

affirm, that I have laid-down nothing in all this discourse, but what I hope is, at least for the main, agreeable to the mind of God ; and what, by his assistance, I myself should desire, and really endeavour to practise, either in the relation of parent or child : which is all the apology I shall make for my plain-dealing ; but shall conclude with those precatory expressions in the Psalms, a very little varied, with respect to those parents who heartily embrace the word of exhortation : “ Let thy work,” O Lord, “ appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon them ;” (Psalm xc. 16, 17 ;) “ that their sons may be as plants grown up in their youth ; that their daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace :” (Psalm cxliv. 12 :) considering what the Lord hath promised for the encouragement of his faithful servants ; namely, “ Their children shall continue, and their seed shall be established before” him. (Psalm cii. 28.)

SERMON XVIII.

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DUTIES OF MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers ; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart ; with good-will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men : knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening : knowing that your Master also is in heaven ; neither is there respect of persons with him.—Ephesians vi. 5—9.

THE question proposed to me to answer at this time is this :—

What are the duties of masters and servants, and how both must eye their Master which is in heaven ?

Before I come to the direct answer to this question, I shall make way to it by laying down a preliminary consideration or two.

1. *That God did in infinite wisdom make all things, though of a far different nature.*—Some beings he made more excellent, and endowed them with noble faculties, fitted for communion with himself ; and some of these he hath placed in a higher, and some in a lower, orb ; and yet all making the glory of infinite wisdom shine more clearly. He sets one creature higher, and another lower ; one to rule, and the other to be ruled. And of the same kind he advanceth one above another ; and yet with no injustice or wrong to any, but for the mutual help one of another, the beauty and harmony of the whole universe, and the more visible dis-

playing of his own unsearchable wisdom. (Psalm civ. 24 ; Gen. i. 31.) If all the stars were suns, how intolerable would their heat and light be ! If the whole body were eyes, how much of its use and excellency would it lose ! What a chaos and heap of confusion would the world be without government ! And how can government be without superiority and inferiority ? It was not without good reason that the philosopher said, that “there was a method of perfect wisdom in the making of all things ; and it was not by chance that they are what they are, but the contrivance of the most excellent counsel.”* Who could have mended what God hath made ? What could be better ordered than what Infinite Goodness hath done ? And who but a fool would desire that things should be otherwise than Wisdom itself hath determined ? † O, what cause hath every one to adore God in every thing, who hath made “every thing beautiful” in its place and season ! (Eccles. iii. 11.) What cause have all to sit down content and thankful in that place where God hath fixed them ! How unreasonable and blasphemous are the repinings of some, that are ready to quarrel with their Maker, and to impeach him, as guilty of partiality, cruelty, and injustice, that hath not advanced them to a higher, richer, and more honourable condition than they are in ! “Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus ?” (Rom. ix. 20.) What diabolical pride and arrogance is this, for the creature to accuse and condemn his Creator ! Shall folly itself indict wisdom ? Must God come to his creatures’ bar ? Must he give thee an account of his actings ? Art thou able to bear his pleadings ? And canst thou, without sinking into nothing, stand before his glory ? What obligation didst thou lay upon God to bring thee out of nothing into something ? Did he stand in any need of thy being ? What was there in thee that should commend thee to God, to advance thee above a toad or a dog ? I could here expatiate, were it not a little beside my design. To conclude : I think it would be far better for us all, to learn of that excellent moralist, ‡ who said, that “though he was lame, and almost blind, and none of the richest ; yet because he was partaker of reason, he had cause to magnify the distinguishing goodness of his Maker, and could wish that all men would more adore and admire God ; and as for his part, it should be his work, while he had a being ; and he did call all to join in concert to His praise who hath made all things in so excellent an order and harmony.” § Did we all consider what God is, and what we are, methinks it should effectually silence discontent, and leave no room for any thing but love, praise, and gratitude. O, would to God there were a little of that order, harmony, and wisdom in our actions, that is in God’s ; and that we could act “like them that study to imitate their Maker !” || O that, with Paul, we could learn still to be content in whatsoever condition we are in ; and if we have spoken or thought any thing derogatory to the Infinite Wisdom, to “repent and abhor ourselves in dust and ashes,” and turn our murmurings against God, that it is no better with us, into admiration that we are not worse ! Every state on this side eternal misery

* HIEROCLES *Comment. in Aur. Carn. Pythag.* † ARRIANI *Diatriba in Epicetum*, lib. ii. cap. 7. ANTONINI *Meditationes*, lib. vii. *ex Platone.* ‡ EPICETUS. § KAI ὕμῶν ἐπὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ταύτην φωνὴν παρακαλῶ.—ARRIANI *Diat. in Epict.* lib. i. cap. 1. || Ὅς Θεοῦ ζηλωτὴν τὰ πάντα καὶ ποιεῖν καὶ λέγειν.—*Idem*, lib. ii. cap. 14.

is advancement above what we deserve, and a mercy we can never be thankful enough for.

