

PART II.

Directions against Hardness of Heart.

IT is necessary that some Christians be better informed what hardness of heart is, who most complain of it. The metaphor is taken from the hardness of any matter which a workman would make an impression on; and it signifieth the passive and active resistance of the heart against the Word and works of God, when it receiveth not the impressions which the Word would make, and obeyeth not God's command; but after great and powerful means remaineth as it was before, unmoved, unaffected, and disobedient. So that hardness of heart is not a distinct sin, but the habitual power of every sin, or the deadness, unmoveableness, and obstinacy of the heart in any sin. So many duties and sins as there be, so many ways may the heart be hardened against the Word, which forbiddeth those sins, and commandeth those duties. It is therefore an error, that hath had very ill consequences on many persons, to think that hardness of heart is nothing but a want of passionate feeling in the matters which concern the the soul; especially a want of sorrow and tears. This hath made them over-careful for such tears, and grief, and passions, and dangerously to make light of many greater instances of the hardness of their hearts. Many beginners in religion (who are taken up in penitential duties) do think that all repentance is nothing but a change of opinion, except they have those passionate griefs and tears, which indeed would well become the penitent; and hereupon they take more pains with themselves to affect their hearts with sorrow for sin, and to wring out tears, than they do for many greater duties. But when God calleth them to love him, and to praise him, and to be thankful for his mercies; or to love an enemy, or forgive a wrong: when he calleth them to mortify their earthly-mindedness, their carnality, their pride, their passion, or their disobedience, they yield but little to his call, and shew here much greater hardness of heart, and yet little complain of this or take notice of it. I entreat you therefore to observe, that the greater the duty is, the worse it is to harden the heart against it; and the greater the sin is, the worse it is to harden the heart by ob-

stinacy in it. And that the greater duties are, the love of God and man, with a mortified and heavenly mind and life; and to resist God's Word commanding these, is the great and dangerous hardening of the heart. The life of grace lieth, 1. In the preferring of God, and heaven, and holiness, in the estimation of our minds before all worldly things. 2. In the choosing them, and resolving for them with our wills, before all others. 3. In the seeking of them in the bent and drift of our endeavours. These three make up a state of holiness. But for strength of parts, or memory, or expression, and so for passionate affections of sorrow, or joy, or the tears that express them; all these in their time, and place, and measure, are desirable, but not of necessity to salvation, or to the life of grace. They follow much the temperature of the body, and some have much of them that have little or no grace, and some want them that have much grace. The work of repentance consisteth most in loathing and falling out with ourselves for our sins, and in forsaking them with abhorrence, and turning unto God; and he that can do this without tears is truly penitent, and he that hath never so many tears, without this, is impenitent still^p. And that is the hard-hearted sinner, that will not be wrought to a love of holiness, nor let go his sin, when God commandeth him; but after all exhortations, and mercies, and perhaps afflictions, is still the same as if he had never been admonished, or took no notice what God hath been saying or doing to reclaim him. Having thus told you what hardness of heart is, you may see that I have given you Directions against it at large before Chap. III. Direct. VI. and VIII.; but shall add these few.

Direct. 1. 'Remember the majesty and presence of that most holy God, with whom we have to do.' Nothing will more affect and awe the heart, and overrule it in matters of religion, than the true knowledge of God. We will not talk sleepily or contemptuously to a king; how much less should we be stupid or contemptuous before the God of Heaven? It is that God whom angels worship, that sustaineth the world, that keepeth us in life, that is always present, observing all that we think, or say, or do, whose commands are upon us, and with whom we have to do in all things;

^p Non tamen ideo beatus est, quia patienter miser est. August. de Civit. l. 14. c. 25.

and shall we be hardened against his fear? "Who hath hardened himself against Him, and hath prospered?"

