

A

S E R M O N

PREACHED UPON THE MUCH LAMENTED DEATH

OF OUR

LATE GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN

QUEEN MARY.

TO THE
MOST ILLUSTRIOUS
WILLIAM
DUKE OF BEDFORD.

May it please your Grace,

IN this season of grief that overspreads three kingdoms, I thought it not unbecoming me, to add one voice to the consort of mourners.

The universal goodness of the Queen's life, is attended with a sorrow of equal compass at her death. If we consider the causes of it, our sins, the just incentives of God's high displeasure, and the chain of fearful consequences that may ensue; what heart is such a frozen fountain as not to dissolve, and mix flowing tears with the current that will be permanent in times to come.

I have presumed to inscribe your Most Honourable Name in the following Sermon, knowing that notwithstanding the meanness of the composure, the subject of it will be very pleasing to your grace, as being the expression

of homage to the memory of the incomparable Princess, our Sovereign by a double title, by her resplendent virtues, and by her crown. I am

My Lord,

Your Grace's very Humble

and Obedient Servant,

WILLIAM BATES.


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S E R M O N, &c.



PSALM CII. 26, 27.

They shall perish, but thou shalt endure, yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them and they shall be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.



THIS Psalm was according to the judgment of the best interpreters composed during the captivity in Babylon: and in the former verses the prophet reflects sadly upon the church's afflicted state, and his own misery and mortality: verses 14, 23, 24. he extends his view to the ruinous prospect of the fabric of heaven and earth: they shall decay, and be destroyed, either in their substance, or qualities and use: perish by consuming, or be changed by a purifying fire. From this consideration he turns his thoughts to the immutable constancy and eternity of God, "but thou art the same;" thy compassionate favour and power never decline; "and thy years shall have no end." Upon this ground he raises his hope, that God will revive and restore his church; "the children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee."

The proposition that I shall discourse of is this,

That the unchangeable everlasting perfections of God are the sure foundation of the church's hope in its desolate state.

In the managing of it, I shall, First, consider the unchangeable perfections of God. Secondly, How they are the foundation of the church's hope.

I. In discoursing of the first head I shall premise, that the most sublime spirits in heaven cannot fully discover and comprehend the intimate and unsearchable perfections of God. "He dwells in that light which is inaccessible," the astonishing glory of his essence. How little then of his nature is known here? In the present state of union with the flesh, we cannot contemplate things purely spiritual without some material resemblances. Human knowledge and language begin by the senses, and in the ascent of the mind to the supreme region, we are constrained to make use of the most refined sensible representations of divine things, as rising steps, lest our thoughts, by their own weight, fall into gross matter.

The Holy Spirit in great condescension reveals God to us, in expressions suitable to our capacity and conception; but the understanding must be attentive to correct the imagination, that we may not offend his majesty, and lessen his glory. In the text, the eternity of God is set forth, "his years shall have no end:" and he is styled, "the ancient of days:" which signify the unequal spaces of transient time, and are proper only to created things that have a successive duration, and are metaphorically attributed to God. Eternity that is proper to God, is a duration permanent, indivisible, and wholly present in itself. All the numbers of motion and measures of time are comprehended and lost in the vastness of eternity, as a few drops of rain that fall into the immense ocean. It is said of God, "he is, and was, and is to come." Rev. 1. 4. There is no past or future in God, but with respect to his works. Our Saviour declares, "I am the first, and the last;" wherein he attributes to himself a perfection truly and manifestly divine.

