

SERMON XXI.

BY THE REV. MR. SIMMONS.

HOW MAY WE GET RID OF SPIRITUAL SLOTH, AND KNOW WHEN
OUR ACTIVITY IN DUTY IS FROM THE SPIRIT OF GOD?*Quicken thou me in thy way.*—Psalm cxix. 37.

THIS psalm shines and shows itself among the rest,

*Velut inter ignes
Luna minores :**

a star in the firmament of the psalms, of the first and greatest magnitude. This will readily appear if you consider either,

1. The manner it is composed in ; or,
2. The matter it is composed of.

1. The manner it is composed in is very elegant.
2. The matter it is composed of is very excellent.

1. The *manner it is composed in is very elegant* : Full of art, rule, method, theological matter in a logical manner, a spiritual alphabet framed and formed according to the Hebrew alphabet.

2. The *matter it is composed of is very excellent* : Full of rare subtilities, deep mysteries, gracious activities, yea, glorious ecstasies. The psalm is made up of three things,

1. Prayers ; 2. Praises ; 3. Protestations.

1. Prayers to God ; 2. Praises of God ; 3. Protestations unto God.

My text belongs unto the first, and may fitly be styled "David's Litany ;" where you have,

1. His *Libera, Domine* : "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity."

2. His *Exaudi, Domine* : "Quicken thou me in thy way."

In this, these three parts are considerable :—

1. The act, "quicken." 2. The subject, "me." 3. The object, "thy way."

In the prosecution of which scripture I shall do these three things :—

I. Explicate the terms.

II. Deduce a corollary.

III. Resolve the cases.

I. FOR EXPLICATION. "Quicken." There is a two-fold quickening :—1. Proper and moral. 2. Improper and metaphorical.

1. *Proper and moral*, which is two-fold : (1.) Total. (2.) Partial.

(1.) *Total*.—Which is the raising a dead body to natural life. Thus was Lazarus raised. (John xi. 43, 44.) So was Drithelme of Northum-

* HORATII *Odarum* lib. i. od. xii. 47.

"And like the moon, the feebler fires among,
Conspicuous shines."—FRANCIS'S Translation.

berland raised, if credit may be given to Bede;* and [so was] Herus Armeneus.†

(2.) *Partial*: Which is the restoring a body, declined and decayed with sickness or sorrow, to spirits and vigorous energies. So was David, whose body by grief and sorrow was made a mere skeleton. (Psalm xxxi. 10—22.) Hezekiah by sickness [was] brought so low, that he was become spiritless; yet he was raised up again: upon which he composes that rare hymn or canticle of praise to God, Isaiah xxxviii. 20.

2. *Improper and metaphorical*; which is likewise two-fold: (1.) Total. (2.) Gradual.

(1.) *Total*; which is the raising of a soul stark-dead in sin, to spiritual life: “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.” (Eph. ii. 1.)

(2.) *Gradual*; which is the raising of a dull and drowsy soul from sloth and sluggishness to high (yea, highest) degrees of vivacity and activity. For this you have David praying here, and in Psalm cxliii. 11: “Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name’s sake.” In this description it will be very necessary to explain sloth, and activity.

1. *Spiritual sloth* is threefold:—(1.) Resolving sloth. (2.) Delaying sloth. (3.) Disturbing sloth.

(1.) *Resolving sloth* is, when a soul is settled upon its lees, and resolves to lie still, and never to stir in that momentous concernment of its own eternal salvation. Solomon excellently deciphers this: “As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed.” (Prov. xxvi. 14.) As the door turns upon the hinges, and never stirs from his place, so the slothful turns upon the bed of security, and never turns from his purpose. They were resolved to worship the queen of heaven, come life, come death. (Jer. xlv. 16, 17.) Such was the soldier’s resolution, who had on his target God and the devil pictured; under God, *Si tu non vis*;‡ under the devil, *Iste rogitat*.§

(2.) *Delaying sloth*; when a person doth intend to look after soul-concernments, but not yet, they will borrow a day, a little time. Much like that sluggard: “Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep.” (Prov. vi. 10.) When the sluggard is called to arise in the morning, he resolves to do it; only entreats one little, one short nap more, and then he will arise. So, when some are called to awaken, arise, and walk with God in his way, in the morning of their age, they crave one short nap more first, and then they will do it; give them leave to get such an estate, to obtain such an honour, to match such a child, to satisfy such a lust, and then will they be for God: such a sluggard was Austin: “A little longer! O Lord, a little longer!

* *Historia Angliæ*, lib. v. cap. 13. † PLATO *De Republicæ*, lib. x. FERRARIUS, *Reip.* lib. vii. fol. 162. The clause in the text, and these references to the curious fact of Plato’s entranced man, were the author’s additions, after the publication of the first edition.—EDIT. ‡ “If thou wilt not” consent to gratify me.—EDIT. § “This old one solicits and invites me” to pleasure. The first edition contains no reference to the author of this passage; but the third and fourth give RUFFUT, —a name with which I confess myself to be unacquainted.—EDIT.

presently, presently !” * The five foolish virgins resolved to have oil in their lamps and vessels ; only they would take a nod. O how dangerous is delaying sloth ! The virgins’ deferring provokes Christ to denying. (Matt. xxv. 10.) Archias, being merry at supper, had a letter sent him that concerned his life ; and, though desired to read it, puts it up into his pocket, saying, *Προς αυριον τα σπουδαια* † “ I will mind serious things to-morrow ;” but he lived not unto the morrow, to mind those serious things. Such another sluggard was the rich man : (Luke xii. 20 :) *Stulte, hac nocte.* ‡

Tolle moras : semper nocuit differre paratis. §

Alexander being asked how he came to conquer the world, replied, *Nunquam differre volens.* || If you will overcome more than Alexander did, not only the world, but also Satan, and your own flesh, the worst and strongest enemy of all, you must carefully lay hold on every lock of opportunity, and expeditiously improve the same.

(3.) *Disturbing sloth* is, when a person doth intend and endeavour to walk in God’s way ; but sloth, as rust, hinders the wheels of his soul from coming to and running in the way of God. The *torpedo* if it touch but any part of the angle that a man holds in his hand, *corpus torpescere facit*, ¶ “ it benumbs and stupifies all the members, that they cannot stir or strive.” Such malignant influence hath sloth upon the soul. The chariots of saints’ souls should drive as Jehu’s, heartily and furiously ; (2 Kings ix. 20 ;) and not as Pharaoh’s chariots, heavily and faintly. (Exod. xiv. 25.) All the agility of the soul, and all the ability of the body, are required in God’s way, and about God’s work : whatsoever comes short of this is sloth, as whatsoever comes short of virtue is vice.

2. *Activity in duty* is a victorious conquest over the great Goliath, sloth, and riding triumph in the way, work, and worship of God. Activity is a David’s dancing before the ark with all his might. There are three things which concur and contribute to complete this activity in duty :—

(1.) *Tota animi intensio* : ** “ A straining and stretching of the soul to the utmost peg, and highest pin ;” a putting of it upon the tenter-hooks in service.

(2.) *Inexplebilis cupiditas agendi* : “ An unsatiable and unsatisfiable desire or longing for the effecting and accomplishing of a duty.”

(3.) *Assiduitas in actione* : “ A constant and continual waiting and working until the duty be perfected.”

Take these three exactly shadowed out in Archimedes : he was drawing his mathematical lines, when Marcellus †† entered the gates of Syracuse, yea, when the soldiers entered his study, that he never minded them :

* *Paululum, paululum, modò et modò, et hoc erat sine modo.*— AUGUSTINI *Confessionum* lib. viii. cap. 5. † PLUTARCHUS in *Moralia*. ‡ “ Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.”—EDIT. § LUCANI *Pharsalia*, lib. i. 281 :—

“Haste then thy towering eagles on their way :

When fair occasion calls, ’tis fatal to delay.”—ROWE’S Translation.

|| “Never wilfully to postpone to a future time any thing which ought now to be done.”—EDIT. ¶ PLENI *Nat. Historia*, lib. xxxii. cap. 1. ** BASILIUS in *Regulis*

Brevioribus, resp. 259. †† PLUTARCHUS in *Vita ejus*.

there was the *intension of his mind*. When the soldiers pulled him by the sleeve, he cries out, "Let me alone to finish my scheme:" there was *his inexpleble desire of perfecting it*. When the soldiers drew their swords to run him through, he yet plied his business: there was *his assiduity in his action*: here was *Hoc age*, ["Attend only to this,"] indeed. O what a shame would it be for us Christians, if a Heathen in his way should outgo and outdo us in God's way! Stupendous was the activity of the Jewish priests about their sacrifices, when their enemies were broken in upon them.* I shall commend two texts of scripture to you, which do most lively obumbrate tepidity and fervidity: Τη σπουδῇ μη οκνησοι. "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." (Rom. xii. 11.) *In festinatione non lenti*: † here *Festina lentè* ‡ is out of doors. We must fly as upon the wings of the wind; our heart must be like the *primum mobile*, to wheel and whirl us about with a most rapid motion; "fervent in spirit," boiling or burning hot, all on fire and flame; "serving the Lord:" "Continuing instant in prayer," § (Rom. xii. 12,) strenuously and steadfastly wrestling with God, as Jacob did, who as a prince "had power with God." (Hosea xii. 3.) This is that *ultimum virium* || which is expected and only respected of God; God accounts nothing else prayer but this: "And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee;" (Isaiah lxiv. 7;) that is, "with that faith and fortitude to hold God's hands," ¶ as Moses, Jacob, and others did. The cock is a rare emblem of this activity, who raises and rouses himself, claps his wings, and then crows with all his might. "We desire that every one of you do show the same diligence: that ye be not slothful," (Heb. vi. 11, 12,)** not of a slow pace; to want fire, yea, and feet too, that [do] not run in God's way. *Non amo nimium diligentes*, †† was the saying of a Heathen; but God will never say so, because we can never be too diligent and devout in his service; and, surely, if Jacob did serve Laban *toto conatu*,—"With all my power I have served your father," (Gen. xxxi. 6,) then much more should we with all our industry and endeavour serve our Father.

