

grace is so much employed about it; and our happiness or misery, joy or sorrow, is greatly promoted by our thoughts. And more I would have said, but that in the third Chapter, and in my "Treatise of the Divine Life," there is much said already. And for a method and Directions for particular meditations, I have given them at large in the fourth Part of the "Saints' Rest," from whence it may easily be taken, and applied to other subjects, as it is there to heaven. It is easy to write and read Directions; but I fear lest slothfulness through the difficulty of practice, will frustrate my Directions to the most. But if any profit by them, my labour is not lost.

CHAPTER VII.

Directions for the Government of the Passions.

THE Passions are to be considered, 1. As in themselves, and the sin of them as respecting God and ourselves only: and so I am to speak of them here. 2. As they are a wrong to others, and a breach of the commandments which require love and duty towards our neighbour: and so I shall speak of them after.

Passions are not sinful in themselves, for God hath given them to us for his service: and there is none of them but may be sanctified and used for him. But they are sinful, 1. When they are misguided and placed on wrong objects. 2. When they darken reason, and delude the mind, and keep out truth, and seduce to error. 3. When they rebel against the government of the will, and trouble it, and hinder it in its choice or prosecution of good, or urge it violently, to follow their brutish inclination. 4. When they are unseasonable. 5. Or immoderate and excessive in degree. 6. Or of too long continuance. 7. And when they tend to evil effects, as to unseemly speeches or actions, or to wrong another.

Passions are holy when they are devoted to God, and exercised upon him or for him. They are good when, 1. They have right objects; 2. And are guided by reason; 3. And

are obedient to the well-guided will ; 4. And quicken and awake the reason and the will to do their duty ; 5. And tend to good effects, exciting all the other powers to their office ; 6. And exceed not in degree, so as to disturb the brain or body.

Tit. 1. Directions against all sinful Passions in general.

Direct. 1. ‘ Trust not to any present actual resistance, without any due, habitual mortification of passions, and fortification of the soul against them. Look most to the holy constitution of your mind and life, and then sinful passions will fall off, like scabs from a healthful body when the blood is purified.’

No wonder if an unholy soul be a slave to passion, when the body is inclined to it : for such a one is under the power of selfishness, carnality, and worldliness ; and from under the government of Christ and his Spirit ; and wanteth that life of grace by which he should cure and subdue the corruptions of nature. The way for such a one to master passion, is not to strive by natural, selfish principles and reasons, which are partial, poor, and weak ; but to look first to the main, and to seek with speed and earnestness for a new and sanctified heart, and get God’s image, and his Spirit, and renewing, quickening grace : this is the only effectual conqueror of nature. A dull and gentle disposition may seem without this to conquer that which never much assaulted it ; (the trial of such persons being some other way.) But none conquereth satan indeed but the Spirit of Christ. And if you should be free from passion, and not be free from an unholy, carnal, worldly heart, you must perish at last, if you seemed the calmest persons upon earth. Begin therefore at the foundation, and see that the body of sin be mortified, and that the whole tree be rooted up which beareth these evil, bitter fruits ; and that the holy, victorious new nature be within you ; and then you will resist sin with light and life, which others still resist but as in their sleep.

Direct. 11. ‘ More particularly, let your souls be still possessed with the fear of God, and live as in his family, under his eye and government, that his authority may be more powerful than temptations, and your holy converse with him may

make him still more regarded by you than men or any creatures.' And then this sun will 'put out the lesser lights, and the thunder of his voice will drown the whisperers that would provoke you, and the humming of those wasps which make you so impatient. God would make the creature nothing, and then it would do nothing to disturb you, or carry you into sin.

Direct. III. 'Dwell in the delightful love of God, and in the sweet contemplation of his love in Christ, and roll over his tender mercies in your thoughts, and let your conversation be with the holy ones in heaven, and your work be thanksgivings and praise to God: and this will habituate your souls to such a sweetness, and mellowness, and stability, as will resist sinful passion even as heat resisteth cold.'

Direct. IV. 'Keep your consciences continually tender, and then they will check the first appearance of sinful passions, and will smart more with the sin than your passionate natures do with the provocation.' A seared conscience, and a hardened, senseless heart, are to every sin, as a man that is fast asleep is to thieves; they may come in and do what they will, so they do not waken him. But a tender conscience is always awake.

Direct. V. 'Labour after wisdom, strength of reason, and a solid judgment: for passion is cherished by folly.' Children are easily overthrown, and leaves are easily shaken with every little wind; when men keep their way, and rocks and mountains are not shaken. Women and children, and old, and weak, and sick people are usually most passionate. If a wise man should have a passionate nature, he hath that which can do much to control it: when folly is a weathercock at the wind's command.

Direct. VI. 'See that the will be confirmed and resolute, and then it will soon command down passion.' Men can do much against passion if they will. Nature hath set the will in the throne of the soul: it is the sinful connivance and negligence of the will, which is the guilty cause of all the rebellion: as the connivance of the commanders is the common cause of mutinies in an army. The will either consenteth, or is remiss in its office, and in forbidding and repressing the rage of passion. When I say, 'you can do it if you will,' you think this is not true, because you are willing;

and yet passion yieldeth not to your will's command: but I mean not that every kind of willingness will serve: it is not a sluggish wish that will do it: but if the will were resolute without any compliance, or connivance, or negligence in its proper office, no sinful passion could remain: for it is no further sin, than it is voluntary, either by the will's compliance, or omission, and neglect. Therefore let most of your labour be to waken and confirm the will; and then it will command down passion.

Direct. vii. 'Labour after holy fortitude, courage, and magnanimity.' Great minds are above all troubles, desires, or commotions about little things. A poor, base, low, and childish mind, is never quiet longer than it is rocked asleep or flattered.

Direct. viii. 'Especially see that you want not self-denial, and that worldliness and fleshly-mindedness be thoroughly mortified: for sinful passion is the very breath and pulse of a selfish, fleshly, worldly mind.' It is not more natural for dogs to fight about a bone, than for such to snarl and quarrel, or be in some distempered passion, about their selfish, carnal interest. Covetousness will not let the mind be quiet. It is as natural for a selfish man to be under the power of sinful passions, as for a man to shake that hath an ague, or to fear that is melancholy. Fleshly men have a canine appetite and feverish thirst continually upon them; after some flesh-pleasing toy or other.

Direct. ix. 'Keep a court of justice in your souls, and call yourselves daily to account, and let no passion escape without such a censure as is due.' If reason and conscience thus exercise and maintain their authority, and passion be every day soundly rebuked; it will wither like a plant that is cropped as fast as it springeth.

Direct. x. 'Deliberate and foresee the end: examine whether passion tend to that which will be approveable when it is past.' Looking to the end doth shame all sinful passions: they are blind, and moved only by things present: they cannot endure the sight of the time to come, nor to be examined whither they go, or where is their home.

Direct. xi. 'Keep a continual apprehension of the danger and odiousness of sinful passions, by knowing how full they are of the spawn of many other sins.' See the evil of

them in the effects. Mark what passion doth in others and yourselves: what abundance of evil thoughts, and words, and deeds do come from sinful passions?

Direct. xii. 'Observe the immediate troublesome effects, and the disorders of your soul, and so turn the fruit of passions against themselves.' Mark how they discompose you, and disturb your reason, and make your minds like muddied waters, and breed a diseased unquietness in you, unfitting you for your works, and breaking your peace; so that you can neither know, nor use, nor enjoy yourselves.

Direct. xiii. 'Let death look your passions frequently in the face.' It hath a mortifying virtue; and as it sheweth us the vanity of the creature, so it taketh down those passions, which creature interest and deceit have caused. It exciteth reason, and restoreth it to its dominion, and silenceth the rebellion of the senses. A man that is to die to-morrow, and knoweth it, would more easily repel to-day a temptation to lust, or covetousness, or drunkenness, or revenge, than at another time he could have done. One look into eternity will powerfully rebuke all carnal passions.

Direct. xiv. 'Remember still that God is present.' Will you behave yourselves passionately before him; when the presence of your prince would calm you? Shall God and his holy angels see thee like a bedlam lay by thy reason and misbehave thyself.

Direct. xv. 'Have still some pertinent Scripture ready to rebuke thy passions:' that thou mayst say as Christ to satan, "Thus it is written." Speak to it in the name and Word of God: though the bare words will not charm these evil spirits, yet the authority will curb them. For this "Word is quick and powerful, a discerners of the thoughts". "Mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ".

Direct. xvi. 'Set Christ continually before you as your pattern, who calleth you to learn of him to be meek and lowly:' who desired not the wealth or glory of the world: who loved his own that were in the world, but loved not the things of the world: who never was lifted up, or sinfully

¹ Heb. iv. 12.

² 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

cast down : who never despised, or envied man, nor ever feared man : who never was over merry or over sad : who being reviled, reviled not again ; but was dumb as a lamb before the shearers.

Direct. xvii. ' Keep as far from all occasions of your passions as other duties will allow you : and contrive your affairs and occasions into as great an opposition as may be to the temptation.' Run not into temptation, if you would be delivered from evil. Much might be done by a willing, prudent man, by the very ordering of his affairs. God and satan work by means ; let the means then be regarded.

Direct. xviii. ' Have a due care of your bodies that no distemper be cherished in them, which causeth the distemper of the soul.' Passions have a very great dependance on the temperament of the body : and much of the cure of them lieth (when it is possible) in the body's emendation.

Direct. xix. ' Turn all your passions into the right channel, and make them all holy, using them for God upon the greatest thing.' This is the true cure : the bare restraint of them is but a palliate cure, like the easing of pain by a dose of opium. Cure the fear of man, by the fear of God, and the love of the creature, by the love of God, and the cares for the body, by caring for the soul, and earthly, fleshly desires and delights, by spiritual desires and delights, and worldly sorrow, by profitable, godly sorrow.

Direct. xx. ' Control the effects, and frustrate your passions of what they would have ; and that will ere long destroy the cause.' Cross yourselves of the things which carnal love and desire would have : forbear the things which carnal mirth or anger would provoke you to, and the fire will go out for want of fuel. (Of which more in the particulars.)

Tit. 2. Directions against sinful Love of Creatures.

Love is the master passion of the soul, because it hath the chiefest object, even goodness which is the object of the will : and simple love is nothing but complacency, which is nothing but the simple volition of good ; and it is a passionate volition or complacency which we call the passion

of love*. When this is good and when it is sinful I shewed before: but yet because the one half of the cure here lieth in the conviction, and it is so hard a thing to make any lover perceive a sinfulness in his love, I shall first help you in the trial of your love, to shew the sinfulness of it: when I have first named the objects of it.

Any creature which seemeth good to us, may possibly be the object of sinful love: as honour, greatness, authority, praises, money, houses, lands, cattle, meat, drink, sleep, apparel, sports, friends, relations, and life itself. As for lustful love I shall speak of it anon.

Helps for discovering of sinful Love.

Direct. i. 'Make God's interest and his Word the standard to judge of all affections by. That which is against the love of God, and would abate or hinder it, yea, which doth not directly or indirectly tend to further it, is certainly a sinful love: and so is all that is against his Word.' For the love of God is our final act upon our ultimate end, and therefore all that tends not to it, is a sin against our very end, and so against our nature and the use of our faculties.

Direct. ii. 'Therefore whatever creature is loved ultimately for itself, and not for a higher end, even for God, his service, his honour, his relation to it, or his excellency appearing in it, is sinfully loved.' For it is made our God when it is loved ultimately for itself.

Direct. iii. 'Suspect all love to creatures which is very strong and violent, and easily kindled, and hardly moderated or quieted.' Though you might think it is for some spiritual end or excellency, that you love any person or any thing, yet suspect it if it be so easy and strong: because that which is truly and purely spiritual is against corrupted nature, and comes from grace which is but weak: we find no such easiness to love God, and Scripture, and prayer, and holiness: nor are our affections so violent to these. It is well if all the fuel and blowing we can use will keep them alive. It is two to one that the flesh and the devil have put in some of their fuel or gunpowder, if it be fierce.

Direct. iv. 'Suspect all that love which selfishness and fleshly interest have a hand in.' Is it some bodily pleasure

* Solus Amor facit hominem bonum vel malum. Paul Scaliger. Thes. p. 721.

and delight that you love so much? Or is it a good book or other help for your soul? We are so much apter to exceed and sin in carnal, fleshly-mindedness, than in loving what is good for our souls, that there we should be much more suspicious. If it be violent and for the body, it is ten to one there is sin in it.

Direct. v. 'Suspect all that love to creatures which your reason can give no good account of, nor shew you a justifiable cause.' If you love one place or person much more than others, and know not why, but love them because you cannot choose, this is much to be suspected: though God may sometimes kindle a secret love between friends, from an unexpressible unity or similitude of minds, beyond what reason will undertake to justify, yet this is rare, and commonly fancy, or folly, or carnality is the cause: however it is more to be suspected and tried, than rational love.

Direct. vi. 'Suspect all that fervent love to any creature which is hasty before sufficient trial: for commonly both persons and things have the best side outward, and seem better at the first appearance than they prove.' Not but that a moderate love may be taken up upon the first appearance of any excellency, especially spiritual: but so as to allow for a possibility of being deceived, and finding more faultiness upon a fuller trial than we at first perceive. Have you dwelt in the house with the persons whom you so much admire? and have you tried them in their conversations? and seen them tried by crosses, losses, injury, adversity, prosperity, or the offers of preferment, or plenty in the world? you would little think what lurketh undiscovered in the hearts of many, that have excellent parts, till trial manifest it!

Direct. vii. 'Try your affections in prayer before God, whether they be such as you dare boldly pray God either to increase or continue and bless; and whether they be such as conscience hath no quarrel against.' If they endure not this trial, be the more suspicious, and search more narrowly: the name and presence of God in prayer, doth much dispel the frauds of carnal reasonings. Yet persons who by melancholy are cast into diseased fears and scrupulosities, are incapable of this way of trial.

Direct. viii. 'Consult with wise, impartial persons: and open your case to them without deceit, before affections have gone so far as to blind you, or leave you incapable of help.' In this case, if in any case, the judgment of a stander by that is faithful and impartial is usually to be preferred before your own. For we are too near ourselves; and judgment will be bribed and biassed even in the best and wisest persons.

Direct. ix. 'Yet cast not away all because you discover much excess or carnality in your affections: for frequently there is mixture both in the cause of love and in the love itself of good and evil.' And when you have but taken out all that was selfish, and carnal, and erroneous in the cause, the carnal, violent love will cease; but not all love: for still there will and must remain the moderate, rational, and holy love, which is proportioned to the creature's worth and merit, and is terminated ultimately on God: the separation being made, this part must be preserved.

Direct. x. 'Mere natural appetite in itself is neither morally good or evil: but as it is well placed and ordered it is good, and as unrul'd or ill-rul'd it is evil.'

Helps to mortify sinful Love.

Direct. i. 'The greatest of all means to cast out all sinful love, is to keep the soul in the love of God^t, wholly taken up in admiring him, serving him, praising him, and rejoicing in him:' of which see Chap. iii. *Direct.* ii. We see that they are taken up in the love and service of one person, are not apt to be taken much with any other^u. But it is not only by diversion, nor only by prepossessing and employing all our love, that the love of God doth cure sinful love; but besides these there is also a majesty in his objective presence which aweth the soul, and commandeth all things else to keep their distance: and there is an unspeakable splendour and excellency in him, which obscureth and annihilateth all things else: (though they are more near, and

^t Jude xxi.

^u Nuptial love maketh mankind: friendly love perfecteth it (much more divine love): but wanton love corrupteth and ombaseth it. Lord Bacon, Essay 10.

clearly seen and known.) And there is a celestial kind of sweetness in his love which puts the soul that hath tasted it out of relish with transitory inferior good. As he that hath conversed with wise and learned men, will no more admire the wit of fools: and as he that hath been employed in the government of a kingdom or the sublimest studies, will be no more in love with children's games, and paddling in the dirt.

Direct. 11. 'The next help is to see that the creature deceived you not; and therefore that you be not rash and hasty; but stay while you come nearer to it, and see it unclothed of borrowed or affected ornaments: and see it not only in the dress in which it appeareth abroad, which often covereth great deformities, but in its homely habit and night attire. Bring it to the light; and if it may be also see it when it hath endured the fire, which hath taken off the paint and removed the dress'. Most of your inordinate love to creatures is by mistake and rashness. The devil tricks them up and paints them, that you may fall in love with them: or else he sheweth you only the outside of some common good and hideth the emptiness or rottenness within. Come nearer therefore and stay longer, and prevent your shame and disappointments. Is it not a shame to see you dote on that place, or office, or thing this year, which you are weary of before the next? Or to see two persons impatiently fond of each other till they are married, and then to live in strife as weary of each other? How few persons or things have been too violently loved, that were but sufficiently first tried?

Direct. 111. 'The next great help is to destroy self-love, (as carnal and inordinate.) For this is the parent, life and root of all other sinful love whatever.' Why doth the worldling overlove his wealth, and the proud man his greatness and repute, and the sensualist his pleasures, but because they first overlove that flesh and self which all these are but the provision for. Why doth a dividing sectary overvalue and overlove all the party or sect that are of his own opinion; but because he first overvalueth and over-

* Bias, in Laetio: Ita amandum quasi odio simus habituri, malos enim esse plurimos. lib. I. sect. 87. p. 54. Quam tamen sententiam Cicero in Lælio sapiente dicit plane indignum. Amicos sequere quos non pudeat elegisse.

loveth himself? Why do you love those above their worth who think highly of you, and are on your side, and use to praise you behind your back, or that do you a good turn, but because you first overlove yourselves? Why doth lustful love inflame you, or the love of meat, and drink, and sport, and bravery, carry you into such a gulf of sin, but that first you overlove your fleshly pleasure? What ensnareth you in fondness to any person, but that you think they love you, or are suitable to your carnal end. See therefore that you mortify the flesh.

Direct. iv. 'Still remember how jealous God is of your love, and how much he is wronged when any creature encroacheth upon his right.' 1. You are his own by creation; and did he give you love to lay out on others, and deny it to himself? 2. He daily and hourly maintaineth you; he giveth you every breath, and bit, and mercy that you live upon, and will you love the creature with his part of your love? 3. How dearly hath he bought your love in your redemption? 4. He hath adopted you and brought you into the nearest relation to him that you may love him. 5. He hath pardoned all your sins and saved you from hell (if you are his own) that you may love him. 6. He hath promised you eternal glory with himself that you may love him. 7. His excellency best deserveth your love. 8. His creatures have nothing but from him, and were purposely sent to bespeak your love for him rather than for themselves. And yet after all this shall they encroach upon his part? If you say, it is not God's part that you give them, but their own; I tell you all that love which you give the creature above its due, you take from God. But if it be such a love to the creature as exceedeth not its worth, and is intended ultimately for God, and maketh you not love him the less but the more, it is not it that I am speaking against, or persuading you to mortify.

Direct. v. 'Look on the worst of the creature with the best, and foresee what it will be when it withereth, and what it will appear to you at the last.' I have applied this against worldliness before, Chap. iv. Part vi. and I shall afterwards apply it to the lustful love. Bring your beloved creature to the grave, and see it as it will appear at last, and much of the folly of your love will vanish.

Direct. vi. 'Understand well the most that it will do for you, and how short a time you must enjoy it, and flatter not yourselves with the hopes of a longer possession than you have reason to expect.' If men consider for how short a time they must possess what they dote upon, it would somewhat cool their fond affections.

Direct. vii. 'Remember that too much love hath the present trouble of too much care, and the future trouble of too much grief, when you come to part with what you love.' Nothing more createth care and grief to us, than inordinate love. You foreknow that you must part with it: and will you now be so glued to it that then it may tear your flesh and heart. Remember you caused all that yourselves.

