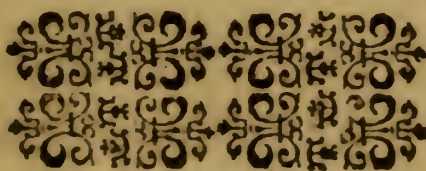


THE
TRIAL
OF A
Christians Estate:

OR,
A Discoverie of the Causes,
degrees, signes and differences
of the Apostasie both of
true Christians and false:

In a Sermon preached in *London*,
by Master PAUL BAYNE, and
afterward sent in writing to
his friend W. F.



LONDON,
Printed by A. G. for I. N. and are
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THE
TRIAL

OF
GEOFFREY HAMPSHIRE

ON
A Bill of Indemnity
for the recovery of his services
of the County of Hampshire
the County of Hampshire

the County of Hampshire
the County of Hampshire
the County of Hampshire
the County of Hampshire
the County of Hampshire

WITNESSETH
THAT

LONDON

Printed by A. C. for E. B. and
W. S. at the Sign of the
Three Kings in St. Dunstons
Church Lane



To the Reader.



Christian Reader, good Wine needeth no garland, it will praise it selfe: so (I perswade my selfe) will this ensuing Sermon, which a learned, holy and faithfull servant of God formerly vivâ voce in publique, sounded in the cares of me and many, and afterwards, as a token of his

To the Reader.

Christian love to mee, bestowed upon me in writing which being so fruitfull and necessarie a labour, in the judgement of the godly and learned that have seene it and so specially besitting these luke-warme and backsliding times, I thought could not, without prejudice to thee, suffer it to lie by me for my private instruction and benefit alone, and therefore for thy good, the keeping in precious memory to the Preacher thereof, whom the Lord hath gathered into his barne, and for the glory

To the Reader.

God especially, I have consented that it be made more publique and common, by comming under the presse. The Lord grant, that it may have that successe in me and thee, which hee that gave first life unto it in studying, and brought it forth by preaching, intended, and I in consenting and causing to have it printed, desire: so shall the feeble, weake and doubting Christian, be taken by the hand, staied and comforted against the feares of totall backsliding, and we all shall be of the number of

To the Reader.

*them which follow faith to
the conservation of our
soules: which the Lord for
Iesus Cbrist his sake grant.
Amen.*

Thine in his best desires,

W. F.

THE
TRIAL
 OF A
 CHRISTIANS
 Estate.

HEBR. 10. vers. 39.

*But we are not they which with-
 draw our selves into perdition;
 but follow faith unto the con-
 servation of the soule.*



He Apostle. ha-
 ving in the
 verse before re-
 membered the
 fearefull estate
 of such who
 through unbe-
 liefe are withdrawne from God,
 doth in this verse prevent a scruple

ple which might arise in some timorous consciences, doubting whether they were not in this case next before threatened. Hee doth therefore take such weake ones by the hand, strengthening them, by bearing them witnesse of their condition, manifested by the fruits above mentioned, verse 32. 33. 34 which estate is set downe here in this verse: First negatively, by deniall of their unbelceeing revolt. Secondly affirmatively, by avouching their perseverance in faith. Either of these properties of unbelieve and believe, being amplified from the effects which accompanied them, *viz.* destruction of the soule (for that is to be understood from the latter clause) and salvation of the same.

The summe of the words. Feare not though I tell you that backsliders are vessels of no delight, for yourselves with my selfe, are not such who steale from our companies, leaving our militarie profession,

sion, which would turne in this life and the life to come to our further destruction; but we continue in faith, and put forth our beliefs more and more, as occasion requirerh, which bringeth us here and everlastingly to see the Lords salvation.

Now for the instructions which both the scope and matter of the verse include in them. First, that *Paul* doth confirme them by bearing them witnesse of their estate. It doth teach us, that wee must stablish our weake brethren, by bearing them record of the graces wrought in them; wee who have found grace must confirme others. If any thing more smart be uttered, we must mollifie it with such wise prevention as Physicians, if they foresee ought harmefull to the bodie, they correct it with other ingredients, that it may wholesomely be received. If wee saw one ready to trip, wee would reach him a hand, and sustaine him

Observat. I.

from falling : much more must we shew this love to the soule shaking through frailtie. This wisedome Christ used, hee quenched not the smoaking flaxe : the seasonable testifying to men their good things causeth them to take increase : our honour of them, our dutie to the comfort of their lives and to the truth, doth require it. Such therefore are to bee taxed who wanting this prudence, handle the word in dividing it like him in the Embleme, who gave to the Ass a bone, to the dogge straw : such are those Pastors who discourage good devotions, and encourage men carnally minded, like unto them we reade of, *Ezechiel*, chap. 13. 22. Such again are they amongst private Christians, who like *Jobs* friends are a breaking to them, whom they should comfort and confirme.