The absolute immutability of the divine nature is by a comparison declared in scripture: God is styled, "The Father of lights, in whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of change." Isa. 44. 6. The great luminary of heaven has various aspects, and appearances in its rising and meridian, and setting; is

changeable in its approaches and recesses from whence different shadows are cast : but the Father of lights has an invariable tenour of glory, he is without motion and mutation. God is absolutely exempt from all change in his nature, and from all accidental change. The reason of this is evident from the consideration of his necessary self-existence, and from the absolute simplicity of his being. Self-existence is the intrinsical property of God's nature : he defines himself by it, " I am that I am." Exod. 3. He directs Moses to tell the Israelites, " I am hath sent me unto you." This and the wonder working rod were his credentials to authorize and dignify him in their esteem, and to induce them to believe his message. Jehovah, which is the same with I am, is the essential, supreme, and singular name of God, whereby he is distinguished from all created beings : it exhibits the clearest character of the Deity. There are other divine titles that signify particular attributes, but Jehovah declares his being from himself, independent upon any cause ; his necessary eternal nature the root (if I may so speak) from which his perfections spring and flourish. All other things are from his causality ; every spark of life, every degree of being is from him : but the most excellent creatures compared to him, are but as dark shadows without reality. Therefore God assumes to himself, " I am, and there is none besides me." It is said the whole world compared to him, " is like a drop of the bucket to the sea, or the dust of the balance to the globe of the earth ; nay, is less than nothing." There is a greater distance between God and the angels, than between the angels and their native nothing : for they have derived, and dependant, limited beings, but God is all perfection, all greatness and goodness from himself.

This necessary self-existence of God is the foundation of his immutability : thus he declares, " I am the Lord Jehovah, I change not." Mal. 3. 6. he is necessarily and eternally himself, and all that he is, without the least change for a moment. Absolute necessity of existence invincibly infers the infinity of existence : for the limits of any being are determined by the productive cause of it. Of created beings some excel in one thing, some in another, according to the will of the Maker. Every change in the substance of things is either perfective or corruptive, and both are equally impossible in God. For nothing can

accrue to infinite perfection, and nothing can be wanting to it. Any accession to his excellency implies, there was a defect before, if any impairing, there would be a defect afterward: from hence it follows, either that he was not God before, or that he shall cease to be God afterward, it being absolutely impossible that any perfection be wanting in the true God.

The absolute simplicity of the divine nature does infer the immutability of it. It is true the perfections of God are expressed by different titles, and are apprehended by us under different conceptions, yet they are all the same infinite nature. There is no composition and mixture of wisdom, and power, and goodness in God, but he is all perfection in the unity of his essence.

Eternity is a resultance from his independent nature: for we cannot conceive of a being necessary in itself, but it must be eternal; "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God." Whatever is made is perishable, either from the principles of its composition, as the bodies of animals, which being made of jarring elements, die by natural expiration, or may be destroyed. The angels, though spiritual substances, are mortal to God, he can by a word annihilate them: nay, their immortality depends upon his power, the productive and conservative cause of their beings. 1 Tim. 6. He only has immortality, the inseparable perfection of his nature, and bestows it upon others.

The eternity of God is inseparably connexed with his immutability: for that being that cannot change, cannot cease to be. These attributes infer and illustrate one another. Those things which time bestows, it takes away: flowers that are of a springing accomplishment, gradually wither: but the sun shone with as much lustre and force the first day as ever since, and continues in its perfection. God was from eternity, and therefore is always the same in himself. He is not more powerful when he works, nor wise when he governs, nor more just when he punishes, nor more good when he bestows his benefits. The immutability of the divine nature is proper to every perfection: I will mention some of them.

The divine wisdom is so perfect there can be no addition to it. From eternity it fixed the best end of all things, the glory of the Creator; and appointed the fittest means to obtain it. His all-discerning eye with one imperious view comprehends all

events necessary and contingent. He sees all real effects, and all possible in himself: for he perfectly understands his own power, and his own will. To his co-eternal knowledge nothing is passed, or to come: nothing occurs new, or appears old.

The divine power is not capable of accession or diminution. "In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." It is a perfection inseparably inherent in his nature: "O Lord be exalted in thine own power. The Lord's arm is not shortened:" Psal. 21. without the least strain of his power he can do all things. We have a constant visible demonstration of the unchangeableness of these attributes: for the same infinite wisdom and power are requisite to manage the world as to make it. Without his directing light and supporting power, that frame of the world would disband, and the full harmony of it be turned into confusion. "He upholds all things by the word of his power." Heb. 11. The manner of sustaining and governing this great world, is as divine as the thing itself. For no less than infinite power can do things by a commanding word.