Direct. II. 'Think well of the unspeakable greatness and importance of those truths and things which should affect you, and of those duties which are required of you.' Eternity of joy or torment is such an amazing thing, that one would think every thought, and every mention either of it or of any thing that concerneth it, should go to our very hearts, and deeply affect us, and should command the obedience and service of our souls. It is true, they are things unseen, and therefore less apt in that respect to affect us than things visible; but the greatness of them should recompense that disadvantage a thousand fold. If our lives lay upon every word we speak, or upon every step we go, how carefully should we speak and go! But O how deeply should things affect us, in which our everlasting life is concerned! One would think a thing of so great moment, as dying, and passing into an endless life of pain or pleasure, should so take up and transport the mind of man, that we should have much ado to bring ourselves to mind, regard, or talk of the inconsiderable interests of the flesh! How inexcusable a thing is a senseless, careless, negligent heart, when God looketh on us, and heaven or hell is a little before us? Yea, when we are so heavily laden with our sins, and compassed about with so many enemies, and in the midst of such great and manifold dangers, to be yet senseless under all, is (so far) to be dead. Will not the wounds of sin, and the threatenings of the law, and the accusations of conscience, make you feel? He that cannot feel the prick of a pin will feel the stab of a dagger, if he be alive.

Direct. III. 'Remember how near the time is, when stupidity and senseless neglect of God will be banished from all the world; and what certain and powerful means are before you at death and judgment, to awaken and pierce the hardest heart.' There are but few that are quite insensible at death; there are none past feeling after death, in heaven or hell. No man will stand before the Lord in the day of judgment, with a sleepy or senseless heart. God

* Job ix. 4.

* Lento enim gradu ad vindictam sui divina procedit ira, tarditatemque supplicii gravitate componat. Valerius Max. de Dionys. lib. 1. c. 2. Bipont Ed. vol. 1. p. 14.

will recover your feeling by misery, if you will lose it by sin, and not recover it by grace. He can make you now a terror to yourselves[†]; he can make conscience say such things in secret to you, as you shall not be able to forget or slight. But if conscience awake you not, the approach of death it is likely will awaken you; when you see that God is now in earnest with you, and that die you must, and there is no remedy, will you not begin to think now, Whither must I go? and what will become of me for ever? Will you then harden your heart against God and his warnings? If you do, the first moment of your entrance upon eternity will cure your stupidity for ever. It will grieve a heart that is not stone, to think what a feeling stony-hearted sinners will shortly have, when God will purposely make them feel, with his wrathful streams of fire and brimstone! When satan, that now hindereth your feeling, will do his worst to make you feel; and conscience, the never-dying worm, will gnaw your hearts, and make them feel, without ease or hope of remedy. Think what a wakening day is coming!

Direct. iv. 'Think often of the love of God in Christ, and of the bloody sufferings of thy Redeemer,' for it hath a mighty power to melt the heart. If love, and the love of God, and so great and wonderful a love, will not soften thy hardened heart, what will?

Direct. v. 'Labour for a full apprehension of the evil and danger of a hardened heart.' It is the death of the soul, so far as it prevaleth: at the easiest, it is like the stupidity of a paralytic member or a seared part. Observe the names which Scripture giveth it. The "hardening of the heart". The "hardening of the neck[‡]," which signifieth inflexibility. The "hardening of the face[§]," which signifieth impudency. The "searedness of the conscience[¶]." The "impenitency of the heart[‡]." Sometimes it is called "sottishness," or "stupidity^b." Sometimes it is called a "not caring," or "not laying things to heart, and not regarding^c." Sometimes it is denominated metaphorically from inanimates, "A face harder than a rock^d." "Stony hearts^e." "A neck with an iron sinew, and a brow

[†] Jer. xx. 4.

[‡] Prov. xxi. 29.

^b Jer. iv. 22.

^d Jer. v. 3.

[‡] Prov. xxviii. 14.

[‡] 1 Tim. iv. 2.

^c Isa. xlii. 25. v. 12. xxxii. 9—14.

^e Esek. xi. 19. xxxvi. 26.

[§] Prov. xxix. 10.

[¶] Rom. ii. 5.

of brass^f." It is called "sleep," and a "deep slumber," and a "spirit of slumber^g," and "death" itself^h.