"THY way;" by way of emphasis, in opposition to and exaltation of, above, all other ways.

There is a fourfold way:—

1. *Via mundi*, "the way of the world;" and that is *spinosa*, "thorny."
2. *Via carnis*, "the way of the flesh;" and that is *insidiosa*, "treacherous."
3. *Via Satanæ*, "the way of the devil;" and that is *tenebricosa*, "darksome."

* JOSEPHUS de *Bello Judaico*. † "Not slow in that which requires instant despatch."—EDIT. ‡ "Use caution in your speed."—EDIT. § Προσκαρτερου-
τες, *assidue operam novantes*.

¶ *Eá fide et fiducia, ut Dei manus teneat*.—A LAPIDE in *loc*. ** Νωθοι εν νε et θεω, *non curro*. *Segnis, quasi se igne, sine igne*. "The Greek word in the text which we render *slothful*, seems to be derived from a participle used as a negative prefix in composition, and from a verb which signifies *to run*: thus representing 'the slothful' to be *no-runners*. The Latin word *segnis* has a similar derivation, from two words signifying *without fire*, or *devoid of vigorous animation*."—EDIT.

†† "I feel no admiration for such as are over-diligent."—EDIT.

4. *Via Domini*, "the way of God;" and that is *gratiosa*, "gracious." This way is twofold:—

(1.) *Via velata*, "a concealed way;" and that is of his privy counsels.

(2.) *Via revelata*, "a revealed way;" and that is of his public commands.

(1.) *Via beneplaciti*, "of his privy counsels:" "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33.) He that shall go about to seek and search for that way, must return a *Non est inventa*,* and shall prove himself a true *ignoramus*: "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" (Verse 34.) The best of mortals were never honoured with that title, to be one of God's privy counsellors.

(2.) *Via signi*, "of his public and common road of commandments:" "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Make me to understand the way of thy precepts." (Psalm cxix. 1, 27.) "He will teach" Zion's scholars "of his ways, and" they "will walk in his paths." (Isai. ii. 3.) "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it." (Isai. xxx. 21.)

We must not be so *impudent* as to desire to walk in the way of his privy counsels, nor so *imprudent* as not to walk in the ways of his public commands.† "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." (Deut. xxix. 29.)

II. Having thus planed my *way* to the text, or rather explained the *way* in my text, I proceed to the deduction of a *COROLLARY*, or conclusion, from the words, which is the second thing I premised and promised.

DOCTRINE.

Every saint is very apt to be a slug in the way and work of God.

"Quicken me," says one of the chiefest and choicest of saints, "in thy way;" and it is as much as if he should say in plain terms, "Ah Lord! I am a dull jade, and have often need of thy spur, thy Spirit." This prayer of David seems proof enough to this point; but if you desire farther confirmation, I shall produce an *argument instar omnium*, "that none shall dare to deny, nor be able to disapprove;" and that is drawn from the topic of your own experience; and this is *argumentum lugubre*, like a funeral anthem, "very sad and sorrowful." Do you not feel and find, to the grief of your own souls, that, whereas you should weep as if you wept not, rejoice as if you rejoiced not, and buy as if you possessed not; *inverso ordine*, ["inverting this order,"] you weep for losses, as if you would weep out your eyes; you rejoice in temporal comforts, as if you were in heaven; and you buy as if it were for ever and a day. (Psalm xlix. 11.) But *e contrario*, ["on the contrary,"] you pray, as if you prayed not; hear, as if you heard not; work for God, as if you worked

* "It cannot be found."—EDIT. † Τα κεκρυμμενα ου δει ζητειν ουδε τα δεδηλωμενα παντελως αγνοειν.—THEODORITI *Dialogi*, i. "It is improper for us to pry into those things which are hidden; neither must we show ourselves to be completely ignorant of those which are revealed."—EDIT.

not. Now, we know *experto credas* : * a man that sticks fast in a ditch needs no reasons to prove he is in, but remedies to pull him out. † Your best course will be to propose the case how you may get rid of this unwelcome guest, spiritual sloth : it is a case we are all concerned in. *Asini aures quis non habet* ? ‡ Every man and mortal hath some of the ass's dulness and sloth in him ; § and therefore I have brought a whip of ten strings to scourge this sloth and dulness out of us.

1. *Keep a strict watch over your eyes at all times, especially when you are in duty.* ¶—The eyes are the port-holes that sin and Satan creep in at. ¶ It is accounted a great piece of charity to a man's body, to close his eyes when he is dead : I am sure it is more charity to our souls, to close our own eyes whilst we are living. See what a strict guard Job keeps upon his eyes, that would not permit them at any time to view vain or wanton objects : “ I made a covenant with mine eyes ; why then should I think upon a maid ? ” (Job xxxi. 1.) And the prophet seems here to imply, that unless God would turn away his eyes from beholding vanity, he should never be quickened in his way. It is *removere prohibens* : “ beholding vanity forbids the banns between the soul and quickening.” If you will keep your houses warm, you must keep your doors shut. If you will keep your hearts hot in a duty, you must keep your eyes shut. If those doors stand wide open for all comers and goers, either your soul, Dinah-like, will be gadding out, or Satan will be getting in, by which the poor soul will be defiled and defloured.*

2. *Send sin packing, bag and baggage.*—These two mutually generate one the other :—

Mater me genuit, eadem mox gignitur ex me.

“ Sin begets sloth, and sloth begets sin : ” sloth in David made him sinful, and sin in David made him slothful. Sin is the soul's sickness. Now sickness makes men lazy, lither, †† loath to stir. There is a disease

* “ You may yield credence to that of which you have made trial.”—EDIT. † *Cum quidam ruisset in puteum, &c. : Cogita quomodo hinc me liberet, non quomodo huc ceciderim quæras.*—AUGUSTINUS, Epist. 29. “ When a certain man had fallen into a well, where the water was of such a moderate depth as saved him from being instantly drowned, and where his sense of suffocation was not too great to hinder his ready utterance ; a stranger, attracted by his cries, approached the brink, and, on looking down with vacant wonderment on the struggling man, began coolly to inquire : ‘ May I ask, Sir, what unlucky accident has brought you into this awkward situation ? ’ The anxious man smartly rejoined : ‘ Instantly devise some method of extricating me hence, I entreat you ; and not stand there raising useless queries about the mode of my falling-in ! ’ ”—EDIT. ‡ “ Where is the man who has not the ears of an ass ? ”—EDIT. § *Ehes ! quot ovos habet sanctus David, vel potius Spiritus Sanctus, ad suam cytharam !*—PAREUS. “ Alas ! how many confessions of unaptness or ignorance, like that of an ass playing on a harp, are recorded in the Psalms by holy David, or rather by the Holy Spirit ! ”—EDIT. ¶ *Εκ του οραα γινεται το εραν.* [Vide] Isai. lvii. 8 et ult. “ In consequence of our beholding any object, we begin to love and desire it. See Isai. lvii. 8, 21.”—EDIT. ¶ *Aperuit nobis in Paradiso oculos Satan : nunc omnis labor in eo nobis est, ut eos iterum claudamus et obturemus.*—LUTHERUS. “ Satan opened our eyes in Paradise : but his most strenuous endeavours are now directed to the sole object of inducing us to shut them again, and keep them closed.”—EDIT. * *Ridiculum est quod quidam respondent, se spectaculis non moveri. Quidnam, an ferrei, an saxei, an adamantini sunt, an sapientiores, fortiores, sanctiores quàm David ?*—CHRYSOSTOMUS in *Psalmum* li. Tom. i. “ The reply is ridiculous which some persons give, that THEY are never moved with any kind of shows and spectacles. What then ! are they formed of iron, stone, or adamant ? Or are they wiser, stronger, or more holy, than David ? ”—EDIT. †† “ Inert, supine.”—EDIT.