"The mercy of God endures for ever." This is renewed every morning and moment: it is from his never-failing compassions that we do not fail. This is our continual advocate to deprecate the evils we deserve, and obtains all good things for us. It is mercy supports and sweetens our lives, that are so frail, and so often forfeited. The unwasted treasure of mercy supplies our wants, satisfies our desires, allays our sorrows. The divine mercy vanquishes our fears, comforts us in the hour of death, and crowns us after it with everlasting life.

The holiness of God, the brightest ornament of his essence, is unchangeable: "it is without spot or wrinkle," that may stain its absolute purity. This is the radical, fundamental rule of order in the divine government. It is as impossible the will of God should decline from moral good, as that his understanding should not discern it. From hence our Saviour declares, "That heaven and earth shall pass away before the law shall be abolished." If the pillars of heaven should fall, and the foundations of the earth be overturned, there would be no loss to God: for by one act of his will he can create a new world; but if the law, the copy of his holiness, were altered or abrogated, it would be an imputation upon his holy nature, as if

it were arbitrary and mutable, and consequently he should cease to be God.

Briefly. Divine immutability is the full and constant state of perfections in the Deity. And the blessedness of God, that consists in the fruition of himself, has a necessary connexion with this attribute. Immutability is the ground that supports it, and the perfection that crowns it.

II. The church's hope in its extremity, is supported by the unchangeable perfections of his nature that establish his covenant with his people. It is styled, "an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure." This will be evident by considering the immutability of his counsels and decrees, and of his words and promises.

1. His counsels and decrees that concern the recovery of the church from its despised and desolate state. The unchangeable perfections of his nature are the foundation of his unchangeable decrees: for there can be no change of them from within, and no controlling of them from without. The perfection of his knowledge is such, that he can never be surprised with a sudden new event, that should induce him to alter them: and his power that is truly infinite will effect them. His decrees are expressed to be the "counsel of his will;" those determinations being most complete that are the product of counsel. There are no temporary decrees that begin upon an unforeseen emergency, for it would then follow, there were a change in God: but they were "before the foundation of the world," and shall be accomplished in real effects, either immediately by his own power, or by secondary means. "The counsel of the Lord shall stand." The decree of election, the original spring of all the good his people enjoy or expect, is of infallible accomplishment. It is the observation of * St. Austin, that although the number of the elect shall not be actually complete till the end of time, yet the apostle speaks of eternal predestination, as if it were finally accomplished already: "Whom he predestinated, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he jus-

* *Adbuc usque in finem seculi multiplicandi & justificandi sunt: tamen verba præteriti temporis posuit de rebus etiam futuris, tanquam jam fecerit Deus, quæ jam ut fierent, ex æternitate disposuit.*

tified, them he also glorified." For his eternal will, the product of his eternal love, can never be frustrated.

2. His "word endures for ever:" 2 Pet. 1. it is more stable than the centre. "The strength of Israel cannot lie; for he is not a man that he should repent." 1 Sam. 15. 29. The immutability of his nature gives firmness to his counsels, they are un-retractable, and fidelity to his promises, they are inviolable. The apostle confirms believers in "the hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised." His truth is an attribute so glorious to him, that in the solemn proclaiming of him to the Israelites, it is peculiarly mentioned and placed next to the Deity, "The Lord thy God is God, the faithful God, that keeps covenant and mercy." Deut. 7. It is so sacred and dear to him, "that he magnifies his word above all his name." Therefore he revealed himself by the name Jehovah to Moses, which implied, he would be the same in performing as he was in promising; and accordingly by the miraculous strokes of his power delivered his people from the bondage of Egypt. This is the ground of the psalmist's confidence, "Thou O Lord shalt endure for ever, and thy remembrance unto all generations. Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Sion, for the time to favour her, the set time is come." Psal. 102. From the immutability of the essence of God, he infers the constancy of his promises, which declared by his prophets the fixed time of their restoration.

