

THE HOLY CHOICE.

And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen.—ACTS I. 24.

THE business of the day is an election; an election into one of the most noble offices of the kingdom—the government of this honourable city, which (let not envy hear it) hath no parallel under the sun. The business of my text is an election too; an election into the highest office in the church—to be an apostle and witness of Jesus Christ. If you please to spare the pattern in four circumstances,—as, First, This office is spiritual, yours temporal; Secondly, This place was void by apostasy or deceSSION, yours is supplied by succession; Thirdly, This election is by lots, yours is by suffrages; Fourthly, This choice was but one of two, it may be your number exceeds,—the rest will suit well enough, and the same God that was in the one, be also present in the other, by the assistance of his Holy Spirit!

The argument of the text is a prayer to God for his direction in their choice: yea, indeed, that he would choose a man for them; including a strong reason of such a request, because he doth 'know the hearts of all men.'

They begin with prayer; this was the usual manner in the church of God. So Moses prayed for the choice of his successor: 'Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation,' Num. xxvii. 16. Christ sent not his apostles to that holy work without a prayer: 'Sanctify them through thy truth,' John xvii. 27. In the choosing of those seven deacons, they first prayed, and then 'laid their hands upon them,' Acts vi. 6. Thus were kings inaugurated, with sacrifice and prayer. It is not fit he that is chosen for God should be chosen without God. But for this, Samuel himself may be mistaken, and choose seven wrong, before he hit upon the right. In this I cannot but commend your religious care, that businesses of so great a consequence be always sanctified with a blessing. Those which in a due proportion must represent God to the world, ought to be consecrated to that Majesty which they resemble by public devotions. Every important action requires prayer, much more that which concerns a whole city. When Samuel came to Bethlehem to anoint David, he calls the whole city to the sacrifice. Indeed the family of Jesse was sanctified in a more special manner: this business was most theirs, and all Israel's in them. The fear of God should take full possession of all our hearts that are this day assembled;

but those with whom God hath more to do than with the rest, should be more holy than the rest.

The choice of your wardens and masters in your several companies hath a solema form; and it is the honour of your greatest feasts, that the first dish is a sermon. Charity forbid that any should think you admit such a custom rather for convenience than devotion; as if preaching were but a necessary complement to a solemnity, as wine and music. I am persuaded better things of you: but if there should be any such perverse spirits, that like the governor of a people called *Æqui*, when the Romans came to him, *jussit eos ad quercum dicere*, bade them speak to the oak, for he had other business; but they replied, *Et hæc sacrata quercus audiat fœdus à vobis violatum*,—Let this oak bear witness that you have broke the league which you have covenanted: so when we come to preach to your souls, if you should secretly bid us speak to the walls, lo, even the very walls will be witness against you at the last day. Though Saul be king over Samuel, yet Samuel must teach Saul how to be king. We may instruct, though we may not rule; yea, we must instruct them that shall rule. Therefore, as we obey your call in coming to speak, so do you obey God's command in vouchsafing to hear. Let us apply ourselves to him with devotion, and then he will be graciously present at our election.

This prayer respects two things:—I. *Quem*, the person whom they entreat. II. *Quid*, the matter for which they entreat.

I. The person is described, 1. By his omnipotence, 'Lord;' 2. By his omniscience, 'That knowest the hearts of men.'

1. Omnipotence; 'Lord.' We acknowledge thy right; thou art fit to be thine own chooser. 'Lord:' there be many on earth called lords; but those are lords of earth, and those lords are earth, and those lords must return to earth. This Lord is almighty; raising out of the dust to the honour of princes, and 'laying the honour of princes in the dust.' 'Lord:' of what? Nay, not qualified; not Lord of such a county, barony, seignior; nor Lord by virtue of office and deputation, but *in abstracto*, most absolute. His lordship is universal: Lord of heaven, the owner of those glorious mansions; Lord of earth, disposer of all kingdoms and principalities; Lord of hell, to lock up the old dragon and his crew in the bottomless pit; Lord of death, to unlock the graves; he keeps the key that shall let all bodies out of their earthly prisons. A potent Lord; whither shall we go to get out of his dominion? Ps. cxxxix. 7, &c. To heaven? There we cannot miss him. To hell? There we cannot be without him. In air, earth, or sea, in light or darkness, we are sure to find him. Whither then, except to purgatory? That *terra incognita* is not mentioned in his lordship, the Pope may keep the key of that himself. But for the rest he is too saucy, exalting his universal lordship, and hedging in the whole Christian world for his diocese. Stretching his arm to heaven, in rubricking what saints he list; to hell, in freeing what prisoners he list; on earth, in setting up or pulling down what kings he list, but that some have cut short his busy fingers.