incident to man's body, called the lethargy, which makes him drowsy, sleepy, negligent, and forgetful : it springs from a cold catarrh of a pitchy and glutinous nature, which cools and benumbs the brain.* Sloth is the soul's lethargy, which makes it sluggish, negligent, forgetful. This arises from the catarrh of sin, benumbing and stupifying the heart ; and of all sins, turn covetousness out of doors. There is a disease in the body, called the yellow jaundice,† which makes the persons look yellow all over : this springs from the overflowing of the gall, which, overspreading the whole man, makes it lifeless, listless. Covetousness is the yellow jaundice of the soul, which arises from the overflowing of the heart with love to yellow gold, by which a Christian is dulled and deadened. Thrust a knife into the earth, and it takes away the edge : throw earth upon the fire, and it deadens the heat. Let but earthly-mindedness creep into the heart, it takes off the edge, and deadens the heat of it to, or in, any exercise of religion.‡ Solomon calls it " an evil disease ;" (Eccles. vi. 2 :) indeed, the worst of diseases, a complicated disease. This disease does not only deaden, but destroy, the soul ; " drowns men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil." (1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.) " The birth of money is the burial of the mind : " § therefore our Saviour bids us " take heed, and beware of covetousness : " (Luke xii. 15 :) a double caution, that we might have a double care. Above all keepings, keep covetousness out of thy heart ; (Prov. iv. 23 :) for that will not only hinder thee from being active in duty, but help thee to be active against duty. " The Pharisees, who were covetous, derided him." (Luke xvi. 14.) They that drink of the water of the river Hypanis, at first are delighted with it, but afterward are so hurt by it that *non injuriâ execrantur.* || It is most true of Chrysothraus, " the yellow river," at first draught it pleases ; but afterward it makes them so dead drunk, that they become dormice for ever after.

3. *Frequent a quickening ministry.*—" Thy word hath quickened me." (Psalm cxix. 50.) " The word of God is quick and powerful ;" (Heb. iv. 12 :) ζων και ενεργης, " living and operative," not only *formaliter* and in itself, but also *virtualiter* in the virtue and efficacy of it : it makes men lively in their operation : λογια ζωντα, " Oracles making lively : " (Acts vii. 38 :) " I will make my words in thy mouth fire." (Jer. v. 14.) Fire, as it is the most noble, so it is the most active, element ; and makes other things active. ¶ Creatures almost dead for cold, brought to the fire, are made active and nimble : witness Æsop's snake, which the countryman brought in his hand ; but when it had received heat from the fire, it disturbed the whole house. Dr. Ames relates, that there was once such cold preaching in Paris, that the Protestants were

* *Ægris corporibus simillima est ægritudo animi.*—CICERO *De Finibus*, lib. vii. 13. " Grief of spirit bears the strongest resemblance in its symptoms to bodily indisposition."—EDIT. † *Aurugo*, ab *auræ* colore, ut medici. " It is called the golden or yellow disease, from the colour of gold which it assumes, as physicians intimate."—EDIT. ‡ Scythians smothered their gods in the dust, Christians bury their godliness in the dunghill. § *Fonus pecuniæ, funus animæ.*—LEO. || SOLINUS, c. 14. " That with good reason it becomes an object of their detestation."—EDIT. ¶ *Ignis animantibus vim dat mirificam.*—VARRO. " Fire communicates a most amazing power and force to every particle of animated nature."—EDIT.

constrained to go into the country to a godly minister to be warmed. A godly minister will warm a cold heart, and put quickness into a drowsy spirit.

4. *Make out to the Lord Jesus Christ, whose promise and office it is to make us active and vivacious.*—"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John x. 10.) "Christ came not only to make us alive, but also to make us lively." * Persons who are slothful by reason of cold stiffening their joints, make out † to the mineral and metalline baths, which heal and help them. The blood of Christ is the most precious mineral hot-bath in the world: it will doubtless cure and quicken all cold and dull souls that come into it. It is the "fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness." (Zech. xiii. 1.) Sloth,—it is a very foul sin and filthy uncleanness. "And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin:" (1 John i. 7:) [from] the sin of sloth, which in some sense may be called "all sin," it being *pulvinar Satanae*, "the devil's pillow" that he lays his head on in the soul. Come to Christ the "living stone," and you shall come from Christ "lively stones." (1 Peter ii. 4, 5.)

5. *Get quickening love to the ways of God.*—

Qui non vult fieri desidiosus, amet.†

Pliny tells us, that a rod of myrtle in the hand of a traveller will never suffer him to flag or faint, but keeps him fresh and lively to his journey's end. I am sure, where love is in the heart, it will carry a man in the way of God with life. § The apostles did triumph in their tribulations; and how so? "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us;" (Rom. v. 5;) [in the] original, "is plentifully poured out," as wine into bottles, which makes it spiritfult. "Love turns all pains into pleasures, and perils into perfumes." || Love is the fore-horse in the soul's chariot, who draws all the other affections and faculties after him. What a loadstone was Shechem's love to Dinah! (Gen. xxxiv. 19.) It makes him communicate his wealth, change his religion, circumcise his fore-skin. ¶ See how spiritual love wrought in Paul: it was as strong physic, ready to work out his bowels: "For the love of Christ constraineth us." (2 Cor. v. 14.) Love hath not only an *impulsive* but also a *compulsive* power, *συμψυχει*. **

* *Anima dat vitam et vivacitatem corpori; Christus dat vitam et vivacitatem anime.* "The presence of a human spirit imparts life as well as vivacity to the body; but it is Christ that imparts vitality and liveliness to the spirit."—EDIT. † "Make out" in that age conveyed nearly the same meaning as our modern colloquial phrases, "Make off," "Run away quickly," &c., when any one is commanded hastily to depart. In this sense also it occurs at the commencement of the paragraph.—EDIT. ‡ OVIDIUS, *Amorum* lib. i. 9, 46.

"Let him whose listless soul no power can move,
Begin to feel the active force of love."—EDIT.

§ *Omnis anime motus radix est amor.*—PARISIENSIS. "Love is the spring of every motion of the heart."—EDIT. || *Ubi amor est, non est labor, sed sapor.*—BERNARDUS, *Serm.* 85, in Cant.

¶ *Si tantum potuit cupiditas, quid potest caritas?*—AUGUSTINUS. "If cupidity, or strong natural desire, possessed such potency, what immense power must exist in the love of God!"—EDIT. ** *Metaphora a parturientibus sumpta.*—GROTIUS.

Constraineth us—"A metaphor derived from women who endure the pains of parturition."
--EDIT.

Love is a grace that is always big-bellied, and is in labour, always being delivered of some good duty or other. This love put Paul upon exceeding pains, and excessive perils.

(1.) *Exceeding pains, that never mere man took the like.*—"I laboured more abundantly than they all." (1 Cor. xv. 10.) It must be great pains to preach the gospel fully "from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum;" (Rom. xv. 19;) *εν κυκλω*, in *circulo*, or *circuitu*,* making Jerusalem the point, and the regions round about the circumference; and then the space could not be less than four thousand miles. But if you take it in a collateral line, taking-in the regions of Attica, Bœotia, Achaia, Epirus, Asia Minor, Cilicia, Cappadocia, &c., it was two thousand miles. But if you take it in a direct line from Jerusalem to Stridon, a town in Illyricum, it was above a thousand miles. And though these tiresome journeys might have apologized for sparing, or at least for curtailing, duties; yet Paul never measured out his pains by a few sands in a glass, but spent much time among the saints in praying, preaching, disputing. Very memorable is that pains of his, where Paul spends all the time, from the disciples' meeting together on the Lord's day, until midnight, in holy exercises. (Acts xx. 7.)

(2.) *His excessive perils.*—What a large catalogue have you of them!—"In stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the Heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." (2 Cor. xi. 23—27.) All this laid together, well may we say with him: † "There was never a more fierce persecutor of the gospel, nor a more fervid propagator of the gospel: the first proceeded from his hatred against Christ, the last proceeded from his love to Christ."

6. *By faith apply the quickening promises, and the promises of quickening.*

(1.) *The quickening promises.*—Promises are steel spurs that will reach the dull heart to the quick; they are singular plasters, if well applied, to draw out the corruption of sloth; they are the sovereign elixirs whose quintessence will make the soul full of spirits. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine Nature." (2 Peter i. 4.) Precious promises, as stones, ‡ are precious, which have egregious virtue in them, "that by them we might be made partakers of the Divine Nature," not of the substance of God, "as Servetus stubbornly defended even to death," § but of those divine qualities and gracious dispositions which will stand with God's nature to communicate, and our nature to partici-

* BEZA. "In a circle or circuit."—EDIT. † AUGUSTINUS. *Nemo acrior inter persecutores, nemo prior inter peccatores.* (Tom. x. p. 202.) ‡ CARDANUS, *Subst. lib. vii.* § BEZA *in loc.*

pate.* Now, God's Divine Nature is an act, and our Divine nature is active. Now, the right applying promises will be very virtuous† to make us vigorous, to come as nigh the image and life of God as possibly we can. Plato says, it is our chiefest good, *Deo penitus conformem fieri*, "to bear the character of God upon us."