In short, by the covenant of God, his church is received into communion with him, and because he lives, it is impossible they should perish. In this the force of our Saviour's argument consists against the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection: "that Jehovah was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," therefore they should be raised to a glorious immortality.

The Application of the Point.

From hence we may understand the reason of the supreme and solemn adoration that all intelligent creatures are obliged to pay to God; it is for the absolute and unchangeable perfection of his nature, whereby he is infinitely superior and separate from all created beings. There are different degrees of excellency in the creatures, but in comparison with God they all

vanish and are equally nothing. As if one should be raised to the region of the stars, and cast a look down on the earth, the highest mountains with the vallies would appear an equal plain. God's incommunicable name is, "I am;" he is alone from himself infinite and immortal, and in propriety of speech he only is: all other beings are derived and dependant on him, and have but a countenance and shadow of being.

Let us consider men and angels, that in nature are more excellent than other creatures. The first man in the perfection of paradise was mutable, his natural life was in a continual flux, and to be preserved by the fruits of the garden. If he had persevered in his obedience, after a short immortality on earth, he had ascended to heaven alive in his entire person, but he must have been changed in his ascension, "for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven." He had strength to stand, but was free to fall: and that freedom to evil was a branch of imperfection. There is a woful proof of this in his rebellious disobedience, for which he lost more in a day than his progeny can recover to all ages. The angels are superior spirits, yet "they were charged with folly," that is, a slipperiness and mutability from which God alone is entirely exempt. The elect angels, who continued faithful when such mighty numbers were false, and deserted their duty, (and fell from their original purity and glory) are not absolutely unchangeable: their confirmation and stability is from the continual irradiations and influences of divine grace, that preserve their minds from error, and their wills from irregular desires, and consequently they cannot sin, nor forfeit their felicity; for all sin proceeds from error in the mind, and disorder in the will.

In the perfection of glory the angels are not without change; their understandings and wills are variously tintured and coloured by diversity of objects: their minds are illustrated with new discoveries of the divine counsels in their gradual accomplishment. The apostle tells us, "unto principalities and powers is made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." Eph. 3. 10. With the intellectual change their wills receive new impressions of joy. At the incarnation of our Saviour a chorus of angels sang with celestial harmony. "Glory to God on high, on earth peace, good will towards men." Luke 15. At the conversion of a sinner there is new joy among those

blessed spirits : but the blessed God is always the same. It is from the consideration of God's peerless excellencies that the glorious seraphims are for ever in a posture of lowest reverence before the throne, and magnify him by the transcendent title that separates him from all creatures of the highest order, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts : the earth is full of thy glory." The most proper affection due to that infinitely excelling object, is admiration mixed with humble fear.

2. This should confirm our trust "in God at all times." The psalmist's induction is from hence, "Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. The children, of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee." We will consider this security of the church in the present and future state.

1st. While the church is in this lower world the sphere of mutability. The first sin of Adam opened a passage to innumerable evils, that either oppress us, or are impendent over us : "Man at his best estate is altogether vanity:" Psal. 39. not only when languishing and wasting by diseases, when afflicted by disasters, but in his fairest flower and best vigour. Nay, the higher his exaltations in this world, the more he is exposed to the storms of mutability. How shall man, a creature so impotent and apprehensive of dangers, compose the disorder of his passions? How shall he support his spirit in an unsafe and unquiet condition? The present world, as it is insufficient for our satisfaction, so it cannot afford us protection : it cannot fill the immensity of our desires, nor extend to the eternity of our duration, nor preserve us from afflictions here. The seeming felicity here is like a feast in an empty dream, mere imaginary food, and vanishes in a little while. What then can quiet our fears under imminent evils? what can revive and support our hopes in our distress and exigencies but the unchangeable God, whose love, and power, and truth, are everlasting? Therefore we are encouraged "to trust in the Lord for ever, because in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." He sits in heaven, his throne is unshaken, when things below are whirled about in a vertiginous circle. Creatures may promise us relief in our troubles, but they are so false or fading, that we shall be deceived in our reliance on them, and disappointment will increase our vexa-