Observe also how dreadful a case it is, if it be predominant, both symptomatically and effectively. It is a forerunner of mischiefⁱ. It is a dreadful sign of one that is far more unlikely than others to be converted; when they are "alienated from the life of God by their ignorance," and are "past feeling," they are "given up to work uncleanness with greediness^k." Usually God calleth those that he will save, before they are past feeling; though such are not hopeless, their hope lieth in the recovering of the feeling which they want; and a hardened heart, and iron neck, and brazen forehead are a sadder sign of God's displeasure, than if he had made the heavens as brass, and the earth as iron to you, or let out the greatest distress upon your bodies. When men have eyes and see not, and ears and hear not, and hearts but understand not, it is a sad prognostic that they are very unlikely to be "converted and forgiven^l." A hardened heart (predominantly) is garrisoned and fortified by satan against all the means that we can use to help them: and none but the Almighty can cast him out and deliver them. Let husband, or wife, or parents, or the dearest friends entreat a hardened sinner to be converted, and he will not hear them. Let the learnedest, or wisest, or holiest man alive, both preach and beseech him, and he will not turn. At a distance he may reverence and honour a great divine, and a learned or a holy man, especially when they are dead; but let the best man on earth be the minister of the place where he liveth, and entreat him daily to repent, and he will either hate and persecute him, or neglect and disobey him. What minister was ever so learned or holy, or powerful a preacher, that had not sad experience of this? When the prophet crieth out, "Who hath believed our report^m?" and the apostles were fain to shake off the dust of their feet against many that rejected them; and were abused, and scorned, and persecuted by those whose souls they would have saved? Nay, Jesus Christ himself was refused by the most that heard him; and no minister dare compare himself with Christ. If our Lord and Master

^f Isa. xlvi. 4.^g Rom. xiii. 11. xi. 8. Matt. xxv. 5.^h 1 Tim. v. 6. Ephes. ii. 1. 5. Col. ii. 13. Jude 12.ⁱ Prov. xxviii. 14.^k Ephes. iv. 14.^l Mark iv. 12. Acts xxviii. 27.^m Isa. liii. 1.

was blasphemed, scorned, and murdered by sinners, what better should his ablest ministers expect? St. Augustine found drunkenness so common in Afric, that he motioned that a council might be called for the suppression of it; but if a general council of all the learned bishops and pastors in the world were called, they could not convert one hardened sinner, by all their authority, wit, or diligence, without the power of the Almighty God. For will they be converted by man, that are hardened against God? What can we devise to say to them that can reach their hearts, and get within them, and do them good? Shall we tell them of the law and judgments of the Lord, and of his wrath against them? why all these things they have heard so often till they sleep under it, or laugh at them. Shall we tell them of death, and judgment, and eternity? why we speak to the posts or men asleep: they hear us as if they heard us not. Shall we tell them of endless joy and torments? they feel not, and therefore fear not, nor regard not; they have heard of all these, till they are weary of hearing them, and our words seem to them but as the noise of the wind or water, which is of no signification. If miracles were wrought among them by a preacher, that healed the sick, and raised the dead, they would wonder at him, but would not be converted. For Christ did thus, and yet prevailed but with few^a; and the apostles wrought miracles, and yet were rejected by the most^o. Nay, if one of their old companions should be sent from the dead to give them warning, he might affright them, but not convert them; for Christ hath told us so himself^p; or if an angel from heaven should preach to them, they would be hardened still, as Balaam and others have been. Christ rose from the dead, and yet was after that rejected. We read not of the conversion of the soldiers that watched his sepulchre, though they were affrighted with the sight of the angels: but they were after that hired for a little money to lie, and say that Christ's disciples stole him away. If magistrates that have power on their bodies, should endeavour to bring them to godliness, they would not obey them, nor be persuaded. King Hezekiah's messengers were but mocked by the people. David and Solomon could not convert their hardened subjects. Punish them, and hang them, and they will be wicked to the death:

^a John xi. 48. 53.^o Acts vii. 57. xiii. 22.^p Luke xvi. 31.

witness the impenitent thief that died with Christ, and died reproaching him. Though God afflict them with rod after rod, yet still they will sin and are the same⁹. Let death come near and look them in the face, and let them see that they must presently go to judgment, it will affright them, but not convert them. Let them know and confess, that sin is bad, that holiness is best, that death and eternity are at hand, yet are they the same, and all will not win their hearts to God; till grace take away their stony hearts, and give them tender, fleshy hearts¹.