Secondly, we must be provoked by this example to encourage weake ones when they are doub-
ting.

ting of their estates: for as a timorous patient imagining twenty evils, when his Physitian assureth him that his case is nothing so, is well satisfied: so here.

Againe, in that he saith, We are not they that withdraw. Hence we are given to understand, that some may fall away from the Graces received. In some manner Gods owne children and others are reported to have fallen: *David, Saul, Peter, Alexander, &c.* But that this may be more distinctly opened, three things must be considered.

1. First, from what the godly truly sanctified may fall; how farre others.

2. Secondly, from whence falls come, and the difference of them.

3. Thirdly, what are the symptoms or signes of a state declining from God.

To the first, a man not having the true grace of the elect, may fall from all outward privileges, which hee holdeth as a member of the visible

visible Church. Secondly, from the effects of his Grace in life and conversation. Thirdly, from the very habituall gifts, which were the fountain whence his fruits flowed. Thus hee may come to betwice dead, and in worse case than ever.

The Lords chosen may fall from their outward prerogatives: but that divine nature still abideth in them, and it is onely with their graces, as it is with the minde in distempers of melancholy, and phrensic; with the Sun in eclipses; with the tree when leaves and fruits faile it; with the naturall life when it moveth not, ne yet breatheth sensible: which in diseases of the Mother is often discerned. Their faith is an ever failing faith; their life an eternall life; their seed a seed abiding in them.

*Causes of
desfection.*

Now for the second, *viz.* what are the causes of falling away, and that so diversly; this opened will lend a more thorow light to the former. The causes which worke
in

in withdrawing us are inward or outward. But the verity of these declinings springeth chiefly from the inward.

The cause in the Lords children is, the state of their grace, which is such as hath still reliques of sinne dwelling with it.

The cause of the others totall fall, is an essentiall defect in their grace, which teacheth not to make a true union betwixt Christ and them, nor yet to produce true sanctification. In a word, the cause of the ones persevering, and the others totall deficiency, is not only to be taken from Gods power and gracious pleasure, from Christ his intercession, from the stinging of Satan to the heele of the true Christian seed : but also from the essentiall qualification, and disposition of the grace bestowed upon either. But this is a difficulty further to be cleared; How wee may formally distinguish these gifts which are in the Christian that perse-

persevereth from those that are in him that temporiseth. The difference is double:

1. First, in the union which is made by them.

2. Secondly, in the different productions which follow upon so different manners of being united with Christ.

I

To open the first, is set downe this conclusion : The spirituall gift of the temporiser doth meerly enlighten him to see Christ, but doth not move his will to go unto Christ, as given him of God, that he might not perish but have eternall life. His application is an overweening hope, taken vp by his owne presumption; it is not a motion which the spirit doth eliciate and draw out, but such as is his enlightning.

In the Word of Christ are two things: first, the truth of it, a true word: Secondly, the goodnesse of it, a good word. That may be apprehended, God giveth his chosen

not

not onely an apprehension, in the understanding of the truth, and goodnesse of it; but a motion of affiance, which maketh the soule go to and clasp about Christ whom it beholdeth. Hence it is, that coming and believing, *Ioh. 1. 12. Ioh. 6. 35. 37.* is apprehending, as when a thing is taken by the handle: and from this property of Faith doth come that internall union twixt the believer and Christ, which maketh them dwell mutually one in the other. Hence it is that the true believer doth more affect Christ, prize him, joy in him, more than the benefits by them.