tion; yet our carnal constitution strongly inclines us to depend upon them, either for the obtaining what we desire, or for the preventing what we fear: the reason is, because we see things with the eyes of flesh, and accordingly esteem their strength and sufficiency as it is visible to us. Therefore we are so often directed "not to put our trust in princes, nor in the sons of men, in whom there is no help: his breath goeth forth, he returns to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish. They are distinguished from others in the quality of living, but are under the same hard and inflexible necessity of dying. They cannot retain one ray of the superficial lustre of their crowns, to enlighten the dark shadow of death: they carry no relics of majesty into the next world, to impress a reverence upon others. "All flesh is grass, and the glory of it as the flower of grass: the grass withers, and the flowers thereof fade; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever." God is our living strength, a sure refuge to which we may fly in our extremities. He can compose a raging world, or preserve his church in it, as he did the ark in the universal deluge. The prophet alledges this reason of his confidence, "Art not thou from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine holy one? we shall not die." And accordingly the prophet Jeremiah argues; "Thou O Lord remainest for ever, thy throne is from generation to generation! Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever, and forsake us so long time?" Lam. 5. 19, 20.

2dly. In the next state we shall be unchangeably happy in his influxive presence. Here there are many vicissitudes, strange and sudden prosperity and adversity, riches and poverty, health and sickness in the circulation of time succeed one another: as in a voyage, the change of the winds, sometimes a storm, and after a calm, the unquiet agitation of the ship, the sickness of the passengers, are accidents that happen to those who sail in the ocean: but when they arrive at the port, all is at an end. Thus when we shall come to heaven, all the variations of time shall end in a permanent stable state: our blessedness shall exceed all our desires, and exclude all our fears: it shall be complete and surrounded with eternity. "There God is all in all."

The text I have been discoursing of, is very applicable to the

occasion; for we are instructed by very afflicting experience how fallacious our hopes are, that depend upon dying creatures. The excellent queen, from whose inclination and power the kingdom expected such diffusive good, and for a long continuance, was in the prime and vigour of her age taken from us.

How convincingly verified are the words of the wise preacher, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. Those who are styled gods by deputation and vicegerency, and children of the Most High, shall die like men:" Psal. 82. 6, 7. they are made of the same frail materials, and liable to the same accidents with the lowest of the people.

That we may have a due sense of our heavy loss, I shall endeavour sincerely and briefly to represent what she was, and what a blessing we enjoyed in her government.

I know that the praising of the dead is usually suspected to be guilty of flattery, either in disguising their real faults, or in adorning them with counterfeit virtues, and such praises are pernicious to the living. The temptation to excess in this kind is never so dangerous as in the funeral encomiums of princes. The most regular discretion is requisite in managing such subjects: flaunting language, and high sounding words the more poetical, are less persuasive, for they seem to proceed from a vain ostentation of eloquence. The discovery of the paint of art in a funeral sermon defeats the end of it, for it lessens the credit of the speaker, and the esteem of the person spoken of. The suspicion that more is said than is true, induces a thought that there is less praise-worthy than there is. But when the excellent goodness of a person in a uniform tenor of life was illustriously visible, the naked narrative of her actions will be a more effectual amplification of her worth and praise, than the most lively and graceful colours of language can impart.

Before I proceed, it is necessary to consider two acts of divine providence concerning the queen, that are eminently observable, and were principal ingredients in our miraculous deliverance.