2. As God did in infinite wisdom make every thing, and placed every thing in that sphere that was most fit for it, *so it is the highest excellency of the creature to shine in his orb, and be regular in his motion.*—I mean, it is every one's duty and excellency to fill-up that place and relation, that God hath set him in, with duty. The whole world is a great army, and God is the General of this army; and he appoints every one their station and rank; and in keeping of it exactly is security, honour, and reward. God makes one a king, another a subject; one a master, another a servant; one rich, another poor; and *he* is really most excellent *that* is so in the faithful discharge of the state and relation he is in. A good servant is far better than a bad master; a good subject, than a wicked prince: he that is not relatively good, is not really good. He that breaks his rank, to get a higher and safe place, may be likelier to meet with destruction than promotion. Adam's loss of Paradise, and the angels' loss of heaven, are sufficient demonstrations of this truth. The world is a stage, saith the Stoic; and in it every one hath his part to act; and it is our commendation and wisdom to act our part well, whether it be a prince or a beggar, a father or a child, a master or a servant. This was holy David's care and resolution: he would "behave himself wisely in a perfect way;" and how shall that be done better than "by walking before God in his house with a perfect heart?" (Psalm ci. 1, 2.) What was Abraham commended for more than his faithfulness? And was this the least act of his faithfulness, to instruct his family, and teach them the fear of God? Joshua was a man of great gallantry and resolution; but I am ready to think he never acted both more bravely than when he said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua xxiv. 15.) Socrates laughed at them for fools, that endeavoured to persuade him to leave instructing the youth: "God," saith he, "hath set me in this station; and how can I leave it?" * O how few Christians exceed this Heathen! Nay, who almost comes near him, if he lived as well as he spake? It is too true a proof, that there is but little wisdom and religion worth calling so in the world, in that so few (blessed be God, some there are!) are good in their relations. Where are magistrates to be found that are God's vicegerents in their places? Where are the masters that command and direct in wisdom, so as their service is rather a privilege than a toil, a pleasure than a vassalage? (Isai. iii. 5.) Where are the servants that "obey in singleness of heart, as unto Christ?" What a strange disorder and confusion is there in the world, in kingdoms, corporations, and families! And who may be thanked for it but men's lusts, and their not faithfully filling-up that relation God hath set them in? Most are governed by the law of corrupt nature and hell; (James iv. 1;) but few, too few, have that respect to the law of God which should be.† How excellently doth that imperial philosopher declaim against those that are unfaithful in their places, and do not willingly submit to, and order their lives according to, the direction of the most good, wise, and just lawgiver of the world! Hear his words: "He is an apostome of the world, who,

* Ὁ Θεὸς ἐν τινὶ χωρῇ καταστροφήν κατατετακε ταύτην ὃ ἐγκαταλίπειν δεῖ ἡμᾶς;—
EPICTETUS.

† ARRIANI *Diat. in Epict.* lib. 1. cap. 13.

being unfaithful in his place, doth, as it were, apostatize and separate himself from God's rational administration." * O that men were wise, and understood their true interest, and were faithful to it! O that every one would labour to rectify that ataxy and disorder that is in himself, and then in his family! Then, O then, how happy would our kingdom, cities, families be! It was no small commendation of the Grecian commander, that he reckoned it none of the best qualifications of a man to be able to play well upon a harp, but to be able to govern himself and others well; and if a city were put into his hands poor, dismantled, undisciplined, to be able quickly to make it rich, strong, orderly.† To fill-up our relations with religion, is the divine precept, our true wisdom, our peace, profit: it is honest; I had almost said, it is one of the fairest fruits of real Christianity. Would we could all, as one man, engage to do our best for the putting this in execution; and then "Holiness to the Lord" might quickly be written upon our door, our city might be called *Jehovah Shammah*, "The Lord dwells there;" and our land "Hephzibah and Beulah." For this let every honest soul pray; for this let ministers preach. And in the prosecution of this design, I shall, in my poor way, give you advice, by resolving of this question, which I have made way to by this preface:—

What are the duties of masters and servants, and how must both eye their great Master in heaven?

In the answering of this question the more fully, I shall do these things:—

I. Show you *what is meant by master and servant.*

II. Show you *how both are to eye their great Master in heaven.*

III. I shall show you *what is the master's duty, exhort him to it, and give him helps for the performance of it.*

IV. I shall show *what is the duty of servants, press them to it, and give them some helps for the performance of it.*

I. I shall show *what is meant by master and servant.*

By *master* here is meant either master or mistress, such a one as hath the power of himself, and upon whose government and command another dependeth.

Now, in an *absolute and most proper sense* there is none may be called master but God: he only hath an absolute, independent, unlimited power of himself, and hath all others at his command and direction; and he alone is fit for this despotic monarchy, being infinite in wisdom, goodness, and justice. And this clears the meaning of those words of our Saviour: "Call no man father, master, but God;" (Matt. xxiii. 8—10;) that is, look upon none as absolute, infallible lords of the conscience, but him.

But in a *more limited sense* there are masters, to whom respect and honour must be paid by their servants, and that with all readiness and cheerfulness, so far as they command nothing that is contrary to God's command.

By *servant*, I mean one that is not at his own disposal, but at the command of another, so far as his commands thwart not the commands of God.

* MARCI ANTONINI *Meditationes*, lib. iv. sect. 24; lib. vi. sect. 38. † PLUTARCHUS in *Vita Themistoclis*.

Remember, whatever is spoken of servants, is spoken to maid-servants as well as men-servants.

Now this relation seems, in a word, to rise from *nature, law, or contract*. From *nature*, in that some are of a more strong body, and weaker understanding; others of weaker bodies, but of more judgment and experience; and so one is by nature fit to rule, and the other to be ruled. That relation that riseth from *law*, is when any one, by some flagitious act, hath justly forfeited his liberty, and is condemned to servility either for a time, or during his life. The last and usual foundation of this relation is by *contract*; and that is, where one that is by nature free, subjects himself to another's command for a certain time, upon such and such just considerations.

Now this is that relation that I am principally concerned to show you the duties of.