Now the Papists faith is a meere enlightning, not having any confidence within the compasse of it, (for a man may be found in their faith, and in damnable despaire at the same instant) and the temporisers faith having no more than an apprehension in the understanding of the good word of salvation joyned with presumptuous perswasion

on and fallible hopes conceived by himsefse on false reckonings: these cannot innerly unite him with Christ; but looke as a Wen is so united in the body by the skin incompassing it, and some kinde of continuation with the other members; but hath not sinewes, nerves, arteries shot into it from head and heart, as the other parts: so these by their common illumination and profession have conjunction with the body, but want the influence of that more neere ligament of that affianced motion of the will, which onely floweth from Christ into his proper members. And this is the first ground of their after failing: for looke as standing-waters, or never such torrents which have no head of living spring-waters to feed them, cannot in time but dry up: so these not having Christ the Well-head of all grace, whatsoever is in them, in time fadeth and vanisheth to nothing.

From defect of internall union,
which

which is, as it were, the fountaine, commeth a difference in grace derived. The temporisers, being such as doth never truly humble him, such, as is superficiall, insincere: in a word, such as doth not truly sanctifie him: by reason of which defect, it is not permanent.

First, not being within the gracious light of this Sunne of righteousness, the depth of his wound is never gaged, and though he know much humiliation, yet hee is never truly humbled. First, hee seeth not with humble consciouſnesse the sinfull depravation of his nature: his displeasure is more against the fruits, than rootes whence they issued. *Paul* a Pharisee knew not concupiscence; a Papist acknowledgeth not this as sinfull after hee is once baptised, whereas this was the highest pitch of *Pauls* and *Dauids* penitentiall exercise.

But may not the temporiser know and maintaine the truth of this Doctrine, yea, propound it fruit-

Ans.

fruitfully to others? *Answer.* He may (by faith infused) conceive and assent to it, yea, deliver it to others, but so, that the power of it doth not reflect on himselfe, so as to be humbled in this respect: but as the Moone giveth us light which is not rooted in the body of her, for that continueth darksome: so they receive light from Gods Word, and set it forth to others, but have none in themselves. Secondly, not being within grace, his confession and passion under sin is not free and voluntary, but extorted either from some evidence of light, or fact evincing him; as *Saul* to *David* confessed; or the racke of Gods terrours inforcing it from him. Whereas the children of God, who now see, that the more their sinne is, the more grace superabounded; that their baseness is his glory, whose grace they live under, they frankly, yea, delightfully humble themselves in confessing their vilenesse. Thirdly,

2.

3.

not

not being within the grace of Christ with sound affiance, he never grieveth at sinne as it is enmity against his God: for to be contrite in this regard, implyeth a love to God, which cannot be in him who hath not found God loving him first: hee is vexed at his sins in respect of his miseries hee seeth imminent, or only as they are worldward, shamefull aberrations from practice of such apparent vertues, which men may repute glorious, and much affect. In a word, hee is never truely humbled, which his obedience being partiall doth witness; for hee will take and leave in that which hee heareth at his owne pleasure: yea, if crosses come, hee is too proud to humble himselfe under Gods hand; he is lifted up above others, whom hee outstrippeth in common graces: he is censorious, without conscience of that naturall condition under sin, which is common to him with others. And from hence it is, that
at

at length his grace faileth: for as a house builded on the sands, without a due ground-worke laid; or plants unrooted cannot indure: so this frame which wanteth the foundation and root of grace (such as humility is) cannot persist.

2.

Secondly, I say from this prime defect of inner union, all the temporisers graces produced are superficial, sleight, full of overture: whereas those in sound believers are solid, substanciall, not *res intrinsecus defectuose*, things which though outwardly they have the appearance, yet are inwardly defective. Hence it is that *Paul* calleth their godlinesse, a figure of godlinesse, *2 Tim. 3. 5.* their knowledge an externall forme of knowledge, *Rom. 2. 20.* that Christ maketh all they have, a semblance, a seeming onely, *Luk. 8. 18.* for looke as a wilde herbe, though it have but the name and common nature, yet it differeth much from one which groweth in gardens, better manured and

and dressed: and as a blew, died with blackwood, though it seeme brighter a while, yet is not so substantiall as that which is woaded (and therefore we say it is a true colour :) so here, though the graces of the temporiser have the same name and cōmon nature, (for they are inferiour workes of the spirit) yea, though they may exceede in shew, yet for the truth and substance, they are nothing to those that are wrought in honest hearts; and from hence come two things.