Direct. viii. 'Remember that you provoke God to deprive you of what you overlove, or to suffer it to grow unlevelly to you. Many a man's horse that he overloved hath broke his neck: and many a man's child that he overloved hath died quickly, or lived to be his scourge and sorrow: and many a husband or wife that was overloved, has been quickly snatched away or proved a thorn, or a continual grief and misery.

Direct. ix. 'If there be no other means left, prudently and moderately embitter to thyself the creature which thou art fond of: which may be done many ways, according to the nature of it.' By the seldomer or more abstemious use of it: or by using it more to benefit than delight; or by mixing some mortifying, humbling exercises; or mixing some self-denying acts, and minding more the good of others, &c.

Direct. x. 'In the practice of all directions of this nature, there must abundance of difference be made between a carnal, voluptuous heart, that is hardly taken off from sensual love, and a mortified, melancholy, or overscrupulous person, who is running into the contrary extreme, and is afraid of every bit they eat, or of all they possess, or wear, or use, and sometimes of their very children and relations, and ready to overrun their mercies, or neglect their duties, suspecting that all is too much loved.' And it is a very hard thing for us so to write or preach to one party, but the other will misapply it to themselves, and make an ill use of it. All that we can write or say is too little to mortify the

fleshly man's affections : and yet speak as cautiously as we can, the troubled soul will turn it into gall, to the increase of his trouble : and what we speak to his peace and settlement, though it prove too little and uneffectual, yet will be effectual to harden the misapplying sensualist in the sinful affections and liberty which he useth. Therefore it is best in such cases to have still a wise, experienced, faithful guide, to help you in the application in cases of difficulty and weight.

Tit. 3. Directions against sinful Desires and Discontent.

I shall say but little here of this subject, because I have already treated so largely of it, in my book of Self-denial, and in that of Crucifying the World ; and here before in Chap. iv. Part vi. and vii. against worldliness and flesh-pleasing, and here against sinful love which is the cause⁷.

How sinful desires may be known, you may gather from the desires of sinful love : as, 1. When you desire that which is forbidden you. 2. Or that which will do you no good, upon a misconceit that it is better or more needful than it is. 3. Or when you desire it too eagerly, and must needs have it, or else you will be impatient or discontented, and cannot quietly be ruled and disposed of by God, but are murmuring at his providence, and your lot. 4. Or when you desire it too hastily, and cannot stay God's time. 5. Or else too greedily as to the measure, being not content with God's allowance, but must needs have more than he thinks fit for you. 6. Or specially when your desires are perverse, preferring lesser things before greater ; desiring bodily and transitory things more than the mercies for your souls which will be everlasting. 7. When you desire any thing ultimately and merely for the flesh, without referring it to God, it is a sin. Even your daily bread and all your comforts, must be desired but as provender for your horse, that he may the better go his journey, even as provision for your bodies, to fit them to the better and more cheerful service of your souls and God. 8. Much more when your desires are for wicked ends, (as to serve your lust, or pride,

⁷ Read Mr. Burrough's excellent treatise, called 'The Jewel of Contentment.' And that excellent tract of a Heathen, 'Plutarchi de tranquillitate animi.'

or covetousness. or revenge), they are wicked desires. 9. And when they are injurious to others.

Direct. 1. 'Be well acquainted with your own condition, and consider what it is that you have most need of; and then you will find that you have so much grace and mercy to desire for your souls, without which you are lost for ever, and that you have a Christ to desire, and an endless life with God to desire, that it will quench all your thirst after the things below*.' This if any thing will make you wiser, when you see you have greater things to mind. A man that is in present danger of his life, will not be solicitous for pins or fool-gawds: and the hopes of a lordship or a kingdom will cure the desire of little things: a man that needeth a physician for the dropsy or consumption, will scarce long for children's balls or tops. And methinks a man that is going to heaven or hell, should have somewhat greater than worldly things to long for. O what a vain and doting thing is a carnal mind: that hath pardon, and grace, and Christ, and heaven, and God, to think of, and that with speed before it be too late; and can forget them all, or not regard them or eagerly long for some little inconsiderable trifle; as if they said, I must needs taste of such a dish before I die: I must needs have such a house, or a child, or friend, before I go into another world! O study what need thy distressed soul hath of a Christ, and of peace with God, and preparation for eternity, and what need thy darkened mind hath of more knowledge, and thy dead and carnal heart of more life, and tenderness, and love, to God, and communion with him; feel these as thou hast cause, and the eagerness of thy carnal desires will be gone.

Direct. 11. 'Remember how much your carnal desires

* *Mentem nullis imaginibus depictam habeat: nam si corde mundus et ab universis imaginibus liber esse cupit, nil penitus cum amore possidere, nulli homini per voluntarium affectum singulari familiaritate, nullus ipsi, adhærere debet. Omnis namque familiaritas aut conversatio pure propter Dei amorem non inita, variis imaginibus inficit et perturbat hominum mentes, cum non ex Deo, sed ex carne originem ducat. Quisquis in virum spiritualem et divinum proficere cupit, is, carnali vitâ penitus renunciata, Deo soli amore adhæreat, eundemque interiori homine suo peculiariter possideat, quo habito mox omnis multiplicitas, omnes imagines, omnis inordinatus erga creaturas amor fortiter ab eo profligabuntur; Deo quippe per amorem intus possesso protinus ab universis homo imaginibus liberatur. Deus spiritus est, cujus imaginem nemo proprie exprimere aut effigiare potest. Thaulerus flor. p. 79, 80.*

do aggravate the weakness of your spiritual desires, and make the sin more odious and unexcusable.' Are you so eager for a husband, a wife, a child, for wealth, for preferment, or such things, while you are so cold and indifferent in your desires after God, and grace, and glory? Your desires after these are not so earnest! They make you not so importunate and restless: they take not up your thoughts both day and night: they set you not so much on contrivances and endeavours: you can live as quietly without more grace, or assurance of salvation, or communion with God, as if you were indifferent in the business: but you must needs have that which you desire in the world, or there is no quiet with you. Do you consider what a horrible contempt of God, and grace, and heaven, is manifested by this? Either you are regenerate or unregenerate. If you are regenerate, all your instructions, and all your experience of the worth of spiritual things, and the vanity of things temporal, do make it a heinous sin in you to be now so eager for those things which you have so often called vanity, while you are so cold towards God whose goodness you have had so great experience of. Do you know no better yet the difference between the creature and the Creator? Do you yet no better understand your necessities and interest, and what it is that you live upon and must trust to, for your everlasting blessedness and content? If you are unregenerate (as all are that love any thing better than God) what a madness is it for one that is condemned in law to endless torments, and shall be quickly there, if he be not regenerate and justified by Christ, to be thirsting so eagerly for this or that thing, or person, upon earth, when he should presently bestir him with all his might to save his soul from endless misery! How incongruous are these desires to the good and bad?

Direct. III. 'Let every sinful desire humble you, for the worldliness and fleshliness which it discovereth to be yet unmortified in you; and turn your desires to the mortifying of that flesh and concupiscence which is the cause.' If you did not yet love the world, and the things that are in the world, you would not be so eager for them. If you were not too carnal, and did not mind too much the things of the flesh, you would not be so earnest for them as you

are.. It should be a grievous thing to your hearts to consider what wordliness and fleshiness this sheweth to be yet there. That you should set so much by the creature, as to be unable to bear the want of it: is this renouncing the world and flesh? The thing you need is not that which you so much desire; but a better heart, to know the vanity of the creature, to be dead to the world, and to be able to bear the want or loss of any thing in it; and a fuller mortification of the flesh: mortifying and not satisfying it, is your work.

Direct. iv. 'Ask your hearts seriously whether God in Christ be enough for them, or not? If they say no; they renounce him and all their hope of heaven: for no man takes God for his God that takes him not for his portion, and as enough for him: if they say yea; then you have enough to stop the mouth of your fleshly desires, while your hearts confess that they have enough in God.' Should that soul that hath a filial interest in God, and an inheritance in eternal life, be eager for any conveniences and contentments to the flesh? If God be not enough for you, you will never have enough. Turn to him more, and know him better, if you would have a satisfied mind.

Direct. v. 'Remember that every sinful desire is a rebelling of your wills against the will of God; and that it is his will that must govern and dispose of all, and your wills must be conformed to his; yea, that you must take pleasure and rest in the will of God.' Reason the case with your hearts, and say, 'Who is it that is the governor of the world? and who is to rule me and dispose of my affairs? Is it I or God? Whose will is it that must lead, and whose must follow? Whose will is better guided, God's or mine? Either it is his will that I shall have what I desire, or not: if it be, I need not be so eager, for I shall have it in his time and way: if it be not his will, is it fit for me to murmur and strive against him?' Remember that your discontents and carnal desires are so many accusations brought in against God: as if you said; thou hast not dealt well or wisely, or mercifully by me: I must have it better: I will not stand to thy will and government: I must have it as I will, and have the disposal of myself.

Direct. vi. 'Observe how your eager desires are con-

demned by yourselves in your daily prayers, or else they make your prayers themselves condemnable. If you pray that the will of God may be done, why do your wills rebel against it, and your desires contradict your prayers? And if you ask no more than your daily bread, why thirst you after more? But if you pray as you desire, 'Lord let my will be done, and my selfish, carnal desire be fulfilled, for I must needs have this or that;' then what an abominable prayer is this? Desire as you must pray.

Direct. VII. 'Remember what covenant you have made with God; that you renounced the world and the flesh, and took him for your Lord, and King, and Father, and yielded up yourselves as his own, as his subject, and as his child, to be disposed of, ruled, and provided for by him: and this covenant is essential not only to your Christianity, but to your taking him for your God.' And do you repent of it? or will you break it, and forfeit all the benefits of the covenant? If you will needs have the disposal of yourselves, you discharge God of his covenant and fatherly care for you: and then what will become of you, if he so forsake you?

Direct. VIII. 'Bethink you how unmeet you are to be the choosers of your own condition.' You foresee not what that person, or thing, or place will prove to you, which you so eagerly desire: for ought you know it may be your undoing, or the greatest misery that ever befell you. Many an one hath cried with Rachel, "Give me children or else I die *," that have died by the wickedness and unkindness of their children. Many an one hath been violent in their desires of a husband or a wife, that afterwards have broken their hearts, or proved a greater affliction to them than any enemy they had in the world. Many an one hath been eager for riches, and prosperity, and preferment that hath been ensnared by them, to the damnation of his soul. Many an one hath been earnest for some office, dignity, or place of trust, which hath made it a great increaser of his sin and misery. And it is flesh and self that is the eager desirer of things that are against the will of God, and nothing is so blind and partial as self and flesh. You think not your child a competent judge of what is best for him, and make not his desires, but your own understanding the guide and

* Gen. xxx. 1.

rule of your dealings with him, or disposals of him. And are you more fit choosers for yourselves in comparison of God, than your child is in comparison of you? Either you take God for your Father, or you do not. If you do not, call him not Father, and hope not for mercy and salvation from him: if you do, is he not wise and good enough to dispose of you, and to determine what is best for you, and to choose for you?

Direct. 1x. ‘Remember that it is one of the greatest plagues on this side hell, to be given up to our own desires, and that by your eagerness and discontents you provoke God thus to give you up.’ “So I gave them up to their own heart’s lust, and they walked in their own counsels: O that my people had hearkened to me! &c.^b” “Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, &c.” “For this cause God gave them up to vile affections^d.” “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient^e.” God may give you that which you so eagerly desire, as he gave “Israel a king, even in his anger^f.” Or as he gave the Israelites “their own desire, even flesh which he rained upon them as dust, and feathered fowls as the sand of the sea, they were not estranged from their lusts: but while their meat was yet in their mouths, the wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them^g.” “They lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert, and he gave them their request, but sent leanness into their souls^h.” God may say, ‘Follow your own lust, and if you are so eager, take that which you desire; take that person, that thing, that dignity which you are so earnest for; but take my curse and vengeance with it: never let it do you good, but be a snare and torment to you. “Let a fire come out of the bramble and devour youⁱ.”’

Direct. x. ‘Take heed lest concupiscence and partiality entice you to justify your sinful desires and take them to be lawful.’ For if you do so, you will not repent of them, you will not confess them to God, nor beg pardon of them, nor beg help against them, nor use the means to extinguish them;

^b Psal. lxxxi. 12.^c Rom. i. 24. 26.^d ver. 28.^e 2 Thess. ii. 10—12.^f Hos. xiii. 10, 11.^g Psal. lxxviii. 27. 29—31.^h Psal. cvi. 14, 15.ⁱ Judges ix. 15.

but will cherish them, and be angry with all that are against them, and love those tempters best that encourage them ; and how dangerous a case is this ? And yet nothing is more ordinary among sinners, than to be blinded by their own affections, and think that they have sufficient reason to desire that which they do desire. And affection maketh them very wity and resolute to deceive themselves. It setteth them on studying all that can be said to defend their enemy, and put a deceitful gloss upon their cause. Try your desires well, (as I before directed you.) Q. 1. Is the thing that you desire a thing that God hath bid you desire, or promised in his Word to give you, (as grace, Christ, and heaven ?) If it be so, then desire it, and spare not ; but if not so, Q. 2. Why then are you so eager for it when you should at most have but a submissive, conditional desire after it ? Q. 3. Nay is it not something which you are forbidden to desire ? If so, dare you excuse it ?

Direct. xi. 'Remember that concupiscence or sinful desire is the beginning of all sin of commission, and leadeth directly to the act.' Theft, adultery, murder, fraud, contention, and all such mischiefs begin in inordinate desires. For "every one is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed : then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin ; and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death ^k." By 'lust' is meant, any fleshly desire or will ; therefore when the apostle forbiddeth gluttony and drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, strife and envying," he strikes at the root of all in this one word, "make no provision for the flesh to satisfy its lusts" (or wills).

Direct. xii. 'Pull off the deceiving vizard, and see that which you so eagerly desire, as it is.' What will it be to you at the last ? it is now in its spring or summer : but see it in fall and winter ? It is now in its youth : but see it withered to skin and bone in its decrepid age : it is now in its clean and curious ornaments, but see it in its uncleanness and its homely dress : cure your deceit, and your desire is cured.

Direct. xiii. 'Promise not yourselves long life, but live as dying men, with your grave and winding sheet always in your eye ; and it will cure your thirst after the creature when you are sensible how short a time you must enjoy it, and especially how near you are unto eternity.' This is the apos-

^k James i. 14, 15.

^l Rom. xiii. 13, 14.

tle's method, " But this I say, brethren, the time is short : it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none ; and they that weep, as though they wept not ; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not ; and they that buy, as though they possessed not ; and they that use the world, as not abusing it (or as if they used it not) : for the fashion of this world passeth away " . So you will desire as if you desired not, when you perceive well how quickly the thing desired will pass away.

Direct. xiv. ' In all your desires, remember the account as well as the thing desired.' Think not only what is now at hand, but what account you must make to God of it ; " For to whom men give or commit much, of them they require the more " . Will you thirst after more power, more honour, more wealth, when you remember that you have the more to give account of ? Have you not enough to reckon for already, unless you had hearts to use it better ?

Direct. xv. ' Keep yourselves to the holy use of all your mercies, and let not the flesh devour them, nor any inordinate appetite fare ever the better for them when you have them, and this will powerfully extinguish the inordinate desire itself.' We are in little danger of being over eager after things spiritual and holy, for the honour of God : resolve therefore that all you have shall be thus sanctified to God, and used for him, and not at all to satisfy any inordinate desire of the flesh, and the flesh will cease its suit, when it finds it fares never the better for it. You are able to do much in this way if you will. If you cannot presently suppress the desire, you may presently resolve to deny the flesh the thing desired, (as David would not drink the water though he longed for it,) and you may presently deny it, the more of that you have. If you cannot forbear your thirst, you can forbear to drink : if you cannot forbear to be hungry, you can forbear to eat whatever is forbidden or unfit : if Eve must needs have an appetite to the forbidden fruit, yet she might have commanded her hands and teeth, and not have eaten it. If you cannot otherwise cool your desire of curious apparel, wear that which is somewhat homelier than else you would have worn, on purpose to rebuke or control that desire : if you cannot otherwise quench your covetous de-

" 1 Cor. vii. 29—31. " Luke xii. 48. " Matt. xxv. " 2 Sam. xxiii. 15. 17.

sires, give so much the more to the poor to cross that desire. You cannot say that the outward act is out of your power, if you be but willing.

Direct. xvi. 'When your desires are over eager, bethink you of the mercies which you have received already and do possess.' Hath God done so much for you, and are you still calling for more, even of that which is unnecessary when you should be giving thanks for what you have? This unthankful greediness is an odious sin. Think what you have already for soul and body, estate and friends; and will not all this quiet you, (even this with Christ and heaven) unless you have the other lust or fancy satisfied, and unless God humour you in your sick desires?

Direct. xvii. 'Understand how little it will satisfy you, if God should give you all that you earnestly desire.' When you have it, it will not quiet you, nor answer your expectations. You think it will make you happy, and be exceeding sweet to you, but it deceiveth you, and you promise yourselves you know not what, and therefore desire you know not what. It would be to you but like a dreaming feast, which would leave you hungry in the morning.

Direct. xviii. 'Remember still that the greatest hurt that the creature can do thee, is in being overloved and desired, and it is never so dangerous to thee as when it seemeth most desirable.' If you remembered this aright, you would be cast into the greatest fear and caution, when any thing below is presented very pleasing and desirable to you.

Direct. xix. 'Consider that your desires do but make those wants a burden and misery to you which otherwise would be none.' Thirst makes the want of drink a torment, which to another is no pain or trouble at all. The lustful wanton is ready to die for love of the desired mate which nobody else cares for, nor is ever the worse for being without. A proud, ambitious Haman thinks himself undone if he be not honoured, and is vexed if he be but cast down into the mean condition of a farmer: when many thousand honest, contented men live merrily and quietly in as low a condition. It is men's own desires, and not their real wants which do torment them.

Direct. xx. 'Remember that when you have done all, if God love you he will be the chooser, and will not grant your

sick desires, but will correct you for them till they are cured.' If your child cry for a knife, or for unwholesome meat, or any thing that would hurt him, you will quiet him with the rod if he give not over. And it is a sign some rod of God is near you, when you are sick for this, or that, or the other thing, and will not be quiet and content unless your fancy and concupiscence be humoured.

Tit. 4. Directions against sinful Mirth and Pleasure.

Mirth is sinful, 1. When men rejoice in that which is evil: as in the hurt of others, or in men's sin, or in the sufferings of God's servants, or the afflictions of the church, or the success or prosperity of the enemies of Christ, (or of any evil cause:) this is one of the greatest sins in the world, and one of the greatest signs of wickedness, when wickedness is it that they rejoice in¹. 2. When it is unseasonable or in an unmeet subject: as to be merry in the time and place of mourning; to feast when we should fast: or for an unsanctified, miserable soul to be taken up in mirth, that is in the power of sin and satan and near to hell. 3. Mirth is sinful when it tendeth to the committing of sin, or is managed by sin: as to make merry with lies and fables and tempting, unnecessary time-wasting dances, plays or recreations; or with the slander or abuse of others; or with drunkenness, gluttony or excess. 4. Mirth is sinful when it is a hindrance to our duty, and unfitteth the soul for the exercise of that grace, which is most suitable to its estate. As when it hindereth a sinner's conviction and humiliation, and resisteth the Spirit of God, and bawleth down the calls of grace, and the voice of conscience, that they cannot be heard: and when it banisheth all sober consideration about the matters that we should most regard, and will not give men leave to think with fixedness and sobriety, upon God and upon themselves, their sin and danger, upon death and judgment and the life to come: when it makes the soul more unfit to take reproof, to profit by a sermon, to call upon God. This drunken mirth which shuts out reason, and silenceth conscience,

¹ Stoici dicunt severos esse sapientes, quod neque ipsi loquantur ad voluptatem, neque ab aliis ad voluptatem dicta admittant. Esse autem et alios severos, qui ad rationem acris vini severi dicantur; quo ad medicamenta, potius quam ad propinationem, utantur. Laert. in Zenone.

and laughs at God, and jesteth at damnation, and doth but intoxicate the brain, and make men mad in the matters where they should most shew their wisdom, I say this mirth is the devil's sport, and the sinner's misery, and the wise man's pity: of which Solomon speaketh, "I said of laughter it is mad, and of mirth, what doth it?" "As a madman who casteth firebrands, arrows and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am I not in sport?" "It is a sport to a fool to do mischief." 5. But mirth is most horribly odious when it is blasphemous and profane: when incarnate devils do make themselves merry with jesting and mocking at Scripture, or at the judgments of God, or the duties of religion; or in horrid oaths and cursed speeches, against the servants of the Lord.