II. I come now to show you, *how both masters and servants are to eye their great Master in heaven.*

1. They are both to *have an eye to the presence of their great Master who is in heaven*.—God in his nature is a Spirit, that is infinitely immense, filling heaven and earth, and yet not included in either. If men did indeed lie under the lively impressions of God's omniscience and omnipresence, what an awe would it put upon their spirits! how honest would it make them in the dark! This, this would make the master reasonable, just, and merciful; this would make the servant faithful, diligent, and constant in his obedience to his master. What makes men to act like devils, but this,—a hope that God doth not see? What made Abraham so upright, but his walking before God? (Gen. xvii. 1.) What kept David so unmoved, but his setting the Lord always before his eyes? (Psalm xvi. 8.) I am persuaded, the greatest failures in either master or servant have their spring here,—a secret root of atheism, and disbelief of God's eye and observation. What truth in all the Bible more clear than this, and yet what almost less believed? O what do men make of God! How do they rob him of his glory, and themselves of the truest motives of fidelity, activity, and cheerfulness! Sirs, is Psalm cxxxix. canonical scripture, or no? Can any hide any thing from God's eye? (Jer. xxiii. 24.) Do not his eyes behold the good and evil? (Prov. xv. 3.) Doth not he ponder the ways of men? (Prov. v. 21; Psalm xciv. 7, 9.) Do you indeed believe this? What, then, is the meaning of falseness on all hands? It was no unjust complaint of the moralist, when he said, that "many dare not do that, the image of God being present, which they will do, God himself being present," hearing, seeing, and observing exactly all that they do.* The all-seeing eye of God is a good motto: I would this were written upon our doors, counters, counting-houses, studies, over our tables. I shall conclude this with an excellent one of Epictetus's sayings: "When you are at home, and have shut the doors, and are in the dark, remember you never say you are alone; but God is within; and he needs no candle to see what you are doing."†

2. *Both masters and servants must have an eye to the glory of their*

* ABRRIANI *Diat. in Epict.*, lib. ii. cap. viii.

† Μεμνησθε μηδεποτε λεγειν οτι μονοι εστε: αλλ' ο θεος εδωκ εστι: και τις τουτω χρεια φωτος εις το βλεπειν τι ποιειται; — *Idem*, lib. i. cap. 14.

great Master in heaven.—There is not an action in our whole lives, but we should either habitually or actually respect God's glory in it; (1 Cor. x. 31; Rom. vi. 16;) and it is but reasonable that He of whom all things are, and by whom all things are preserved, and from whom are all our hopes of good here and hereafter, should have all glory for ever and ever.

Actions lose their excellency when they have not a right end; and to make any thing our end below God, is little less than idolatry. It was excellent advice given, more than once, by that brave moralist: "Refer all things to God; make him your centre, your end."* I shall conclude with another of that noble emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus's sayings: "Remember always in all things thy relation to God; for without respect to him thou wilt never perform any action aright while thou livest."

3. *Both masters and servants must have an eye to the command of their great Master in heaven.*—Ask David how you shall escape a state and act of shame; and he will tell you, "By having respect unto all God's commands." (Psalm cxix. 6.)

If men would never command any thing but what they have warrant for from the word of God, commands would then be just, and obedience easy; then the poor servant would never be put upon that sad dilemma, whether he should obey his earthly or heavenly Master. (Acts v. 29.) The Pythagoreans were not at all out in that doctrine of theirs, that "man is under an oath of allegiance to God, to be obedient to his laws, and never willingly to transgress them." If the master consult God's commands, then he will "forbear threatening," and not make his servants to serve with rigour; and be faithful, meek, putting on bowels and pity; warning, instructing, and correcting, like a Christian, in love to them, and obedience to God. If the servants had still an eye to their great Master's commands, how singly, uprightly, diligently, and cheerfully would they obey! "To the law, to the testimony!" and "peace will be to them that walk according to this rule, and the whole Israel of God." Both masters and servants, yea, all men in all things, should still be of Epictetus's mind, and still use his petition: "Lead me, O God, whither thou pleasest, I will follow thee cheerfully; and if I be something unwilling, yet, notwithstanding, I am resolved to look to thy command, and obey it."† Let God's word be our counsellor, and we cannot do an unjust and imprudent act.

4. *Both masters and servants must have an eye to the assistance of their great Master in heaven.*—Our heavenly Master is so humble and kind, that he never bids any servant do any work, but he is willing to put his own hand to it; and, to say the truth of it, the best servant of all is so weak and foolish, that he is not able to manage the least piece of work [which] his Master sets him about, except himself be at one end of it, and do the most of it, nay, I had almost said, do all of it himself. (John xv. 4.) And if God stand-by, direct, and assist, how wisely, gently, and piously will masters do their part! and how patiently, diligently, and readily will servants do theirs! Then the masters will not threaten, nor the servants groan or complain. But I may have occasion to speak something of this nature elsewhere.

5. *Both masters and servants must have an eye to the sovereignty,*

* HIEROCLES.

† *Enchiridion.*

power, and justice of their great Master.—He is higher than the highest; he hath us in his hand, as the clay is in the hand of the potter, and none of his ways are unequal; he will do righteously, when men do not; and the day is coming when masters and servants, king and subjects, must stand upon even ground before him, and he will do unto every one according to their works. O that masters would remember that God is infinitely more above them, than they are above the poorest servant! Were this well weighed, how soon would the heat of some masters be cooled, their storms be calmed, and their fury turned into meekness! Remember, man, God can easily, without doing any injury at all, make thee and thy servant change places. O that servants could still remember, that they have a greater and a better Master that must be pleased, whosoever is displeased! The deep sense of God's sovereignty would quickly make the proudest heart stoop: this, this would pull-down the stout, insolent, rebellious spirit of a wicked servant, and make him judge obedience far more tolerable than flames; and if any thing of injury be done him by his master, the thoughts of God's justice and righting will quiet his mind.

III. I come now to the third thing proposed, which was to show you *what is the master's duty, and to exhort him to it.*—And this I shall do by giving him,—

(I.) *Some cautionary directions.*

(II.) *Positive directions.*

(I.) I shall give you some

CAUTIONARY DIRECTIONS.

1. *Let masters take heed of being servants to sin and Satan, and rebels to God.*—A bad man is not likely to be a good master. With what face can any man expect others should obey him, whose commands are usually unreasonable, whilst he disobeyeth God, whose commands are always good and equal? How can a drunken, prayerless, swearing wretch look for better service than he gives to his Master?