Direct. vi. 'Take notice of the doleful effects of hard-heartedness in the world.' This fills the world with wickedness and confusion, with wars and bloodshed; and leaveth it under that lamentable desertion and delusion, which we behold in the far greatest part of the earth. How many kingdoms are left in the blindness of Heathenism and Mahometanism, for hardening their hearts against the Lord! How many Christian nations are given up to the most gross deceits of popery, and princes and people are enemies to reformation, because they hardened their hearts against the light of truth! What vice so odious, even beastly filthiness, and bitterest hatred, and persecution of the ways of God, which men of all degrees and ranks do not securely wallow in through the hardness of their hearts! This is the thing that grieves the godly, that wearieth good magistrates, and breaks the hearts of faithful ministers: when they have done their best, they are fain, as Christ himself before them, to grieve for the hardness of men's hearts. Alas! we live among the dead: our towns and countries are in a sadder case than Egypt, when every house had a dead man. Even in our churches, it were well if the dead were only under ground, and most of our seats had not a dead man, that sitteth as if he heard, and kneelth as if he prayed, when nothing ever pierced to the quick. We have studied the most quickening words, we have preached with tears in the most earnest manner, and yet we cannot make them feel! as if we cried like Baal's worshippers, O Baal, hear us! or, like the Irish to their dead, 'Why wouldst thou die, and leave thy house, and lands, and friends?' So we talk to them about the death of their souls, and their wilful misery, who

⁹ Psal. lxxviii. Hos. vii. 14. Amos iv. 9. Jer. v. 3. Isa. i. 5.

¹ Ezech. xxxvi. 26.

never feel the weight of any thing we say : we are left to ring them a peal of lamentation, and weep over them as the dead that are not moved by our tears : we cast the seed into stony ground^a. It stops in the surface, and it is not in our power to open their hearts, and get within them. I confess that we are much to blame ourselves, that ever we did speak to such miserable souls, without more importunate earnestness and tears ; (and it is because the stone of the heart is much uncured in ourselves ; for which God now justly layeth so many of us by :) but yet, we must say, our importunity is such, as leaveth them without excuse. We speak to them of the greatest matters in all the world ; we speak it to them in the name of God ; we shew them his own Word for it ; and plead with them the arguments which he hath put into our mouths ; and yet we speak as to posts and stones ; to men past feeling. What a pitiful sight was it to see Christ stand weeping over Jerusalem, for the hardness of their hearts, and the nearness and greatness of their misery ! while they themselves were so far from weeping for it, that they raged against the life of him that so much pitied them ! We bless God that it is not thus with all. He hath encouraged some of us with the heart-yielding, obedient attention of many great congregations : but, among the best, alas ! how many of these hardened sinners are mixed ! and, in many places, how do they abound ! Hence it is that such odious abominations are committed ; such filthiness and lying, and perjury, and acts of malicious enmity against the servants of the Lord ; and that so many are haters of God and godliness. If satan had not first hardened their hearts, he could never have brought them to such odious crimes, as now with impudency are committed in the land. As Lot's daughters were fain to make their father drunk, that he might commit the sin of incest ; so the devil doth first deprive men both of reason and feeling, that he may bring them to such heinous wickedness as this, and make them laugh at their own destruction, and abhor those most that fain would save them. And they are not only past feeling, but so hate any quickening ministry, or truth, or means, which would recover their feeling, that they seem to go to hell, as some condemned malefactors to the gallows, that make themselves drunk before they go, as if it were all they

^a Matt. xiii. 5. 20.

had to care for, to keep themselves hoodwinked, from knowing or feeling whither they go, till they are there.

See what a picture of a hardened people God giveth to Ezekiel: "But the house of Israel will not hearken to thee; for they will not hearken to me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hard hearted¹." Observe but what a case it is that they are so insensible of, and then you will see what a hardhearted sinner, past feeling, is.

1. They are the servants of sin; in the power of it; corrupted by it; and yet they feel it not.

2. They have the guilt of many thousand sins upon them, all is unpardoned that ever they committed, and yet they feel it not.

3. They have the threatenings and curses of God in force against them in his Word; even words so terrible, as you would think might affright them out of their sins or their wits: and they take on them to believe this Word of God; and yet they feel not.

4. They are in the power of the devil: ruled and deceived by him, and taken captive by him at his will².

5. They may be certain that if they die in this condition they shall be damned, and they are uncertain whether they shall live another day: they are never sure to be one hour longer out of hell; and yet they feel not.