Direct. 1. 'First see that thou be a person fit for mirth, and that thou be not a miserable slave of satan, in an unregenerate, unholy, unjustified state.' Thou wouldst scarce think the innocent games or sports were becoming a malefactor that must die to-morrow. An unregenerate, unholy person, is sure whenever he dieth to be damned: if he believe not this, he must deny God or the Gospel to be true. And he is not sure to live an hour. And he is sure that he shall die ere long. And now, if you have not fooled away your reason, tell me whether your reason can justify the mirth of such a man? Dost thou ask, 'What harm is it to be merry?' None at all for one that hath cause to be merry, and rejoiceth in the Lord. But for a man to be merry in the way to hell, and that so near it; for a man to be merry before his soul be sanctified, and his sin be pardoned, or before he seeketh it with all his heart, this is harm; if folly, and unbelief, and contempt of God and his dreadful justice, be any harm. O hearken to the calls of God; abhor thy sins; and set thy heart on heaven and holiness, and then God and conscience will allow thee to be merry. Get a renewed heart and life, and get the pardon of thy sins, and a title to heaven, and a readiness to die, and then there is reason and wisdom in thy mirth*. Then thy mirth will be

* Eccles. ii. 2.

* Prov. xxvi. 18, 19.

* Prov. x. 23.

* Prov. xix. 10. Delight is not seemly for a fool.

* *Siquis est quem fientem mori debeat. ridere dedecuit viventem: cum instare, semperque supra verticem videret, unde mors fiendum sciret. Risum illum haud debile fletus hic non longo sejunctus spacio sequebatur.* Petrarch, *Dial.* 119. lib. 2.

honourable and warrantable; better than the lame man's that was healed, that went with Peter and John into the temple, "walking, and leaping, and praising God." But it is a most pitiful sight to see an ungodly, unregenerate sinner, to laugh, and sport, and play, and live merrily, as if he knew not what evil is near him! It would draw tears from the eyes of a believer that knoweth him, and thinketh where he is like to dwell for ever. I remember the credible narrative of one that lived not far from me, that in his profaneness was wont to wish that he might see the devil; who at last appeared to him in his terror; and sometimes he smiled on him: and the man was wont to say, that he never seemed so ugly and terrible as when he smiled: (and the man was affrighted by it into a reformed life.) So though a servant of the devil be never comely, yet he never seemeth so ghastly as when he is most merry in his misery.

Direct. II. 'Yet do not destroy nature by overmuch heaviness, under pretence that thou hast no right to be merry.' For, 1. The very discovery of thy misery puts thee into the fairer hopes of mercy. 2. And many of God's children live long without assurance of their justification, and yet should not therefore cast away all joy. 3. And so much ease and quiet of mind must be kept up by the unsanctified themselves, as is necessary to preserve their natures, that they may have time continued, and may wait on God till they obtain his grace. Above all men, they have reason to value their lives, lest they die and be lost, before they be recovered. And therefore, as they must not famish themselves by forbearing meat or drink, so their sorrows must not be such as may destroy their bodies (of which more anon).

Direct. III. 'See that you first settle the peace of your souls upon solid grounds, and get such evidences of your special interest in Christ and heaven, as will rationally warrant you to rejoice; and then make it the business of your lives to rejoice and delight yourselves in God, and take this as the principal part of grace and godliness, and not as a small or indifferent thing; and so let all lawful, natural mirth be taken in, as animated and sanctified by this holy delight and joy; and know that this natural, sanctified mirth is not

only lawful, but a duty exceeding congruous and comely for a thankful believer in his way to everlasting joy.*

This is the true method of rejoicing. Though, as I said, so much quietness may be kept up by the unregenerate, as is needful to keep up life and health, and the Gospel where it cometh is tidings of great joy to those that hear it: yet no man can live a truly comfortable, merry life, but in this method; but all his mirth beside that which either supporteth nature, or meeteth mercy in his returning to God, will be justly chargeable with madness; and maketh him a more pitiful sight†.

The first thing therefore to be done, is to lay the groundwork of true mirth. And this is done by unfeigned repenting, and turning to God by faith in Christ, and becoming new creatures, a sanctified, peculiar people, and being justified and adopted to be the children of God; and then by discerning (upon sober trial) the evidences and witness of all this in ourselves, that we may know that we have passed from death to life.

And though there are several degrees both of grace and of the discerning of it, some having but little holiness, and some but little discerning of it in themselves, yet the least may afford much comfort to the soul upon justifiable grounds, though not so much as the greater degrees of grace, and clearer discerning of it may do.

The foundation being thus laid, it must be our next endeavour to build upon it a settled peace of conscience, and quietness of soul: for till we can attain to joy, it is a great mercy to have peace, and to be free from the accusations, fears, and griefs which belong to the unjustified: and peace must be the temper more ordinary than much joy, to be expected in this our frail condition.

Thirdly, Peace being thus settled, we must endeavour to rise up daily into joy, as our great duty and our great felicity on earth: it being frequently and earnestly commanded in the Scriptures, that we “Rejoice in the Lord always,” and “Shout for joy, all that are upright in heart‡.” Thus he that “proveth his own work,” may have “rejoicing in

* See my Sermon at Paul's, called “Right Rejoicing.” And here before, Chap. iii. Direct. 13.

† Paul. xxxiii. 1. Phil. iii. 1. iv. 4. Deut. xii. 12. 18. xxvii. 7.

himself^b," even in the "testimony of his conscience," of his own "simplicity and godly sincerity^c." And this all believers should maintain and actuate in themselves.

Fourthly, With this rejoicing in God, our lawful, natural mirth must be taken in, as subordinate or sanctified; that is, we must further our holy joy by natural mirth and cheerfulness, and by the comforts of our bodies in God's lower mercies, promote the service and the comforts of our souls. And this is the right place for this mirth to come in, and this is the true method of rejoicing.

Direct. iv. 'Mark well the usefulness and tendency of all thy mirth: and if it be useful to fit thee for thy duty, and intended by thee to that end, (though you alway observe not that intention at the time,) and if it tend to do thee good, or help thee to do good, without a greater hurt or danger, then cherish and promote it: but if it tend to carry thee away from God, to any creature, and to unfit thy soul for the duties of thy place, and to carry thee into sin, then avoid it as thy hurt.' Still remembering that the necessary support of nature must not be avoided by good or bad. A Christian that hath any acquaintance with himself, and with the work of holy watchfulness, may discern what his mirth is by the tendency and effects, and know whether it doth him good or harm.

Direct. v. 'Take heed that the flesh defile not your mirth, by dropping in any obscene or ribald talk, or by stirring up fleshly lust and sin.' Which it will quickly do, if not well watched, and holy mirth and cheerfulness is very apt to degenerate on a sudden into sinful mirth.

Direct. vi. 'Consider what your mirth is like to prove to others as well as to yourselves.' If it be like to stir up sin in others, or to be offensive to them, you must the more avoid it in their presence, or manage it with the greater caution: if it be needful to cheer up the drooping minds of those you converse with, or to remove their prejudice against a holy life, you must the more give place to it: for it is good or bad as it tendeth unto good or bad.

Direct. vii. 'Never leave out reason or godliness from any of your mirth. Abhor that mirth that maketh a man a fool, or playeth the fool: and take heed of that ungodliness

^b Gal. vi. 4.

^c 2 Cor. i. 12.

which maketh a man merriest when he is furthest from God, like the horse or ox that leapeth and playeth for gladness when he is unyoked or loosed from his labour. Something of God and heaven should appear to be dropped into all our mirth, to sweeten and to sanctify it.'

Direct. viii. 'Watch your tongues in all your mirth; for they are very apt to take liberty then to sin.' Mirth is to the tongue as holidays and playdays to idle scholars; who are glad of them as a time in which they think they have liberty to game, and fight, and do amiss.

Direct. ix. 'If a word break forth from yourselves or companions to the wrong of others in your mirth, as of backbiting, evil speaking, jeering, scorning, defaming, (yea, though it be your enemy) rebuke it, and cast it out, as dirt or dung that falleth into your dish or cup.'

Direct. x. 'If profaneness intrude, and any make merry with jesting at Scripture, religion, or the slanders, or scorns of godly persons, with a tendency to make religion odious or contemptible; if they are such as you may speak to, reprove them with reverend seriousness to their terror: if they are not, then shew your abhorrence of it by turning your backs and quitting the place and company of such devilish enemies of God.' Be not silent or seemingly-consenting witnesses of such odious mirth, against your Maker.

Direct. xi. 'If the mirth of others in your company grow insipid, frothy, foolish, wanton, impious, or otherwise corrupt, drop in some holy salt to season it; and something that is serious and divine to awe it and repress it.' As to remember them of God's presence, or to recite such a text as Ephes. v. 3, 4. "But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not be once named amongst you as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting; which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks."

Direct. xii. 'If mirth grow immoderate and exceed in measure, and carry you away from God and duty by the very carnal pleasure of it, have always at hand these following considerations to repress it.' 1. Remember that God is present; and levity is not comely in his sight. 2. Remember that death and judgment are at hand, when all this levity will be turned into seriousness. 3. Remember that

your souls are yet under a great deal of sin, and wants, and danger, and you have a great deal of serious work to do.

4. Look on Jesus Christ, and remember what an example he gave you upon earth: whether he laughed, and played, and jested, and taught you immoderate or carnal mirth: and whether you live like the disciples of a crucified Christ.

5. Think on the ordinary way to heaven, described in Scripture; which is through many tribulations, afflictions, fastings, temptations, humiliations, sufferings, and mortifications: and think whether a wanton, jesting, playful life be like to this. 6. Think of the course of the ancient and excellent Christians, who went to heaven through labour, and watchings, and fasting, and poverty, and cruel persecutions, and not through carnal mirth and sport. 7. Think of the many calamitous objects of sorrow that are now abroad in the world! Of the millions of heathens and mahometans, and other strangers and enemies to Christ! Of the obstinate Jews; of the papal tyranny and usurpation; and of the divided state of all the churches, and the profaneness, and persecution, and uncharitableness, and contentions, and mutual reproaches and revilings, which make havock for the devil among the members of Christ.

Tit. 5. Directions against sinful Hopes.

Hope is nothing but a desirous expectation: therefore the directions given before, against sinful love and desire, may suffice also against sinful hopes, save only for the expecting part. Hope is sinful; 1. When it is placed ultimately upon a forbidden object: as to hope for some evil to yourselves which you mistakingly think is good. To hope for felicity in the creature, or to hope for more from it, than it can afford you. To hope for the hurt of other men; for the ruin of your enemies; for the hindrance of the Gospel, and injury to the church of Christ^d. 2. When you hope for a good thing by evil means: as to hope to

^d Doth any man doubt that if there were taken out of men's minds, vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations, &c. but it would leave the minds of a number of men, poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and uncomfortable to themselves? Lord Bacon's Essay of Lies.

please God, or to come to heaven by persecuting his servants, or by ignorance, or superstition, or schism, or heresy, or any sin. 3. To hope ungroundedly for that from God, which he never promised. 4. To hope deceitfully for that from God which he hath declared he will never give. All these are sinful hopes. But it is not these last that I shall here say much to, because I have said so much already of them in many other writings.

Direct. 1. 'Hope for nothing from God against faith or without faith; that is, for nothing which he hath said he will not give, nor for any thing which he hath not promised to give, or given you some reason to expect.' To hope for that which God hath told us he will not give, or that which is against the holiness and justice of God to give, this is but to hope that God will prove a liar, or unholy, or unjust, which are wicked and blaspheming hopes. Such are the hopes which abundance of ignorant and ungodly persons have; who hope to be saved without regeneration, and without true holiness of heart or life; and hope to be saved in their wilful impenitence or beloved sins: who hope that God forgiveth them those sins, which they hate not, nor will be persuaded to forsake: and hope that the saying over some words of prayer, or doing something which they call a good work, shall save them though they have not the spirit of Christ: or that hope to be saved, though they are unsanctified, because they are not so bad as some others, and live not in any notorious, disgraceful sin: all these believe the devil who tells them that an unholy person may be saved, and believe that the Gospel is false which saith, "without holiness none shall see the Lord*;" and they hope that God will prove unholy, unjust, and false to save them, and yet this they call a hoping in God. Hope for that which God hath promised, and spare not; but not for that which he hath said he will not do, yea, protested cannot be^f.

Direct. 11. 'When thou hopest for any evil to others, or thyself, remember what a monstrous thing it is to make evil the object of thy hope, and how those hopes are but thy hastening unto chosen misery, and contradict themselves.' For thou hopest for it as good; and to be greedy for evil

* Heb. xii. 14.

^f John iii. 3, 5.

on supposition that it is good, doth shew thy folly that wilt try no better the objects of thy hopes: like a sick man that longs and hopeth for that which if he take it will be his death. Thus sinners hope for the poisoned bait.

Direct. III. 'Understand how much of the root of worldliness consisteth in your worldly hopes.' Poor worldlings have little in possession to delight in; but they keep up a hope of more within them. Many a covetous or ambitious wretch, that never reacheth that which he desireth, yet liveth upon the hopes of it: and hope is it that setteth and keepeth men at work in the service of the world, the flesh and the devil; as divine hope doth set and keep men at work for heaven, for their souls, and for Jesus Christ. And many an hypocrite that loseth much upon the account of his religion, yet sheweth his rottenness by keeping up his worldly hopes, and going no further than will stand with those.

Direct. IV. 'Hath not the world deceived all that have hoped in it unto this day?' Consider what is become of them and of their hopes? What hath it done for them, and where hath it left them? And wilt thou place thy hopes in that which hath deceived so many generations of men already?

Direct. V. 'Remember that thy worldly hopes are a sin so fully condemned by natural demonstration, that thou art utterly left without excuse.' Thou art certain beforehand that thou must die: thou knowest how vain the world will be then to thee: and how little it can do for thee; and yet art thou hoping for more of the world!

Direct. VI. 'Consider that the world declareth its vanity in the very hopes of worldlings.' In that it is still drawing them by hopes, and never giveth them satisfaction and content. Almost all the life of a worldling's pleasure is in his hopes. The very thing which he hopeth for, doth not prove so sweet to him in the possession, as it was in his hopes. A hoping and still hoping for that which they never shall attain, is the worldling's life.

Direct. VII. 'O turn your souls to those blessed hopes of life eternal, which are sent you from heaven by Jesus Christ, and set before you in the holy Scriptures, and proclaimed to you by the messengers of grace.' Doth God

offer you sure, well-grounded hopes of living for ever in his joy and glory? And do you neglect them, and lie hoping for that felicity in the world which cannot be attained, and which will give no content when you have attained it? This is more foolish than to toil and impoverish yourselves in hope to find the philosopher's stone, and refuse a kingdom freely offered.

Tit. 6. Directions against sinful Hatred, Aversion or Backwardness towards God.

The hatred to God and backwardness to his service, which is the chief part of this sin, is to be cured according to the Directions in the first chapter, as a state of wickedness is: and more I shall say anon, about the worship of God: and Chap. iii. Direct. 11. containeth the cure also. Only here I shall add a few directions to a God-hating generation.

Direct. 1. 'The first thing you have to do, is to discover this to be your sin.' For you are confident that you love God above all, while you hate him above all, even above the devil. You will confess, that this is horrid wickedness, where it is found, and well deserveth damnation: take heed lest thy own confession judge thee. Remember then that it is not the bare name that we now speak of: I know that God's name is most honoured, and the devil's name is most hated. Nor is it every thing in God that is hated. None hateth his mercifulness and goodness as such: nor is it every thing in the devil that is loved: none love his hatred to man, nor his cruelty in tormenting men. But the holiness of God, which is it that man must receive the image of, and be conformed to, is hated by the unholy: and the devil's unholiness, and friendship to man's sin and sensuality, is loved by the sensual and unholy. And this hatred of God, (and love of the devil) one would think you might easily perceive.

1. In that you had rather God were not so just and holy; you had rather he had never commanded you to be holy, but left you to live as your flesh would have you: you would rather God were indifferent to your sins, and would give you leave to follow your lusts. Such a God

you would have : and a God that will damn you unless you be holy, and hate your sins and forsake them, you like not, you cannot abide, but indeed do hate him.

2. Therefore you will not believe that God is such a holy, sin-hating God : because you would not have him so ; and so hate his nature, while you believe that you love him ; and love but an idol of your unholy fantasies^c. " These things hast thou done, and I kept silence : thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself : but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thy eyes : now consider this ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver^d."

3. ' You love not the holiness of the Word of God, which beareth his image.' You love not these strict and holy passages in it, John iii. 3, 5. Luke xiv. 26. 33. Matt. xviii. 3. Rom. viii. 13. Col. iii. 1—4. 2 Cor. v. 17, with abundance more. You had rather have had a Scripture that would have left you your ambition, covetousness, lust and appetite, to their liberties ; and that had said nothing for the absolute necessity of holiness, nor had condemned the ungodly.

4. You love not the holiest ministers or servants of Christ, that most powerfully preach his holy Word, or that most carefully, seriously, and zealously obey it ; your hearts rise against them, when they bring in the light, which sheweth that your deeds and you are evil^e. They are an eyesore to you ; your hearts rise not so much against whoremongers, swearers, liars, drunkards, atheists, or infidels, as against them. What sort of persons on the face of the earth, are so hated by the ungodly in all nations, and of all degrees, and used by them so cruelly, and pursued by them so implacably, as the holiest servants of the Lord are ?

5. You love not to call upon God in serious, fervent, spiritual prayer, praises, and thanksgiving : you are quickly weary of it : you had rather be at a play, or gaming, or a feast : your hearts rise against holy worship as a tedious, irksome thing.

6. You love not holy, edifying discourse of God, and of heavenly things. Your hearts rise against it, and you hate

^c *Malunt nascere, quia jam oderunt.* Tertul. Apologet. c. 1.

^d *Psalm. l. 21, 22.*

^e *John iii. 19, 20.*

and scorn it, as if all serious talk of God were but hypocrisy, and God were to be banished out of our discourse.

7. You cannot abide the serious, frequent thoughts of God in secret; but had rather stuff your minds with thoughts of your horses, or hawks, or bravery, or honour, or preferments, or sports, or entertainments, or business, or labours in the world: so that one hour of a thousand or ten thousand was never spent in serious, delightful thoughts of God, his holy truths, or works, or kingdom.

8. You love not the blessed day of judgment, when Christ will come with his holy angels to judge the world, to justify his accused and abused servants, to be "glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that do believe^k." And can you be so blind after all this, as not to see that you are haters of God?

Direct. 11. 'Know God better, and thou canst not hate him: especially know the beauty and glorious excellency of that holiness and justice which thou hatest.' Should the sun be darkened or disgraced, because sore eyes cannot endure its light? Must kings and judges be all corrupt, or change their laws, and turn all men loose to do what they list, because malefactors and licentious men would have it so?