First, their graces are soone growne up; for a thing superficiall is done in halfe the time that a substantiall thing is a working. They get the start: and, while many a true heart before them in the Lord, is complaining of wants, and weaknesses, sinfull inclinations, usurping in them; they are carried, as it were, *per saltum*, to their perfection. But as a true birth, though slowly at the first, yet still taketh increase, whereas a mole groweth faster at the

the first, but soone ceaseth : and looke as in nature, things the soonest ripe, are the soonest rotten : So it fares with these leap-Christians.

2.

Secondly, I say their graces are insincere, their hearts are never purged from some sin which they love and like to live in, for sinister ends intertaining the message of Gods mercy, which is not that they may reverence him, and serve him all their daies without slavish terror : but they gladly heare it, as hoping that they have a protection by it, though they hold on in their own courses. For this it is that the elects faith, which never faileth, is called a faith without hypocrisie ; that the true believer is onely said to have an honest heart.

As God hath made some remedies in nature, such as purge universally every peccant humor, as the Physicians Catholicon, &c. Some againe that purge, *cum delectu*, that expell choler, but meddle not with melancholy ; phlegme, but

but stirre not choler : So this medicine of grace, which God infuseth into an honest heart, it is a Catholique expeller of all knowne sinne, great or little. The grace of the temporiser purgeth out the root of no sin ; represseth the moving and paroxysmes, as it were, of some choise sins onley, as in *Herod*. And hence it is that the grace of the temporiser doth not continue : for as corne growing up with twitch, briars, thornes, is at length smothered ; and as wholesome meate in a stomacke full of flying choler, is at length vomited : so raigning sin growing up with these seeming graces, doth never cease till they be brought up and discharged, *Luk. 8. 12. 13, 14.* Thus much to cleare that difference of graces in Gods children and others, which causeth that the falls of the one are not totall nor finall, which is incident to the condition of the other.

Now taking it as granted, that the Lords children fall, by reason
of

2.

of the reliques of sin dwelling in them, I come to name the externall means, which actually bring forth into Apostasie this inbred defection. These sometimes worke it more violently at once, sometime successively, by some hainous wasting sin, which like a strong poison dispatcheth all quickly. Crosses repeated, and gradually increased, lures of pleasures and profits, uncomfortablenesse, which accompanieth by many meanes Christian courses, (dead worke is quickly given over) examples of the multitude, a strong back-bias, by which the divell sometimes draweth from persisting in grace, offence at the simplicity, which to eye of flesh seemeth to be in Christian courses, at dissention in opinions amongst men of the same profession, at the sins observed, and falls once knowne by such, who make profession; the seducing calls of false Teachers, the glorious shewes of holinesse, and whatsoever things

of

of this nature, by w^{ch} men through Satans working are with-drawne.

Now followeth the third thing, the symptoms or signes of a declining soule. This one thing must be premised, lest that weake ones should cast themselves further down by mistaking the matter. The presence of these evils, and sence of due dispositions or actions, are not evil signes of a dangerous declining soule, but when they are willingly carried without remorse, renewed desires and endeavours after the contrary: for as one may be without Gods gracious presence to his feeling, and yet not a forsaker of God; so one may be without these things, and not leaving them, but rather left of them (Gods wisdom for many ends so dispensing) while by grieve, faich, and renewed desires, he doth follow after them.

This consideration interlaced for the right understanding of the matter in hand. Let this be the first signe, viz. a feeble, livelesse action

B of

of grace willingly admitted: v. g. as when a man can performe any Christianduty without ali power spirituall and good devotion; neverthelesse doth not challenge himselfe, as if it were ill with him in that regard. *Lasæ ætiones lasæ arguunt facultates*: As when the eye seeth not as it hath done, wee may presume the instruments or faculties are not as they have beene: So here, when we doe not things with the vigour we have done, it is a signe of infirmity, and a faculty inwardly or outwardly hindred: but when wee can thinke well enough of this state, it is a signe of Apostasie and wilfull declining; luskish reachings are the first forerunners cōmonly: Gods people declining have fallen first to these formalities, to performance of duties in a perfunctory fashion, the heart and raines far from the Lord, in them.