(2.) *The promises of quickening.*—David presses God to be as good as his word: "Quicken thou me according to thy word." He is often upon this string, resolving not to let God alone until he kept his word. (Psalm cxix. 25, 107, 154.) "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." (Isai. xl. 31.) Our soul, as a bee, must suck honey from this flower to quicken itself. Say thus to thyself: "Soul, God hath promised I shall mount up with eagles' wings, fly through difficulties and duties with celerity; he is a God able, true, willing; therefore I may be assured of this assistance." O! this honey will enliven thee more than Jonathan's honey enlightened him; who must die, because he had eaten honey; and if he had not eaten honey, he must have died. (1 Sam. xiv. 26, 29.)

7. *Mind quickening examples.*—A dull jade will put himself faster on when he sees other horses gallop before him.‡ The apostle, having mustered up in rank and file the examples of those famous worthies, does excite the Hebrews with patience to run the race that was set before them. (Heb. xi., xii. 1.) If the rare acts of Miltiades would not suffer Themistocles to sleep, then the famous actions of God's worthies should not suffer us to slumber. View Elias, how he went up in a fiery chariot to heaven *in his spirit*, before he went in a fiery chariot to heaven *in his person*. (James v. 17.) Eye Paul, how industriously and indefatigably he pursues, even as a beagle, his chase with full cry, and all celerity.§ (Phil. iii. 10—15.) Observe Ignatius, how he goes to the beasts to be devoured, as if he had gone to a bridal to be married.|| Lastly, slight not the martyrs in Queen Mary's days, who went to the fire as if they had been going to a bonfire. "Seest thou this woman?" saith our Saviour to Simon, of Mary Magdalene, "with what activity and affection she hath washed and wiped my feet, her tears being the water, her hair the towel: let it provoke thee to more diligence and devotion."¶ (Luke vii. 44, 45.) Examples are pricking and provoking goads, to quicken us; fires to light our candles by, to heat our bodies with.

* *Non transformatione naturæ humanæ in divinam, sed participatione donorum quibus conformes divinæ naturæ simus.*—PAREUS. "Not by transformation of the human into the Divine nature, but by partaking of those gifts through which we may become conformed to the Divine nature."—EDIT. † In the anciently received meaning of "potent, efficacious," from the Latin word *virtus*.—EDIT. ‡ *Coimus in cætum, ut Deum, quasi manu factâ, precationibus ambianus orantes; hæc vis Deo grata.*—TERTULLIANI *Apolog. adversus Gentes*, cap. 39. "We Christians assemble together in one congregation, that we may form ourselves into a sacred band of suppliants, and by our united prayers importunately besiege the throne of grace: with such holy violence God is well pleased."—EDIT. § *Διωκω more venatorum persequentium feram.*—ARETIUS. "'I follow after,' I eagerly pursue, as hunters do when in warm chase after wild beasts."—EDIT. || *IGNATIUS, Epist. ad Romanos.* ¶ *En, amo te; et hoc parum est, amem validius.*—AUGUSTINUS, *liber de Meditationibus*, c. 18. "Behold, I love thee, O my God! and since this is indeed a feeble expression of my affection, I would love thee with still greater intensity."—EDIT.

8. *Keep quickening company.*—As bad company is water to quench, so good company is oil to quicken, fervour ; * as iron sharpens iron, so one gracious heart sets an edge upon another. (Prov. xxvii. 17.) Holy companions are bellows, *αναζωπυρειν*, “to blow up, and make burn,” the graces that lie in embers. (2 Tim. i. 6.) The gracious affections of saints are called beds of spices. (Canticles vi. 2.) Holy conference of holy company is the rubbing and chafing those spices to make them scent and send forth their perfumes. Alexander, wherever he came, perfumed the room with his presence ; so does every believer with his speeches. David, who desires quickenings, picks out quickening company : “ I am a companion of all them,” rich or poor, “ that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.” (Psalm cxix. 63.) Paul is “ pressed in the spirit ” by the company and conference of Silas and Timotheus : (Acts xviii. 5 :) the two disciples’ hearts burned within them in their journey to Emmaus, by that sweet discourse [which] they had with Christ. (Luke xxiv. 32.)

9. *Consider quickening considerations.*—They that are apt to faint and tire in a journey, carry-about their bottles of water to quicken their spirits. Let these ten considerations be such bottles to you, when you tire in the journey of a duty :—

(1.) Consider *how odious and abominable sloth is to man or God.*—The Romans judged sloth and idleness worthy of the greatest contempt. † *Asinus ad lyram, Asinus ad tibiam*, ‡ are proverbs of the greatest derision and disgrace. § How contemptibly does Jacob speak of Issachar, “ A strong ass couching down between two burdens ! ” (Gen. xlix. 14, 15 ;) yea, God himself refuses the first-born of an ass in sacrifice. (Exod. xiii. 13.) Bellarmine gives this reason, because it was *animal tardigradum*, “ a slow-paced and sluggish creature,” which God hates : God, being a pure act, loves pure activity. || O what thunder-claps and cracks of threatenings may you hear from the Mount Ebal of his word, able to make the most sluggish Caligula to creep under his bed for shelter ! “ Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord *negligently*.” (Jer. xlvi. 10.) “ Cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing.” (Mal. i. 14.) God threatens to remove the candlestick from the church of Ephesus, because she was grown remiss in her first love. (Rev. ii. 5, 6.) He terrifies the church of

* *Bonus comes pro vehiculo.* “ A good companion is as useful as a carriage in aiding us in our journey through life.”—EDIT. † *ZONARÆ Annales*, lib. ii. ‡ In these

proverbs, the ancients referred to the alleged absence of musical taste and perception in the ass ; for it was averred, that whenever the most delicious music was within hearing, he remained insensate and supine, betraying not the slightest emotion of pleasure, all other animals at the same time exhibiting undisguised symptoms of delighted sensation. It is a case widely different from that of the adder, mentioned by the Psalmist, which had the faculty of stopping or opening its ears, at option, when it was within the sound of the siren “ voice of charmers.” (Psalm lviii. 4.) This peculiar defect in the ass seems to have anciently affixed to his character the opprobrium of natural hebetude and incurable dulness ; which, by an easy figure of speech, has been transferred to those human beings whose power of option has been more perversely exercised than their power of perception.—EDIT. § *PEIRESC.* 87. d. lib. iii. cap. 16. || *Enerves animos odisse virtus solet.*—*VALERIUS MAXIMUS*, lib. ii. cap. 7. “ Those who possessed natural courage have always evinced the utmost contempt for men of pusillanimous spirits.”—EDIT. *Tardis nam mentibus virtus non facile committitur.*—*CICERO, Quæst. Tusculan.* lib. v. “ He must be a man of extraordinary capacity ; for virtue is not easily connected with dull minds.”—*MAIN’S Translation.*

Laodicea with the menace of spuing her out of his mouth for her lukewarmness. [Rev. iii. 16.] The servant who had not returned *cent. per cent.* for his talent is called "wicked and slothful servant," and cast into the darkest dungeon. (Matt. xxv. 26, 30.) How would this consideration, well considered on, cause all slothful servants' ears to tingle, and their hearts to tremble!

(2.) Consider, *sloth exposes you to all manner of sin*, especially these two desperate and dangerous ones:—(i.) Sordid apostasy. (ii.) Spiritual adultery.

(i.) *Sordid apostasy*.—Sloth in the soul is like the green sickness in the body of a virgin, which makes her not only fall from her colour, strength, stomach to wholesome food, but also to long and lust after trash and trumpery, coals, soot, ashes. The Galatians, because they were *ανοητοι*, "without mind and mettle," do therefore prove apostates, beginning in the Spirit, ending in the flesh; (Gal. iii. 1, 3;) falling off from fervour, will turn to falling away to folly.* "The slothful man will not bring his hand to his mouth." (Prov. xix. 24.) It is expounded of a slothful minister who will not bring *voci suæ vitam suam*, "his works to his words."† Though this be an undoubted truth of lazy and slothful ministers, yet the proverb holds true of all sluggards' tendency to falling away in their hand from their mouth, that is, from what they have formerly professed. Consider how great and grievous a sin apostasy is: it was the first sin that ever was committed; it was the sin of the devils, for which they were cast out of heaven, and cast down into hell. "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him;" (Heb. x. 38;) a metaphor taken from a sluggish jade, who, finding the load come heavy, draws back again. "The backslider in heart," much more in hand, from God's way, "shall be filled with his own ways;" (Prov. xiv. 14;) that is, he hath run away from his captain, colours, cause, and he shall have martial law for it. It will be worth my pains and your patience, to give an instance what severe martial law God hath executed on all renegadoes and revolvers.