Direct. 111. 'Know God and holiness as they are to thee thyself; and then thou wilt know them not only to be best for thee, as the sun is to the world, and as life and health are to thy body, but to be the only good and happiness: and then thou canst not choose but love them.' Thy prejudice and false conceits of God and holiness cause thy hatred.

Direct. 1v. 'Cast away thy cursed unbelief: if thou believe not what the Scripture saith of God and man, and of the soul's immortality, and the life to come, thou wilt then hate all that is holy as a deceit, and needless troubler of the world.' But if once thou believe well the Word of God, and the life everlasting, thou wilt have another heart.

Direct. v. 'Away with thy beastly, blinding sensuality.' While thou art a slave to thy flesh, and lusts, and appetite, and its interest reigneth in thee, thou canst not choose but hate that holiness which is against it, and hate that God that forbiddeth it, and tells thee that he will judge thee and

^k 2 Thes. i. 8—11.

damn thee for it if thou forsake it not : this is the true cause of the hatred of God and godliness in the world. God's laws condemn the very life and pleasure of the fleshly man: Godliness is unreconcilable to concupiscence and the carnal interest. Lay by thy fleshly mind and interest, or as sure as thou art a man, thou wilt be judged and damned as an enemy to God. Dost thou not feel that this is the cause of thy enmity, that God putteth thee on displeasing (holy) courses, and will not let thee please thy flesh, but affrighteth thee with the threatenings of hell¹? "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace: because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be: so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. If ye live after the flesh ye shall die."² "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."³ "Woe to him that striveth with his Maker." Read Luke xix. 27.

Direct vi. 'Draw near and accustom thy soul to serious thoughts of God: for it is strangeness that maketh thee the more averse to him.' We have less pleasure in the company of strangers than of familiar acquaintance. Reconciliation must be made by coming nearer, and not by keeping at a distance still.

Direct. vii. 'Study well the wonderful love and mercy which he hath manifested to thy soul in the redemption wrought by Jesus Christ, in the covenant of grace, in all the patience he hath exercised towards thee, and all his offers of mercy and salvation, entreating thee to turn and live.' Canst thou remember what God hath done for thee all thy life, and how patiently and mercifully he hath dealt with thee, and yet canst thou hate him, or thy heart be against him?

Direct. viii. 'Judge not of God or holiness by the faults of any men that have seemed holy.' No more than you will censure the sun, because thieves rob by the light of it; or because some men are purblind. God hateth sin in them

¹ Pene omnis sermo divinus habet simulacra sua. Quot genera præceptorum sunt, tot adversariorum: si largitatem esse in omnibus jubet Dominus, avarus irascitur: si parsimoniam exigit, prodigus execratur: sermones sacros, improbi, hostes suos dicunt. Salvian. lib. iv. ad Eccles. Cath. Non ego tibi inimicus, sed tu veritati. Hieron. in Gal. 5.

² Rom. viii. 6—8. 13.

³ Acts ix. 5.

⁴ Isa. xlv. 9.

and you, wherever he findeth it. Judge of God and holiness by his proper nature and true effects, and by the holy Scriptures, and not by the crimes of sinners which he condemneth, who, if they had been more holy, had less offended.

Direct. ix. 'Come among the godly, and try a holy life awhile, and judge not of it or them that use it by the reports of the devil and wicked men.' Malice will speak ill of God himself, and of his holiest servants, Can worse be said, than was said of Christ himself, and his apostles? The devil was not ashamed to belie Job to God's own face, and tell God that he was such an one, as that a little trial to his flesh would turn him from his godliness. But those that come near and try the ways and servants of God, do find that the devil did belie them.

Direct. x. 'Remember thy near approaching end, and how dreadful it will be to be found and judged among the malignant enemies of holiness.' "And if the righteous be scarcely saved, where then shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Then what wouldst thou give to be one of those holy ones that now thou hatest? and to be judged as those that lived in that holiness which thy malignant heart could not abide? Then thou wilt wish that thou hadst lived and died as the righteous, that thy latter end might have been like his.

Tit. 7. Directions against sinful Wrath or Anger.

As anger is against the love of our neighbour, I shall speak of it afterwards; as it is against the soul itself, I shall speak of it in this place. Anger is the rising up of the heart in passionate displacency against an apprehended evil, which would cross or hinder us of some desired good. It is given us by God for good, to stir us up to a vigorous resistance of those things, which, within us or without us do oppose his glory or our salvation, or our own or our neighbour's real good.

Anger is good when it is thus used to its appointed end, in a right manner and measure: but it is sinful, 1. When it riseth up against God or any good, as if it were evil to us. As wicked men are angry at those that would convert and

save them, and that tell them of their sins, and hinder them from their desires⁹. 2. When it disturbeth reason, and hindereth our judging of things aright. 3. When it casteth us into any unseemly carriage, or causeth or disposeth to any sinful words or actions: when it inclineth us to wrong another by word or deed, and to do as we would not be done by. 4. When it is mistaken, and without just cause. 5. When it is greater in measure than the cause alloweth. 6. When it unfitteth us for our duty to God or man. 7. When it tendeth to the abatement of love and brotherly kindness, and the hindering of any good which we should do for others: much more when it breedeth malice, and revenge, and contentions, and unpeaceableness in societies, oppression of inferiors, or dishonouring of superiors⁷. 8. When it stayeth too long, and ceaseth not when its lawful work is done. 9. When it is selfish and carnal, stirred up upon the account of some carnal interest, and used but as a means to a selfish, carnal, sinful end: as to be angry with men only for crossing your pride, or profit, or sports, or any other fleshly will. In all these it is sinful.

Directions Meditative against sinful Anger.

Direct. 1. 'Remember that immoderate anger is an injury to humanity, and a rebel against the government of reason.' It is without reason, and against reason. Whereas in man all passions should be obedient to reason. It is the misery of madness, and the crime of drunkenness to be the suppressing and the dethroning of our reason. And sinful anger is a short madness or drunkenness. Remember that thou art a man, and scorn to subject thyself to a bestial fury.

Direct. II. 'It is also against the government of God: for God governeth the rational powers first, and the inferior by them.' If you destroy the king's officers and judges, you oppose the government of the king. Is a man in a passion fit to obey the commands of God, that hath silenced his reason?

Direct. III. 'Sinful passion is a pain and malady of the mind.' And will you love or cherish your disease or pain?

⁹ Duo maxime contraria sunt consilio. Ira et festinatio. Bias in Laert.

⁷ Read Seneca de Ira. and be ashamed to come short of a heathen.

Do you not feel yourselves in pain and diseased while it is upon you? I do not think you would take all the world to live continually in that case yourselves. If you should be still so, what were you good for, or what could you enjoy, or what comfort would your lives be to you? Why, if a long pain be so bad, a short one is not lovely. Keep not wilfully so troublesome a malady in your mind.

Direct. iv. 'Observe also what an enemy it is to the body itself.' It inflameth the blood, and stirreth up diseases, and breedeth such a bitter displeasedness in the mind, as tends to consume the strength of nature, and hath cast many into acute, and many into chronical sicknesses, which have proved their death. And how uncomfortable a kind of death is this?

Direct. v. 'Observe how unlovely and displeasing it rendereth you to beholders:' deforming the countenance, and taking away the amiable sweetness of it, which appeareth in a calm and loving temper. If you should be always so, would any body love you? Or would they not go out of your way, (if not lay hands on you) as they do by any thing that is wild or mad? You would scarce desire to have your picture drawn in your fury, till the frowning wrinkles, and inflamed blood are returned to their places, and have left your visage to its natural comeliness. Love not that which maketh you so unlovely to all others.

Direct. vi. 'You should love it the worse because it is a hurting passion, and an enemy to love and to another's good.' You are never angry but it inclineth you to hurt those that angered you, if not all others that stand in your way: it putteth hurting thoughts into your mind, and hurting words into your mouths, and inclineth you to strike or do some mischief: and no men love a hurtful creature. Avoid therefore so mischievous a passion.

Direct. vii. 'Nay, mark the tendency of it, and you will find that if it should not be stopped it would tend to the very ruin of your brother, and end in his blood and your own damnation.' How many thousands hath anger murdered or undone! It hath caused wars, and filled the world with blood and cruelty! And should your hearts give such a fury entertainment?

Direct. viii. 'Consider how much other sin immoderate

anger doth incline men to^{*}. It is the great crime of drunkenness that a man having not the government of himself, is made liable by it to any wickedness : and so is it with immoderate anger. How many oaths and curses doth it cause every day? How many rash and sinful actions? What villany hath not anger done? It hath slandered, railed, reproached, falsely accused, and injured many a thousand. It hath murdered, and ruined families, cities and states. It hath made parents kill their children, and children dishonour their parents. It hath made kings oppress and murder their subjects, and subjects rebel and murder kings. What a world of sin is committed by sinful anger throughout all the world? How endless would it be to give you instances. David himself was once drawn by it to purpose the murdering of all the family of Nabal. Its effects should make it odious to us.

Direct. ix. 'And it is much the worse in that it suffereth not a man to sin alone, but stirreth up others to do the like.' Wrath kindleth wrath, as fire kindleth fire. It is two to one but when you are angry you will make others angry, or discontented, or troubled by your words or deeds. And you have not the power of moderating them in it, when you have done. You know not what sin it may draw them to. It is the devil's bellows to kindle men's corruptions; and sets hearts, and families, and kingdoms in a flame.

Direct. x. 'Observe how unfit it maketh you for any holy duty; for prayer, or meditation, or any communion with God.' And that should be very unwelcome to a gracious soul, which maketh it unfit to speak to God, or to be employed in his worship. If you should go to prayer or other worship, in your bedlam passion, may not God say, as the king of Gath did of David, "Have I need of madmen?" Yea, it unfitteth all the family, or church, or society where it cometh, for the worship of God. Is the family fit for prayer, when wrath hath muddled and disturbed their minds? Yea, it divideth Christians and churches, and causeth confusion and every evil work.

Direct. xi. 'It is a great dishonour to the grace of God,

^{*} *Proprium est magnitudinis veræ, non sentire, se esse percussum. Qui non irascitur, incunctus injuria persistit: qui irascitur motus est. Senec. de Ira.*

that a servant of his should shew the world that grace is of no more force and efficacy, that it cannot rule a raging passion, nor so much as keep a Christian sober: that it possesseth the soul with no more patience, nor fear of God, nor government over itself. O wrong not God thus by the dishonouring of his grace and Spirit.

Direct. XII. 'It is a sin against conscience, still repented of and disowned by almost all when they come to themselves again, and a mere preparation for after sorrow.' That therefore which we foreknow we must repent of afterwards, should be prevented and avoided by men that choose not shame and sorrow.

Object. I. 'But (you will say) I am of a hasty, choleric nature, and cannot help it.'

Ans. That may strongly dispose you to anger, but cannot necessitate you to any thing that is sinful: reason and will may yet command and master passion, if they do their office. And when you know your disease and danger, you must watch the more.

Object. II. 'But the provocation was so great, it would have angered any one; who could choose?'

Ans. It is your weakness that makes you think that any thing can be great enough to discharge a man's reason, and allow him to break the laws of God. That would have been small or nothing to a prepared mind, which you call so great. You should rather say, 'God's majesty and dreadfulness are so great, that I durst not offend him for any provocation. Hath not God given you greater cause to obey, than man can give you to sin?'

Object. III. 'But it is so sudden that I have no time of deliberation to prevent it.'

Ans. Have you not reason still about you? And should it not be as ready to rule, as passion to rebel? Stop passion at first, and take time of deliberation.

Object. IV. 'But it is but short, and I am sorry for it when I have done.'

Ans. But if it be evil, the shortest is a sin, and to be avoided: and when you know beforehand that you must be sorry after, why will you breed your own sorrow?

Object. V. 'But there are none that will not be angry sometimes: no not the best of you all.'

Ans. The sin is never the better because many commit it. And yet, if you live not where grace is a stranger, you may see that there are many that will not be angry easily, frequently, furiously, nor misbehave themselves in their anger, by railing, or cursing, or swearing, or ill language, or doing wrong to any.

Object. vi. 'Doth not the apostle say, "Be angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath?" My wrath is down before the sun: therefore I sin not.'

Ans. The apostle never said that anger is never sinful, but when it lasteth after sun-setting. But entertain no sinful anger at all; but if you do, yet quickly quench it, and continue not in it. Be not angry without or beyond cause: and when you are, yet sin not by uncharitableness, or any evil words or deeds, in your anger; nor continue under the justest displeasure, but hasten to be reconciled and to forgive.

These reasons improved may rule your anger.

Directions Practical against sinful Anger.

Direct. i. 'The principal help against sinful anger is, in the right habituating of the soul, that you live as under the government of God, with the sense of his authority still upon your hearts, and in the sense of that mercy that hath forgiven you, and forbeareth you, and under the power of his healing and assisting grace, and in the life of charity to God and man.' Such a heart is continually fortified, and carrieth its preservatives within itself, as a wrathful man carrieth his incentives still within him: there is the main cause of wrath or meekness.

Direct. ii. 'Be sure that you keep a humbled soul, that overvalueth not itself; for humility is patient and aggravateth not injuries: but a proud man takes all things as heinous or intolerable that are said or done against him.' He that thinks meanly of himself, thinks meanly of all that is said or done against himself. But he that magnifieth himself, doth magnify his provocations. Pride is a most impatient sin: there is no pleasing a proud person, without a great deal of wit, and care, and diligence. You must come

¹ Ephes. iv. 26.

about them as you do about straw or gunpowder with a candle. "Only by pride cometh contention^u." "He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife^x." "Proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath^y." "Let the lying lips be put to silence, which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous^z." Humility, and meekness, and patience live and die together.

Direct. III. 'Take heed of a worldly, covetous mind: for that setteth so much by earthly things, that every loss, or cross, or injury will be able to disquiet him, and inflame his passion.' Neither neighbour, nor child, nor servant can please a covetous man: every little trespass, or crossing his commodity toucheth him to the quick, and maketh him impatient.

Direct. IV. 'Stop your passion in the beginning, before it go too far.' It is easiest moderated at first. Watch against the first stirrings of your wrath, and presently command it down: reason and will can do much if you will but use them according to their power. A spark is sooner quenched than a flame: and this serpent is most easily crushed in the spawn.

Direct. V. 'Command your tongue, and hand, and countenance, if you cannot presently command your passion.' And so you will avoid the greatest of the sin, and the passion itself will quickly be stifled for want of vent. You cannot say that it is not in your power to hold your tongue or hands if you will. Do not only avoid that swearing and cursing which are the marks of the profane, but avoid many words till you are more fit to use them, and avoid expostulations, and contending, and bitter, opprobrious, cutting speeches, which tend to stir up the wrath of others. And use a mild and gentle speech, which savoureth of love, and tendeth to assuage the heat that is kindled. "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger^a." And that which mollifieth and appeaseth another, will much conduce to the appeasing of yourselves.

Direct. VI. 'At least command yourself into quietness till reason be heard speak, and while you deliberate.' Be not so hasty as not to think what you say or do. A little

^u Prov. xiii. 10.^x Prov. xxviii. 25.^y Prov. xxi. 24.^z Psal. xxxi. 18.^a Prov. xv. 1.

delay will abate the fury, and give reason time to do its office. "By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft answer breaketh the bone^b." Patience will lenify another's wrath: and if you use it but so long, as a little to stay yourselves, till reason be awake, it will lenify your own. And he is a fury and not a man that cannot stop while he considereth.

Direct. VII. 'If you cannot more easily quiet or restrain yourselves, go away from the place and company.' And then you will not be heated by contending words, nor exasperate others by your contending. When you are alone the fire will assuage. "Go away from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge^c." You will not stand still and stir in a wasp's nest when you have enraged them.

Direct. VIII. 'Yea, ordinarily avoid much talk; or disputes, or business with angry men, as far as you can without avoiding your duty: and avoid all other occasions and temptations to the sin.' A man that is in danger of a fever, must avoid that which kindleth it. Come not among the infected, if you fear the plague: stand not in the sun, if you are too hot already. Keep as far as you can from that which most provoketh you^d.

Direct. IX. 'Meditate not on injuries or provoking things when you are alone: suffer not your thoughts to feed upon them.' Else you will be devils to yourselves, and tempt yourselves when you have none else to tempt you; and will make your solitude as provoking as if you were in company: and you will be angering yourselves by your own imaginations.

Direct. X. 'Keep upon your minds the lively thoughts of the exemplary meekness and patience of Jesus Christ; who calleth you to learn to be "meek and lowly^e." "Who being reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered he threatened not; leaving us an example that we should follow his steps^f." Who hath pronounced a special "blessing" on the "meek," that "they shall inherit the earth^g."

^b Prov. xv. 1.

^c Prov. xiv. 7.

^d Unicuique pertinacius contententi, justam habere causam permittite, tacendoque contumaci cede: sic uterque quieti et imperturbati permanebitis. Thauler. flor. p. 84.

^e Matt. xi. 29.

^f 1 Pet. ii. 21, 23.

^g Matt. v. 5.

Direct. xi. 'Live as in God's presence; and when your passions grow bold repress them with the reverend name of God, and bid them remember that God and his holy angels see you.'

Direct. xii. 'Look on others in their passion and see how unlovely they make themselves.' With frowning countenances, and flaming eyes, and threatening, devouring looks, and hurtful inclinations: and think with yourselves, whether these are your most desirable patterns.

Direct. xiii. 'Without any delay confess the sin to those that stand by (if easier means will not repress it). And presently take the shame to yourselves, and shame the sin and honour God.' This means is in your power if you will; and it will be an excellent, effectual means. Say to those that you are angry with, I find a sinful anger kindling in me, and I begin to forget God's presence and my duty, and am tempted to speak provoking words to you, which I know God hath forbidden me to do. Such a present opening of your temptation, will break the force of it: and such a speedy confession will stop the fire that it go no further; for it will be an engagement upon you in point of honour, even the reputation of your wit and honesty, which will both suffer by it, if you go on in the sin just when you have thus opened it by confession. I know there is prudence to be used in this, that you do it not so as may make you ridiculous, or harden others in their sinful provocations. But with prudence and due caution it is an excellent remedy, which you can use if you are not unwilling.

Direct. xiv. 'If you have let your passion break out to the offence or wrong of any, by word or deed, freely and speedily confess it to them, and ask them forgiveness, and warn them to take heed of the like sin by your example.' This will do much to clear your consciences, to preserve your brother, to cure the hurt, and to engage you against the sin hereafter: if you are so proud that you will not do this, say no more, you cannot help it, but that you will not. A good heart will not think this too dear a remedy against any sin.

Direct. xv. 'Go presently (in the manner that the place alloweth you) to prayer to God for pardon, and grace against the sin.' Sin will not endure prayer and God's pre-

sence. Tell him how apt your peevish hearts are to be kindled into sinful wrath, and entreat him to help you by his sufficient grace, and engage Christ in the cause, who is your head and advocate; and then your souls will grow obedient and calm. Even as Paul, when he had the prick in the flesh, prayed thrice, (as Christ did in his agony,) so you must pray and pray again and again, till you find God's grace sufficient for you^b.

Direct. xvi. 'Covenant with some faithful friend that is with you to watch over you and rebuke your passions as soon as they begin to appear: and promise them to take it thankfully and in good part.' And perform that promise that you discourage them not. Either you are so far weary of your sin and willing to be rid of it, as to be willing to do what you can against it, or you are not: if you are, you can do this much if you please; if you are not, pretend not to repent, and to be willing to be delivered from your sin upon any lawful terms, when it is not so. Remember still, the mischievous effects of it do make it to be no contemptible sin. "Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools^c." "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty: and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city^d." "A wrathful man stirreth up strife; but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife^e." "The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression^f."

Tit. 8. Directions against sinful Fear.