The second signe is a preposterous appetite of unwholesom food,
 liked

liked well enough, no way distur-
bant to us: when men can be with-
out preaching, or at least without
any that moveth their consciences;
when they can extol frothy windy
stuffe, which filleth them, but ne-
ver feedeth them, so as their soules
are not the better for it toward
God. It is a signe the man is wil-
ling to sleepe that draweth the cur-
taines about him: It is a presump-
tion, that these are willing to nap
in their sins, that love not such a
light of truth as should awaken
them. Not bearing the wholesome
word is the preamble of Apostasie.

3

A Third token is indigestion of
that we heare, borne contentedly;
when the heat of love doth not so
digest things, that they might after
be distributed into the veines of
every good word and worke: be-
cause they receive not the truth in
love, &c. 2 *Thess.* 2. When meate
is taken in, and passeth away not
altered by the stomacke, it leaveth
the body in an atrophie, that is,

such a taste wherein it is not nourished : So here.

4

The fourth signe is an inordinate appetite after things hurtfull and noxious : as when a man feeleth no hurt, though hee intermeddle immoderately in the cares of the world ; though hee intemperately quasse in these sinfull pleasures which last but a season : when a man loves to follow the good healths, wee may boldly say, hee loves to breed ill health. Worldly cares and pleasures are the things of which the soule is drunken, and sursets; and these are the thornes and weeds with which the seed of graces never thriveth.

5

A fifth signe may be the dis-affecting of our brethren, whom we have acknowledged as begotten of God. The Divell cannot bring a man who hath knowne any good, to confront and despise him directly : therefore hee entreth them with this politicke traine ; he teacheth them first to be bold and
trample

trample downe his Image, and so at length bring them to despise God, 2 *Tim.* 1. 4. *Demas* (as it is likely) turning Apostate, forsooke the Apostle.

The sixth signe is, when there is felt no reluctance in regard of our daily weaknesse & lesser sins, but they digest with us: if the soule were not fallen well asleepe, it could not concoct so well. When nature (things able to provoke taken in) maketh not resistance, her strength is feeble: So here. But when a man is growne to this, that he can go on in his impenitency without checke, it is an evident signe he is downe the wind in a wilfull declination; yea, that he is farre gone in it. Thus you have heard that some fall from their grace; and for further declaration you have, scene cleared, how farre all sorts may fall; whence commeth their falls, with the difference of them. Thirdly, what are the indicants of a soule declining.

Use 1.

The use of all is; First, as to stirre us up to take comfort in the true worke which God hath begun; so to make sure that we have received such grace as shall not faile: would wee not be loth to reare such a frame in a materiall building, which should after come downe upon our heads? We are builders, let us make sure to digge so deep, and ground our worke so well, that though it should shake, (as they say, firme houses will) yet it may be farre from feare of ruine. In taking gold, wee refuse washed and light gold, or clipped, wee weigh them, ring them, &c. In receiving grace be not lesse carefull that it be right currant, not wanting a graine of due weight.

Use 2.

Secondly this, that many fall away, must awaken us to more circumspection; though it light upon some men only, it is every mans terrour. We have great reason, for wee live in most perilous times, wherein the holy Ghost hath warned

ned as that the dampe of sin shall make the love of many waxe cold: wherein the contagion of Apostasie is epidemicall; is growne a popular disease. For now what lukewarmnesse? what a weak pulse beateth every where? men care not to deale with themselves to hold their thoughts to heavenly things, to awaken their affections, to renew their faith, to blow up devotion; to live in an holy contention; nay, this in our daies is counted a superfluous unnecessary course, forged in the head of some over-forward fellows; it is the undiscrete fervor of green youth, which ages wisdom will take up. Others more moderately spoken, thinke that every thing new is dainties, and that prime affections cannot be retained: a fig-leave, nature, art, grace, go from lesse perfect to more perfect. Whether doth a child at eight yeeres or eightene most love and joy in his inheritance? Dost thou not count thy prentises two last

yeeres better than foure of his first?

