul might be saved from the fire eternal! If any Alcibiades had authority and will to kindle such a fire in England as was once at Athens, I believe that no tears would be shed to quench it; but the music of our peace would sound merrily to it, and the rather because there would be no more groans to disturb it.

The destructive depopulator is another pestiferous rider. He is a light-horseman; he can leap hedges and ditches, and therefore makes them in the midst of plain fields. He loves to ride in his own ground; and for this purpose expelleth all neighbours. Though Solomon says, Eccles. v. 9, that 'the king is served by the field that is tilled;' yet he, as if he were wiser than Solomon, promiseth to serve him better with grass. He posteth after the poor, and hunts them out of his lordship. He rides from town to town, from village to village, from land to land, from house to house; à *doloso furto ad publicum latrocinium*, and never rest till he hath rid to the devil.

And there is a fourth rider gallops after him amain, as if he had sworn not to be hindmost—the oppressing landlord. And he rides upon a horse that hath no pace but racking; for that is the master's delight, racking of rents: and he hath two lacqueys or pages run by him—fines and carriages. Thus ascended and attended, he rides over the heads and hearts of the poor tenants, that they can no more grow in wealth than corn can that is scattered in the highway; for they, as that, are continually overridden by their merciless landlord. Let these riders take heed, lest the curses of the poor stumble their horses, and break their necks.

The churlish cormorant is a mischievous rider: he sits on a black jade, *Covetousness*; and rides only from market to market, to buy up grain when he hath store to sell: and so hatcheth up dearth in a year of plenty. Our land is too full of these riders: they repine and complain of the unseasonableness of the weather, of the barrenness of the earth; but they conceal the true cause, whereof their own souls are conscious, their uncharitableness.

The earth hath never been so frozen as their consciences ; nor is the ground so fruitless of plenty as they of pity. This is not *mala terra, bona gens* ; but *mala gens, bona terra*,—we have bad minds, good materials. The earth hath not scanted her fruits, but our concealings have been close, our enhavacings ravenous, our transportations lavish. The Lord sends grain, and the devil sends garners. The imprecations of the poor shall follow these riders, and the ears of God shall attend their cries.

There is the proud gallant, that comes forth like a May-morning, decked with all the glory of art ; and his adorned lady, in her own imagination a second Flora : and these are riders too, but closer riders. The world with them runs upon wheels ; and they, hastening to overtake it, outrun it. Their great revenues will not hold out with the year : the furniture on their backs exceeds their rent-day. Hence they are fain to wring the poor sponges of the country, to quench the burning heat of the city. Therefore say the countrymen, that their carts are never worse employed than when they do service to coaches.

There is the fraudulent tradesman, that rides no further than between the burse and the shop, on the back of a quick-spirited hobby called *Cheating* : and whereas greatness presseth the poor to death with their weight, this man trips up their heels with his cunning. They have one God at the church, another at their shops ; and they will fill their coffers, though they fester their consciences. This rider laughs men in the face while he treads on their hearts ; his tongue knows no other pace but a false gallop.

The bribe-groping officer, in what court soever his dition lies, is an oppressing rider : they that would have their suits granted, must subject their necks to his feet, and let him ride over them. He confutes the old allegory of Justice, that is usually drawn blind, for he will see to do a petitioner ease by the light of his angels.* Nothing can unlock his lips but a golden key. This rider's horse, like that proud emperor's, must be shod with silver ; and the poor man must buy of him, and that at a dear rate, his own treading on.

I come to him last, whom I have not least cause to think upon, the church-defrauder, that rides upon a winged horse, as if he would fly to the devil, called *Sacrilege*. He may appear in the shape of a Protestant, but he is the most absolute recusant ; for he refuseth to pay God his own. He wears the name of Christ for the same purpose the Papists wear the cross, only for a charm. These are the merchants of souls ; the pirates of God's ship, the church ; the underminers of religion, they are still practising trains to blow it up. They will not pay their Levites ; their Levites must pay them. They will not part with their cures, whereof they have the donation, but upon purchase. But it is no wonder if they sell the cures, that have first sold their souls. The charitable man dreams of building churches, but starts to think that these men will pull them down again.

There is yet one other rider, though he spurs post, must not pass by me unnoted : the truth-hating Jesuit, that comes trotting into England on a red horse, like *Murder*, dipped and dyed in the blood of souls ; and, if he can reach it, in the blood of bodies too. Neither doth he thirst so much after ordinary blood, that runs in common veins, as after the blood-royal. There is no disease, saith one, that may so properly be called the king's-evil. He is the devil's make-bait, and his chief officer to set princes together by the ears. He sits like the raven on a dead bough, and when the lion and leopard come forth to fight, he sounds out a point of war, hoping whichsoever falls, his carcass shall serve him for a prey to feed on. His main study is to

* The coin so called.—Ed.

fill the schools with clamours, the church with errors, the churchyard with corpses, and all Christian States with tragedies. The Seminaries were once like that strange weed, tobacco, at the first coming up ; but here and there one entertained in some great man's house, now may you find them smoking in every cottage. They have deservedly increased the disgrace of that religion ; so that now, in the common censure, a Papist is but a new word for a traitor. They have received their errand at Tiber, and they deliver it at Tyburn.