The chief of my advice concerning this sin, I have given you before, Chap. iii. *Direct.* xii. Yet somewhat I shall here add. Fear is a necessary passion in man, which is planted in nature for the restraining of us from sin, and driving us on to duty, and preventing misery. It is either God, or devils, or men, or inferior creatures, or ourselves, that we fear. God must be feared as he is God; as he is great, and holy, and just, and true: as our Lord, and King, and Judge, and Father: and the fear of him is the beginning of wisdom. Devils must be feared only as subordinate

^b 2 Cor. xii. 7—9.

^c Eccles. vii. 9.

^d Prov. xvi. 32.

^e Prov. xv. 18.

^f Prov. xix. 11.

to God, as the executioners of his wrath ; and so must men, and beasts, and fire, and water, and other creatures be feared, and no otherwise. We must so discern and fear a danger as to avoid it. Ourselves we are less apt to fear, because we know that we love ourselves. But there is no creature that we have so much cause to fear, as our folly, weakness, and wilfulness in sin.

Fear is sinful, 1. When it proceedeth from unbelief, or a distrust of God. 2. When it ascribeth more to the creature than is its due : as when we fear devils or men, as great, or bad, or as our enemies, without due respect to their dependence upon the will of God : when we fear a chained creature, as if he were unchained. 3. When we fear God upon mistake or error, or fear that in him which is not in him, or is not to be feared. As when we fear lest he will break his promise ; lest he will condemn the keepers of his covenant ; lest he will not forgive the penitent that hate their sin ; lest he will despise the contrite ; lest he will not hear the prayers of the humble, faithful soul ; lest he will fail them and forsake them ; lest he will not cause all things to work together for their good ; lest he will forsake his church ; lest Christ will not come again ; lest our bodies shall not be raised ; lest there be no life of glory for the just, or no immortality of souls : all such fears as these are sinful. 4. When our fear is so immoderate in degree, as to distract us, or hinder us from faith and prayer, and make us melancholy : or when it hindereth love, and praise, and thanks, and necessary joy, and tendeth not to drive us to God, and to the use of means to avoid the danger, but to drive us from God, and kill our hope, and make us sit down in despair.

Directions against sinful Fear of God.

Direct. i. ‘ Know God in his goodness, mercifulness and truth, and it will banish sinful fears of him :’ for they proceed from the ignorance or unbelief of some of these ; or not considering and applying them to the cause that is before you, “ They that know thy name, will put their trust in thee.”

Direct. ii. ‘ Know God in Jesus Christ the Mediator,

and come to him by him.' And then you may have "access with boldness and confidence". We have "boldness to enter into the holiest by his blood, by the new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. And having an high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith". The sight of Christ by faith should banish immoderate fear. "Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid".

Direct. III. 'Understand the tenor of the Gospel, and the freeness of the covenant of grace,' and then you will there find abundant encouragement against the matter of inordinate fears.

Direct. IV. 'Employ yourselves as much as possible in love and praise: for love expelleth tormenting fear; there is no fear in love'.

Direct. V. 'Remember God's particular mercies to yourselves: for those will persuade you that he will use you kindly, when you find that he hath done so already. As when Manoah said, "We shall surely die because we have seen God; his wife answered, "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received an offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these things'."

Direct. VI. 'Labour to clear up your title to the promises and special interest in Christ.' Otherwise the doubts of that will be still feeding and justifying your fears.

Direct. VII. 'Consider what a horrible injury it is to God, to think of him as you do of the devil, as an enemy to humble, willing souls, and a destroyer of them, and an adversary to them that diligently seek him;' of whom he is a lover and rewarder. And so think of God as evil, and fear him upon such misapprehensions.

Direct. VIII. 'Observe the sinfulness of your fear in the effects; how it driveth you from God, and hindereth faith, and love, and thankfulness, and discourageth you from prayer, and sacraments, and all duty.' And therefore it must needs be pleasing to the devil, and displeasing to God, and no way to be pleaded for or justified.

Direct. IX. 'Mark how you contradict the endeavours

^a Ephes. iii. 12.

^o Heb. x. 19—23.

^p Matt. xiv. 27.

^q 1 John iv. 18.

^r Judge xiii. 23, 23.

of God, in his Word, and by his ministers.' Do you find God driving any from him, and frightening away souls that would fain be his? Or doth he not prepare the way himself and reconcile the world to himself in Christ, and then send his ambassadors in his name and stead to beseech them to be reconciled unto God, and to tell them that all things are ready, and compel them to come in?

Direct. x. 'Consider how thou wrongest others and keepest them from coming home to God.' When they see thee terrified in the way of piety, they will fly from it, as if some enemies or robbers were in the way. If you tread fearfully, others will fear there is some quicksand. If you tremble when you enter the ship with Christ, others will think he is an unfaithful pilot, or that it is a leaking vessel. Your fear discourageth them.

Direct. xi. 'Remember how remediless, as to comfort, you leave yourselves, while you inordinately fear him, who alone must comfort you against all your other fears.' If you fear your remedy, what shall cure the fear of your disease? If you fear your meat, what shall cure your fear of hunger? If you fear him that is most good and faithful, and the friend of every upright soul, what shall ease you of the fear of the wicked and the enemies of holy souls? If you fear your Father, who shall comfort you against your foes? You cast away all peace, when you make God your terror.

Direct. xii. 'Yet take heed lest under this pretence you cast away the necessary fear of God; even such as belongeth to men in your condition, to drive them out of their sin and security unto Christ, and such as the truth of his threatenings require. For a senseless presumption and contempt of God, are a sin of a far greater danger.'

Directions against sinful Fear of the Devil.

Direct. i. 'Remember that the devil is chained up, and wholly at the will and beck of God.' He could not touch Job, nor an ox, nor an ass of his, till he had permission from God: he cannot appear to thee nor hurt thee unless God give him leave.

* 2 Cor. v. 19. Luke xiv. 17. Matt. xxii. 8.

Direct. II. 'Labour therefore to make sure of the love of God, and then thou art safe:' then thou hast God, his love and promise always to set against the devil.

Direct. III. 'Remember that Christ hath conquered the devil in his temptations, on the cross, by his resurrection and ascension.' He "destroyed through death him that had the power of death, even the devil, that he might deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage¹." The prince of this world is conquered and cast out by him, and wilt thou fear a conquered foe?

Direct. IV. 'Remember that thou art already delivered from his power and dominion, if thou be renewed by the Spirit of God.' And therefore let his own be afraid of him, that are under his power, and not the free men and redeemed ones of Christ. God hath delivered thee in the day that he converted thee, from a thousandfold greater calamity, than the seeing of the devil would be: and having been saved from his greatest malice, you should not overfear the less.

Direct. V. 'Remember what an injury it is to God, and to Christ that conquered him, to fear the devil, while God is your Protector,' (any otherwise than as the instrument of God's displeasure :) It seemeth as much to say, I fear lest the devil be too hard for God: or lest God cannot deliver me from him.

Direct. VI. 'Remember how you honour the devil by fearing him, and please him by thus honouring him.' And will not you abhor to honour and please such an enemy of God and you? This is it that he would have, to be feared instead of God: he glorieth in it as part of his dominion: as tyrants rejoice to see men fear them, as those that can destroy them when they will, so the devil triumpheth in your fears as his honour. When God reprehendeth the idolatry of the Israelites, it is as they feared their idols of wood and stone. To fear them, shewed that they took them for their gods.

Direct. VII. 'Consider that it is a folly to be inordinately fearful of that which never did befall thee, and never befalleth one of many hundred thousand men:' I mean any

¹ Heb. ii. 14, 15.

terrible appearance of the devil. Thou never sawest him : nor hearest credibly of but very few in an age that see him (beside witches) : This fear therefore is irrational, the danger being utterly improbable.

Direct. viii. 'Consider that if the devil should appear to thee, yea, and carry thee to the top of a mountain, or the pinnacle of the temple, and talk to thee with blasphemous temptations, it would be no other than what thy Lord himself submitted to ; who was still the dearly beloved of the Father'. One sin is more terrible than this.

Direct. ix. 'Remember that if God should permit him to appear to thee, it might turn to thy very great advantage : by killing all thy unbelief or doubts, of angels, and spirits, and the unseen world.' It would sensibly prove to thee that there is indeed an unhappy race of spirits, who envy man and seek his ruin ; and so would more convince thee of the evil of sin, the danger of souls, the need of godliness, and the truth of Christianity. And it is like this is one cause why the devil no more appeareth in the world, not only because it is contrary to the ordinary government of God, who will have us live by faith and not by sight ; but also because the devil knoweth how much it would do to destroy his kingdom, by destroying infidelity, atheism, and security, and awakening men to faith, and fear, and godliness. The Fowler or the angler must not come in sight, lest he spoil his game by frightening it away.

Direct. x. 'If it be the spiritual temptations and molestations only of satan which you fear, remember that you have more cause to fear yourselves, for he can but tempt you ; and if you do not more against yourselves, than all the devils in hell can do, you will never perish.' And if you are willing to accept and yield to Christ, you need not inordinately fear either satan or yourselves. For it is in the name and strength of Christ, and under his conduct and protection, that you are to begin and finish your warfare. And the Spirit that is in us, is greater and stronger than the spirit that is in the world, and that molesteth us^x. And the "Father that giveth us to Christ is greater than all, and none can pluck us out of his hands". And the "God of peace will tread down satan under our feet". If it were in

^x Matt. iv.^x 1 John iv. 4.^y John x. 29.^z Rom. xvi. 20.

his power he would molest us daily, and we had never escaped so far as we have done: our daily experience telleth us that we have a protector.

Directions against the sinful Fear of Men, and sufferings by them.

Direct. 1. 'Bottom thy soul and hopes on Christ, and lay up thy treasure in heaven; be not a worldling that liveth in hope of happiness in the creature; and then thou art so far above the fear of men, as knowing that thy treasure is above their reach, and thy foundation and fortress safe from their assaults.*' It is a base, hypocritical, worldly heart that maketh you immoderately afraid of men! Are you afraid lest they should storm and plunder heaven? Or lest they cast you into hell? or lest they turn God against you? or lest they bribe or overawe your judge? No, no! these are none of your fears! No, you are not so much as afraid lest they hinder one of your prayers from prevailing with God; nor lest their prison walls and chains should keep out God and his Spirit from you, and force you from your communion with him! You are not afraid lest they forcibly rob you of one degree of grace, or heavenly mindedness, or hopes of the life to come! (If it be lest they hinder you from these by tempting or affrighting you into sin, (which is all the hurt they can do your souls,) then you are the more engaged to cast away the fears of their hurting your bodies, because that is their very temptation to hurt your souls.) No, it is their hurting of your flesh, the diminishing your estates, the depriving you of your liberty or worldly accommodations, or of your lives, which is the thing you fear. And doth not this shew how much your hearts are yet on earth? and how much unmortified worldliness and fleshliness is still within you? and how much yet your hearts are false to God and heaven? O how the discovery should humble you! to find that you are yet no more dead to the things of the world,

* Omnia Christe tui superant tormenta ferendo. Tollere que nequeunt, hæc tolerare queunt. His vita caruisse frui est: posuisse potiri. Et superasse pati est: et superasse mori.

Ad tribunal æternum judicis justi provocatio salva est: solet is perperam judicata rescindere. Petrarch. Dial. 66. lib. 2.

and that the cross of Christ hath yet no more crucified it to you! to find that yet the fleshly interest is so powerful in you; and the interest of Christ and heaven so low! that God seemeth not enough for you, and that you cannot take heaven alone for your portion, but are so much afraid of losing earth! O presently search into the bottom of this corruption in your hearts, and lament your worldliness and hypocrisy, and work it out, and set your hearts and hopes above, and be content with God and heaven alone, and then this inordinate fear of man will have nothing left to work upon.

Direct. II. 'Set God against man, and his wisdom against their policy, and his love and mercy against his malice and cruelty, and his power against their impotency, and his truth, and omniscience, and righteousness against their slanders and lies, and his promises against their threatenings; and then if yet thou art inordinately afraid of man, thou must confess that in that measure, thou believest not in God.' If God be not wise enough, and good enough, and just enough, and powerful enough to save thee, so far as it is best for thee to be saved, then he is not God: away with atheism, and then fear not man.

Direct. III. 'Remember what man is that thou art afraid of.' He is a bubble raised by Providence, to toss about the world, and for God to honour himself by or upon. He is the mere product of his Maker's will: his breath is in his nostrils! he is hasting to his dust, and in that day his worldly hopes and thoughts do perish with him. He is a worm that God can in one moment tread into the earth and hell. He is a dream, a shadow, a dry leaf or a little chaff, that is blown awhile about the world^b. He is just ready in the height of his pride and fury, to drop into the grave; and that same man or all those men, whom now thou fearest, shall one of these days, most certainly lie rotting in the dust, and be hid in darkness, lest their ugly sight and stink be an annoyance to the living. Where now are all the proud ones that made such a bustle in the world but awhile ago? In one age they look big, and boast of their power, and re-

^b Job xiii. 25. Psal. i. 5, 6. lxviii. 2. lxxiii. 20. Job xx. 8. Victor Uti-
cens. saith of Augustine, that he died of fear. Nunc illud eloquentiæ, quod ubertim
per omnes campos ecclesiæ decurrebat, ipso metu siccatum est flumen: when Genseric
besieged Hippo.

bel, and usurp authority, and are mad to be great and rulers in the world, or persecute the ministers and people of the Lord; and in the next (or in the same) they are viler than the dirt; their carcases are buried, or their bones scattered abroad, and made the horror and wonder of beholders: And is this a creature to be feared above God, or against God? See Isa. li. 7. "Hearken to me ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation. Isa. ii. 22. "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?" Psal. cxlvi. 3, 4. "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help: his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." When Herod was magnified as a god, he could not save himself from being devoured alive by worms. When Pharaoh was in his pride and glory, he could not save his people from frogs, and flies, and lice. Saith God to Sennacherib, "The virgin, the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn,—and hath shaken her head at thee; whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed, and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice and lifted thine eyes on high?" O what a worm is man that you are so afraid of!

Direct. iv. 'Remember that men as well as devils are chained, and dependant upon God, and have no power but what he giveth them, and can do nothing but by his permission.' And if God will have it done, thou hast his promise that it shall work unto thy good^c. And are you afraid lest God should do you good by them? If you see the knife or lancet in an enemy's hand only, you might fear it; but if you see it in the surgeon's or in a father's hand, though nature will a little shrink, yet reason will forbid you to make any great matter of it, or inordinately to fear. What if God will permit Joseph's brethren to bind him, and sell him to the Amalekites? and his master's wife to cause him to be imprisoned? Is he not to be trusted in all this, that he will turn it to his good? What if he will permit Shimei to curse

^c Rom. viii. 28.

David; or the king to cast Daniel into the lion's den; or the three confessors into the furnace of fire? Do you believe that your Father's will is the disposer of all? and yet are you afraid of man? Our Lord told Pilate when he boasted of his power to take away his life or save it, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above^d."

I know you will say that it is only as God's instruments that you fear them, and that if you were certain of his favour, and were not first afraid of his wrath, you should not fear the wrath of men. *Ans.* By this you may see then what it is to be disobedient, and to cherish your fears of God's displeasure, and to hinder your own assurance of his love, when this must be the cause of, or the pretence for so many other sins. But if really you fear them but as the instruments of God's displeasure; 1. Why then did you no more fear his displeasure before, when the danger from men did not appear? you know God never wanteth instruments to execute his wrath or will. 2. And why fear you not the sin which doth displease him more than the instruments, when they could do you no hurt were it not for sin? 3. And why do you not more fear them as tempters than as afflictors? and consequently why fear you not their flatteries, and enticements, and preferments, and your prosperity, more than adversity, when prosperity more draweth you away to sin. 4. And why fear you not hell more than any thing that man can do against you, when God threateneth hell more than human penalties. 5. And why do you not apply yourselves to God chiefly for deliverance, but study how to pacify man? why do you with more fear and care, and diligence, and compliance, apply yourselves to those that you are afraid of, if you fear God more than them? Repent and make your peace with God through Christ, and then be quiet, if it be God that you are afraid of: your business then is not first with the creature, but with God. 6. And if you fear them only as God's instruments, why doth not your fear make you the more cautiously to fly from further guilt, but rather make you to think of

^d John xix. 11. Valentinianus jussus ab Imperatore Juliano immolare idolis, aut militia excedere, sponte discessit: nec mora, qui pro nomine Christi amiserat tribunatum, in locum persecutoris sui accepit imperium. Paul. Diaconus, lib. i. p. 1.

stretching your consciences as far as ever you dare, and venturing as far as you dare upon God's displeasure, to escape man's? Are these signs that you fear them only as the instruments of God's displeasure? or do you see how deceitful a thing your heart is? Indeed man is to be feared in a full subordination to God, 1. As his officers, commanding us to obey him; 2. As his executioners, punishing us for disobeying him; 3. But not as satan's instruments, (by God's permission) afflicting us for obeying him, or without desert. "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil.*" Would you have the fuller exposition of this? It is in 1 Pet. iii. 10—17. "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. Having a good conscience, that whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing." See also 1 Peter iv. 13—15^f.

Direct. v. 'Either you fear suffering from men as guilty or as innocent; for evil-doing, or for well-doing, or for nothing! If as guilty and for evil-doing, turn your fears the right way, and fear God, and his wrath for sin, and his

* Rom. xiii. 3, 4.

^f When Socrates' wife, lamenting him said, *Injustè morieris*: he answered, *An tu juste malles?* Diog. Laert. in Socrat. lib. ii. sect. 35. p. 102.

threatenings of more than men can inflict; and acknowledge the goodness of justice both from God and man; but if it be as innocent or for well-doing, remember that Christ commandeth you exceedingly to rejoice; and remember that martyrs have the most glorious crown: and will you be excessively afraid of your highest honour, and gain and joy? Believe well what Christ hath said, and you cannot be much afraid of suffering for him. "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." And will you fear the way of blessedness and exceeding joy? "Beware of men, for they will deliver ye up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues, and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them— But take no thought, &c.^h" You are allowed to beware of them, but not to be over fearful or thoughtful of the matter. "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, fly to another."—Fly but fear them not, with any immoderate fear: "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it^k." "Verily I say unto you, there is no man hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come, life everlasting^l." Can you believe all this, and yet be so afraid of your own felicity? O what a deal of se-

^h Matt. v. 10—12. The seven brethren that suffered in Africa under Hunpericus, Incedebant cum fiducia ad supplicium quasi ad epulas, decantantes, Gloria Deo in excelsis, &c. Votiva nobis hæc est dies, et omni solennitate festivior. Ecce nunc tempus acceptabile, ecce nunc dies est salutis, quando pro fide nunc domini dei nostri, perferimus præparatum supplicium, ne amittamus acquisitæ fidei indumentum. Sed et populi publica voce clamabant: Ne timeatis populi Dei, neque formidetis minas atque terrores præsentium tribulationum, sed moriamur pro Christo, ut ipse mortuus est, redimens nos pretioso sanguine salutari. Victor. Uticens. p. 368. In Paulo quinque gloriationes observavi. Gloriatur in imbecillitate, in cruce Christi, in bona conscientia; in afflictionibus, in spe vitæ æternæ. Bucholtzer.

^k Matt. x. 17—19. ^l Ver. 22, 23. ^k Ver. 39. ^l Luke xviii. 29, 30.

cret unbelief is detected by our immoderate fears! "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as an evil doer—yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him glorify God on that behalf—wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing as unto a faithful Creator^m." There is scarce any point that God hath been pleased to be more full in, in the Holy Scriptures, than the encouraging of his suffering servants against the fears of men; acquainting them that their sufferings are the matter of their profit and exceeding joy; and therefore not of too great fear.