6. They know that they must die, and that it is a great change, and of the greatest, endless consequence, that death will make with them, and they know that this is sure and near, and are past doubt of it; and yet they feel it not³.

7. They must shortly appear before the Lord, and be judged for all that they have done in the body, and be doomed to their endless state; and yet they feel not.

8. They know that life is short, and that they have but a little time to prepare for all this terrible change, and that it must go with them for ever, as they now prepare; and yet they feel not.

9. They hear and read of the case of hardened, wicked men, that have gone before them, and have resisted grace,

¹ Ezek. iii. 7.

² Acts xxi. 18. ³ Tim. ii. 26.

^x *Feriemini, moriemini, sentietis: an cœci autem an videntes, id in vestra manu est. Optate igitur bene mori (quod ipsum nisi bene vixeritis frustra est.) Optate, inquam, nitimini, et quod in vobis est facile: reliquum illi committite; qui vos in hanc vitam ultro non vocatos intulit; egressuris, non nisi vocatus et rogatus manum dabit. Non mori autem nolite optare. Petrarch. Dial. 107. lib. 2.*

and lost their time, as they now do: and they read or hear of the miserable end that such have come to; and yet they feel not.

10. They have a world of examples continually before them: they see the filthy lives of many for their warning, and the holy lives of others for their imitation, and see how Christ and satan strive for souls; and yet they feel not.

11. They are always before the eye of God, and do all this before his face. He warneth them, and calleth them to repentance; and yet they feel not.

12. They have Christ as it were crucified before their eyes^a: they hear of his sufferings: they may see in him what sin is, and what the love of God is: he pleadeth with them his blood and sufferings against their obstinate unkindness; and yet they feel not.

13. They have everlasting joy and glory offered them, and heaven so opened to them in God's promises, that they may see it as in a glass^b. They take on them to believe, how much the blessed spirits there abhor such wickedness as theirs; and yet they feel not.

14. They have the torments of hell opened to them in the Word of God: they read what impenitent souls must suffer to all eternity: they hear some in despair in this life, roaring in the misery of their souls: they hear the joyful thanksgivings of believers, that Christ delivereth them from those torments; and yet they feel not.

15. All the promises of salvation in the Gospel, do put in an exception against these men, "unless they be converted:" they are made to the penitent, and not to the impenitent. There is justification and life; but not for them. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit^a." "But he that believeth not, is condemned already^b." And they that "after their hardness and impenitent hearts, do treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, shall have tribulation and anguish^c." Here is comfort for repenting sinners, but none (but on condition they repent) for them: when others are welcomed to Christ's marriage feast, he saith to these, "How came you in hither?" and yet they feel not.

16. They still carry about with them the doleful eviden-

^a Gal. ii.

^b J.

^c 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

^d Rom. ii. 5-7.

^e Rom. viii. 1.

oes of all this misery. One would think the ambitious, and covetous, and voluptuous might see these death-marks on themselves; and the ungodly might feel that God hath not their hearts: especially they that hate the godly, and shew their walfish cruelty against them, and are the progeny of Cain; and yet they feel not any of this, but live as quietly, and talk as pleasantly, as if all were well with them, and their souls were safe, and their calling and election were made sure. Alas! if these souls were not hardened in sin, we should see it in their tears, or hear it in their complaints: they would after sermon sometimes come to the minister, as they, Acts ii. 37. xvi. 30. "Sirs, what must we do to be saved?" or we should see it in their lives; or hear of it by report of others, who would observe the change that grace had made: and sermons would stick longer by them, and not at best be turned off with a fruitless commendation, and saying it was a good sermon, and there is an end of it. Judge now, by this true description which I have given you, what a hardened sinner is. And then the godly may so see cause to bewail the remnants of this mischief, as yet to be daily thankful to God, that they are not in the power of it.