[i.] *Ministers*.—Judas, who revolted from his Master and ministry, turning from being a guard to his Saviour, to be a guide to the soldiers, afterward hanged himself, his bowels burst out of his belly, and so he took his proper and peculiar place in hell. (Acts i. 17, 18, 25.) John Speiser, preacher at Ainsborough in Germany, who preached so profitably and powerfully, that the common strumpets left the brothel-houses, then tolerated, and betook themselves to a better course, *anno* 1523; yet, afterward revolting to the Papists, he perished miserably.‡

[ii.] *People*.—"Remember Lot's wife;" (Luke xvii. 32;) who, turning back to Sodom,§ was turned into a pillar of salt, "to season us, that we may be preserved from the stinking sin of apostasy."|| Lucian, a great professor in the days of Trajan, but revolting, was torn in pieces, and devoured of dogs. The emperor Julian the Apostate was wounded

* *Tepiditas, si callum obduserit, fiet apostasia*. "If lukewarmness superinduce a callous insensibility, it will soon degenerate into apostasy."—EDIT. † GREGORII *Moral.* lib. xxii. cap. 5. ‡ SCULTETI *Annales*, 118. § JOSEPHI *Antiq.* lib. i. cap. 12. || *Quoddam præstitit condimentum, quo sapiunt aliquid, undè illud caveatur exemplum*.—AUGUSTINUS *De Civitate Dei*, lib. xvi. cap. 30.

with an arrow, none knowing from whence, in his war against the Persians, who, throwing his blood up to heaven, died, scornfully crying, *Vicisti, Galilæe, vicisti!* *

(ii.) *Spiritual adultery*.—Bodily sloth exposes to corporal adultery.

Quæritur, Ægisthus quare sit factus adulter?
In promptu causa est: Desidiosus erat. †

David's instance clears it sufficiently. Spiritual sloth exposes to spiritual adultery. (2 Sam. xi. 2.) "When they knew God, they glorified him not as God." What follows upon this sloth in not glorifying God as he ought to be glorified? They "changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." (Rom. i. 21, 23.) Sloth is the highway to superstition, and idleness the road-way to idolatry: "Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play;" (1 Cor. x. 7;) by which is implied, their idleness was the cause of their idolatry. When Demas grew lazy and slothful in his ministry, he turned priest in an idol's temple, where he had less work and more wages. † (2 Tim. iv. 10.) Consider idolatry and superstition are God-provoking, land-destroying, soul-damning, sins; § no wonder John should conclude his epistle with,— "Keep yourselves from idols." (1 John v. 21.)

(3.) Consider *how impossible it is, that creeping snails in God's way should ever get to their journey's end*.—"Fair and softly" goes far, but never so far as heaven. || "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent," *ἀπρᾶζουσιν*, "take it by force;" (Matt. xi. 12;) a metaphor taken from storming cities and castles. ¶ They storm heaven, hang their petards of prayers on heaven-gates, and blow them open, that get heaven by a conquest: storming is not work either for the fearful or the slothful.** "So run, that ye may obtain;" (1 Cor. ix. 24;) not creep, but run; not run, but *so run*; not indifferently, but industriously; as the racers in the Isthmian games, to which the apostle here alludes, who did stretch and strain their legs and limbs, that they might gain the prize. †† "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." Heaven hath a

* "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean! thou hast conquered."—EDIT. † OVIDII *Remed. Amor.* 161. "Ask ye the cause of vile Ægisthus' crime? In idleness he spent his weary time."—EDIT.

‡ DOROTHEUS in *Synopsi*. *Adeò proclive est ex servo Mammonæ transire in sacerdotem diaboli*. "Such a strong propensity is felt by a servant of Mammon to become a priest of the devil!"—EDIT. DR. ARROWSMITH'S *Tactica Sacra*. § *Gravissimum peccatum*.—AQUINAS, *Secunda Secundæ*, Quest. 94. Act. iii. "A most grievous sin." *Principale crimen, et summus hujus sæculi reatus*.—TERTULLIANUS. "The principal crime and highest guilt of the present age."—EDIT. || *Omnes qui ad Paradisum redire desiderat, oportet transire per ignem et aquam*.—AUGUSTINE in *Serm. ad Lipp.* "Every one who feels desirous of returning to Paradise must pass through fire and through water."—EDIT. ¶ BRUGENSIS. ** *Non dormientibus provenit regnum colorum, nec otio et desidid torpentibus beatitudo aternitatis ingeritur*.—PROSPER de *Vita Contemplativa*. "The kingdom of heaven has no place, and does not flourish, in sleepy Christians; neither is the blessedness of eternity held out for acceptance to those who are in a state of torpor through their sloth and inactivity."—EDIT. †† *Qui stadium currit, eniti debet et contendere quàm maxime possit ut vincat, &c.*—CICERO De *Officiis*, lib. iii. 10. "The man who runs a race ought to stretch and to strain all he can, in order to come in foremost; but he ought by no means to jostle or to trip up the heels of the man with whom he runs."—GUTHRIE'S Translation.

very strait gate: we must crowd, yea, crush, ourselves, if ever we get in; αγωνιζεσθε, "play the champions to a very agony;" "for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able;" ζητησουσιν, "shall seek with industry and endeavour."* (Luke xiii. 24.)

(4.) Consider *how equitable it is that you should be as active in the way of God, as you were once in the way of sin and Satan.*—"I speak after the manner of men," that is, I speak reason as well as religion; † "as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity;" ("as," not of quality but equality;) ‡ "even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness;" (Rom. vi. 19;) "even so;" in the same manner and the same measure. This very consideration wrought effectually upon Paul himself, who, as he had formerly sinned more than all, so afterwards he laboured more than all: § the time he could not recover by recalling, he does recover by redeeming. What a piercing and prevailing spur would this be to a dull and sluggish soul! "Ah soul! what a shame, what a sin is this, to be a slow snail in the way of God, that hast been a swift dromedary in the way of sin!"

(5.) Consider *how you contradict your own prayers, your very Pater-noster, wherein you desire God's will should be so done by you on earth, as it is done by the angels in heaven.*—Now those winged Mercuries and messengers of heaven do speedily and spritely execute the commandments of God: "Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word." (Psalm ciii. 20.) These heavenly pursuivants stand listening to know their Prince's royal pleasure, and then they go to execute it. ||

(i.) *With all celerity and speed.*—They are said to have wings, which are the emblems of velocity: the seraphim came flying to Isaiah with a coal from the altar. (Isai. vi. 2, 6.) Gabriel is sent post from heaven, "being caused to fly swiftly," (Dan. ix. 21,) [with] extraordinary haste, that he seemed weary and tired; the angels' flying upon God's embassy is always very swift. The Schoolmen make a doubt whether they do *ab extremo ad extremum transire*; ¶ yet it seems they can mend their pace in their flight from heaven to earth, and so back again, which is, (as those wise astronomers,** who have been there to measure it,) backward and forward, above one hundred and sixty millions of miles.

(ii.) *With ardency and intensesness.*—They are called "seraphims." (Isai. vi. 2.) *Igniti*, "fiery," yea, "a flame of fire." (Heb. i. 7.) Elijah's chariot and horses of fire were angels appearing in those forms. (2 Kings ii. 11.) Of all the elements, fire is the most intense and active: the mouth of fire devours and destroys all that comes before it.

* *Potent cum ardore.* † *Humanum quiddam dico.*—ERASMUS. "I am now speaking that which is in accordance with every man's own experience."—EDIT. ‡ "Sicut," non qualitatis sed equalitatis. § Cyprian was πολυς εν ασεβεια, πλειων εν ευσεβεια. —GREG. NAZ. *Orat.* 18. "In his unregenerate state, Cyprian was remarkable for profaneness; but, when reclaimed, he became far more distinguished for piety."—EDIT. || *Angelos πορθημευοντας τα των θεων προς ανθρωπουσ, και τα ανθρωπων προς τους θεουσ, esse putat Plutarchus.* "Plutarch supposed angels to be employed in conveying to men those things which belonged to the gods, and to the gods those things which concerned mankind."—EDIT. ¶ "Whether they pass entirely through the path ethereal from one extremity to the other."—EDIT. ** CLAVIUS in *Sphæram*.

Many of the Heathens did worship fire for their god, because it devoured all their other gods. These fiery hosts of God are very devouring: one of them in one night destroyed a hundred fourscore and five thousand Assyrians. (2 Kings xix. 35.)

(iii.) *With alacrity and cheerfulness.*—It is a great part of their joy in heaven, that they do God's service with joy. As soon as ever they were created, they rejoiced that they should be employed in such honourable service: "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." (Job xxxviii. 7.) How cheerfully did the angels bring tidings of Christ's birth to the world! as appears by their praising God to the highest of their power: "Glory to God in the highest," &c. (Luke ii. 14.) Surely, if you consider angels' worship and doing God's will, it will make you leave off your sloth or your service; either cause you to pray better, or not to pray at all.