By sin man at first forfeited that sovereignty that he had over the creatures; and by a constant habit of sin, especially gross sins, which the light of nature doth condemn, a man prostitutes his reason, debaseth his authority, and looseth that majesty which else he is invested with. How can a drunken master rebuke or punish his servant for tippling? Is an intemperate sensualist a fit person to censure gluttony? Can an unclean person condemn wantonness? Is it likely that the servant should be faithful, who seeth his master cheat and lie every day? If the master be a profuse gamester, and given to his pleasure, is it likely that his servant should be frugal and diligent? Are not lying, and swearing, and cursing, and wickedness, as soon learned of a master as a trade? And is it worth the while for a man to give twenty, forty, a hundred, pounds to teach his child to serve the devil, and a short cut to hell, and a sure way to ruin and misery of body and soul? Is that man fit to govern another that cannot rule himself? Is he that hath drowned his reason capable of instructing one [in] that which requires some wisdom to understand and learn, and more to teach? Are not sots, that cannot speak sense, in a sweet frame to speak to God in prayer, or to read a

chapter? What have such to do to take God's name into their mouths, who hate to be reformed? O that wicked masters would consider that their wickedness doth not only hazard the damnation of a single soul, but even of all that are under their charge! Is it not enough to have your own sins to be laid to your charge? Are all your oaths and lies and wickedness too little to sink you, but you must make your servants' sins yours? Is one damnation too little, but you must seek to double it? Are those flames so cool and tolerable, that you are busy in adding fuel to that terrible fire, to make it burn seven times hotter? What a hell must such a man's house be, in which the name of God is scarce heard, except it be in an oath or a curse! Is there a blessing likely to be in the house on which God's curse rests? Friends, I believe you would be loath your children should have Ham's curse, and be servants to a tyrant and a slave: a wicked man is both. (Prov. iii. 33.) Masters, if you would have your servants obey your commands, you must not break God's.* If you would have them sober, you must not be drunk; if you would have them chaste, you must not be filthy; if you would have them true, you must not be false; if you would have them good, you must not be bad yourselves. Your example signifieth more to them than your precept: do not undo that by your actions and life which you would build-up by your words. O, little do wicked masters think what a plague they are to a city, what a curse to a family, and what inevitable ruin they expose their own and other souls, bodies, and estates to, except Infinite Power and Mercy step-in quickly to prevent it!

2. *Take heed of idleness, carelessness, and trusting your servants too much.*—A master's negligence tempts the servant to unfaithfulness. When masters are idle abroad, usually the servants are so at home. It cannot well be expected, that when the master is spending his time foolishly and unaccountably in the coffee-houses, ale-houses, or taverns, the servant should spend his wisely in the shop; especially where he observes that the master never minds which end goes foremost, never examines his books, nor calls him to any account. O this sin of idleness, that sodomitical, soul-debasing, body-weakening, estate-wasting sin! (Ezek. xvi. 49.) Have we a mind to try whether God will rain such another storm of brimstone upon us, as once he did upon them? O how many persons are very prodigal of that commodity which will shortly be very precious! †

Sirs, do you never take a Bible in your hands? Do you never read how much God is displeas'd with sloth, how oft he forbids it? (Rom. xii. 11.) Can you call your spending three or four hours together, in an idle house, in insignificant chat, redeeming the time? (Prov. xviii. 9.) Is neglecting your servants the way to make them faithful? O think of these things, before it is too late. I know, men have their excuses, and can easily evade what I say. But, believe it, it is one thing to deal with a poor minister, and another thing to deal with God; and a thousand of your pleas, when they are cast into his balance at the day of judgment, will be found light. If men must be judged for idle words, I believe they will scarce be acquitted for idle actions. I wish we that are masters could oft speak to ourselves in that brave emperor's language: "In the morning, when thou findest thyself unwilling to rise, consider with thyself presently, 'It is to go about a man's work that I am stirred-up. Am

* PYTHAGORAS.

† SENECA.

I unwilling to do that for which I was born, and brought into this world? Was I made for this, to lay me down and make much of myself in a warm bed?'"* "O, but this is pleasing." And was it for this that thou wert born, that thou mightest take thy pleasure? Was it not in truth that thou shouldst always be busy and in action? Seest thou not, how every thing is busy in its kind, to perform what belongs to it in its place? &c. And you use to say, "If you keep the shop, the shop will keep you." If you keep not your eye upon your servant, when you hope to find an honest man, you may meet a thief.

3. *Take heed whom you admit into your family.*—One that is born of wicked, debauched parents, and hath had nothing but bad examples, and seldom good precepts; that hath been accustomed to lying and baseness from the cradle; that hath not been taught to read, and knows neither his duty to God nor man; that is ignorant of God, Christ, soul, heaven, hell, and, consequently, is not capable of lying under the force of the most powerful motives to faithfulness. David was hugely cautious in this point: a liar should not dwell in his house. (Psalm ci. 7.) As good servants bring a blessing along with them into the families where they come; (Gen. xxxix. 5;) so sometimes wicked servants bring a curse with them into the house where they come. Little do masters think how much damage a neglect in this may bring upon them: their estate may insensibly be wasted, their other servants infected, their children be corrupted, and provisions laid-in to feed their sorrows all their days. Never talk of what thou shalt have with them; how responsible † their parents be: will this balance the hazard of your children's souls? Sooner take a toad into your bosom, than a wicked servant into your family.