In stead of appetite to the Word, now some thinke the Sabbath may be tolerably sanctified without any preaching: some count it enough, if they be where preaching is, let it be what it will be; farre from such as is able to worke on their soules; as if the orders of the person, not the supernaturall gifts of knowledge and wisdom made the Sermon (but these must not be severed:) some count such plaine preaching (as heretofore was effectuall in them) lesse diligent, and lesse learned. Thus the Divell not able quite to make them cast off the ordinance, perswades them that change is no robbetrie; and that they may sleepe the quieter (neglecting such preaching as was powerfull in them) he casts them this pillow, suggesting that they leave not that which was effectuall in them toward God, but that onely which was indiligent and unlearned.

Again,

Againe, in stead of working the Word upon our affections, how many content themselves to exercise their critickes, this or that was well spoken, &c. and there is an end? For the world, men have their hands in it elbow-deep; yea, many who in their times have made shew of a more heavenly minde, some are now so shie to their brethren, that they will not looke at them, not meete on the same side of the streete, not know them. How many, whole hearts would have switten them in lesser offences can now commit as great, and it never upbraids them? nay, esteeme this tenderneffe scrupulous simplicity, and melancholike austeritiy. The more vulgar then this disease is, the more cautelous wee must be.

Thirdly, wee see now that who will keepe life and power in his course, endeavouring a good conscience in all things, they must passe the pikes of evill tongues

which are shaken against them. For now such heare, as if they were humorists, new-fanglists, Precisians, proud, singular, simple, melancholike persons, what not? Finally, the Divell to make revolts, new refines his wits, and turnes Angell of light, hanging out our owne colours, that hee may the easilier surprize us; and pretending perfections, which we yet want, doth transport many, whom neither crosses nor allurements would prevaile against. So that we had need, if ever, to walke warily, looking to the author and finisher of our faith: yea, thankfully, that so in evill times we are kept (though weakely) alive in his sight. Thus much of the second doctrine.

Obser. 3.

The third followeth in these words; *to perdition; viz.* of the soule, 2 *Pei.* 2. 20. 21. even as hee that goeth out of the light, must needs come into darkenesse: so he that leaveth the living God, the fountaine of blessed life, must needs
fall

fall into perdition. The relapse into any sicknesse is more dangerous, than the first entrance into it: for nature is now more enfeebled, much spent in her former resistance; againe, the disease is much strengthened as a prevailing conqueror: So in these declinings from the healthsome state of grace in some sort attained, sin is stronger (the diuell coming with seven worse spirits) and our capacity of receiving health lesser; we being twice dead, and for the degree more removed from grace, than ever before, & this end befalls backsliders most deservedly: for they offer God the greatest indignity, it being better they had never admitted him, than having taken him in, to dislodge him causlessly. Again, when such as forgetting their military Sacrament, steale from their colours, are justly punished with temporall death; how deservedly are these punished with eternall perdition, who respect not that warfare, to which they

they bound themselves by Sacramēt, who flinch away, leaving that displaid ensigne of a zealous profession, under which sometime they have served.

But how can destruction follow on declining courses, when Gods chosen cannot perish; and the other sort were never in state of salvation?

Ans. This is said to be the end of it, not absolutely without exception, but respectively, if wee by repentance take not streight steps the sooner, & get our halting healed.

To the first it may be answered, that the Apostacy of Gods children in it self tendeth to destruction; it is his mercy that preventeth them in this way, not the fruit of their backsliding. Secondly, they after a sort destroy themselves, when they bring their spirituall life into a swoone, and leave not themselves breath or motion discernable. For the wicked though they never were thorowly vindicated or redeemed from destruction, yet to the judgement of
charity

charity they seemed so: now it is usual to speak of things not according as they are, but as they appeare. Secondly, they, though they never had that sound eternall life, yet they had such a life as is in a Wen; and though the rootes of their griefe were not brought away, yet the effects were so restrained, and for a time suspended, that to their seeming they were made well. Thirdly, they are said to fall into destruction, though they are in it; because they by Apostacy, goe to the heigh: & consummation of it; as we are said by a godly course, to go to life everlasting, which in some degree wee have already. And the truth is, that falling away doth bring the untimely judgments; doth procure an effectuall delivering to Satan, who doth afterwards more fully fill them with his efficacy: For as God maketh the sincerest Saints often of those, who have beene the foulest sinners: So here Satan, when he gets such an one, who hath beene in shew an Angell of light, hee doth make