To the Lord of all they commend the choice of his own servants. Every mortal lord hath this power in his own family; how much more that Lord which makes lords! Who so fit to choose as he that can choose the fit? Who so fit to choose as he that can make those fit whom he doth choose? It is he alone that can give power and grace to the elected, therefore not to be left out in the election. How can the apostle preach, or the magistrate govern, without him, when none of us all can move but in him? It is happy when we do remit all doubts to his decision, and resign ourselves to

his disposition. We must not be our own carvers, but let God's choice be ours. When we know his pleasure, let us shew our obedience. And for you upon whom this election falls, remember how you are bound to honour that Lord of heaven that hath ordained such honour for you upon earth : that so in all things we may glorify his blessed name.

2. Omniscience : it is God's peculiar to be the searcher of the heart. 'The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ; who can know it?' Jer. xvii. 9, 10. Who? *Ego Dominus*, 'I the Lord search the heart.' He hath made no window into it, for man or angel to look in : only it hath a door, and he keeps the key himself.

But why the heart? Here was an apostle to be chosen : now wisdom, learning, eloquence, memory, might seem to be more necessary qualities than the heart. No, they are all nothing to an honest heart. I deny not but learning to divide the word, elocution to pronounce it, wisdom to discern the truth, boldness to deliver it, be all parts requirable in a preacher. But as if all these were scarce worth mention in respect of the heart, they say not, Thou that knowest which of them hath the subtler wit or abler memory, but which hath the truer heart ; not which is the greater scholar, but which is the better man : 'Thou that knowest the heart.'

Samuel being sent to anoint a son of Jesse, when Eliab, the eldest, came forth, a man of a goodly presence, fit for his person to succeed Saul ; he thinks with himself, This choice is soon made ; sure this is the head upon which I must spend my holy oil. The privilege of nature and of stature, his primogeniture and proportion, give it him ; this is he. But even the holiest prophet, when he speaks without God, runs into error. Signs and apparances are the guides of our eyes ; and these are seldom without a true falsehood or an uncertain truth. Saul had a goodly person, but a bad heart ; he was higher than all, many were better than he. It is not hard for the best judgment to err in the shape. Philoxemenes, a magnanimous and valiant soldier, being invited to Magyas's house to dinner, came in due season, but found not his host at home. A servant seeing one so plain in clothes, and somewhat deformed in body, thought him some sorry fellow, and set him to cleave wood. Whereat Magyas (being returned) wondering, he received from him this answer : *Expendo poenas deformitatis mee*,—I pay for my unhandsomeness. All is not valour that looks big and goes brave. He that judgeth by the inside, checked Samuel for his misconceit : 'Look not on his countenance or stature, for I have refused him ; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth,' 1 Sam. xvi. 7. David's countenance was ingenuous and beautiful, but had it promised so much as Eliab's or Abinadab's, he had not been left in the field, while his brethren sat at the table. Jesse could find nothing in David worthy the competition of honour with his brethren : God could find something to prefer him before them all. His father thought him fit to keep sheep, though his brethren fit to rule men : God thinks him fit to rule, and his brethren to serve ; and by his own immediate choice destines him to the throne. Here was all the difference : Samuel and Jesse went by the outside, God by the inside ; they saw the composition of the body, he the disposition of the mind. Israel desires a king of God, and that king was chosen by the head ; God will choose a king for Israel, and that king is chosen by the heart. If, in our choice for God, or for ourselves, we altogether follow the eye, and suffer our thoughts to be guided by outward respects, we shall be deceived.