4. *Take heed of putting your servants upon too much work.*—It is the way to alienate their affections, to make them almost incapable of doing their duty as they should to God; it puts them upon cries and groans to him, that hath ever an ear open to the complaints of the oppressed. (Exod. ii. 24.) By this you make them more blockish, and less ingenious; and, consequently, not so fit to carry-on your business so much for your interest, as else they might do. Remember, how contrary this is to humanity. How would you like this in others? Were the Egyptians to be justified for their great burdens wherewith they loaded the Israelites, and the Turks to be commended for the hard vassalage they put poor Christians to? I know, you readily censure both these. And how can you condemn either, when you imitate both? Is your sin less, because against greater light? Except you desire the curse of God and man too, take heed of this sin. You may learn more mercy from an Heathen than you ever practised; for he tells you, that "your servants are the inferior and poor friends, and are to be accounted next to children, and came not into the house for servitude and vassalage, but patronage." ‡

5. *Take heed of letting them have too little employment.*—It is of dangerous consequence to get a habit of idleness. It was none of the least commendations of that worthy woman, that she would suffer none in her house to eat "the bread of idleness." (Prov. xxxi. 27.) As you must give an account of your own time, so must you also of your

* ANTONINI *Meditationes*, lib. v. sect. 1.

† This meaning of the word, almost synonymous with *respectable* and *affluent*, was not unknown to some of our older writers.

—EDIT.

‡ SENeca *De Clementia*.

servants' too, how it is spent. When your servants are idle, the devil is at work. If you have nothing for them to do, remember God hath something. Set them to reading the word, praying, and put them upon using all "diligence in making their calling and election sure." It is far better to have no servant, than to keep one to do nothing but look about him. This, this hath laid the foundation of some young men's ruin: this is unfaithfulness to God and man; by this you wrong body and soul.

6. *Take heed of bitterness and threatening, of cruelty and injustice, of wronging them in meat, drink, clothing, or lodging, and neglecting them when they are sick, and denying them that tendance, physic, and care that is fit for them at such a time.*—Take heed of calling them names, and cursing them, and of correcting them with unreasonable weapons, for slight or no faults, and using them worse than a merciful man would do his beast. Are not your servants of the same metal with yourselves? They have sense and feeling as well as you; their flesh is not iron, nor their bones brass. Would you have God give you such mercy as you give your servants? If he should mark what you do amiss, what would soon become of you? Did you never read the woes that God denounceth against oppressors? And do you think God threatens in jest? Cannot he easily give life and execution to his woes? And where are you, then, man? What, if God should curse when you curse? What, if he should strike as well as you! Are you able to bear the strokes that his hand can lay-on? Can thy heart endure, or thy back bear, what he can inflict? When you are just lifting up your hand, consider a little the nature of the fault, and do as thou wouldst have God do by thee; and then be outrageous and cruel if you can. Remember, your servants are God's servants, and you must not rule them with rigour: read those scriptures which you find quoted in the margin. (Lev. xxv. 42, 43; Deut. xxiv. 14; James v. 4.) Some may wonder that I insist upon this caution so long; but I wish the empty bellies, the thin cheeks, the black and blue skins, of many poor servants did not give me too good reason for what I say. I shall desire such masters to ask themselves sometimes, "Whose soul do I now properly possess,—a tyrant's, a madman's, or a beast's?"* Suppose your servant is not so wise, strong, and active as you would have him; it may be, for this, he more needs pity than blows or curses. But if he be really faulty, were you never so too? And when punishment is due, remember, that religion, reason, and humanity must always measure punishment. Think not they are in your power, and poor and friendless, and that they have none that can or will right them. If this were a good warrant for oppressing another, how many are there who would soon crush you to pieces!

7. *Take heed of neglecting your servants' souls.*—Their souls, as well as their bodies, are your charge; and you must be accountable shortly for them. O how few consider seriously of this! Are not the souls of servants slighted, as if they were little better than the souls of brutes? Sirs, is that which Christ thought worth his blood, not worth your care? The neglect of most masters in this thing is horrible. How seldom do they speak a word of God to their servants! How great a rarity is it for them to pray with them, and read the scriptures before them, and to call

* ANTONINI *Meditationes*, lib. v. sect. 11; lib. vi. sect. 21.

upon them to mind what they read! Who endeavours to convince their servants of the corruption of their nature, and that they are born slaves of sin and Satan? Who commends Christ as the best Master, and commands his servants to obey him? Where is the master to be found, that is frequently and importunately endeavouring to convince all under his charge, of the necessity of faith in Christ, repentance, and a holy life? How little are masters concerned for God's honour and service! Nay, are there not some that are so far from minding the souls of their servants, that if once they perceive a poor servant begins to set his face toward heaven, how are they set against him! What scoffs and jeers shall he then have, and scarce live a quiet life after it! And there are others that put their servants upon sin, that keep them up to work so unreasonably late upon Saturday nights, that they lose half the Lord's day with sleeping. (2 Kings xxi. 11; Isai. xxxvii. 24.) How many that put their servants upon work, and serving of goods, upon the Lord's day! How many do we see keeping their stalls open to sell fruit! O where are our Nehemiahs? Who reproves his servants for neglecting God's service, more than for neglecting of his own? Who observes what company they keep, how the sabbath is spent? Who reproves them for lying and cheating for their profit? Are there not too many that put them upon telling lies to cover their own neglect? Do such masters as these deserve the name of Christians? Do they look like God's servants? Whose fault is it that Moorfields is so full of idle youths, and that the houses and taverns are so frequented on the Lord's day? Whom may we thank for many of our disorders, judgments, and miseries, but careless masters? Whence is it that so many vile women are maintained so high, that bastards are so common, and that we hear so oft of murdered infants? How comes it to pass that prisons are so full, and Tyburn so fruitful? If the matter were well canvassed, we should find that masters' and parents' neglect of catechising, instructing, reproving, and correcting them under their charge, is not the least cause of this and other evils. Sirs, can you prove the Bible to be a lie, and souls and invisibles to be but fancies? O what then do you mean by your strange neglect of these affairs? God hath made you watchmen; and if you be asleep, or give not warning, at whose hand, do you think, must the blood of the souls in your family be required? (Ezek. iii. 17, 18.) The very Heathens have declaimed notably against this sin: "If," saith one, "a friend had but * a dog under your care, you would not starve him, but in some measure proportion your care of him to the love you bear to your friend."† And hath not God put souls under your care, and are they to be neglected? I have been the more large upon this head, because this sin is so common, and of such dismal consequence, and so little care is taken for the redress of it.