make of him an incarnate diuell. In nature the sweetest things whē they turn, become the sowrest. This mortall sicknesse we must take heed of; and if our love, zeale, tendernesse of conscience be diminished, wee must timely seek out for remedy. I know men thinke, we are not so far gone; once beloved, alwaies beloved; we have left nothing but meere curiosity, melancholike austerity, men in many considerations reproveable; such as those, who joine not with them, we hope may be in Gods favour, and goe to heaven. But never take such paines to deceive your selves; these vaine words will not still rocke the conscience asleepe. If thy spirituall actions be fallen asleep, thy contention against the evil dwelling in thee ceased, thy appetite after sincere milke & meat abated, thy tendernes of conscience impaired, and thou canst sit under all these things without repentant sorrow; assure thy selfe, the end of this (if thou preventest it not by repentance)

tance) shall be destruction. Luke-warmnes (thogh men think it a part of prudence) it is odious with God, and will make us be cast up with displeasure: true it is that Gods wrath is not presently espied against such, but this is onely because wee see not the spirituall judgements, where-with they are stricken; and we see in nature the thing is long bred and conceived, before it is brought forth and manifested.

Secondly, we must be exhorted here to stand constantly in our courses, who doe walke with God in some life and power, though not without great weaknesse; let us not give over our labour and holy contention, to which the presence of sin & defect of righteousness have pricked us: this work of grace goeth against the streame of nature, if we intermit to ply the oare of holy exercise, wind and tide will carry us back againe. Where we cease to improve by good husbandry the grace received, there it beginneth to be impaired.

impaired. True it is, that the shaking up of our selves, resisting sloth, the restless aspiring after things which we are still cast from with violence, are in their kinds laborious: but remember, what men do in their earthly warfare; they (for pay of two shillings a day) march thorow places often full of difficulty, lie (the ground being their bed) in the ayre, no covert over them; in their victualls they are sore streightned, often they carry their lives in their hands, and fight in the Canons mouth: to thinke upon this once, is enough to make us ashamed of our softnesse and cowardice. But we are of faith, as we say, and men of courage & wisdom. But alas, first who hath these things? secondly, who doth put them forth? thirdly, who is constant in holding them, and making shew of them as occasion is offered?

Obser. 4.

We may observe this as a fourth instruction, what is the property of a sound believer or believe, *viz.* to

per-

persevere when they are tried & opposed: this faith is a precious, sincere, never failing faith; it groweth from one degree to another; the true believer, hee holdeth the faith against hell gates themselves, that is, the powers of hell which oppose him in it: which that we may more fruitfully understand; we must know that where sound faith is wrought, there the divell plaieeth the assailant, bending all his force to disarme them of this divine shield, by drawing them backe againe to unbelieve and false confidences which will not helpe them.

To this purpose hee mustereth crosses, vomitteth deluges of false slanders; stirres up the neereſt friends of such as are now come to God by faith, to persecute them most bitterly: sometime he sheweth them impossibilities, in sense of seeing that they desire and believe: sometimes he troubles their feelings, that so he may shake them in their believing: sometimes hee withdraweth their
faith

faith by false objects, which he proposeth to them; but if hee cannot break off their belief, then he laieth about to repress the fervency and the renewed exercise of their beliefe. by unsettling us with some new devices, when we are more intent; by making our exercise painfull, and uncomfortable, overcasting the light which was wont to shine to us in the promises; hindring us from feeling the sweet comfort in them; exciting the reliques of sloth, deadnes, inconstancy that are in us: sometime by causlesse fears & sinfull shamefastnesse hee withdraweth us from our holy devout exercise. But this sound faith quencheth all these fiery darts which are throwne against it; and like as a tree which shaken, rotteth more deeply; or like as a torch which beaten, blazeth more brightly; or like as a star, which when the aire is obscured, shineth most clearly: so is it with this root, torch, this glorious star; these powers of darknesse doe nothing in the end, but lend it a more beau-

beautifull lustre, than it ever put forth while it was not berounded with any such enmities.