Why do they not say, Thou that knowest the estates of men, who is rich, and fit to support a high place, and who so poor that the place must sup-

port him? I hear some call wealth *substance*; but certainly at best it is but a mere circumstance. It is like the planet Mercury: if it be joined with a good heart, it is useful; if with a bad and corrupt one, dangerous. But howsoever, at the beam of the sanctuary, money makes not the man, yet it often adds some metal to the man; makes his justice the bolder, and in less hazard of being vitiated. But *pauperis sapientia plus valet quam divitis abundantia*. If the poor man have 'wisdom to deliver the city,' Eccles. vi. 15, he is worthy to govern the city. I yield that something is due to the state of authority: *ad populum phaleras*. So Agrippa came to the tribunal with great pomp and attendance. This is requisite to keep awe in the people, that the magistracy be not exposed to contempt. But *magistratus, non vestitus, indicat virum*,—wise government, not rich garment, shews an able man. It was not riches that they regarded.

Why do they not say, Thou that knowest the birth or blood of men? I know it is a reverend thing to see an ancient castle or palace not in decay, or a fair tree sound and perfect timber. But as fowl birds build their nests in an old forsaken house, and doted trees are good for nothing but the fire; so the decay of virtue is the ruin of nobility. To speak morally, active worth is better than passive: this last we have from our ancestors, the first from ourselves. Let me rather see one virtue in a man alive, than all the rest in his pedigree dead. Nature is regular in the brute creatures: eagles do not produce cravens; and it was a monstrous fable that Nicippus's ewe should yean a lion. But in man she fails, and may bring forth the like proportion, not the like disposition. Children do often resemble their parents in face and features, not in heart and qualities. It is the earthly part that follows the seed; wisdom, valour, virtue, are of another beginning. Honour sits best upon the back of merit: I had rather be good without honour, than honourable without goodness. Cottages have yielded this as well as palaces. Agathocles was the son of a potter, Bion of an infamous courtesan. In holy writ, Gideon was a poor thresher, David a shepherd; yet both mighty men of valour, both chosen to rule, both special saviours of their country. Far be it from us to condemn all honour of the first head, when noble deservings have raised it, though before it could shew nothing but a white shield. Indeed, it is not the birth, but the new birth, that makes men truly noble.

Why do they not say, Thou that knowest the wisdom and policy of men? Certainly, this is requisite to a man of place; without which he is a blind Polyphemus, a strong arm without an eye. But a man may be wise for himself, not for God, not for the public good. An ant is a wise creature for itself, but a shrewd thing in a garden. Magistrates that are great lovers of themselves are seldom true lovers of their country. All their actions be motions that have recourse to one centre—that is, themselves. A cunning head without an honest heart, is but like him that can pack the cards, yet when he hath done, cannot play the game; or like a house with many convenient stairs, entries, and other passages, but never a fair room; all the inwards be sluttish and offensive. It is not then, Thou that knowest the wealth, or the birth, or the head, but the heart: as if in an election that were the main; it is all if the rest be admitted on the by.

Here then we have three remarkable observations—(1.) What kind of hearts God will not choose, and we may guess at them. (2.) What hearts he will choose, and himself describes them. (3.) Why he will choose men especially by the heart.

(1.) What kind of hearts he will not choose; and of these, among many, I will mention but three:—

[1.] *Cor divisum*, a distracted heart; part whereof is dedicated to the Lord, and part to the world. But he that made all will not be contented with a piece. *Aut Casar, aut nihil*. The service of two masters, in the obedience of their contrary commands, is incompatible, *sensu composito*. Indeed Zaccheus did first serve the world, and not Christ; afterward Christ, and not the world; but never the world and Christ together. Many divisions followed sin. First, It divided the heart from God: 'Your sins have separated between you and your God,' Isa. lix. 2. Secondly, It divided heart from heart. God by marriage made one of two, sin doth often by prevarication make two of one. Thirdly, It divided the tongue from the heart. So Cain answered God, when he questioned him about Abel, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' as if he would say, Go look. Fourthly, It divided tongue from tongue at the building of Babel; that when one called for brick, his fellow brings him mortar; and when he spake of coming down, the other falls a-removing the ladder. Fifthly, It divided the heart from itself: 'They spake with a double heart,' Ps. xii. 2. The original is, 'A heart and a heart:' one for the church, another for the change; one for Sundays, another for working days; one for the king, another for the Pope. A man without a heart is a wonder, but a man with two hearts is a monster. It is said of Judas, There were many hearts in one man; and we read of the saints, There was one heart in many men, Acts iv. 32. *Daba illis cor unum*; a special blessing.