Direct. vi. 'Experience telleth us that men have never so much joy on earth as in suffering for the cause of Christ; nor so much honour as by being dishonoured by men for him.' How joyfully did the ancient Christians go to martyrdom? many of them lamented that they could not attain it: and what comfort have Christ's confessors found, above what they could ever attain beforeⁿ? and how honourable now are the names and memorials of those martyrs, who died then under the slanders, scorn and cruelty of men? Even the Papists that bloodily make more, do yet honour the names of the ancient martyrs with keeping holidays for them, and magnifying their shrines and relicts: for God will have it so, for the honour of his holy sufferers, that even that same generation that persecute the living saints, shall honour the dead, and they that murder those they find alive, shall honour those whom their forefathers murdered: "Woe unto

^m 1 Peter iv. 12—16. 19.

ⁿ Idololatria tam altis in mundo egit radices, ut non possit extirpari: ideo optimum est confiteri et pati. Bucholtzer. Victor Uticensis saith, that Gensericus commanded that when Masculinus came to die, if he were fearful they should execute him, that he might die with shame, but if he were constant, they should forbear, lest he should have the honour of a glorious martyrdom. And so his boldness saved his life. Et si martyrem invidus hostis noluit facere confessorem, tamen non potuit violare.

you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites ! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous : and say, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them of the blood of the prophets^o." Comfort and honour attend the pain and shame of the cross. "They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name^r." "Paul and Silas sang praises to God at midnight in the prison and stocks^q," when their backs were sore with stripes. It is written of some of the Christians that were imprisoned by Julian, that they would not forbear in the Emperor's hearing as he passed by, to sing, "Let God arise, and his enemies shall be scattered."

Direct. vii. 'Love better the holy image of God upon your souls, and then you will be glad of the great helps to holiness which sufferings do afford.' Who findeth not that adversity is more safe and profitable to the soul than prosperity? Especially that adversity which Christ is engaged to bless to his servants, as being undergone for him? "We glory in tribulation also ; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed^r." God chasteneth us for our profit that we may be partakers of his holiness : now no chastisement for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous ; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby^s." Moses "esteemed the very reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt : and therefore rather chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season^t." It is but "now for a season, and if need be, that we are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of our faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ^u." Who is it that knoweth himself, that feeleth not a need of some afflictions ? to awake us from our drowsiness, and quicken us from our dullness, and refine us from our dross, and wean us from the world, and help us to mortify the flesh, and save us from the deceits of sin ?

^o Matt. xxiii. 29—31.

^p Acts v. 41.

^q Acts xvi. 25.

^r Rom. x. 3—5.

^s Heb. xii. 10, 11.

^t Heb. xi. 25, 26.

^u 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7.

Direct. viii. 'Remember that sufferings are the ordinary way to heaven.' Love heaven better, and your sufferings will seem lighter, and your fear of them will be less^a. Christ hath resolved on it, that "if any one come to him, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be his disciple: and whoever doth not bear his cross and follow him, cannot be his disciple: and whoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be his disciple^b." "In the world we shall have tribulation, but peace in him^c." "Through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God^d." "If so be that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified with him. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us^e." Therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God^f." In preaching the Gospel, Paul saith, he "suffered as an evil doer even unto bonds, but the word of God is not bound^g." "I suffer these things," saith he, "nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day^h." "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecutionⁱ." Our patience in sufferings is the joy of our friends, and therefore they are not too much to be feared. "So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer^j." Therefore take the conclusion of all from God, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried: and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of

^a Anacharsis (in Laertio) percontanti quoniam esset securissima navis: ea inquit, quæ in portum venerit. See Diog. Laert. lib. i. sect. 104. pp. 66. 67.

^b Luke xiv. 26, 27. 33.

^c John xvi. 33.

^d Acts xiv. 22.

^e Rom. viii. 17.

^f 1 Tim. iv. 10.

^g 2 Tim. ii. 9.

^h 2 Tim. i. 12.

ⁱ 2 Tim. iii. 12.

^j 2 Thea. i. 4. 5. Ingenii philosophici est ex inimicorum odio decerpere aliquid quod veritas in suum bonum. Paul. Scalig. p. 728.

life^b." "And in nothing terrified by your adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God : for to you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sakeⁱ." And shall we fear so great a gift?

Direct. ix. 'Remember how small and short the suffering will be, and how great and long the glorious reward.' It is but a little while, and the pain and shame will all be past : but the glory will be never past : what the worse now is Stephen for his stones, or John Baptist for being beheaded : or Paul for his bonds and afflictions, which did every where abide him, or any holy martyr for the torment and death which they underwent ? O how the case is altered with them, now God hath wiped away all tears from their eyes ! Are we so tender that we cannot endure the grief that is but for a night, when we know that joy will come in the morning ? "For this cause we faint not ; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory ; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen : for the things which are seen are temporal ; but the things which are not seen are eternal^k." "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith : but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him^l."

Direct. x. 'When you are delivered from the power of the devil himself, what cause have you to fear his instruments ?' Can they do more than he ? If Goliath the champion, and the general be overcome, the common soldiers are not like to overcome us.

Direct. xi. 'Are you better than your Lord ? look to him, and be confirmed.' "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the

^b Rev. ii. 10. ⁱ Phil. i. 28—30. ^k 2 Cor. iv. 16—18. ^l Heb. .x. 35—38.

disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household^m." "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God: for consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied, and faint in your mindsⁿ."

Direct. xii. 'Be of good cheer: our Lord hath overcome the world^o. And shall we fear inordinately a conquered world? Yea, he overcame it by suffering, to shew us that by suffering we shall overcome it.' He triumphed over principalities and powers (greater than mortals) "on the cross^p." And therefore "all power in heaven and earth is given to him^q," and he is "Lord both of the dead and living^r," and "is made head over all things to the church^s." And so, though "for his sake we be killed all the day long, and counted as sheep to the slaughter, yet in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us:" that is, we have a nobler victory than if we conquered them by the sword.

Direct. xiii. 'Think how little your suffering is in comparison of what your sin deserved, and your Lord hath freely saved you from.' Should a man grudge at the opening of a vein for his health, who deserved to have lost his life? Can you remember hell which was your due, and yet make a great matter of any thing that man can do against you?

Direct. xiv. 'Remember that to sin, through fear, of suffering, is to leap into hell to escape a little pain on earth.' Are you afraid of man? Be more afraid of God: Is not God more terrible? "It is a fearful thing to fall into his hands: for he is a consuming fire^t." O hear your Lord. "And I say to you my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body and after that have no more that they can do: but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: fear him which af-

^m Matt. x. 24.

^p Col. ii. 15.

^o Ephes. i. 21. 22.

ⁿ Heb. xii. 1—3.

^q Matt. xxviii. 19.

^r Heb. x. 31. 26. 27. 29.

^o John xvi. 33.

^p Rom. xiv. 9.

^t Heb. xii. 29.

ter he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, fear him ^u." If their fire be hot, remember that hell is hotter: and that God is the best friend, and the dreadfulest enemy.

Direct. xv. 'Remember that you shall suffer (and it is like as much) even here from God, if you escape by sin your suffering from men.' If you sin to escape death, you shall die when you have done: and O! how quickly! and how much more joyful it is to die for Christ, than a little after unwillingly to part with that life, which you denied to part with for your Lord? and what galls will you feel in your guilty conscience both in life and at your death? So that even in this life, your fear would drive you into greater misery.

Direct. xvi. 'Think of the dangerous effects of your immoderate fear.' It is the way with Peter to deny your Lord: yea, the way to apostasy, or any wickedness which men shall drive you to by terrors. If you were where the Turk is now tyrannising among Christians, if you overcome not your fear, he might overcome your fidelity ^x, and make you turn from Jesus Christ: and that is the sin which the apostle so dreadfully describeth, Heb. x. 26, 27, 29. "If we sin wilfully, (that is, wilfully renounce our Lord) after the acknowledgment of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fire which shall devour the adversary." O how many have been drawn by the fear of men, to wound their consciences, neglect their duties, comply with sin, forsake the truth, dishonour God, and undo their souls. And often in this life they do as poor Spira did, who, by sinning through the fear of man, did cast himself into melancholy and self-murdering despair. Your fear is a more dangerous enemy to you than those that you fear are. "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe. Many seek the ruler's favour, but every man's judgment cometh of the Lord ^y." Fear is given to preserve you: use it not to destroy you.

^u Luke xiii. 4, 5.

^x Qui propter timorem retinet veritatem, veritatis proditor est. Hincmar. Rhemens. Dialog. de Statu. Eccl.

^y Prov. xxi. 25, 26.

Direct. xvii. 'Believe and remember God's special providence, extending to every hair of your head, and also the guard of angels which he hath set over you.' "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father: but the very hairs of your head are numbered: fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows^a." O that this were well believed and considered! "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."

Direct. xviii. 'Think what a vile dishonour it is to God, to have his creature, even breathing dirt, to be feared more than he.' As if he were less powerful to do good or hurt to you than man, and were not able or willing to secure you, so far as to see that no man shall ever be a loser by him, or any thing which he suffereth for his cause! "And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid it to thy heart: have I not held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not^d?" How did Daniel and the three confessors honour God, but by fearing him more than the king and the flaming furnace: saying, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter: if it be so our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O king: but if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, &c^b." Daniel would not cease praying thrice a day openly in his house, for fear of the king, or of the lions. "Moses forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing him that is invisible^c." "So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me^d."

Direct. xix. 'Remember the dangers which you have been saved from already: especially from sin and hell.' And is an uncircumcised Philistine more invincible than the lion and the bear?

Direct. xx. 'Remember the great approaching day of

^a Matt. x. 29, 30. ^b Isa. lvii. 11. ^c Dan. iii. 16—18. ^d Heb. xi. 27.

^d Heb. xiii. 6. Plus dicam: tanto est melius juste etiam damnari quam injuste absolvi, quanto est pejus impunitum crimen quam punitum: in hoc enim celeri juncta justitia est: malo magno bonum ingens. In illo autem scelus et impunitas, quæ nescio, an scelere ipso pejor sit. Petrarch. dial. 66. lib. 2.

judgment, where great and small will be equal before God : and where God will right all that were wronged by men, and be the full and final avenger of his children !' He hath promised, though "he bear long, to avenge them speedily *." Can you believe that day, and yet not think that it is soon enough to justify you fully and finally, and to make you reparations of all your wrongs ? Cannot you stay till Christ come to judge the quick and the dead ? You will then be loath to be found with those that, as Saul, made haste to sacrifice, because he could not stay till Samuel came ; whose souls "drew back, because they could not live by faith." "Fear them not therefore ; for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, and hid that shall not be known †." "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you ; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance, &c. When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe ‡."

Direct. XXI. 'Remember that the fearful and unbelieving shall be shut out of heaven ^b : ' that is, those that fear men more than God, and cannot trust him with their lives at all, but will rather venture upon his wrath by sin, than on the wrath of man.

Direct. XXII. 'Turn your fear of the instruments of the devil into pity and compassion to men in such lamentable misery : ' and pray for them as Christ and Stephen did : foresee now the misery that is near them. When you begin to be afraid of them, suppose that just now were the day of judgment, and you saw how they will then tremble at the bar of God, (as conscience sometimes makes some of them do, at the hearing or remembering of it ; as Felix before Paul :) see them as ready to be sentenced to the fire prepared for the devil and his angels, as Matt. xxv. Can you fear him that is near such endless misery, whom you should condole and pity (as the ancient martyrs used to do ?) "What shall the end" of the persecutors be, "and where shall the ungodly sinners appear, if judgment begin at the house of God, and the righteous be saved with so much ado ¹ ?"

* Luke xviii. 7, 8.

† Matt. x. 26.

‡ 2 Thess. i. 6—10.

^b Rev. xxi. 8.

¹ 1 Pet. iv. 17.

About the fear of death, I have written largely already in my "Treatise of Self-denial," and in the "Saints' Rest," and in "The Last Enemy Death," &c. and in "The Believer's Last Work." Therefore, I shall here pass it by^k.

Tit. 9. Directions against sinful Grief and Trouble.

Sorrow is planted in nature to make man a subject capable of government, by making him capable of punishment, that he might be kept from sin by the fear or sense of that which nature hath made its punishment: and that the beginnings of pain might help to prevent the sin that would bring more; and might drive the wounded soul to its remedy: or by sympathy might condole the misery of others.

Sorrow or grief, in itself considered, is neither morally good nor evil; but it is a natural passion, and evil, that is hurtful to him that hath it; but good, that is an apt, conducive means to the universal or higher ends of government to which the Creator and Universal King hath planted it in man: the same may be said of all capacity of pain and natural misery.

Mere sorrow in itself considered, is a thing that God commandeth not, nor taketh pleasure in. Sorrow for our natural or penal hurt, is in itself no duty, but a necessary thing. God doth not command it, but threatens it: therefore there is no moral good in it. God will not command or entreat men to feel when they are hurt, or mourn under their torment; but will make them do it whether they will or no: therefore humble souls must take heed of thinking they merit or please God merely by sorrowing for their sufferings. But yet sorrow for misery may accidentally become a duty and a moral good, 1. 'Ratione principii,' by respect to the principle it proceedeth from. As when it is, (1.) The belief of God's threatenings which causeth the sorrow. (2.) When it cometh from a love to God. 2. 'Ratione materiæ,' for the matter's sake, when it is the absence of God, and his favour, and his Spirit, and image, which is the misery that we lament (which therefore savoureth of some love to God); and not mere fleshly, sensitive suffering. 3. 'Ratione finis,' in respect of the end; when we

^k See after Part iii. c. 19. tit. 3. and c. 30.

sorrow with intent to drive our hearts to Christ our Saviour, and to value mercy and grace, and to recover us to God. 4. 'Ratione effecti,' in respect of the effect, when these forementioned ends become the fruits of it¹.

Sorrow for sin is a duty and moral good. 1. Formally in itself considered: for to be sorrowful for offending God, and violating his law, essentially containeth a will to please God and obey his law. 2. It must be also made good, by a good principle; that is, by faith and love. 3. By a right end; that it be to carry us from the sin to God. 4. And by a right guide and matter; that it be sin indeed, and not a mistaken, seeming sin, that is it we sorrow for. But sorrow for sin (materially) may be made sinful. 1. By an ill end and formal reason; when we mourn not for sin as sin, but as one sin hindereth another, or as it marred some ill design. 2. And by the effect; when it doth but sink men in despair, or torment them, and not at all separate them from the sin. 3. When it cometh not at all from any love to God, or care to please him, but only an unwillingness to be damned, and so it is lamented only as a means of damnation; which, though it be a sorrow, positively neither good nor evil, yet it is evil privatively.

But it is the passion of grief as in its excess that I am now to speak against. And it is in excess, 1. When we grieve for that which we ought not at all to grieve for: that is, either for some good, or for a thing indifferent that is neither good or bad: both which come from the error of the mind. 2. When we grieve too much for that which we may grieve for lawfully in some measure: that is, for our own afflictions or penal suffering. 3. When we grieve too much for that which we are bound to grieve for in some measure: as (1.) For our sin. (2.) For our loss of the favour of God, or of his grace and Spirit. (3.) For other men's sin and suffering. (4.) For the sufferings of the church, and calamities of the world. (5.) For God's dishonour^m.

¹ Even sorrow that profiteth not, may testify a just affection. It is said by Laertius, that when Solon was reproved for mourning for his son, with a 'Nihil proficia,' he answered, 'At propter hoc ipsum illachrymor, quia nihil proficio.' Diog. Laert. lib. i. sect. 63. p. 39.

^m That very old book of Hermes, called "Pastor," notably sheweth how much grief and heaviness are enemies to Christianity and to the Spirit of God.

Though it is not easy to have too much sorrow for sin, considering it estimatively : that is, we can hardly take sin for a worse evil than it is, and accordingly grieve for it ; yet it is oft too easy to have too much sorrow for sin, or any other evil intensively as to the greatness of the passion. And thus sorrow for sin is too great, 1. When it distracteth the mind, and overturneth reason, and it is made unfit for the ends of sorrow. 2. When it so cloudeth and clotheth the soul in grief, that it maketh us unfit to see and consider of the promise, to relish mercy, or believe it ; to acknowledge benefits, or own grace received, or be thankful for it ; to feel the love of God, or love him for it, to praise him, or to mind him, or to call upon him : when it driveth the soul from God, and weakeneth it to duty, and teacheth it to deny mercy, and sinketh it towards despair ; all this is too much and sinful sorrow : and so is all that doth the soul more hurt than good ; for sorrow is not good of itself, but as it doth good, or sheweth good.

Direct. i. ' Keep your hearts as true and close to God as possible, and make sure of his love, that you may know you have not an unregenerate, miserable soul to mourn for, and then all other grief is the more curable and more tolerable.' Be once able to say that God is on your side, that Christ, and the Spirit, and heaven are yours, and then you have the greatest cordial against excessive grief that this world affords. If you say, ' How should this be done ? ' I answer, that it is opened in its proper place. No marvel if sorrow overwhelm that soul, that is in the chains of sin, under the curse of God, as soon as awakened conscience comes to feel it. And it is most miserable when it hath the smallest sorrow ; there being some hope that sorrow may drive it home to Christ. Therefore if thou have been a secure, unhumbled, carnal wretch, and God be now beginning to humble thee, by shewing thee thy sin and misery, take heed as thou lovest thy soul, that thou drive not away necessary, healing sorrow and repentance, under pretence of driving away melancholy or over much sorrow : thy smart tendeth to thy hopes of cure.

Direct. ii. ' Renew not the wounds of conscience by renewed, wilful, gross sin.' For sin will bring sorrow, especially if thou have any life of grace to feel it : even as

falls, and breaking the bones bring pain. Obey carefully if thou wouldst have peace.

Direct. III. 'Be well acquainted with the general grounds of hope in the mercy of God, the office and death of Christ, and the free, universal offer of pardon, grace, and life in the New Covenant.' Abundance of grief doth dwell in many humbled souls, through the ignorance of these general grounds of comfort; which would vanish away if these were known.

Direct. IV. 'Know well the true nature and use of godly sorrow: how it is but a means to higher grace, and a thing which may exceed, and not a thing that we should stop in, or think we can never have too much of it.' Desire is but in its place, and to its proper ends.

Direct. V. 'Know well the nature and excellency of those higher graces which sorrow tendeth to: even love, and thankfulness, and delight in God, and fruitful obedience.' And then you will be carried after these, and will learn to hate the sorrow that hindereth them, and to cherish that sorrow which leadeth you up to them, and to value it but as a means to them.

Direct. VI. 'Manage all your affairs, especially those of your souls, with prudent foresight: and look not only on things as they appear at hand^m. Judge not by sense, but by reason; for sense cannot foresee, but pleaseth itself at present with that which must be bitterness in the end. Thus, carnal delight is the common way to overwhelming sorrow. He that would not have the pain and sickness of a surfeit to-morrow, must not please his appetite against reason to-day. Poison will gripe and kill never the less for tasting sweet. You must foreknow how that which you take will work, and what will be the effects of it, and not only how it tasteth, if you would escape the pain. The drunkard thinketh not of his vomiting, and poverty, or shame, or sickness, and therefore causeth them. There is no sorrow so intolerable as that of a guilty soul, that is passing in terror to the bar of God, and thence to everlasting pain. Foresee this sorrow in your most pleasant sin; and remem-

^m Pittaci sententia fuit, prudentiam virorum esse priusquam adversa contingant, providere ne veniant: fortium vero, cum illa contigerint, sequo animo ferre. Diog. Laert. in Pittac. lib. i. sect. 78. p. 48.

ber that when you are tempted to sin, you are tempted to sorrow; and then you may prevent it. And in all your particular actions use a foreseeing judgment, and ask what is like to be the end, before you enter on the beginning. Most of our sorrows come for want of this, and express themselves by, 'Had I known, or had I thought of this, I had prevented it.' Do nothing which you may foresee must be repented of; for repentance is sorrowful: and the weightier the case the deeper the sorrow. How easy and comfortable a life and death might men attain, if they would not buy a little forbidden, poisonous pleasure, with the price of future pain and sorrows! And if they did not foolishly and overtenderly refuse those holy, necessary, medicinal sorrows, by which their greater, overwhelming, and undoing sorrows should have been prevented!