True it is, that the best faith may hang the wing, being weatherbeaten, and seeme to retire under some more vehement delaies or tentation: but that which flieth to day, fighteth againe to morrow; and like as it is with those, whose going backe helpeth them to take their rise and fetch their leap more comodiously: So here, faith (through him that is the author & finisher of her) by how much she gave backe, by so much in her renewed indeavours she cometh forward more successfully. From this ground many come to be reprov'd: Some there are, who will seeme to follow sincerity & sanctification, while making shew of these things is gainfull; but if crosses come they will lay down their weapons, and will provide to sleepe in whole skins, whatsoever become of other matters. Some, if they be delayed beyond their owntime, cast up their hopes,

hopes, and are ready proudly to say, It is in vaine to serve God. Amongst the Lords children, how many are there who follow not faith, growing up from faith to faith, renewing the exercise of it in fasting on the gracious promises which are made unto us? Men that will check themselves if they omit the act of mercy, of testifying truth, of justice where occasion is offered; blame not themselves for neglecting to renew their faith towards God, when his promises renewed, or experience of his goodnesse and truth doth call for it from us.

Some there are, who weakly fore-speak things, signifying their unbelief, by saying, they shall never see this or that evil mending with the; that it is but a folly to attempt further, seeing wee strive against the streame. But this is not to be carryed with full saile of faithfull perswasion on him who hath spoken good to us, but through attending to that sense & reason speaketh, to yeeld to unbelief.

Second-

Secondly, we may hence here gather the truth of our believe. Hath it stood through help of Gods grace in temptation? Christ letteth us see that hee was our supporter, it is a true signe of grace never failing: bulldings which stand when winds and storms beat on them, are presumed to be sure grounded, whereas the paper-walls and painted castles of these who have not unfained grace, cannot indure any sound assault which is made against them.

The last thing to be marked is, what it is that doth bring us to see salvation here and everlastingly, it is our believe, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. Gods pleasure of working this or that for us, is first made knowne by his Word revealing it. Secondly, it is delayed for a triall of them to whom it is given. Thirdly, it is executed. Now the revelation of this future pleasure onely faith apprehendeth; the delay (wherein many occurrences are incident) speaking the contrary this faith beareth, by cleaving to that which formerly it heard from God. When the thing is executed,

Obse. 5.

ted, then faith is changed with sight; so that it is plaine, that faith bringeth us to see salvation, for it never giveth over till the thing be in present; it doth keepe us within the tower of Gods impregnable strength for the present, which is our safety against all enemies; it doth bring us out of all troubles by holding Gods gracious Word; as a man commeth from a deepe dungeon, by climbing a scaling ladder cast to him, or sitting upon an Eagles wing which would mount up with him.

In the Chapter following there is a catalogue of glorious believers, the end of their faith being likewise recorded. Whence we may first see that errour of Papists, who though they ascribe our first forgivenesse of our sinnes to faith; yet our after-righteousnesse and salvation they referre to good workes, penall satisfactions, application of the Churches treasure, &c. withdrawing themselves from faith, when now they are brought to be in state of grace; but
faith

faith is never to cease till the thing believed be now in sight, neither will the same thing be got both by faith and workes; for these are such as will not be compounded, the Apostle being witnesse.

Againe, hence we see how wofull a thing it is to cast away our confidence, we fling away the plaister that should heale us; for whatsoever evils were upon us, yet holding our faith on the truth and mercy of God in Christ, they should vanish away as shewes, which on our garments, dry up in time and come to nothing. Yea, their danger is hence discovered, who though they make conscience of murder, adultery, injustice; yet care not to live in unbeliefe, which is of all sinnes the most dangerous, for the other should not hurt us deadly, were it not for this; that wee will not by faith take that medicine which should heale us.

Secondly, this must incourage us to persevere in our faith: as Christ looked to the end of the Crosse, so must we looke to the end of our faith, that
we

we may indure all difficulties the better, with which wee are encountred. True it is, that men are often most deceived, where they trust most; but leaning on the Lord, and waiting on him, thou shalt never be deceived, nor misse of his promised salvation.

Object.

But in temporary evils wee cannot assure our selves of deliverance.

Ans^r.

Ans^r. The truth is, we see not deliverance, because wee exercise not faith in particular promises so farre as we might. Secondly, we must ever be assured of issue, such as is joyned with salvation. Thirdly, though it keepe us not out of the fire, yet faith will keepe us from burning, or taking hurt in our most fiery trialls; wherefore let us renew our faith in Gods precious promises, assuring our selves that the end of it shall be salvation of soule and body in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. To whom with the Father and Spirit, &c. *Amen.*

F I N I S.