Now this division of heart is intolerable in a magistrate; when he plies his own cause under the pretence of another's, and cares not who lose, so he be a gainer. St Jerome calls this *cor male locatum*; for many have hearts, but not in their right places. *Cor habet in ventre gulosus, lascivus in libidine, cupidus in lucris*. Naturally, if the heart be removed from the proper seat, it instantly dies. The eye unsted from the head, cannot see; the foot sundered from the body, cannot go: so spiritually, let the heart be uncentred from Christ, it is dead. Thus the coward is said to have his heart at his heel, the timorous hath his heart at his mouth, the envious hath his heart in his eyes, the prodigal hath his heart in his hand, the fool hath his heart in his tongue, the covetous locks it up in his chest. He that knows the hearts of all men will not choose a divided or misplaced heart.

[2.] *Cor lapideum*, a hard or stony heart. This is *ingratum ad beneficia, infidum ad consilia, inverecondum ad turpia, inhumanum ad bona, temerarium ad omnia*. A rock, which all the floods of that infinite sea of God's mercies and judgments cannot soften; a stithy, that is still the harder for beating. It hath all the properties of a stone: it is as cold as a stone, as heavy as a stone, as hard as a stone, as senseless as a stone. No persuasions can heat it, no prohibitions can stay it, no instructions can teach it, no compassions can mollify it. Were it of iron, it might be wrought; were it of lead, it might be molten, and cast into some better form; were it of earth, it might be tempered to another fashion; but being stone, nothing remains but that it be broken. What was Pharaoh's greatest plague? Was it the murrain of beasts? Was it the plague of boils? Was it the destruction of the fruits? Was it the turning of their rivers into blood? Was it the striking of their first-born with death? No; though all these plagues were grievous, yet one was more grievous than all—*cor durum*, his hard heart. He that knows all hearts, knows how ill this would be in a magistrate; a heart which no cries of orphans, no tears of widows, no mourning of the oppressed, can melt into pity. From such a heart, good Lord, deliver us!

[3.] *Cor cupidum*, a covetous heart, the desires whereof are never filled.

A handful of corn put to the whole heap increaseth it; yea, add water to the sea, it hath so much the more; but 'he that loveth silver shall never be satisfied with silver,' Eccles. v. 10. One desire may be filled, but another comes. *Crescet amor nummī, quantum ipsa pecunia crescit.* Natural desires are finite, as thirst is satisfied with drink, and hunger with meat. But unnatural desires be infinite: as it fares with the body in burning fevers, *quo plus sunt potæ, plus sitiuntur aquæ*; so it is in the covetous heart, *ut cum possideat plurima, plura petat.* Grace can never fill the purse nor wealth the heart.

This vice is in all men iniquity, but in a magistrate blasphemy; the root of all evil in every man, the rot of all goodness in a great man. It leaves them, like those idols in the Psalms, neither eyes to see, nor ears to hear, but only hands to handle. Such men will transgress for handfuls of barley and morsels of bread; and a very dram of profit put into the scale of justice turns it to the wrong side. There is not among all the charms of hell a more damnable spell to enchant a magistrate than the love of money. This 'turns judgment into wormwood,' or at least into vinegar; for if injustice do not make it bitter as wormwood, yet shifts and delays will make it sour as vinegar. Oh, how sordid and execrable should bribes be to them, and stink worse in their nostrils than Vespasian's tribute of urine! Let them not only bind their own hands, and the hands of their servants, that may take, but even bind the hands of them that would offer. He that useth integrity doth the former, but he that constantly professeth integrity doth the latter. It is not enough to avoid the fault, but even the suspicion. It is some discredit to the judge, when a client with his bribe comes, to be denied; for if his usual carriage had given him no hope of speeding, he would not offer. A servant that is a favourite or inward gives suspicion of corruption, and is commonly thought but a by-way; some postern or back-door for a gift to come in when the broad fore-gates are shut against it. This makes many aspire to offices and great places, not to do good, but to get goods; as some love to be stirring the fire, if it be but to warm their own fingers. Whatsoever affairs pass through their hands, they crook them all to their own ends; and care not what becomes of the public good, so they may advance their own private: and would set their neighbour's house on fire and it were but to roast their own eggs. Let them banish covetousness with as great a hatred as Amnon did Tamar: first thrust it out of their hearts, then shut and lock the door after it; for the covetous heart is none of them that God chooseth.