(II.) I come now to lay down the *positive duties* of masters; and that I shall do with somewhat more brevity.

POSITIVE DUTIES OF MASTERS.

1. *Let all masters endeavour to be God's servants.*—True religion, and divine principles in the heart, will give a man the best measures

* Is this a misprint for *put*?—EDIT.

† EPICETUS.

of action: the grace of God will teach him to deny his pride, passion, sensuality, and worldly lusts, and to live holily, soberly and righteously, in this present world. Religion in its power,—O how lovely doth it make a man! With what wisdom and prudence doth such an one act! With what sweetness and love, and yet with what majesty! What a brave master was Abraham! And what made him so, but the fear of God? This, this will make a man merciful, patient, meek, heavenly-minded, and yet diligent in his place; (Matt. xi. 29;) this will make him exemplary, and, as much as in him lies, to act like God in his place. And what injury can such a person do? Can *he* be cruel, *that* hath such a Master as Christ? Can *he* find in his heart to be unmerciful, *who* hath obtained mercy? If a man be very holy himself, his example will have a drawing power in it to allure to that which is so good, and be a constant check to that which is bad: such an one is under the promise of God's blessing; and he will teach him, and give him wisdom to discharge the duty of his place: he is made "partaker of the divine nature," (2 Peter i. 4,) and so enabled in some measure to act in a conformity to the divine will.* It was no small commendation which Paul gave of Philemon, when he spake of the "church in his house." (Phil. 2.)

When our first parents were in their pure state, what homage did all the creatures give them, as their visible Lord! And had not man, by his fall, forfeited this prerogative, and by denying God's sovereignty lost their own, they had, no doubt, still kept their dominion over the creatures. And now, the more of holiness is in a man, and the more near God, and like him, the more likely [is he] to get and keep a majesty and dominion in his place. Surely, "great holiness commands respect and reverence;" † and rather choose to have your inferiors reverence than fear you; for admiration and love accompany reverence; but hatred, fear. ‡ O what a noble thing were man, if goodness and purity did always accompany superiority and government! These are, and shall be, honourable, in spite of malice itself. A right worshipping of God is the captain of all virtue; § and when this divine seed is cast into the soul, it lays the foundation of brave and true honour and respect; such a one,—he offers himself a sacrifice to God, and makes a temple for God in himself, and then in his family; and such a master, who would grudge to serve? How sweet must obedience then be, when nothing is commanded but what God commands, and it is interest and profit to obey! (1 Peter v. 1.) O, sirs, little do you think how much power a meek, holy, grave conversation hath. Who that hath the least spark of ingenuity in him will not be restrained, if not conquered, by it? O that masters would but try this way! And if honouring God do not more secure their honour than severity, then let me be counted a deceiver. This, this is the most effectual way to make servants good,—to be good yourselves; this will bring them to a true relish of religion, when it is pressed upon them by precept and example. (1 Sam. i. 21.) I have known some servants that have blessed the day that ever they saw their masters' faces. O let your excellency allure and draw those under you, as the sun doth men's eyes, or as meat and drink doth the hungry.||

* EPICTETUS. † PYTHAGORAS. ‡ HIEROCLES. § Idem. || ARRIANI *Diat.*
in *Epiet.* ANTONINI *Meditationes*, lib. vi. sect. 27.

2. *Endeavour the good of the souls of those under your charge with all your might : be in travail to see Christ formed in their souls.* (Rom. x. 1.)—Give them no rest till you have prevailed with them to be in good earnest for heaven : allow them time for prayer, reading of the word, hearing of good sermons, and for conversing with good books : commend to them Baxter's "Call to the Unconverted," and Mr. Thomas Vincent's "Explanation of the Assembly's Catechism," &c. ; and observe what company they keep ; and if you know a holy, experienced servant, commend their society and example to them. Keep a constant watch over your servants : remember what temptations they are exposed to ; know how they spend their time ; call them oft to an account, and look well to your books : it will do them no hurt, and you much good : be oft, in meekness and pity, treating with them about their everlasting concerns ; and let your carriage bring full evidence along with it of your dear love to their immortal souls. Labour, as well as you can, to convince them of the corruption of their nature, of the evil of sin, of their lost and undone state, of their impotency and utter inability to save themselves, or to make the least satisfaction to divine justice, or to bear that punishment that is due unto them for every sin ; show them their absolute need of a Christ, and that, without him, there is no salvation ; make them to understand what the new birth is, what kind of change it is, and how necessary ; and warn them of the danger of miscarriage in conversion, and of taking-up with a half-work, and resting in the outward part of religion, and their own righteousness. (Matt. v. 20.) Put them upon labouring to know God in Christ : "This is life eternal, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent." (John xvii. 3.) Do what you can possibly to convince their judgments of the reasonableness, profitableness, and sweetness of religion, where it is in its reality, vigour, and constancy : (Prov. iii. 17 ; Rom. xii. 1 ; Matt. xi. 28—30 ; 1 Tim. iv. 8 :) take-off the imputations and aspersions which the unexperienced, foolish infidel would cast upon Christianity. Never think you can commend Christ too much to them. (Prov. iii. 15.) O, if you could allure their souls, captivate their hearts, and make them in love with Him who is "altogether lovely !" (Canticles v. 16.)