The first is, that she was not early engaged in the belief and practice of popery, a religion so contrary to reason and divine revelation. Children before they come to the free exercise of reason, are very receptive of the first impressions: especially the instruction of parents enter with authority and efficacy into the

minds, and more especially if they partake from them as the secondary authors, not only life, but high honour and riches. There is the clearest evidence of this, for in all nations children receive their religion from the quality of their parents. Now it is truly wonderful, that the queen's father being so amorous of his religion, did not take the season of instilling it into her, before she could with understanding make a choice of it. It increases the wonder, in that the priests were attendants in his court, who being deeply struck with superstition, are watchful to take all advantages to propagate it. If she had been tainted with it, how unhappy had it been to herself, how pernicious to others? "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?" Popery is a religion that begins in inward darkness, and leads to utter darkness. If her mind had been prepossessed with so dangerous errors, how hard to have represented truth convincingly to her? The wool that has imbibed a dark tincture, can never receive a lighter colour: the change of inclinations that are deeply set in the will is very hard, and the change of opinions concerning religion that have first possessed the mind, is equally if not more difficult. How pernicious had it been to others? For the corrupting the mind of a royal person with a false religion, is like poisoning a public fountain, that conveys infection abroad. How admirable was the preventing mercy of God, that as soon as she was capable, she was instructed in the knowledge of the saving truth; and that her mind and heart were so firm and fixed in it, that she was neither seduced nor terrified from it. This preventing grace was an illustrious mark of her election.

2. The disposal of her in marriage to a prince of the reformed religion, raised by God to oppose the proud aspirer, and check the current of his fury, who usurps the glory of heaven, and breaks the peace of the earth; who arrogates a sovereignty over conscience, and has compelled such vast numbers to abjure the truth: whose infamous ambition has turned Europe into a stage of bloody confusion. Our serenity and tranquillity, the flourishing of peace and truth, are from the benevolent aspect and favourable influence of these two bright stars in conjunction.

I shall in speaking of this excellent queen, not insist on the privileges in the order of nature that eminently distinguished her

from others. Her descent was royal: but this is only an external circumstance, and derives no moral value to a person. The splendour of extraction, like varnish in a picture that gives more life and lustre to the colours, makes the virtues or the vices of a person more conspicuous.

Her body was the beautiful temple of a fairer soul: her graceful presence inspired reverence and love in those who saw her, and appeared worthy of empire. But visible beauty is often joined with foul deformity in the same person.

I shall begin with her piety towards God. This is the first duty of man in order and dignity, and the most considerable in its consequences: it is the foundation of all royal virtues. In the public worship of God, she was a bright example of solemn and unaffected devotion. She prayed with humble reverence, heard the word with respectful silence, and with serious application of spirit, as duly considering the infinite interval between the supremacy of heaven and princes on earth: that their greatness in its lustre is but a faint and vanishing reflection of the divine majesty. One instance I shall specify in this kind: when her residence was at the Hague, a lady of noble quality coming to the court to wait on her on a saturday in the afternoon, was told she was retired from all company, and kept a fast in preparation for the receiving the sacrament the next day. The lady staying till five o'clock, the princess came out, and contented herself with a very slender supper, it being incongruous to conclude a fast with a feast. Thus solemnly she prepared herself for spiritual communion with her Saviour. When Moses was surpris'd at the sight of the flaming bush, and intended to come near to it, he was warn'd by a voice from heaven, "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place wherein thou standest is holy ground." By the familiar figure of putting off the shoes, is signified the purifying ourselves from all defilements. And certainly the presence of the Son of God is more peculiar in that sacred mysterious ordinance, than it was in the burning bush; accordingly we should sanctify ourselves, and approach with holy fear.

Her religion was not confined to the chapel, but every day she had chosen hours for communion with God, of which he is the only discernor and rewarder. Some that are high in the world, think it sufficient to pay a complimentary visit to God

once a week, and content themselves with the external service, though destitute of holy affections, which are the life of religion, or at best are satisfied with a few expiring acts of devotion : but the good queen's conversation was in heaven, she was constant in those duties wherein the soul ascends to God by solemn thoughts and ardent desires, and God descends into the soul by the excitations and influences of his Spirit.