Direct. VII. 'Live, if you can possibly, under a lively, quickening ministry, and in the company of serious, lively Christians.' It is true, that we should be deeply affected with the truths of God, how coldly soever they be delivered. But the question is not, what is our duty; but, what are our disease, and our necessity, and the proper remedy. All men should be so holy, as not to need any exhortations to conversion at all: but shall ministers therefore neglect such exhortations, or they that need them turn away their ears? Hear, if possible, that minister that first feels what he speaks, and so speaks what he feels, as tendeth most to make you feel. "Cry aloud; spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgressions, and the house of Israel their sins^d." Though such "as seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God." God is the chief agent; but he useth to work according to the fitness of the instrument. O woeful case! to hear a dead minister speaking to a dead people, the living truths of the living God! As Christ said, "If the blind

^d Isa. lvi. 1, 2.

lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch." And if the dead must raise the dead, and the ungodly enemies of a holy life must bring men to godliness and to a holy life, it must be by such a power as once made use of clay and spittle, to open the eyes of the blind. It seems it was a proverb in Christ's days, "Let the dead bury their dead:" but not, 'Let the dead raise the dead.' God may honour the bones of the dead prophet, with the raising a corpse that is cast into its grave, and toucheth them. A meeting of a dead minister and a dead people, is like a place of graves: and though it be a lamentable thing to hear a man speak without any life, of life eternal, yet God can concur to the quickening of a soul. But sure we have no great reason to expect that ordinarily he should convert men so miraculously, without the moral aptitude of means. It is most incongruous for any man in his familiar discourse, to speak without great seriousness and reverence, of things concerning life eternal. But for a preacher to talk of God, of Christ, of heaven, and hell, as coldly and sleepily, as if he were persuading men not to believe him, or regard him, that no more regards himself, is less tolerable. It is a sad thing to hear a man draw out a dreaming, dull discourse, about such astonishing weighty things; and to speak as if it were the business of his art, to teach men to sleep while the names of heaven and hell are in their ears; and not to be moved while they hear the message of the living God, about their life or death everlasting. If a man tell in the streets of a fire in the town, or a soldier bring an alarm of the enemy at the gates, in a reading or jesting tone, the hearers will neglect him, and think that he believeth not himself. I know it is not mere noise that will convert a soul: a bawling fervency, which the hearers may discern to be but histrionical and affected, and not to come from a serious heart, doth harden the auditors worst of all. A rude, unreverent noise is unbecoming an ambassador of Christ. But an ignorant saying of a few confused words, or a sleepy recital of the most pertinent things, do as little beseech them. Christ raised not Lazarus by the loudness of his voice: but where the natural ears are the passage to the mind, the voice and manner should be suitable to the matter. Noise without seriousness and pertinent matter, is like gunpowder without bullet, that causeth sound, and no execution. And the

weightiest matter without clear explication and lively application, is like bullet without powder. If you will throw cannon bullets at the enemy with your hands, they will sooner fall on your feet than on them. And it is deadness aggravated by hypocrisy, when a lifeless preacher will pretend moderation, as if he were afraid of speaking too loud and earnestly, lest he should awake the dead, whom lightning and thunder will not awake : and when he will excuse himself by accusing those that are not as drowsy or dead as he : and would make men believe that seriousness is intemperate rage or madness. If you are cast upon a cold and sleepy minister, consider the matter more than the manner : but choose not such a one for the cure of hardness and insensibility of heart.

Direct. VIII. ' Take notice, how sensible, tender-hearted Christians are, of sins far less than those that you make a jest of : ' and how close those matters come to their hearts, that touch not yours. And have not you as much cause to be moved as they ? and as much need to lay such things to heart ? Did you but know what a trouble it is to them, to be haunted with temptations to the unbelief and atheism which prevaieth with you : though they are far from choosing them, or delighting in them ! Did you see how involuntary thoughts and frailties make some of them weary of themselves ! And how they even hate their hearts for believing no more, and loving God no more, and for being so strange to God and heaven, when yet there is nothing in the world so dear to them, nor hath so much of their estimation or endeavour ! You would think, sure, that if such hearts had your sin and misery to feel, they would feel it to their grief indeed, (unless the sin itself did hinder the feeling, as it doth with you.) Let tender-hearted Christians instruct you, and not be witnesses against you.

Direct. IX. ' Take heed of hardening company, examples, and discourse.' To hear men rail and scoff at holiness, and curse, and swear, and blaspheme the name and truth of God, will at first make you tremble ; but if you wilfully cast yourself ordinarily into such company, by degrees your sense and tenderness will be gone, and you will find a very great hardening power, in the company, and frequent discourse, and practices, which yourselves condemn.