Direct. vii. 'Look always on your remedy when you look on your misery, and when you find any dangerous sin or sign in you, presently consider what is your duty in order to your recovery and escape.' It is an ordinary thing with peevish, distempered natures, when they are reprov'd for any sin, to resist the reproof by excuses as long as they can: and when they can resist no longer, then they fall into despairing lamentations, if they are so bad, what then shall they do! and in the mean time never set themselves against the sin, and cast it off and return to their obedience, that their comforts return: they will do any thing rather than amend. The reason why God convinceth them of sin is that they may forsake it, and they are sooner brought to any thing than to this: convince them of their pride, or malice, or worldliness, or disobedience, or slothfulness, or passion, and they will sooner sink in sorrow and despair than they will set upon a resolved reformation. This is it indeed which the devil desireth: he can allow you grief and desperation, but not to amend. But is this best for you? Or is it pleasing to God? Deny not your sin, but see withal that there is enough in Christ for your pardon and deliverance. He hath appointed you means for your present recovery, and he is ready to help you. Ask what is your duty for your cure, and set upon it without delay.

Direct. viii. 'Remember your causes of joy as well as

your cause of sorrow, that each may have their due, and your joy and sorrow may both be suited to their causes. To which end you must labour for the exactest acquaintance with your own condition, that possibly you can attain to.' If you are yet ungodly, your sorrow must be greater than your joy, or else it will be irrational joy, and pernicious to your souls and increase your after sorrow. And you must not overlook so much cause of comfort as is afforded you in God's patience, and the offers of a Saviour, and of pardon, and grace, and life in him. If you are truly godly, you must so mourn for sin, and weakness, and wants, and crosses, and afflictions of yourselves and others, as never to forget the invaluable mercies which you have already received, your part in Christ and life eternal, your beginnings of grace, and your reconciliation with God, which allow and command you greatly to rejoice: and remember that no humiliations will excuse you from the observation and acknowledgment of all these mercies.

Direct ix. 'Read over all the commands of Scripture that make it your duty, to rejoice in the Lord, and exceedingly to rejoice; and make as much conscience of them as of other commands of God.' The same God commandeth you to rejoice, who commandeth you to hear, and pray, and repentⁿ.

Direct. x. 'Befriend not your own excessive sorrows, by thinking them to be your duty, nor suspect lawful mirth and joy as if it were a sin, or a thing unbecoming you.' For if you take your sin for your duty, and plead for it, and your duty for your sin, and plead against it, you are far from the way of amendment and recovery. And yet it is common with an afflicted, weak, impatient soul, to fall into liking (though not in love) with their inordinate sorrows, and to justify them, and think that it is their duty still to mourn. If these sorrows were of God, we should be more backward to them: and if our comfort were not more pleasing to God, our natures would not be so backward to them as they are.

Direct. xi. 'Love no creature too much, and let it not

ⁿ See Psal. xxxiii. 1 Phil. iii. 1. iv. 4. Rom. v. 2. Phil. iii. 3. 1 Thes. v. 16. 1 Pet. i. 6—8. iv. 13. Heb. iii. 6. 2 Cor. vi. 10. Rom. xii. 12. Psal. xxxii. 11. cxxxii. 9—16. Rom. xiv. 17. Psal. v. 11.

grow too sweet and pleasant to you : else you are preparing for sorrow from the creature.' Love it less, and you shall sorrow less. All your grief for crosses and losses, in goods, estate, in children and friends, in reputation, liberty, health and life, doth come from your over loving them. Value them but as they deserve, and you may easily bear the loss of them. He that maketh them his idol or felicity, will grieve for the want of them, or the loss of them as a man undone that cannot live without them. But he that hath placed his happiness and hopes in God, and valueth the world no further than it tendeth to his ultimate end, will no further grieve for the want of it, than as he misseth it to that end. "The love of money and coveting after it, doth pierce men through with many sorrows*." Mark what you find your heart too much set upon and pleased in, or hoping after, and take it off quickly if you love your peace.

Direct. XII. 'Learn to be pleased and satisfied in the will of God. Trust your heavenly Father who knoweth what you need.' It is some rebellion or crossness of our wills to the will of God, which causeth our inordinate griefs and trouble. Because we cannot bring our wills to his will, nor make our reason stoop unto his wisdom, nor think well of his providence, unless he will stir it to our conceits, and interests, and lusts, therefore so far as we are carnal we are ordinarily displeased and grieved at his ways. If we might have had our own wills about our estates, or names, or children, or friends, or health, or life, we should not have been troubled (at the present). But because it is not our way, but God's way that is taken, nor our will, but God's will that is done, therefore we are grieved and discontent, as if his way and will were worse than ours, and God had wanted his foolish children to be his counsellors, or they could have chosen better for themselves !

Direct. XIII. 'Afflict yourselves no further than God or man afflict you : but remember if you think that you have too much already against your wills, how foolish and self-contradicting it is to lay a great deal more, wilfully upon yourselves*."

* 1 Tim. vi. 10.

† Libenter feras quod necesse est : dolor patientiâ vincitur. Martin. Dumiens. de Morib. Tristitiam si potes, ne admiseris : sin mitas, ne ostenderis. Id. ib.

Is it slanders or reproach that men afflict you with? Let it be so; that toucheth not the heart. Is it poverty, crosses, or losses, that God afflicteth you with? Let it be so: that toucheth not the heart neither. Is it loss of children, or friends; or is it pain and sickness? I confess these are sore; but yet they do not touch the heart. If they come thither it is your doing; and (though thither they should come moderately) if they are immoderate, it is your own sinful doing. It is you that grieve; and make the heart ache. God and man did but make the flesh ache. If others hurt your bodies, will you therefore vex your minds? Will you pierce through your hearts, because they touch your name or goods? If so, remember which part of your sorrow is of their making, and which is of your own: and can you for shame go beg of God or man to ease the grief which you yourselves are causing, and wilfully continue it while you pray against it? And why lament you that which you cause and choose? It is a shame to be wilfully your own tormentors.

Direct. xiv. 'Abhor all that tendeth to take down the power and government of reason (that is, all feebleness and cowardice of mind, and a melancholy, a peevish, passionate disposition): and labour to keep up the authority of reason, and to keep all your passions subject to your wills; which must be done by Christian faith and fortitude.' If you come once to that childish or distracted pass, as to grieve and say, I cannot help it: I know it is sinful and immoderate, but I cannot choose, if you say true, you are out of the reach of counsel, advice, or comfort. You are not to be preached to, nor talked to, nor to be written for: we do not write directions to teach men how to touch the stars, or explain the asperities or inequalities of the moon, or the opacous parts of Saturn, or to govern the orbs, or rule the chariot of the sun. If it be become a natural impossibility to you, doctrine can give you no remedy: but if the impossibility be but moral in the weakness of reason, and want of consideration, it may be doctrine, consideration, and resolution be overcome. You can do more if you will than you think you can¹. How come you to lose the command of your passions? Did not God make you a rational

¹ See Mr. Fenner's book of Wilful Impenitency.

creature, that hath an understanding and will to rule all passions? How come you to have lost the ruling power of reason and will? You would take it for a disparagement to be told that you have lost the use of your reason: and is it not a principal use of it to rule the passions, and all other inferior subject powers? You say you cannot choose but grieve! But if one could give you that creature which you want or desire, then you could choose: you could rejoice, if one could restore you that child, that friend, that estate which you have lost. But God, and Christ, and heaven, it seems, are not enough to cure you: if you must have but them you cannot choose but grieve! And what hearts have you then that are thus affected? Should not those hearts be rather grieved for? God will sometime make you see, that you had more power than you used.

Direct. xv. 'Observe the mischiefs of excessive sorrow that you may feel what reason you have to avoid it.' While you know not what hurt is in it, you will be the more remiss in your resisting it: I shall briefly name you some of its unhappy fruits.

1. It is a continual pain and sickness of the mind. (This you know by feeling.) 2. It is a destroyer of bodily health and life. For "worldly sorrow worketh death". "A merry heart doth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones". 3. It putteth the soul out of relish with its mercies, and so causeth us to undervalue them, and consequently to be unthankful for them, and not to improve them. 4. It destroyeth the sense of the love of God, and lamentably undisposeth the soul to love him: and therefore should be abhorred by us were it but for that one effect. 5. It destroyeth the joy of the Holy Ghost, and unfitteth us to obey that command of God, 'rejoice continually.' 6. It contradicteth a heavenly mind and conversation, and hindereth us from all foretastes of the everlasting joys. 7. It undisposeth us to the excellent work of praise: who can ascend in the praises of God, while grief doth oppress and captivate the soul? 8. It destroyeth the sweetness of all

^r 2 Cor. vii. 10.

^s Prov. xvii. 22.

^t Even Anaxagoras, a philosopher, could say to one that asked him, 'Nullane tibi patrie cura est? Mihi vero patrie cura, et quidem summa est, digitum in cœlum intendens.' Diog. Laert. lib. ii. sect. 7. p. 83.

God's ordinances, hearing, reading, prayer, sacraments; we may force ourselves to use them, but shall have no delight in them. 9. It hindereth the exercise of faith, and raiseth distrust, and sinful doubts and fears, within us. 10. It causeth sinful discontents and murmurings at God and man. 11. It maketh us impatient, peevish, froward, angry, and hard to be pleased. 12. It weakeneth the soul to all that is good, and destroyeth its fortitude and strength: for it is the "joy of the Lord that is our strength." 13. It hindereth us in the duties of our callings: who can do them as they should be done, under the clog of a disquiet mind? 14. It maketh us a grief and burden to our friends, and robs them of the comfort which they should have in and by us. 15. It maketh us unprofitable to others, and hindereth us from doing the good we might: when we should be instructing, exhorting, and praying for poor sinners, or minding the church of God, we are all taken up at home, about our own afflictions. 16. It maketh us a stumbling block and scandal to the ungodly, and hindereth their conversion, while the devil setteth us before the church doors, to keep away the ungodly from a holy life, as men set scarecrows in their fields and gardens, to frighten away the birds. 17. It dishonoureth religion, by making men believe that it is a melancholy, vexatious, self-tormenting life. 18. It obscureth the glory of the Gospel, and crosseth the work of Christ, his Spirit, and ministers, who all come upon a message of great joy to all nations; and proclaim glad tidings to the worst of sinners: much more to the sons of God, and heirs of life. 19. It misrepresenteth God himself, as if we would persuade men, that he is a hard and cruel master, that none can please, though they do all through a Mediator upon a covenant of grace; and that it is worse with us since we served him than before; and that he delighteth in our grief and misery, and is against our peace and joy; and as if there were no joy nor pleasure in his service. Such hideous doctrine do our lives preach of God, when those that profess to fear and seek him, do live in such immoderate grief and trouble. 20. And it too much pleaseth the devil, who is glad to torment us here, if he may not do it in hell; and especially to make ourselves

* Neh. viii. 10.

the executioners upon ourselves, when he is restrained ; when he can boast and say, ' Though I may not vex thee, I will persuade thee to vex thyself.' These are the fruits of sinful sorrows.

Direct. XVI. ' Govern your thoughts, and suffer them not to muse and feed on those objects, which cause your grief.' No wonder if your sore be always smarting, when you are always rubbing on it in your thoughts. Of this I spake more fully even now.

Tit. 10. Directions against sinful Despair, (and Doubting.)

Despair is the contrary to hope^x. There is a despair that is a duty, and a despair that is a sin, and a despair that is indifferent, as being but of natural and not of moral kind. Despair is a duty, when it is contrary to the sinful hope before described : that is, 1. When we despair of any thing which God hath told us shall never come to pass : for we are bound to believe his word : as that all the world should be saved or converted, or that our bodies should not die and perish, and many such like. 2. It is a duty to despair of ever attaining a good end by means or upon terms, which God hath told us it shall never be-attained by : and so it is a great duty for an unregenerate person to despair of ever being saved without regeneration, conversion and holiness : and to despair of ever being pardoned or saved, if he live after the flesh and have not the spirit of Christ, and repent not unfeignedly of his sin, and be not a new creature, and crucify not the flesh with its affections and lusts. Such a despair is one of the first things necessary to the conversion of a sinner, because the false hopes of being pardoned and saved without regeneration, is the present hindrance to be removed.

Despair is a sin, when it is contrary to any hope which God commandeth us : (so it be not only a negative despair, or bare not hoping, which in sleep and other times may be innocent, but a positive despair which concludeth against hope). As, 1. Particular despair of the benefit of some particular promise (as if Israel had despaired of deliverance from Egypt, or Abraham of a Son). 2. General despair of

^x See more of the Care of Doubting, Part. ii. Chap. xzv.

the fulfilling of some general promise; as if we despaired of the resurrection, or the kingdom of Christ in glory. 3. When by misapplication we despair of that pardon and salvation to ourselves, which yet we believe shall be to others.

Yea, despair is sinful sometimes when it is not contrary to any promise or commanded hope: for if God have not revealed his will one way or other, it is no duty to expect the thing, and yet it is a sin to conclude positively that it will not be: for then we shall say more than we know, or than God hath revealed. If hope be taken for the comfort that ariseth in us from the apprehension of a mere possibility, then indeed it is a duty to hope for that good which is possible only: but if hope be taken for a confident expectation, then both such hope, and also the contrary despair would be a sin. We may (so) 'non-sperare' but not 'desperare.' Possibles must be taken but for possibles, yet still for such.

He that despaireth but of some common mercy which he should not despair of, 'ratione materiæ' committeth a sin of the smaller sort: he that despaireth of a great mercy to others (though not promised), committeth a greater sin 'ratione materiæ:' (as if you despair of the conversion of a bad child, or the continuance of the Gospel to the kingdom, &c.) But he that despaireth of his own pardon and salvation, sinneth more perilously 'ratione materiæ.'

The despairing of pardon and salvation upon a despair of the truth of the Gospel, or sufficiency of Christ, is damnable, and a certain mark of a wretched infidel, if it be predominant. But to believe all the Gospel to be true, and desire Christ and life as best, and yet to despair upon too bad thoughts of one's self, or through some other mistake, this is a sin of infirmity, consistent with grace, (unless the despair be so total and prevalent, as to make the sinner settledly cast off a godly life, and give up himself to a life of wickedness.) The Scripture speaketh little of this humble sort of despair, and no where threateneth it as it doth infidelity.

The commonest despair (like Spira's) which cometh im-

† Judas perished not merely by despair; but he had no such repentance as renewed his soul, nor any love to God and holiness.

mediately from invincible predominant melancholy (though occasioned first by sin) is no otherwise sinful or dangerous, than the despair or the raving of a madman, or one in a doting fever is. It is the too humble despair, through personal misapplication, and particular mistakes, that I shall speak of in this place.

Direct. I. 'Take heed of being ignorant of, or misunderstanding the three great general grounds of faith and hope; that is, 1. The infinite goodness of God, and his unmeasurable love and mercy. 2. The relation of Christ's office to all, and the sufficiency of his ransom and sacrifice for all. 3. The universality of the promise, or the act of oblivion, or deed of gift of free pardon and salvation to all on condition of penitent belief and acceptance, which is procured and given by Christ, and contained in the Gospel.' If you mistake so about any one of these, as not to believe or understand them, or if you do not well consider and improve them, no wonder if you be left under continual doubtings and liable to despair.

Direct. II. 'Understand well the true nature of the condition of this universal promise; how much it consisteth in the will or acceptance of Christ and life as offered by the Gospel; or in our hearty consent to the baptismal covenant, that God be our God and Father, our Saviour and Sanctifier: and that in God's account the will is the man, and he is a true believer and hath part in Christ that is truly willing of him to the ends of his office: and that he hath right to all the benefits of the covenant of grace, who doth heartily consent to it.' This is true faith: this is the condition of pardon; and on these terms Christ and life are given. This is the infallible evidence of a state of grace. If you know not this, but look after something else as necessary which is separable from this, no wonder you are perplexed, and inclined to despair.

Direct. III. 'Understand the extent of this pardoning covenant as to the sins which it pardoneth: that it containeth the forgiveness of all sin without exception, to them that perform the condition of it (that is, to consenters). So that directly no sin is excepted but the non-performance of the condition; but consequently, all sin is excepted and none at all forgiven by it, to them that do not

perform the condition.' Every conditional grant doth expressly except non-performance of the condition by the making of it to be the condition. He that saith, All sin is forgiven to them that believe and repent, and no other, doth plainly import, that not believing and not repenting are not forgiven, while they continue; nor any other sin to such. But to penitent believers or consenters, all sin is pardoned. Which made the ancients say, that all sin is washed away in baptism, supposing the person baptized to be a meet subject, and to have the condition of the covenant which is by baptism sealed and delivered to him.

Direct. iv. 'Misunderstand not the excepted sin against the Holy Ghost; which is no other, than an aggravated non-performance and refusal of the condition of the covenant; viz. when infidels are so obstinate in their infidelity, that they will rather impute the miracles of the Holy Ghost to the devil, than they will be convinced by them that Christ is the true Messiah or Saviour.*' This is the true nature of the sin against the Holy Ghost, of which I have written the third part of my "Treatise of infidelity." So that no one hath the sin against the Holy Ghost that confesseth that Jesus is the Christ and Saviour; or that confesseth the miracles done by Christ and his apostles were done by the Holy Ghost, or that confesseth the Gospel is true; or that doth not justify his sin and infidelity. He must be a professed infidel against confessed miracles that commits this sin. And yet many despair because they fear they have committed this sin, that never understood what it is, nor have any reason but bare fear, and some blasphemous temptations which they abhor, to make them imagine that this sin is theirs. But the truth is, in their fearing condition, if any other sin had been as terribly spoken of, they would have thought it was theirs.

Direct. v. 'Understand the time to which the condition of the Gospel doth extend, namely, to the end of our life on earth: the day of this grace hath no shorter end.' For the Gospel saith not, He that believeth this year or the next shall be saved: but absolutely without limitation to any

* Though the troubles of some call for a larger discourse of this sin, yet having written a Treatise of it, I must not here be tedious in reciting what is there said already.

time short of death. He that believeth shall be saved : so that to doubt whether true repentance and faith will be accepted at any time before death, is but to be ignorant of the Gospel, or to doubt whether it be true. And therefore for a despairing soul to say, If I did repent, it is too late because the day of grace is past, is but to contradict the Gospel covenant itself, or to say he knows not what. God never refused a soul that truly repented and believed before death.

Obj. 1. 'But (they will say) do not some divines say that some men's day of grace is sooner past, and God hath forsaken them, and it is too late, because they came not in time ?'