Her religion was not only exercised in divine worship, but was influential into her practice. 'The law of God was written in her heart, and transcribed in her life in the fairest characters.'

She had a sincere zeal for the healing our unhappy divisions in religious things, and declared her resolution upon the first address of some ministers, that she would use all means for that blessed end. She was so wise as to understand the difference between matters doctrinal, and rituals ; and so good as to allow a just liberty for dissenters in things of small moment. She was not fettered with superstitious scruples, but her clear and free spirit was for the union of christians in things essential to christianity. One thing I shall specify : which though small in itself, yet as an indication of the freedom of her mind, deserving remembrance. A person of eminent worth, who was in waiting, observing the disturbance that was made by bringing in the pulpit at the end of the service, represented to her that the fixing of the pulpit would prevent much disorder : but signified, that custom would be alledged, and the altering of it opposed as a novelty. To which the prudent queen replied, if it be convenient, the convenience of the alteration would continue, and the objection of novelty would vanish. This revives in me the sorrowful remembrance of the late excellent archbishop, though in place incomparably inferior to the queen ; their principles and temper, their designs and endeavours were for peace : and the hopes of obtaining it are weakened by the fatal conjuncture of their funerals.

The holiness of her life was universal. She was born and lived in the court that shines in pomp and flows in pleasures, and presents charming temptations to all the diseased appetites. Pride that destroyed both worlds, and cleaves so close to human nature, reigns there. The love of pleasure is a soft seducer, that easily insinuates through the senses, and captivates the soul.

It is an observation of St. Chrysostom that the preserving the three Hebrew martyrs unpolluted in the court of Babylon, was a greater miracle than the preserving them unsinged in the fiery furnace. In the absence of temptations the corrupt nature is sometimes so concealed that it is hardly known to itself; but when tempting objects armed with allurements offer themselves, the corrupt nature is presently discovered: especially if a person comes to the licence of the sceptre, that swells pride, and authorizes the exorbitant desires. To be humble in such a high elevation, to be temperate in the midst of the freest fruitions, is the effect of powerful grace. Who ever saw in the queen an appearance of pride and disdain? How graceful was the condescendence of her greatness? Who saw any disorder in her countenance, the chrysalis wherein the affections are visible? Her breast was like the pacific sea, that seldom suffers and is disturbed by a storm. She was so exempt from the tyranny of the angry passions, that we may have some conjecture of the felicity of the state of unstained innocence, of which one ray is so amiable. She was so abhorring from the sensual passions, that nothing impure durst approach her presence.

In her relation to the king she was the best pattern of conjugal love and obsequiousness. How happy was her society, redoubling his comforts, and dividing his cares? Her deportment was becoming the dignity and dearness of the relation. Of this we have the most convincing proof from the testimony and tears of the king since her death. Solomon adds to many commendations of a virtuous woman, as a coronis, that her husband praises her. The king's declaring, that in all her conversation he discovered no fault, and his unfeigned and deep sorrow for his loss, are the queen's entire elogy.

She had an excellent understanding that qualified her for government. Of this her presiding in council in times of danger, and preserving the tranquillity of the kingdom, were real proofs.

Her charity, that celestial grace, was like the sun, nothing within her circuit was hid from its refreshing heat. Love is the clearest notion we have of the Deity: "God is love." A prince in no perfection resembles God more than in his communicative goodness. I will mention one act of her pious charity, and the noble manner of doing it. A lord of great honour and

piety proposed to her a very good work that was chargeable: she ordered a hundred pounds should be paid to him for it. Some time interposing before the receipt of the money, he waited upon the queen, and pleasantly told her, that interest was due for the delay of payment: she presently ordered, that fifty pounds more should be given, which was done accordingly. If it were known what this good queen did, and what she designed to do, among all her reluctant virtues, charity would be illustrious.