Direct. x. 'Take heed of wilful sinning against knowledge: much more of lying in such sin, unrepented of.' It greatly hardeneth, to sin against knowledge: and much more to commit such sins over and over. This grieveth and driveth away the Spirit, and dangerously provoketh God to leave men to themselves.

Direct. xi. 'Take heed of being customary in the use of those means that must be the means of curing hardened hearts.' If once the lively preaching, and holy living, and fervent praying, of the servants of God, be taken by thee but as matters of course, and thou go with them to church and to prayers, but as to eat, or drink, or kneel with them but for custom, thou wilt be as the smith's dog, that can sleep by the anvil, while the hammers are beating, and the sparks are flying about his ears. It is dangerous to grow customary and dull, under powerful, lively helps.

Direct. xii. 'Be often with the sick, and in the house of mourning, and read thy lesson in the church-yard, and let the grave, and bones, and dust instruct thee.' When thou seest the end of all the living, perhaps thou wilt somewhat lay it to heart. Sight will sometimes do more than the hearing of greater things. Fear may possibly touch the heart, that hath not yet so much ingenuity as to be melted by the force of love. And ordinarily, the humbling and softening of a hard, impenitent heart begins in fear, and ends in love. The work of preparation is in a manner the work of fear alone. The first work of true conversion is begun in a great measure of fear, and somewhat of love; but so little as is scarce perceived, because of the more sensible operations of fear. And as a Christian groweth, his love increaseth, till perfect love in the state of perfection have cast out all tormenting fear, though not our reverence or filial fear of God. Look, therefore, into the grave, and remember, man, that thou must die!—thou must die!—it is past all controversy that thou must die! And dost thou know where thou must appear, when death hath once performed its office? Dost thou not believe that after death comes judgment? Dost thou not know that thou art now in a life of trial, in order to endless joy or misery? and that this life is to be lived but once? and if thou miscarry now, thou art undone for ever? and that all the hope of prevent-

ing thy damnation, is now, while this life of trial doth continue? "Now is the accepted time: this is the day of salvation." If hell be prevented, it must be now prevented! If ever thou wilt pray, if ever thou wilt be converted, if ever thou wilt be made an heir of heaven, it must be now! O man! how quickly will patience have done with thee, and time be gone! and then, O then, it will be too late! Knowest thou not, that all the care, and labour, and hope of the devil for thy damnation, is laid out this way, if it be possible to find thee other work, or take thee up with other thoughts, or keep thee asleep with presumptuous hopes, and carnal mirth, and pleasures, and company, or quiet thee by delays, till time be gone, and it be too late? And wilt thou let him have his will, and pleasure him with thy own perdition? Dost thou think these are not things to be considered on? Do they not deserve thy speediest, and most serious thoughts? At least use thy reason and self-love to the awakening, and moving, and softening thy hardened heart.

PART III.

Directions against Hypocrisy.

HYPOCRISY is the acting the part of a religious person, as upon a stage, by one that is not religious indeed*. A seeming in religion to be what you are not, or to do what you do not. Or a dissembling or counterfeiting that piety which you have not. To counterfeit a state of godliness is the sin only of the unregenerate, who at the present are in a state of misery: to counterfeit some particular act of god-

* Multi Christum oculantur; pauci amant: aliud est φαῖν, aliud ἀγαπᾶν. Abr. Bucholtzer in Scaltet. cur. p. 15. Dicunt Stoici sapientes esse sinceros, observateque et cavere sollicite nequid de se melius quam sit commendare putemus furo seu arte aliqua mala occultante, et bona que insant apparere faciente, ac circumcludere vocis omnem fictionem. Laert. in Zenone. lib. vii. sect. 118. p. 499. In this citation, Mr. Baxter has given the sense, but not the words of his author. (T. C.) Philosophia res adeo difficilis est, ut talem vel simulare magna sit pars philosophia. Paul. Scalg. It was one of the Roman laws of the 12 Tables, 'Impius ne audeo placere donis iram Deorum.' 'Let no ungodly person dare to go about to appease the displeasure of the gods by gifts: i. e. He must appease them first by reformation. Bona conscientia prodire vult et conspici: ipsas nequitia tenebras timet. Senec. Epist. 97. Els. 1649. p. 379.