There are many other riders, so properly ranking themselves in this number, and assuming this name, which, for modesty's sake, I bury in silence ; considering that *quædam vitia nominata docentur*,—some sins are taught by reporting their names.

But I perceive a prevention : I have not time enough to end our misery, much less to enter the speech of our mercy. The journey they make us take through fire and water requires a more punctual tractation than your patience will now admit. Two short uses shall send away our oppressors with fear, ourselves with joy.

1. For them. Let all these tyrannous riders know, that there is one rides after them,—a great one, a just one,—even he that 'rides on the wings of the wind, and the clouds are the dust of his feet : ' he that hath a bridle for these Sennacheribs, and strikes a snaffle through their jaws, and turns their violence with more ease than the wind doth a vane on the house-top. Then 'a horse shall be but a vain thing to save a man,' saith the Psalmist. Horse and master shall fall together.

Then the covetous Nimrod, that rode on the black beast, Oppression, shall be thundered down from his proud height, and the jade that carried him shall dash out his brains, and lie heavier than a thousand talents of lead on his conscience. His oppression shall damn himself, as before it did damn others. It was to them a momentary vexation, it shall be to him an eternal pressure of torment.

Then the blood-drawing usurer, that rode so furiously on his jade, Extortion, shall (if timely deprecation and restitution stay him not) run full butt against the gates of hell, and break his neck. And he that at the bars of temporal judgments cried out for nothing but justice, justice, and had it, shall now cry louder for mercy, mercy, and go without it.

And let the cormorant, that rides on the back of Engrossing, whose soul is like Erisicathon's bowels in the poet—

'Quodque urbibus esse,
Quodque satis poterat populo, non sufficit uni'—

that starves men to feed vermin—know, that there is a pursuivant flies after him, that shall give him an eternal arrest, and make him leave both *horreum* and *hordeum*, his barn and his barley, to go to a place where is no food but fire and anguish.

And the lofty gallant, that rides over the poor with his coaches and caroches, drawn by two wild horses, Pride and Luxury ; let him take heed, lest he meet with a wind that shall take off his chariot-wheels, as Pharaoh was punished, *Exod. xiv.*, and drown horses, and chariots, and riders ; not in the Red Sea, but in that infernal lake whence there is no redemption.

Let all these riders beware lest he that rides on the wings of vengeance, with a sword drawn in his hand, and that will eat flesh and drink blood ; that will make such haste in the pursuit of his enemies that he will not bait or refresh himself by the way ; lest this God, before they have repented,

overtake them. Ps. xlv. 4, 5, 'Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty; and in thy majesty ride prosperously,' &c.; 'and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.' Then shall the 'Lord remember the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem,' Ps. cxxxvii. 7, 8; and 'reward them as they served us.' Lo, now, the end of these riders: Ps. xxxvi. 11, 'There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, and shall not be able to rise.' Zech. x. 5, 'The riders on horses shall be confounded.'

2. For us. Though passion possess our bodies, let 'patience possess our souls.' The law of our profession binds us to a warfare; *patiēdo vincimus*, our troubles shall end, our victory is eternal. Hear David's triumph, Ps. xviii. 38-40, 'I have wounded them, that they were not able to rise; they are fallen under my feet. Thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me. Thou hast also given me the neck of mine enemies,' &c. They have wounds for their wounds; and the treaders down of the poor are trodden down by the poor. The Lord will subdue those to us that would have subdued us to themselves; and though for a short time they rode over our heads, yet now at last we shall everlastingly tread upon their necks. Lo, then, the reward of humble patience and confident hope. *Speramus et superamus*. Deut. xxxii. 31, 'Our God is not as their God, even our enemies being judges.' Ps. xx. 7, 'Some put their trust in chariots, and some in horses.' But no chariot hath strength to oppose, nor horse swiftness to escape, when God pursues. Ver. 8, 'They are brought down, and fallen; we are risen, and stand upright.' Their trust hath deceived them; down they fall, and never to rise. Our God hath helped us; we are risen, not for a breathing space, but to stand upright for ever.

Tentations, persecutions, oppressions, crosses, infamies, bondage, death, are but the way wherein our blessed Saviour went before us; and many saints followed him. Behold them with the eyes of faith, now mounted above the clouds, trampling all the vanities of this world under their glorified feet; standing on the battlements of heaven, and wafting us to them with the hands of encouragement. They bid us fight, and we shall conquer; suffer, and we shall reign. And as the Lord Jesus, that once suffered a reproachful death at the hands of his enemies, now sits at the right hand of the Majesty in the highest places, far above all principalities and powers, thrones and dominations, 'till his enemies be made his footstool;' so one day they that in their haughty pride and merciless oppressions rode over our heads, shall then lie under our feet. 'Through thee will we push down our enemies; through thee will we tread them under that rise up against us.' At what time yonder glorious sky, *cælum stellatum*, which is now our ceiling over our heads, shall be but a pavement under our feet. To which glory, he that made us by his word, and bought us by the blood of his Son, seal us up by his blessed Spirit! Amen.