(2.) Next let us see what kind of hearts God will choose; and they be furnished with these virtues fit for a magistrate:—

[1.] There is *cor sapiens*, a wise heart; and this was Solomon's suit, 'an understanding heart,' 1 Kings iii. 9. He saw he had power enough, but not wisdom enough; and that royalty without wisdom was no better than an eminent dishonour, a very calf made of golden ear-rings. There is no trade of life but a peculiar wisdom belongs to it, without which all is tedious and unprofitable; how much more to the highest and busiest vocation, the government of men! An ignorant ruler is like a blind pilot; who shall save the vessel from ruin?

[2.] *Cor patiens*, a meek heart; what is it to discern the cause, and not to be patient of the proceedings? The first governor that God set over his Israel was Moses, a man of the meekest spirit on earth. How is he fit to govern others, that hath not learned to govern himself? He that cannot rule a boat upon the river is not to be trusted with steering a vessel on the ocean. Nor yet must this patience degenerate into cowardliness: Moses,

that was so meek in his own cause, in God's cause was as resolute. So there is also—

[3.] *Cor magnanimum*, a heart of fortitude and courage. The rules and squares that regulate others are not made of lead or soft wood, such as will bend or bow. The principal columns of a house had need be heart of oak. A timorous and flexible magistrate is not fit for these corrupt times. If either threatenings can terrify him, or favour melt him, or persuasions swerve him from justice, he shall not want temptations. The brain that must dispel the fumes ascending from a corrupt liver, stomach, or spleen, had need be of a strong constitution. The courageous spirit that resolves to do the will of heaven, what malignant powers soever would cross it on earth, is the heart that God chooseth.

[4.] There is *cor honestum*, an honest heart. Without this, courage will prove but legal injustice, policy but mere subtlety, and ability but the devil's anvil to forge mischiefs on. Private men have many curbs, but men in authority, if they fear not God, have nothing else to fear. If he be a simple dastard, he fears all men; if a headstrong commander, he fears no man: like that unjust judge that 'feared neither God nor man,' Luke xviii. 2. This is the ground of all fidelity to king and country—religion. Such was Constantine's maxim: 'He cannot be faithful to me that is unfaithful to God.' As this honourable place of the king's lieutenantship hath a sword-bearer, so the magistrate himself is the Lord's sword-bearer, saith St Paul, Rom. xiii. 4. And as he may never draw this sword in his private quarrel, so he must not let it be sheathed when God's cause calls for it. It is lenity and connivance that hath invited contempt to great places. Did justice carry a severer hand, they durst not traduce their rulers in songs and satires, the burden whereof will be their own shame. Magistrates are our civil fathers; and what deserve they but the curse of Ham, that lay open the nakedness of their fathers? When Alexander had conquered Darius, and casually found his slain body lying naked, he threw his own coat over him, saying, 'I will cover the destiny of a king.' It is God alone that 'casteth contempt upon princes;' which that he may not do, let them preserve *cor mundum*, a clean heart, not conscious of ill demerits.

Such a one sits on the judgment-seat as one that never forgets that he must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. So he executeth justice, as never losing the sense of mercy; so he sheweth mercy, as not offering violence to justice. He can at once punish the offence and pity the offender. He remembers his oath, and fears to violate it: to an enemy he is not cruel, to a friend he will not be partial. And if ever he have but once cut the skirt of justice, as David the lap of Saul's garment, his heart smites him for it. He minds no other clock on the bench but that of his own conscience. He will not offend the just, nor afford a good look to varlets; nor yet doth he so disregard their persons as to wrong their causes. He will maintain piety, but not neglect equity. In court, he looks not before him on the person, nor about him on the beholders, nor behind him for bribes; nay, he will not touch them in his closet or chamber, lest the timber and stones in the wall should witness against him. So he helps the church, that the commonwealth be no loser; so he looks to the commonwealth, that the church may not be wronged. The lewd fear him, the good praise him, the poor bless him; he hath been a father to orphans, a husband to distressed widows. Many prayers are laid up for him in heaven; and when he dies, they, with the assistance of angels, shall bear him up to blessedness.