O let them not alone, till you see them deeply affected with these things ! Expostulate the case with them frequently by themselves. Ask them what they think of the estate of their souls, and leave not with their sullen silence. Ask them plainly, how they can eat, or drink, or sleep, without Christ and pardon ; and what they mean, to be so unconcerned. Tell them that death may be nearer them than they imagine ; and that, as death leaveth them, judgment will find them. Tell them that their stupidity is an effect of that deadness their souls lie under ; and that, if they be not awakened quickly, they must be unconceivably and eternally miserable. Ask them what they have to say against the ways of God, and what they have to plead for their neglecting their souls, for sin and for Satan. Tell them, these things are matters of such weight, that they need not much time to determine what must be done ; it is a matter of such vast importance, that it calls for the greatest speed, diligence, and care imaginable ; and that you cannot be satisfied till you see this work done. Catechise and instruct them con-

stantly, at least once a week. Let the word sound daily in their ears, and pray twice a-day with them ; let some time be allowed them for secret duties ; and put them upon the performance of them spiritually and constantly. Keep them not too long at work, or in the shop, on Saturday night. The Jews had their preparation for the sabbath ; and the ancient Christians did not fall short of them in their preparation for the Lord's day. Let the sabbath be carefully spent in secret, family, and public duties ; and, for the better direction in your duties upon that day, I refer you to that excellent piece, Mr. Wells's " Practical Sabbatarian ;" a book it is pity any great family should want. Cause your servants to bear you company to hear the most powerful preacher you can ; require an account of what they hear, and let the sermons be repeated in your family ; and ask them what it was that did most affect their hearts, and labour to press things home afresh upon their souls. And if you perceive any good inclinations in them, encourage them greatly, and improve them all you can ; and if you do not see what you would presently, be not quite discouraged, and cast them off as hopeless. " Exhort them daily, while it is called to-day ;" (Heb. iii. 13 ;) and if you see them still dull, hard-hearted, and under a spirit of slumber, be yet the more earnest : who knows but a little more patience and compassion and zeal may prevail ? But if, after long using the fore-mentioned means, you find them still refractory, stubborn, and to slight your counsel, and run-on in sin, and to grow worse and worse, you must add sharp reproofs ; (Prov. xxix. 19 ;) and if they do no good, but they make a mock at them, and endeavour to jeer their fellow-servants out of their duty too, then you must add blows to your words. Stripes are fit for the back of a fool ; (Prov. xxvi. 3 ;) and if neither exhortations, reproofs, nor corrections will prevail, but they continue still like sons of Belial, rebellious to God and you ; then remember your duty is to ease your house of them. (Psalm ci. 4.) Consider well what danger there is of their infecting the rest of your servants and children ; consult your own peace, honour, and profit. Let not a liar, a company-keeper, a vile person, dwell in your house, when you have used all possible means for his reclaiming : " What fellowship should light have with darkness ?" (2 Cor. vi. 14.) Remember that God hath made you a prophet, a priest, and a king in your own family.

3. Another duty of masters is, *diligently and faithfully to instruct their servants in their calling.*—Conceal nothing of the mystery of your art from them : I mean, of what is lawful ; for if you are skilled in the art of cheating, you must unlearn that yourselves, and never teach them that which will hazard their ruin. Some masters are ready to hide the most profitable and ingenious part of their trade from their servants. Remember, sirs, that law and nature, reason and religion, all command you to be faithful in this thing. Their parents or friends put them to you to teach them an honest calling ; and you promised you would do it ; and it is dishonesty in the highest degree to fail in this.

4. *Be just, compassionate, and loving.*—Be as ready to commend and encourage them for doing their duty, as to reprove them for the neglect of it. Let them want nothing that is fitting for them in the place they are in. Let their food be wholesome, seasonable, and sufficient ; (Prov.

xxi. 15;) let their clothing be warm, sweet, and decent; let their lodging be warm, and sweet, and wholesome; not too far from your eye and ear. Let them have rest sufficient to recruit nature, and to fit them for God's service and yours. And in case of sickness, let them have such tendance, physic, and diet as they need. You cannot imagine what obligations you may by this lay upon your servants to fidelity; how acceptable this is to God, and how much reputation it will get you among men. See an excellent example in the centurion. (Matt. viii. 5, 9.) "Give unto your servants that which is just and equal." (Col. iv. 1.) It was Job's commendation, "that he did not despise the cause of his hand-maid." (Job xxxi. 13.) Use your tongues to sweetness: a soft word sooner prevails than a hard blow or curse.

Be punctually faithful to your contract with them; pay them their wages to the full: it is better to do more, than less, than your bargain. In a word, "as the elect of God, put-on bowels of pity, and put-off all these, anger, wrath, malice, cursing:" remember "the wrath of man works not the righteousness of God." (Col. iii. 12; James i. 20; Eph. iv. 26.) Be angry for nothing but sin. Remember, a Christ-like gospel-spirit is a spirit of love and peace, meekness and faithfulness; with these things God and man are well pleased. (Gal. v. 22.)

5. *Discharge your servants with sweetness and love, and do not grudge that they should have a livelihood as well as you.*—Send them out of your family with the counsel, the good-will of a father, and reckon, one that was a faithful servant to you seven years deserves to be esteemed next a child ever after. To this end it would not be amiss, if you give him as good a report as he deserves, to raise his reputation and credit; and if you help him as far as you are well able in his setting-up, you will not repent it upon a death-bed, nor at the day of judgment. In old time God did require, that when a servant served six years, he should not be sent away empty; "but," saith the text, "thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy wine-press: and that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him." (Deut. xv. 13, 14.) And I know not why this may not be practised still, where the master is wealthy and able, and the servant poor and deserving: neither do I know where the gospel gives us a discharge from the works of charity and mercy. (Col. iii. 13; Rom. xiii. 9, 10; 1 Thess. iv. 9.)

I come now to *exhort masters to this work*, to perform their duty. And this I shall press with a few

MOTIVES.