Ans. They that understand what they say, must say but this : that this word 'the day of grace' hath divers senses. 1. Properly by the day of grace is meant, the time in which according to the tenor of the Gospel, God will pardon and accept those that repent : and in this sense the time of life, is the time of grace : whenever a sinner repenteth and is converted, he is pardoned. 2. Sometimes by the 'day of grace' is meant the time in which the means of grace are continued to a nation or a person : and thus it is true, that the day of grace is quicklier past with some countries than others : that is, God sometimes taketh away the preachers of his Gospel from a people that reject them, and so by preaching offereth them his grace no more. But in this sense a man may easily know whether his day of grace be passed or no ? that is, whether Bibles, and books, and Christians, and preachers, be all gone, or not ? (And yet if they were, he that receiveth Christ before they are gone is safe.) No man in his wits can think this day of grace is passed with him while Christ is offered him, or while there is a Bible, or preacher, or Christian about him. 3. Sometimes by 'the day of grace,' is meant, the certain time which we are sure of as our own. And so it is only the present minute that is the time of grace : that is, we cannot beforehand be sure of another minute ; but yet the next minute when it is come is as much the time of grace as the former was. 4. Sometimes by 'the day of grace' is meant the time in which God actually worketh and giveth grace ; and that is no more than the day of our conversion. And in this sense to have the day of grace passed is a happiness and comfort,

that is, that the day is passed in which we were converted. 5. And sometimes by 'the day of grace' is meant that day in which God moveth the hearts of the impenitent more strongly towards conversion than formerly he did; and this is it that divines mean when they talk of the day of grace being passed with men before their death: that is, though such have never a day of effectual grace, yet their motions were stronger towards it, than hereafter they shall be, and they were fairer for conversion, than after when they are gone further from it. This is true, and this is all: and what is this to a soul that is willing to come in, and ignorantly questioneth whether he shall be accepted, because the day of grace is passed?

Obj. II. 'But Christ saith, If thou hadst known in this thy day'.——

Ans. That was the day of the offers of grace by preaching: we grant the nations have but their day of enjoying the Gospel which they may shorten by sinning it away.

Obj. III. 'But it is said of Esau that "afterward when he would have inherited the blessing he was rejected, for he found no place of repentance though he sought it carefully with tears".' It seems then that repentance in this life may be too late.'

Ans. It is true that Esau's time for the blessing was passed as soon as Isaac had given it to Jacob. When he had sold his birthright it was too late to recal it, for the right was made over to his brother; and it was not repentance, and cries, and tears, that could recal the right he had sold, nor recal the words that Isaac had spoken: but this doth not prove that our day of grace doth not continue till death, or that any man repenting before his death shall be rejected as Esau's repentance was: the apostle neither said nor meaneth any such thing. The sense of the words are only this much: Take heed lest there be any so profane among you, as to set so light by the blessings of the Gospel, even Christ and life eternal, as to part with them for a base lust or transitory thing, as Esau that set more by a morsel of meat than by his birthright: for let them be sure that the time will come (even the time mentioned by Christ, when the door is shut and the Lord is come,) when they

^a Luke xix. 42.

^b Heb. xii. 17.

will dearly repent it, and then as it was with Esau when the blessing was gone, so it will be with them when their blessing is gone, repentance, and cries, and tears will be too late: for the Gospel hath its justice and terrors as well as the law. This is all in the text, but there is no intimation that our day of grace is as short as Esau's hope of the blessing was.

Obj. iv. 'Saul had but his time, which when he lost he was forsaken of God.'

Ans. Saul's sin provoked God to reject him from being king of Israel, and to appoint another in his stead: but if Saul had repented he had been saved after that, though not restored to the crown: and it is true, that as God withdrew from him the spirit of government, so many before death by the greatness of their sins, cause God to forsake them so far as to withhold those motions, and convictions, and fears, and disquietments in sin, which sometimes they had, and to give them over to a "reprobate mind," to commit "all uncleanness with greediness," and glory in it as being "past feeling." If it be thus with you, you would be no better, you would not be recovered, you think sin is best for you, and hate all that would reform you.

Obj. v. 'It is said, 2 Cor. vi. 2. "Behold now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation." And Heb. iii. 7. 12, 13. "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts—lest any of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."'

Ans. This saith no more than that the present time is the best, yea, the only certain time; and we are not sure that the day of salvation will continue any longer, because death may cut us off: but if it do not, yet sin is a hardening thing, and the longer we sin the more it hardeneth! yea God may withhold the motions of his Spirit, and leave us to ourselves, to the hardness of our hearts: and thus he doth by thousands of wicked persons, who are left in impenitency and hatred of the truth: but most certainly if those men repented they might be saved, and the very reason why they have not Christ and life is still because they will not consent.

Direct. 6. 'Understand by what help and strength it is that the obedience to the gospel must be performed: not

* Rom. i. 28. Eph. iv. 18, 19.

merely by your own strength, but by the help of grace, and strength of Christ: if he have but made you willing, he will help you to perform the rest.' You are not by this covenant to be a saviour and sanctifier to yourselves; but to consent that Christ be your Saviour, and the Holy Spirit your Sanctifier. You might else despair indeed if you were left to that which you are utterly unable to do. Though you must "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, it is he that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure^c."

Direct. 7. 'Understand well the difference between mortal sins and infirmities, that you may not think that every sin is a sign of death or gracelessness; but may know the difference between those sins which should make you think yourselves unjustified, and those sins which only call for particular humiliation, being such as the justified themselves commit.' Though in the Popish sense we take no sin to be venial, that is, which in itself is properly no sin, nor deserveth death according to the law of works; yet the distinction between mortal and venial sin, is of very great necessity: that is, between sins which prove a man in a state of death, or unjustified, and sins which consist with a state of grace and justification: between sins which the gospel pardoneth not, and those which it pardoneth, that is, all that stand with true repentance^d. There are some sins which every one that repenteth of them, doth so forsake as to cease committing them: and there are some lesser sins, which they that repent of them do hate indeed, but yet frequently renew, as our defective degrees in the exercise of repentance itself, faith, love, trust, fear, obedience: our vain thoughts and words; some sinful passions, omissions of many duties of thought, affection, word or deed towards God or man; some minutes of time overslip us; prayer and other duties have a sinful coldness or remissness in them, and such like. Many such sins are fitly called infirmities and venial, because they consist with life and are forgiven: it is of great use to the peace of our consciences to discern the difference between these two, for one sort require a conversion to another state, and the other require but a parti-

^c Phil. ii. 13.

^d De quâ vide Tract. Rob. Baronii, of Mortal and Venial Sin.

cular repentance, and where they are unknown, are forgiven without particular repentance, because our general repentance is virtually, though not actually, particular as to them. One sort are cause of judging ourselves ungodly; and the other sort are only cause of filial humiliation. Any one may see the great need of discerning the difference; but yet it is a matter of very great judgment doctrinally to distinguish them, much more actually to discern them in every instance in yourselves. The way is to know first, what is the condition of the new covenant, and of absolute necessity to salvation or justification: and then every sin that is inconsistent with that condition is mortal, and the rest that are consistent and do consist with it are venial, or but infirmities: as venial signifieth only that sort of sin which is pardonable, and may consist with true grace, so a venial sin may be in an unsanctified person materially, where it is not pardoned; that is, *e. g.* his wandering thought, or passion, is a sin of that sort that in the godly is consistent with true grace: but as venial signifieth a sin that is pardoned, or pardonable without a regeneration, or conversion into a state of life from a state of death, so venial sin is in no unregenerate, unjustified person, but it is only the infirmities of the saints; and thus I here speak of it. In a word, that sin which actually consisteth with habitual repentance, and with the hatred of it, so far that you had rather be free from it than commit or keep it, and which consisteth with an unfeigned consent to the covenant, that God be your father, saviour, and sanctifier, and with the love of God above all, is but an infirmity or venial sin. But to know from the nature of the sin, which those are, requireth a volume by itself to direct you only.

Direct. VIII. 'Understand how necessary a faithful minister of Christ is, in such cases of danger and difficulty, to be a guide to your consciences; and open your case truly to them, and place so much confidence in their judgment of your state as their office, and abilities, and faithfulness do require, and set not up your timorous, darkened, perplexed judgments above theirs, in cases where they are fitter to judge.' Such a guide is necessary, both as appointed by Christ who is the author of his office, and in regard of the greatness, and danger, and difficulty of your case. Do you

not feel that you are insufficient for yourselves, and that you have need of help? sure a soul that is tempted to despair may easily feel it. You are very proud, or blindly self-conceited if you do not. And you may easily know that Christ that appointed them their office, requireth that they both be used and trusted in their office, as far as reason will allow. And where there is no office, yet ability and faithfulness deserve and require credit of themselves. Why else do you trust physicians and lawyers, and all artificers, in their several professions and arts, as far as they are reputed able and faithful? I know no man is to be believed as infallible as God is; but man is to be believed as man; and if you will use and trust your spiritual guide but so far as you use and trust your physician or lawyer, you will find the great benefit, if you choose aright.

Direct. ix. ‘Remember when you have sinned, how sure, and sufficient, and ready a remedy you have before you, in Jesus Christ and the covenant of grace; and that it is God’s design in the way of redemption, not to save any man as innocent, that none may glory, but to save men that were first in sin and misery, and fetch them as from the gates of hell, that love and mercy may be magnified on every one that is saved, and grace may abound more by the occasion of sin’s abounding*.’ Not that any should “continue in sin because grace hath abounded: God forbid†.” But that we may magnify that grace and mercy which hath abounded above our sins; and turn the remembrance of our greatest sins to the admiration of that great and wonderful mercy. To magnify mercy when we see the greatness of our sin, and to love much because much is forgiven, this is to please God, and answer the very design and end of our redemption; but to magnify sin, and extenuate mercy, and to say, My sin is greater than can be forgiven, this is to please the devil, and cross God’s design in the work of our redemption. Is your disease so great that no other can cure it? It is the fitter for Christ to honour his office upon, and God to honour his love and mercy on. Do but “come to him that you may have life,” and you shall find that no greatness of sin past, will cause him to refuse you, nor any infirmities which you are willing to be rid of, shall cause him to disown you, or

* Rom. v. 15. 20.

† Rom. vi. 1.

cast you out. The prodigal is not so much as upbraided with his sins, but finds himself before he is aware, in his father's arms, clothed with the best robes, the ring and shoes, and joyfully entertained with a feast. Remember that there is enough in Christ, and the promise to pardon and heal all sins which thou art willing to forsake.

Direct. x. 'Take heed of being so blind or proud in thy humility, as to think that thou canst be more willing to be a servant of Christ, than he is to be thy Saviour, or more willing to have grace than God is to give it thee, or more willing to come home to Christ, than he is to receive and welcome thee.' Either thou art willing or unwilling to have Christ and grace, to be sanctified and freed from sin: if thou be willing Christ and his grace shall certainly be thine: indeed if thou wouldst have pardon without holiness, this cannot be, nor is there any promise of it: but if thou wouldst have Christ to be thy saviour and king, and his Spirit to be thy sanctifier, and hadst rather be perfect in love and holiness than to have all the riches of the world, then art thou in sincerity that which thou wouldst be in perfection: understand that God accounteth thee to be what thou truly desirest to be. The great work of grace lieth in the renewing of the will: if the will be sound, the man is sound. I mean not the conquered, uneffectual velleity of the wicked, that wish they could be free from pride, sensuality, gluttony, drunkenness, lust, and covetousness, without losing any of their beloved honour, wealth, or pleasure; that is, when they think on it as the way to hell they like not their sin, but wish they were rid of it, but when they think of it as pleasing their fleshly minds, they love it more, and will not leave it, because this is the prevailing thought and will. So Judas was unwilling to sell his Lord, as it was the betraying of the innocent, and the way to hell, but he was more willing as it was the way to get his hire. So Herod was unwilling to kill John Baptist, as it was the murder of a prophet: but his willingness was the greater, as it was the pleasing of his damsel, and freeing himself from a troublesome reprover. But if thy willingness to have Christ and perfect holiness be more than thy unwillingness, and more than thy willingness to keep thy sin, and enjoy the honour, wealth, and pleasures of the world, then thou hast an un-

doubted sign of uprightness, and that love to grace, and desire after it, which nothing but grace itself doth give. And if thou art thus willing, it is great wrong to Christ to doubt of his willingness. For, 1. He is a greater lover of holiness than thou art; and therefore cannot come behind thee, in being willing of thy holiness. 2. He is more merciful to thee, than thou art to thyself: his love and mercy are beyond thy measure. 3. He hath begun to thee and fully shewed his willingness first. He died to prepare thee a full remedy: he hath drawn up the covenant: he hath therein expressed his own consent, and entreateth thine; he is the first in consenting, and is a suitor to thee. Never sinner did yet begin to him in the world. Never any was willing of the match before him: his general offer of mercy, and covenant tendered to all, doth shew his willingness before they can shew theirs by their acceptance. Never man overwent him in willingness and was more willing than he. Take this sinner, as God's infallible truth. If the match break between Christ and thee, and thou be lost, it shall not be through his refusal, but through thine: and it cannot break any other way, no not by the craft or force of all the devils in hell; but either because Christ is unwilling, or because thou art unwilling; and on Christ's part it shall never break. And therefore if thou be willing the match is made; and there is no danger but lest thy heart draw back. If thou art not willing, why complainest thou for want of that which thou wouldst not have? If thou art willing, the covenant is then made, for Christ is more willing, and was willing first.

Direct. xi. 'Write out those sentences that contain the sense and substance of the Gospel and often read them.' Write them on thy very chamber walls, and set them still before thine eyes; and try whether they agree with the words of him that tempteth thee to despair: such as these which I here transcribe for thee. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—This is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.—He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath

made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son: and this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son: he that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.—He came unto his own, but his own received him not: but to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, to them that believe on his name.—Let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.—And ye will not come unto me, that ye may have life.—All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.—If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink.—Come, for all things are now ready^s.” And read oft Luke xv.

Direct. XII. ‘Distinguish between sin seen and felt, and sin reigning unto death; that you may not be so blinded as to think your sin greatest or your condition worst, when your sight and feeling of it are greatest.’ To see and feel your sin and misery is at least the ordinary preparation for recovery. To be dead is to be past feeling. They that are most forsaken of God are most willing of their present condition, and most love their sin, and hate holiness and all that would reform them, and if they have power, will persecute them as enemies.

Direct. XIII. ‘Think not that the troublesome strivings and temptations which weary you are the worst condition, or a sign of the victory of sin.’ It is rather a sign that you are not yet forsaken of God, while he beareth witness in you against sin, and is yet following you with his dissuaves. Paul saith, “For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would^b.” Read Rom. vii. from 14. to the end.

Direct. XIV. ‘Understand the difference between weak grace and no grace; that you may not think every want of grace is a sign of total gracelessness.’ When you have opened in your complaints a long catalogue of weaknesses,

^s John iii. 16. Ver. 19. 1 John v. 10—12. John i. 11, 12. Rev. xii. 17. John v. 40. John vi. 37. John vii. 37. Luke xiv. 17.

^b Gal. v. 15.

consider whether yet there be not a true desire to be better; and some degree of life with all these?

Direct. xv. 'Think well of the excellency of the least degree of special grace, that it is a seed of glory; the beginning of life eternal; the divine nature, and the image of God, and of greater worth than all the learning, wealth, and honour in the world.' And be not unthankful for so great a mercy, because you have not more.

Direct. xvi. 'Make conscience of observing the grace and mercy received as well as the wants remaining and the sins committed, and of the thankful remembrance and mention of mercy, as much as the humble mention of sin.' Think as oft of mercy as of sin: talk of it as much to others; and mention it to God as much in prayer: this is your plain duty: if you will not do it, your wilful unthankfulness for what you have received, may well leave you in distress without the comfort of it.

Direct. xvii. 'Let your thoughts of God's goodness bear some proportion with your thoughts of his knowledge and his power.' And then you will not be so apt to entertain false suspicions of it, and think of him as a man-hater, like the devil, nor to run away from him, that is the infinite, most attractive good.

Direct. xviii. 'Record the particular kindnesses to thyself, by which God hath testified his particular love to thee: that they may stand as near and constant witnesses of his mercy and readiness to do thee good, against thy excessive fearfulness and despair.'

Direct. xix. 'Think how few there are in the world so likely for mercy as thyself.' Look not only on a few that are better than thyself; but think how five parts of the world are open infidels, and heathens; and of the sixth part that are Christians, how few are reformed from popish and barbarous ignorance, and superstition: and among Protestants how small is the number of them that are less in love with sin than thyself? I know that many wicked men abuse this comparison to presumption: but I know also that a Christian may and must use it against despair, and not think of God and the Redeemer as if he would save so few as are next to none at all.

Direct. xx. 'Remember that God commandeth faith and hope, and forbiddeth unbelief and despair, and that it is your sin: and will you sin more when you have sinned so much already?' What if you see no other reason why you should hope, and why you should not despair, but God's command? Is not that enough? I charge you in the name of God obey him and despair not. Sin not wilfully thus against him¹. Hope is your duty: and dare you plead against duty? Despair is your sin, and will you justify it? Yea, consider what a deal of comfort is in this: for if there were no hope of your salvation, God would never have made it your duty to hope, nor forbidden you to despair. He doth not bid the devils nor the damned hope as he doth you: he forbiddeth not them to despair as he doth you: there is cause for this: he would have done it, if your condition were as hopeless as theirs is.

Direct. xxi. 'If God forbid you to despair, it is certainly the devil that biddeth it.' And will you knowingly obey the devil? What if the devil persuade you to it openly with his own mouth? would you not know that it is bad which such an enemy draweth you to? Methinks this should be a very great comfort to you, to think that it is the devil that persuadeth you to despair? For that proveth that you should not despair; and that proveth that your case is not desperate but hopeful.

Direct. xxii. 'Think whither it tendeth: to despair is to give up all hopes of your salvation: and when you have no hope you will use no means.' For to what purpose should a man seek for that which he hath no hopes to find? And so when this weight is taken off, all the wheels stand still. The meaning of the devil hath two parts, the first is, Do not hear, nor read, nor pray, nor seek advice, nor talk any more about it with good people, for there is no hope. And the next part is, either destroy thyself, or else sin boldly and take the pleasure of sin while thou mayst; for there is no hope of any better. And dost thou think that either of these is from God? Or is it for thy good? What is the meaning of all, but cast away thy soul? While thou hopest, thou wilt seek, and use some means; but to cast

¹ *Psal. cxlvi. 5. xxxi. 24. Rom. viii. 24. xv. 4. 13. Col. i. 23. 1 Thea. v. 8. Heb. iii. 6. vi. 11. 18, 19. Tit. i. 2.*

away hope is to cast away all. And hast thou so far lost self-love as to be thyself the doer of such a deed?

Direct. xxiii. 'Think what a wrong thou dost to the Father, the Saviour, and the Sanctifier of souls, to think so poorly and despairingly of his grace, as if it were not able to prevail against thy sin: and to obscure thus the glory of his redemption; and to believe the devil in his slandering, extenuating, and dishonouring that in God, which he will have most glorified by sinners?'

Direct. xxiv. 'Bethink thee what one person thou canst name in all the world, that ever perished or was rejected, that was willing in this life to be saved and sanctified by Christ, and had rather have Christ and perfect holiness than the treasures or pleasures of the world.' Name me any one such person if thou canst: but I am sure thou canst not: and dost thou fear that which never was done to any one; or think that Christ will begin with thee?

Direct. xxv. 'Up man and be doing, and resolve in despite of the devil that thou wilt wait on God in the use of means, and cast thyself on Christ, and if thou perish thou wilt perish there.' Do this, and thou shalt never perish. Thou canst not do worse than despair and give up all; nor canst thou please the devil more, nor displease God more, nor wrong Christ and the Spirit more. Thou art certain that thou canst lose nothing by trusting thy soul on Christ, and hoping in him, and patiently using his means: do but this, and hope shall save thee, when satan by despair would damn thee.

Direct. xxvi. 'Understand in what time and order it is that Christ giveth his grace and saveth his people from their sins: that he doth it not all at once but by degrees, and taketh all the time of this present life to do it in.' As able as your physician is, he will not finish the cure till your life be finished. The next life is the state of absolute perfection: all things are imperfect here: despair not therefore of all that you have not yet attained: your sin may be more mortified yet, and your grace yet more strengthened. If it be done before you come to judgment it is well for you: do your part in daily diligence: do you plant and water, and he will give the increase. Read more of this before, Part ii. against Melancholy.