(3.) Lastly, Let us see why God will choose men by the heart. I deny not

but wisdom and courage, moderation and patience, are all requisite concurrences ; but the heart is the *primum mobile*, that sets all the wheels agoing, and improves them to the right end. When God begins to make a man good, he begins at the heart : as nature in forming, so God in reforming, begins there. As the eye is the first that begins to die, and the last that begins to live, so the heart is the first that lives, and the last that dies. It is said of the spider that in the morning, before she seeks out for her prey, she mends her broken web, and in doing that, she always begins in the midst. Before we pursue the profits and baits of this world, let us first amend our life ; and when we undertake this, let us be sure to begin at the heart. The heart is the fort or citadel in this little isle of man ; let us fortify that, or all will be lost. And as naturally the heart is first in being, so here the will (which is meant by the heart) is chief in commanding. The centurion's servants did not more carefully obey him, when he said to one, 'Go, and he goeth ; to another, Come, and he cometh ; to a third, Do this, and he doeth it,' Matt. viii. 9, than all the members observe the heart. If it say to the eye, See, it seeth ; to the ear, Hear, it hearkeneth ; to the tongue, Speak, it speaketh ; to the foot, Walk, it walketh ; to the hand, Work, it worketh. If the heart lead the way to God, not a member of the body, not a faculty of the soul, will stay behind. As when the sun ariseth in the morning, birds rise from their nests, beasts from their dens, and men from their beds. They all say to the heart, as the Israelites did to Joshua, 'All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us we will go : only the Lord be with thee,' Josh. i. 16. Therefore the penitent publican 'smote his heart,' Luke xviii. 13, as if he would call up that to call up all the rest. It cannot command and go without.

No part of man can sin without the heart ; the heart can sin without all the rest. The wolf goes to the flock, purposing to devour a lamb, and is prevented by the vigilancy of the shepherd ; yet *lupus exit, lupus regreditur*,—he went forth a wolf, and comes home a wolf. The heart intends a sin which is never brought into action, yet it sins in that very intention. The hand cannot offend without the heart, the heart can offend without the hand. The heart is like a mill : if the wind or water be violent, the mill will go whether the miller will or not ; yet he may choose what kind of grain it shall grind, wheat or darnel. If the affections be strong and passionate, the heart may be working ; yet the Christian, by grace, may keep out lusts, and supply it with good thoughts.

The heart is God's peculiar, the thing he especially cares for : 'My son, give me thy heart,' and good reason, for I gave my own Son's heart to death for it. *Non minus tuum, quia meum*,—It is not less thine for being mine ; yea, it cannot be thine comfortably unless it be mine perfectly. God requires it principally, but not only ; give him that, and all the rest will follow. He that gives me fire needs not be requested for light and heat, for they are inseparable. *Non corticis, sed cordis Deus*,*—God doth not regard the rind of the lips, but the root of the heart. It was the oracle's answer to him that would be instructed which was the best sacrifice, *Da medium luncæ, solem simul, et canis iram* ; which three characters make cor, the heart. Man's affection is God's hall ; man's memory, his library ; man's intellect, his privy chamber ; but his closet, sacrary, or chapel, is the heart. So St Augustine glosseth the *Patroster* : *qui es in cælis*,—which art in heaven ; that is, in a heavenly heart.

All outward works a hypocrite may do, only he fails in the heart ; and

* Ambr.

because he fails there, he is lost everywhere. Let the flesh look never so fair, the good caterer will not buy it if the liver be specked. Who will put that timber into the building of his house which is rotten at the heart? Man judgeth the heart by the works; God judgeth the works by the heart. All other powers of man may be suspended from doing their offices, but only the will; that is, the heart. Therefore God will excuse all necessary defects, but only of the heart. The blind man cannot serve God with his eyes, he is excused; the deaf cannot serve God with his ears, he is excused; the dumb cannot serve God with his tongue, he is excused; the cripple cannot serve God with his feet, he is excused; but no man is excused for not serving God with his heart. *Deus non respicit quantum homo valet, sed quantum velit.* St Chrysostom seemed to be angry with the Apostle for saying, 'Behold, we have left all, and followed thee,' Matt. xix. 27. What have you left? An angle, a couple of broken nets, and a weather-beaten fish-boat; a fair deal to speak of! But at last he corrects himself, 'I cry you mercy, St Peter: you have forsaken all' indeed; for he truly leaves all that leaves *quod vel capit mundus, vel cupit*,—that takes his heart from the world, and gives it to Christ.