(6.) Consider *you lose the very soul and life of your duty, if you do not perform it as for your life and soul.*—You come to seek and see the face of God in the glass of ordinances; (Psalm xxvii. 8;) to have communion with him, to fetch comfort from him, to get some kisses of him; (Canticles i. 2;) to mortify some lust, to increase some grace, to strengthen your assurance, to testify your duty, to express your affection, &c. Now, spiritual sloth hinders you of all this: dull and drowsy eyes cannot see God; heavy and slothful hearts cannot receive those benefits and blessings from God.* "Sloth is a sluice-gate to the current of God's grace and favour."† Jupiter rained a shower of gold into Danaë's lap; but God will never rain a shower of grace, joy, and comfort, into a sluggard's heart. If you lose the blessed sight of God here in ordinances, you shall lose the beatifical sight of God hereafter in glory. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. iii. 18.) Then have we the kernel of a duty, (every thing else is but a shell,) when our employment is on earth, and our enjoyment in heaven; when we have so sought God's face that our face comes away shining; and we have so poured out our hearts to God that God hath poured out his heart to us; that we return home, like bees loaded with honey, filled with the comforts of the Holy Ghost.

(7.) Consider *the infinite and wonderful glory, greatness, majesty, of Him you appear before and approach unto in your duties.*—A God you are not able to conceive, nor I to express. See how the scripture shadows him out unto us (and indeed it is but a shadow in comparison of his substance): "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and

* *Lambunt petram; mel non sugunt.*—CYPRIANUS *De Cædâ Domini*. "They lick the bare rock, whence they suck no honey."—EDIT. † *Torpor non sinit Deum esse beneficum.*

vanity." (Isai. xl. 12, 15—17.) *Ex pede Herculem.** By this glorious description we may guess (and that is all) at enough in God to scare us from coming to God in a dull and drowsy manner. The Heathens who worshipped the sun for their god, durst not offer up any thing but a flying horse to him in sacrifice : our God is more glorious, swift, seeing, than ten thousand suns ; therefore we should not dare to offer up any thing but a winged cherubim, or swift-flying eagle, to him in service.†

(8.) Consider *how industrious and indefatigable an adversary you have, that lies always in ambush to wrong you, yea, to ruin you.*—Satan is the unwearied peripatetic, who "walks up and down" for prey and spoil. (Job i. 7.) Now the dull soul is his prey : a slug ship is a purchase for the pirate, and a sluggish soul for the devil. It is holy and wholesome advice given by Peter : "Be sober, be vigilant ; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Peter v. 8.) "The devil," says pious and plain Latimer, "is the most diligent bishop in England : he is ever at his plough : no lording nor loitering may hinder him : his office is to hinder religion, to maintain superstition, to set up idolatry, to teach all kind of Popery : where his plough goes, there away with books, and up with candles ; away with Bibles, and up with beads ; away with the light of the gospel, and up with the light of candles, yea, at noon-days !" † How should this quicken us to be active for God and our soul, that have an enemy so active always against God and our soul ! You need not quicken a mariner to make out § all the cloth he can, that knows a pirate hath him in chase at stern ; *timor addidit alas*, "fear will spread the sails, which are the wings of the ship." The devil, the great pirate of souls, to make prize and pillage of us and our graces, hath us in daily pursuit : how careful should we be to fill the sails of our souls with the strong gales of the Spirit, that he may neither overtake us, nor take us. ||

(9.) Consider, *when you slothfully and sluggishly perform duties, you do but mock God.*—"God is not mocked ;" (Gal. vi. 7 ;) that is, "God will not have his nose played with." ¶

God is mocked three ways :—

(i.) DIRECTLY ; when men, by deriding speeches, mock the essentiality or personality of the Godhead : as,

[1.] *The essentiality* ; when a blasphemous Quaker shall say, "God is nothing else but the letters read backward," which is, *horresco referens,** * — Or,

* "From a sight of his huge foot, you may form a judgment of the immense size of Hercules."—EDIT. † *Quæ participatione nobis veneranda sunt, in comparatione ejus memoranda non sunt.*—GREGORII *Moral.* lib. xviii. c. 27. "Those things which we ought to venerate in consequence of common participation, are not worthy of mention when placed in comparison with the Deity."—EDIT. - ‡ MR. HUGH LATIMER's Sermon preached in the shrouds at Paul's church in London, Jan. 18, anno 1548 ; Of the Plough, page 21.

§ In the active sense of "spread out all his canvass ;" in opposition to the phrase, "Take or haul in all sail." See page 441.—EDIT. || *Prius conditionem, complexionem uniuscujusque perspicit, et tum tentationis laqueos apponit.*—GREGORII *Moral.* lib. 9.

"Satan first sifts out and accurately examines the conditions and connexions of every one ; and then he lays down the snares of his temptations with which he may catch them."—EDIT. ¶ *Μικτηρίζω, cum naso ludere.*—CALVINUS. *Nasus derisioni dicatus.*—PLINIUS. "The nose is used to express derision and contempt."—EDIT. ** "A crime too horrible to be described."—EDIT.

[2.] *The personality*; as,

First. *God the Father*; when he shall be called "a cooper hooping his tubs," when it thundereth; or "an old man sitting in heaven," as your common and country people usually jeer.*

Secondly. *God the Son*; when Julian shall gibe him with, "The crucified God;" or Libanus, "The carpenter's Son;" or, as Pope Leo X. to cardinal Bembus, when he brought a piece out of the gospel to comfort him when sick, "Away with those forgeries and follies!" †

Thirdly. *God the Holy Ghost*; when Securtus [Servetus?] shall call him "the three-headed Cerberus, and ridiculous invention of human curiosity."

(ii.) REFLEXIVELY; when men gibe and jeer the faithful messengers of God: "But they mocked the messengers of God:" (2 Chron. xxxvi. 16:) to mock the messengers of God is, by reflexion, to mock the God of those messengers. *Cum multis aliis.*

(iii.) INTERPRETATIVELY: when men do such actions as plainly evidence a mockage of God. I have read of a fellow in want, that earnestly intreated Mercury to send him some relief, promising him that whatever he found he would sacrifice half to him. He found nuts: he ate the kernels, and offered the shells to Mercury; which he resented as a high affront. Activity in duty is the kernel, sloth is the shell, which we offering to God in service, is interpreted a high and horrid mocking. Augustus Cæsar, being invited to one of his subjects' houses, and being slothfully and negligently entertained, took it as a derision. ‡ Duty is an inviting God to our house: if we entertain him sluggishly and carelessly, he will call you to an account for your impudent familiarity with him, and make you hold up your hand at his bar for being guilty of taking his name in vain. (Exod. xx. 7.) §

(10.) Consider *how active Christ was in doing us service.*—He did *omnem movere lapidem.* || He was so enlarged about the thoughts of doing the work, that he was straitened until he was about it: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke xii. 50.) That is, "I have a death of the cross to suffer for man's redemption, and I am pressed with an *antiperistasis* ¶ until I have finished it." Or else, as Grotius renders it, "I am with child of my passion; and how do I long for my delivery! I am in pain until I am in pain;" much like some women, who *breed* their children with more pain than they *do bring them forth*. When that day of his travail came, it was the day of his triumph: "Triumphing over them in it." (Col. ii. 15.) The

* PERKINS. † *Apage istas nugas de Christo.*—PAC. MED. Hist. Eccles. ‡ *Nescibam me tibi tam fuisse familiarem.*—ERASMI Adagia. "I was not previously aware that you deemed yourself to be on such terms of easy familiarity with me."—EDIT. § The whole of this ninth division, nearly an entire page, is omitted in the first edition; instead of which, the following short and appropriate paragraph occurs:—"Consider, when you slothfully perform duties, you do but mock God.—To act in the service of God slothfully is, interpretative, to act scornfully. 'Wine is a mocker;' (Prov. xx. 1;) that is, Wine immoderately taken makes men dull, dronish, sluggish. Sleepy actions in a serious business, are mocking actions. Drowsy service to God, is but a mockery of God. 'God is not mocked;' (Gal. vi. 7;) that is, God will not bear mockery."—EDIT. || "Christ left no stone unturned."—EDIT. ¶ "A being hemmed in; a greater exertion or intention of the active power of one quality, in consequence of the opposition of others."—EDIT.

Athenian Codrus, being informed by the Oracle, that the people whose king should be slain in the battle should be conquerors, disrobed himself, went into the enemies' quarters in the habit of a poor man, with a burden on his back, that he might steal a death to make his people conquerors.* Christ disrobed himself of the garments of glory, assumed the form of a servant, endured contradictions of sinners, held his peace when falsely charged; that he might steal a death for his people, that so they might be more than conquerors: "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame." (Heb. xii. 2.) Shall Christ give you such a copy of activity, and will you blot and blur it with sloth and sluggishness? † Shall Christ go swiftly to death, and we go sluggishly to duty?

10. *Beg the quickening Spirit.*—This is *instar omnium*, ["equal to all the rest,"] none like it, as David said of Goliath's sword. Sloth is the king's evil of the soul; and none but the King of heaven can cure it by his hand, which is his Spirit. "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart." (Psalm cxix. 32.) Idleness is the soul's prison, sloth is her shackle; the Spirit of God only can knock off her fetters, and give gaol-delivery to her. "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities" of ignorance, dulness, deadness, sluggishness; and enables, yea, ennobles, us with gracious, copious, filial affections, even "groans and sighs that are unutterable;" expressions not to be expressed. (Rom. viii. 26.) "Draw me, we will run after thee:" (Canticles i. 4:) there is her prayer, and her promise, and there is no doubt of her performance: she will as certainly follow as the iron the load-stone, or the card the north pole. "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." (Canticles iv. 16.) "Awake and come;" there is the prayer; "O north and south wind;" there is the Spirit; the soul, that is "the garden;" gracious affections, they are the "spices" that "flow out."