Her wise redemption of time from unconcerning vanities for domestic affairs, was the effect and indication of her tender and vigilant conscience. She considered her glass was continually running, and all the sands were to be accounted for. How should this great example correct those who are lavish of nothing so much as of time; which, being lost, is irrecoverable? The sun returns every day, but time never returns.

In her sickness, 'Patience had its perfect work.' her disease was uncomfortable, yet with resigned submission she bore it. When the danger of it was signified to her, she had no fearful thoughts about her future state. It is a cruel respect to sick persons, especially to princes, to conceal from them their danger till death steals insensibly upon them. Indeed consider their past lives, and their present anxieties, the advice of approaching death is an anticipation of it. But the spirit of this excellent saint 'was not afraid of evil-tidings, but fixed, trusting in the Lord.' Her care had been to secure the love of God in the best time of her life, this mixed cordial drops in the bitterness of death.

In short, to finish my discourse, all the blessed virtues were eminently seen in her that might render her government an entire happiness to the kingdom. This erected her a throne in the hearts of her subjects: and the honour the wise poet attributes to the emperor Augustus:

*Victorque volentes
Per populos dat jura.*

That he ruled a willing people, may more truly be said of this excellent princess, she was queen of the affections of the people, and governed them without constraint. Her praiseworthy ac-

tions will eternize her memory, when other princes, divested of their secular pomp, shall either be buried in dark oblivion, or condemned in history.

The earthen vessel wherein all these treasures were deposited is broke, and the instructive providence should persuade us to look to our living strength, the blessed God, fixing our trust in him. He bestowed this rare instrument of his goodness: he can preserve his servant, our sovereign lord, who by the divine assistance has the honour of establishing our religion and liberties at home, and gives hope of restoring it abroad, from whence it has been so cruelly and perfidiously expelled.

THE
ADDRESS OF CONDOLENCE

TO

HIS MAJESTY,

BY THE DISSENTING MINISTERS.



May it please your Majesty,

THOUGH we come in the rear of the train of mourners, to pay our tributary tears for the invaluable loss in the death of your royal consort, and our most gracious Queen, yet our resentments of it are with as tender a sympathy as are in the breasts of any of your subjects. This gives the sharpest accent to our passions, that the considerations which are most proper and powerful to allay our sorrows, exasperate them: for while we remem-

ber what she was, how general and diffusive a blessing to three kingdoms, the severe stroke of providence in taking her from us, is most afflicting. Such a concurrence of high perfection shined in her person and actions, that would have made her illustrious in a low condition; and in her exalted station they were attractive of the eyes and admiration of all. Her mind was above the temptations that attend the throne. Majesty was mixed with that condescending humility, that tender and beneficent goodness, that she was easily accessible to all for their relief and support. Her piety and purity were so conspicuous, her affections were so composed and temperate, that the court, that is usually the centre of vanity and voluptuousness, became virtuous by the impression of her example. Her conversation was so regular, that her enemies (if goodness in such a bright eminency had any) could not fasten a taint upon her. Her royal endowment for government, wisdom, magnanimity, vigilance and care in managing affairs of state (without which the highest princes are but civil idols, useless and unprofitable to the world) these were in such a degree of excellency, that in your Majesty's constrained absence, while you were defending the interest of Christendom, against a

potent enemy abroad, with the sword of war, she sweetly ordered all things at home with the sceptre of peace. She is gone, and must return no more: O astonishing grief! But it becomes us with humble submission to acquiesce in the divine disposal. The will of God is always directed by infinite wisdom, and is the rule of goodness. We must refresh our sorrows with the hope that she is entered into her Saviour's joy, whom she imitated and honoured, and that she is made happy in the love of God and the light of his countenance for ever.

We humbly beseech your Majesty to accept the renewed assurances of our inviolable and constant fidelity, to your person and government; and that we shall influence all that are within our compass to persevere in their duty: we shall earnestly pray to the blessed God to keep you in the best protection, his encompassing favour, to support your spirit with divine comforts, and to continue long your precious life, so necessary for preserving the pure religion, and the civil rights of this kingdom.