All other faculties of man apprehend their objects when they are brought home to them; only the will, the heart, goes home to the object. Colour must come to the eye, before it can see it; sound to the ear, before it can hear it; the object to be apprehended is brought home to the understanding, and past things are recollected to the memory, before either can do her office. But the heart goes home to the object. *Ubi thesaurus, ibi cor*,—Not where the heart is, there will be the treasure; but where the treasure is, there will be the heart.

'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,' Matt. v. 8. Of all, the pure heart is beholden to God, and shall one day behold God. Therefore David prays, *Cor mundum crea in me, Deus*,—'Create in me a clean heart, O God,' Ps. li. 10. The Lord rested from the works of his creation the seventh day; but so dearly he loves clean hearts, that he rests from creating them no day. As Jehu said to Jehonadab, *Est tibi cor rectum*,—'Is thy heart right?' 2 Kings x. 15; then give me thy hand, 'come up into my chariot': so this is God's question, Is thy heart upright? then give me thy hand, ascend my triumphant chariot, the everlasting glory of heaven.

To conclude; because there is such difference of hearts, and such need of a good one, they put it to him that knows them all, and knows which is best of all. For howsoever nature knows no difference, nor is there any, *quorum præcordia Titan de meliore tuto finxit*; yet in regard of grace, the sanctified heart is of purer metal than common ones. A little living stone in God's building is worth a whole quarry of the world. One honest heart is better than a thousand other: the richest mine and the coarsest mould have not such a disproportion of value. Man often fails in his election; God cannot err. The choice here was extraordinary, by lots; yours is ordinary, by suffrages: God's hand is in both.

Great is the benefit of good magistrates: that we may sit under our own vines, go in and out in peace, eat our bread in safety, and (which is above all) lead our lives in honest liberty; for all this we are beholden, under God, to the magistrate, first the supreme, then the subordinate. They are trees, under whose branches the people build and sing, and bring up their young ones in religious nurture. That 'silence in heaven about half an hour,' Rev. viii., when the 'golden vials were filled with sweet odours,' and the prayers

of the saints ascended as pillars of smoke and incense, is referred by some to the peace of the church under Constantine. It is the king of Mexico's oath, when he takes his crown, *Justitiam se administraturum, effecturum ut sol cursum teneat, nubes pluant, rivi currant, terra producat fructus*.—That he will minister justice, he will make the sun hold his course, the clouds to rain, the rivers to run, and the earth to fructify. The meaning is, that the upright and diligent administration of justice will bring all these blessings of God upon a country.

If we compare this city with many in foreign parts, how joyfully may we admire our own happiness! Those murders and massacres, rapes and constuprations, and other mischiefs, that be there as common as nights, be rare with us. I will not say that all our people are better than theirs; I dare say, our government is better than theirs. Merchants make higher use, and are more glad of, calm seas than common passengers. So should Christians more rejoice in peace than can the heathen; because they know how to improve it to richer ends—the glory of God, and salvation of their own souls. Proceed, ye grave and honourable senators, in your former approved courses, to the suppressing of vice and disorders, and to the maintenance of truth and peace among us. It is none of the least renown of this famous city, the wisdom and equity of the governors. To repeat the worthy acts done by the Lords Mayors of London were fitter for a chronicle; they are too large for a sermon.

But it is high time to bless you with a dismissal, and to dismiss you with a blessing.* That Almighty God, 'that knows the hearts of all,' sanctify your hearts to govern, and ours to obey; that we all seeking to do good one to another, He may do good unto us all! To this blessed and eternal God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be all glory and praise for ever! Amen.

* This sermon is incomplete, the second head being left out.—Ed.