QUESTION. But some precious soul whisperm in mine ears: "I bless God, I am not troubled with this lethargy; my sails are so filled that my mill goes and grinds nimbly; only I am afraid the wind blows not from the right quarter: pray, therefore, satisfy my conscience in this case, whether my activity in duty proceed from the Spirit of God?"

ANSWER. We may easily be deceived by our enlargements, because there are many winds and gales blowing from several quarters, which may set the soul in active going and doing; as popular applause, high opinions of the preacher, taking † expressions in prayer, flourishing novelties and notions in a sermon, satanical infusions, common and ordinary inspirations of the Holy Ghost, vouchsafed to reprobates: (Heb. vi. 4—6:) all which, or any of which, may so draw and delight the heart, that, as Orpheus's pipe, they or it may make the heart dance in a duty; and yet, for all this, it may be possible, yea, probable, the heart may dance after the devil's pipe. (Ezek. xxxiii. 32.) The resolution of this case would have been fitter for some ancient, experienced master of

* PLUTARCH. † The next clause was not in the first edition, which had, instead of it: "O look on your copy, and fairly write after it!"—EDIT. † Pleasing, engaging, popular.—EDIT.

assemblies, whose Bible is more in his heart than head, than for so weak and worthless a person as I am, who may truly say, with Agur, Ἀφρονεστατος γαρ εἰμι ἀπαντων ἀνθρωπων, "Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man." (Prov. xxx. 2.) Yet, seeing Providence hath laid the lot at my door, to use Peter's words a little altered, Though silver and golden experiences and expressions I have none, yet such as I have I shall willingly impart and communicate to you. (Acts iii. 6.) If you will lend me your *patience*, I will give you my *pains*, in resolving this weighty and worthy case of conscience, *How a Christian may know whether his activity in duty be from the Spirit of God.*

I shall commend to you these eight characteristic notes, as so many touchstones:—

1. *When we have beforehand earnestly prayed and prepared our souls for such activity.*—When you say and do to your soul, as Jehu did to the worshippers of Baal, (2 Kings x. 19,) "I have a great sacrifice to offer, O my soul!" warn and summon-in all the power and parts of soul and body; be sure that not one be wanting, and so, by reading, meditating, and prayer, get our souls into a holy frame and gracious posture; and humbly, yea, heartily also, beg and beseech of God to carry us on eagles' wings through the duty we are drawing near to. If we mount and soar aloft as *aquila in nubibus*, "eagles to heaven," in that duty, we may safely and surely conclude *that activity is from the Spirit.* When mariners buy a wind of the witches, (as they do in Lapland and other places,) and they have it at every place and point, according to the purchase of the one and the promise of the other, they may undoubtedly conclude that wind came from the spirit of the devil. When we beg a wind from God, and we enjoy it at the time according to our desire, we may upon good ground say, that wind came from the Spirit of God. This will appear very clear, if you please to lay together these four things:—

(1.) *It is God's prerogative to hear prayer.*—"O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come." (Psalm lxxv. 2.)

(2.) *It is God's promise to hear prayer.*—"Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it;" (Psalm lxxxi. 10;) spread thy sails by prayer, and I will fill them by my Spirit. He will "give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." (Luke xi. 13.)

(3.) *It is God's usual course to perform his promise, κατὰ τὸ ῥῆτον,* in that very kind.*—"Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear." (Psalm x. 17.) "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain." (Isai. xlv. 19.)

(4.) *It hath been the constant practice of God's people to look after their prayers, to see what success they have had.*—Prayers come not out of the ark of their souls, as the raven did, never to return; but, as Noah's dove, to come back again with an olive-branch into the soul. "I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints." (Psalm lxxxv. 8.) Saints do not shoot

* "Literally, according to the specified terms."—EDIT.

the arrows of their prayers as children do,—shoot them away, and never mind them; but as archers that shoot their arrows up at a bird, and stand expecting their returns down again. If our activity come from the return of prayers, it must be from the Spirit. When Elias prays so fervently, that fire might come down from heaven, and consume the sacrifice, and it did so, the people might justly cry out, “The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God.” (1 Kings xviii. 37—39.) So when we pray for fire and fervour to come down from heaven on our service, and it comes, we may cry, “The Spirit of God! The Spirit of God!”

2. *When our activity carries us supra sphaeram activitatis,* above the reach of any creature.*—When dust is carried up on high, the wind does it; when dust and ashes are carried up on high in a duty, the wind of the Spirit does it. If a chymist dissolves a stone into drops of water, we may be sure some help higher than a creature hath helped him. If a heart of stone shall be dissolved into drops of water in a duty, it must be some help higher than a creature’s [that] must do it. If Ganymedes be carried up to heaven, it must be by the help of Jupiter. If the soul be carried up to heaven so in a duty that it is an ecstasy rather than an activity, it is by the help of the Spirit. If our spirit cries in a duty with sighs and groans that are unutterable, it was enabled by the Spirit of God. (Rom. viii. 26.) When we are carried through difficulties, doubts, duties, dangers, that seem impossible, impassable, by reason of the lions in the way, and the lions in the streets, that stand open-mouthed to devour us; (Prov. xxvi. 13;) then to venture through all, fire, fury, faggot,—this is of the Spirit of God. When Daniel shall continue active in prayer three times a day, with his windows open, that all might see him, when there were lions in the way indeed; (Dan. vi. 10;)—when Luther in outward straits shall have such inward enlargements, that he comes off from his knees with a *Vicimus, Vicimus*; †—when he shall go to Worms to own the truth of Christ, though all the tiles upon the houses were devils: ‡—of these prayers and practices, and such like, we may say, as Protogenes of a curious line, “None but Apelles could draw this:” “None but the Spirit of God could enlarge and enable to do this.”

3. *When we feel and find our hearts after duty filled and freighted with spiritual joys, and heavenly comforts.*—When our soul is like a merchant’s ship returned from the Indies, loaden as deep as it can swim, with all variety of spices, and precious commodities;—when we have such inward ravishings, that our heart is a little heaven, filled up to the brim with joy; as our Saviour prayed for us; (John xv. 11;) enjoying that “joy unspeakable and full of glory;” (1 Peter i. 8;) heaven antedated, or heaven before-hand;—when we have that joy which is the earnest of God’s love:—“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared,” in this life, “for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.” (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.) This joy is not only the fulfilling of Christ’s prayer, but also the fruit of the Spirit. (Gal. v. 22.)

* “Above the sphere of human activity.”—EDIT.

† “We have conquered! we have conquered!”—EDIT.

‡ SLEIDAN.

When the king had brought his spouse into his bridechamber after her prayer, he ravishes her heart with joy. (Canticles i. 4.) When David had been at prayer, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us," then comes that rapture, "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased." (Psalm iv. 6, 7.) When we have greater joy after duty than worldlings have after harvest, which is their greatest joy: *gaudium messis is messis gaudii*; "the joy of their harvest is all the harvest of their joy," which this world's earth-worms are likely to enjoy: "Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things," says Abraham to Dives. (Luke xvi. 25.)

4. *When our activity in duty is constant, like the motion of the fire in its orb, which, philosophers tell us, is perpetual.*—"My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times." (Psalm cxix. 20.) The Spirit dwells in us as his temple. (1 Cor. vi. 19.) The body is the temple, the soul the lute, the affections the strings, the Holy Ghost the musician, who in all our duties makes melody in our hearts. (Eph. v. 19.) Where the ship is alway sailing, the wind is alway blowing; and we are sure that sailing comes from the wind. If the wind lies still, the ship lies still, is becalmed. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is *ελευθερια*, liberty." (2 Cor. iii. 17.) Freedom and liberty are opposed to three things:—(1.) Necessity; (2.) Co-action; (3.) Restraint. Now, the Spirit of God sets our heels, *ut aiunt*,* our hearts, at liberty, not only from necessity [and] co-action, but also [from] restraint. Setting at liberty is freeing us from imprisonment, and giving freedom to go whither we will. The Spirit admits us to that liberty which is, (1.) The purchase of Christ; (Gal. v. 1;) (2.) The privilege of our filiation: "The glorious liberty of the sons of God." (Rom. viii. 21.) The Spirit makes us act as itself: *Nescit tarda molimina Spiritus Sancti gratia*.† (AMBROSIUS.) "The Spirit quickeneth," *ζωοποιει*, "makes lively." (2 Cor. iii. 6.) As the "Spirit of life" frees us from "the law of sin and death," so from the law of sloth and deadness.‡ (Rom. viii. 2.)

OBJECTION.—But some poor soul cries out, "Woe is me, I am undone! I find none of this Spirit in me. I am none of those fixed stars about the equinoctial that move many millions in an hour; but a slow-paced planet, that finishes not his course in many years, whose motion is so dull, that [it is] not discernible. Sure, I am cast out of the firmament of God's favour, and shall be a wandering star, 'to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.'" (Jude 13.)

ANSWER.—It is the misery of ministers, that they cannot speak of the experimental sublimities of some, but others are presently desponding and despairing. I would not, for a world, quench the smoking flax, or break the bruised reed. (Matt. xii. 20.) Yea, I would, with all my soul,

* "As the phrase is."—EDIT. † "The grace of the Holy Spirit possesses nothing in common with the tardiness of human efforts."—EDIT. ‡ *Per nomen libertatis non tantum intelligo a peccati et carnis servitute manumissionem, sed etiam fiduciam quam concipimus ex adoptionis nostrae testimonio; convenit cum Rom. viii. 15.*—CALVINUS in 2 Cor. iii. 17. "By the word *liberty*, I understand not only a manumission from the slavery of sin and of the flesh, but also that trust (or assurance) which we conceive through the witness of our adoption; and this is agreeable to Rom. viii. 15."—EDIT.

put the lambs in my bosom which cannot go, or [which go] but slowly, and gently lead them that are with young. (Isai. xl. 11.) I speak this to them that are upon the staves of Jacob's ladder in their ascending to heaven, to be a loadstone to draw them up, not a mill-stone to drag them down. But, to answer more appositely :—

(1.) I intend it in opposition to them who live in a course of sin, yet now and then in a duty do feel a flash of joy, and thereupon presume of their good estate; and not to those who, with Zachary and Elizabeth, “walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless;” (Luke i. 6;) and yet do not obtain this constant favour.

(2.) I lay it down [as] a positive sign, and *inclusivè*, that those, and all those, that have constant activities, though differing for the altitudes and degrees, may be certain of the Spirit, as those that have trade-winds from port to port may be sure they sail by the wind; or as those that have the organ, medium, and object rightly disposed, may be sure they see. Bellarmine tells a story of an old man, that always arose from duty with these words: “Be you shut, O my eyes! be shut! for I shall never behold any fairer object than God's face, which I have now beheld.”* But not a negative sign, *exclusivè*, as if those (that repent of sin, meditate on the promises, pour out prayers, walk with God, wait on ordinances) who have it not, were cast-aways. I am confident that many that lie wind-bound in the harbour shall in due time get to the haven.

(3.) There are four things [that] belong to a Christian: (i.) A habit; (ii.) An act; (iii.) Degrees of that act; (iv.) Sense of all these. He may have the three first, and yet want the sense of them. A ship may sail, and yet the mariner not [be] sensible of it.

(4.) There is no rule but hath some exception; no experience in one believer's heart but a contrary experience may be found in another's. Various are the workings of God's Spirit in the heart. He blows when, where, how he pleases.† (John iii. 8.) He is called “seven Spirits,” (Rev. i. 4,) because of his various influences. He doth, *ἐπι το πωλυ*, [“generally,”] blow in a duty, if the ship be ready; but, to show he is *agens liberrimum*,‡ he will sometimes suspend his act, and leave the common road. To conclude this: take this counsel: Stay thyself upon thy God; (Isai. l. 10;) remembering, he will “send forth judgment unto victory.” (Matt. xii. 20.) And take this for a cordial, which is a spiritual riddle: “It is a comfort to have no comfort.” The *desires* of some are as acceptable to God as the *deeds* of others.

5. *When we are enlarged, and yet we are not elated, high in God's Spirit, low in our own spirit.*—True Christians are like canes, the fuller they are of sugar, the lower they bend. *Quantò sublimior, tantò submissior*; “The loftier, the lowlier:” every true saint's motto. True activity is not leaven to puff us up, but lead to pull us down. What Bede wished some to observe of Austine the monk, sent over a legate

* *Claudimini, oculi mei! claudimini: nihil enim pulchrius jam videbitis.* † I may truly say of it as Keckerman says of Mercury's motion, *Valde varius, et, magnè ex parte, incognitus.* [“Extremely various, and, for the most part, unknown.”] ‡ “An agent supremely free.”—EDIT.

from the pope to his brethren the prelates and bishops of England, I may advise you to observe, that *if he carried himself humbly, he came from the Lord*: high in duty, and humble after duty, comes from the Lord. When David and his people had been on the mount, in their offerings to the building of the temple, see [in] what a low valley they are, in the opinion of themselves: "Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." (1 Chron. xxix. 14.) Here is no haughty pharisee, "Who but I?" but an humble publican, "Who am I?"

6. *When activity in duty is expressed in activity in doing; when active prayers are turned into active practices.*—The emperor Sigismund,* having made fair promises, in a sore fit of sickness, of amendment of life, asked Theodoricus, archbishop of Cologne, how he might know whether his repentance were sincere; who replied, "If you are as careful to *perform* in your health, as you are forward to *promise* in your sickness." † "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." (1 Peter ii. 2.) When our being high in duty makes us grow high in grace and knowledge; (2 Peter iii. 18;) even as cedars of Lebanon, until *caput inter nubila*, "we lodge our heads in heaven;" (2 Peter i. 10, 11;) we may be sure it is from the Spirit, when enlargement in duty lays on us an engagement to duty.

7. *When we give God the glory of all our actings and activities.*—If it be returned to his praise, it was received from his Spirit. When rivers return to the sea, it argues they from thence proceeded. (Eccles. i. 7.) When David and his people had showed their activity in their present towards the erecting of the temple, they shut up all with a most gracious and grateful doxology: "Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name." (1 Chron. xxix. 13.) "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory." (Psalm cxv. 1.) He doubles *Non nobis*, ["Not unto us,"] to lay down man, to lift up God. When we unfeignedly give God the glory, God hath undoubtedly given us the grace.

8. *When we have the testimony of the Spirit witnessing with our spirit, that this activity is from himself.*—"God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Gal. iv. 6.) When we are so enlarged in a duty that we do cry, "Abba, Father;" this the Spirit witnesses is his work. The Spirit doth not witness by a clear and distinct, either outward or inward, voice, *totidem verbis*: ["just in so many words:"] "This I have wrought in thee." Thus to affirm, would be a Quaker's fancy, or rather folly. But the Spirit doth sweetly and secretly suggest to us, by having wrought those filial affections and child-like dispositions of love, joy, peace, hope, fear, grief, confidence, &c., in the heart, and by enabling us to act these gracious dispositions, as need shall require. This is the Spirit's *συμμαρτυρεῖν*, "witnessing with our spirits," thus fitted and filled with peace and purity, with melting and mourning. The Spirit doth by his impress and impulse ratify and seal the witness of our own spirit to make it authentic: "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption,

* ÆNÆÆ SYLVII lib. II. *Comment. de Gestis.* † *Promptiores sunt homines promittendo quàm exequendo.*—DION. lib. xxxviii. "Men display far greater promptitude in promising, than in the performance of that which they have promised."—EDIT.

whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits." (Rom. viii. 15, 16.) So that, having two witnesses, it may be established.

(1.) *The witness of conscience*; which is *mille testes*: ["a thousand witnesses in one:"] "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience." (2 Cor. i. 12.)

(2.) *The witness of the Spirit*; which is more than ten thousand witnesses,* because he is an infallible witness, that cannot err; therefore called "the Spirit of truth." (John xiv. 17; 1 John v. 6.) Now these two, putting their hands to the testimonial of our activity, breed and beget that *παρρησιαν προς τον Θεον*, "that confidence in God and evidence to God," as à Lapide interprets the word. (1 John iii. 21.) Now, as those two witnesses' testimony in prophesying against idolatrous and superstitious worship was sufficient to evidence [that] all their actions were from the spirit of antichrist; (Rev. xi. 3;) so these two witnesses, testifying to our souls that these activities are legitimate and laudable, are sufficient assurance that they came from the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

USES.

USE I. Makes an apology for those precious souls, whose wings are so besmeared with the bird-lime of sloth, that they are forced to put up their humble bills to ministers and congregations to beg of God in their behalf spiritual quickenings; that so their hearts being enlarged, by the breathings of the Spirit, they may bowsingly sail in the ways, and through the waves, of God's commandments.

USE II. Is an advocate to *plead justification to the action* in the behalf of those who, as they make it a case of conscience, so they make conscience of the case, to bring their activities to the touchstone, and to the trial. They know that all is not gold that glisters; and they would not, in a thing of that eternal concernment, be deceived with alchymy instead of gold, with blear-eyed Leah instead of beautiful Rachel, with a cloud instead of Juno, with a pebble instead of a pearl; and therefore they are industrious and illustrious to try whether their activity in duty be from the Spirit, by those spirits that are ingredients into their activity.

* *Cum Spiritus testatur, quæ tandem restat ambiguitas?*—CHRYSOSTOMUS in Rom. viii. 15. "When the Holy Spirit bears witness, what ambiguity or doubt can still remain?"—EDIT.

Beside those variations, in the text and illustrative notes, between the first and subsequent editions, which have been specifically noticed, some others occur of minor importance.—EDIT.