1. *Consider, what a Master God is to his servants.*—He is most just and righteous in all his dealings: who can accuse him of the least unrighteousness? Who can say, he hath done him wrong, and that he is a hard Master? Come, let any testify against God, and make good their charge if they can. Is not he full of pity, and ready to forgive? How ready to moderate his anger when he is highly provoked! It is not without good reason that the prophet saith, "Who is a God like unto our God?" And he is ready to teach his servants, and to help their infirmities; and if their work be hard, he doth bear the heavier part of it. He is ready

to keep them company, to succour and encourage and comfort them. He provides all things needful for them : he delights in the prosperity of his servants, and loves to see his servants thrive : he gives them many a token of his love here : but, O, "what great things hath he laid up for them ! Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive it." Their reward is exceeding great, sure, and eternal. (Isai. xlv. 21 ; Psalm xcii. 15 ; James v. 3—8 ; Psalm ciii. 14 ; Mal. iii. 17 ; Micah vii. 18 ; Exod. xxxiv. 6 ; Psalm xxv. 4 ; Job xxxvi. 22 ; Isai. xxviii. 26 ; Rom. viii. 26 ; Psalm xxxii. 8 ; Isai. xliii. 2 ; Dan. iii. 25 ; Psalm xxiii. 1 ; xxxiv. 10 ; xix. 11 ; xxxi. 19, 20.) O, what harm would it do you to be like God ? Do not your servants deserve more kindness from you than you or any other doth from God ?

2. *Consider, what need your servants have of your utmost care in the fore-mentioned particulars.*—They are young, unexperienced, heady, nay, naturally ignorant, proud, dead ; children of wrath, enemies to God ; every moment in danger of miscarrying. And at whose hand will their blood be required, think you, if you do not your duty to warn, reprove, correct them ?

3. *Consider, how much it will be for your honour.*—How high an esteem will all good men have for you ! How great a value must wise magistrates set on you ! What reason hath the city and corporation to rise-up and call such "blessed !" How great and how common a good such are, is scarce to be expressed. Such shall have a good report, in spite of wickedness ; your servants cannot but look upon you as their counsellor, master, father, and give you suitable respect and honour.

4. *Consider, how pleasing and acceptable this is to God.*—Such the Lord is nigh to ; his eyes behold [them] with delight. It is not he that observes his great sacrifices, it is not he that makes many prayers, it is not he that makes the greatest show of religion outwardly, that is accepted ; * but it is he that gives-up his heart first to God, as a warm sacrifice full of love, and then his house unto the Lord : (Joshua xxiv. 15 :) this, this is the man that God will visit, comfort, bless ; (Psalm i. 3 ;) this is he that, ere long, shall hear his great Master's commendation, and have a welcome to glory. (Matt. xxv. 34.)

5. *Consider, how much profit and pleasure you shall have here.*—By your diligence and care, you may be enriched ; there is God's promise for your security. (Prov. xxviii. 20 ; x. 6.) By this your trade is likely to thrive, your credit rise greatly, your custom increase ; and when the careless master makes haste to poverty, a wise, diligent, and faithful [master] is in the most likely way to get, improve, and keep an estate. I might say, what pleasure and comfort a man cannot but take in his family, when every one acts regularly in their place !

6. *Consider, how much good your faithfulness may do others.*—Your servants may, for aught that I know, call you their spiritual fathers, and bless God for ever for your examples, exhortations, prayers ; and your servants may instruct your children, and be frequently instilling one good thing or other into them, and influence them more than you are aware

* HIEROCLES.

of. You are a mighty help to poor ministers; you help to plough-up the ground, and make it fit for the divine seed; you pull-out the stones; you weed-up the roots of bitterness, or at least keep them from thriving and growing-up; you harrow-in the good seed, you water it with your tears, and God will make it fruitful; you pluck-up the darnel and the tares. Of all the persons living, we ministers are most beholden to good masters and good parents: we beseech you, if you have any love for us, or our Master either, be faithful in this thing. O make us glad, when so many thousands are making us sad with their wickedness. I might add, your examples draw others, and make bad citizens good.*

7. *Consider the danger of your neglect, if you be unfaithful.*—You expose body, soul, estate, wife, children, servants, and all, to sin, ruin, shame, and the curse of God for ever; you break the rules of equity and humanity; you forfeit your reputation; you go the likeliest way to work to bring upon you dismal calamities in your life, worse at death, and worst of all after death. O consider this, you that forget God and your duty; and read that scripture often [which] you see quoted in the margin. (Matt. xxv. 26; xxiv. 48—51.)

I shall now crave leave to *expostulate the case with masters about their duty*; for I am loath to leave you, till I have prevailed with you to set to your work like Christians. Sirs, you have heard your duty; and what have you to object against it? Can you prove that that which I have desired of you is not required by God himself? Have I not proved what I have said by plain scriptures? And doth not reason and humanity, as well as Christianity, oblige you to the putting these duties in practice? Have I not laid-down many motives to press you to your duty? Have I not told you what a Master God is to his servants, and put you upon being followers of him as dear children? Would it be any disparagement to you to follow so perfect and unerring an example? Doth not he teach, direct, help, encourage, and reward his servants? Is not he faithful to his promise, tender, pitiful, and easy to be reconciled, and ready to forgive? And are you not very well pleased with these properties in God? And if this be amiable in God, why should it not be lovely in you? God humbleth himself to look upon what is done on earth; and is it below you to look upon and take care of your servants? What great difference is there, I pray, between you and them? Are they not of the same mould? And shortly your bones and skulls will not be distinguished. Why did you take them into your family, if you intended to take no more care of them than of a dog? Was it not a piece of base falsehood in you to promise and engage what you never intended to perform? Methinks I have a mind to debate this matter fairly with you, so as to leave you resolved for your duty, or without any reason or excuse for the neglect of it. Sirs, is there any thing of dishonesty in what I have been persuading you to? Is it a dishonest thing to pray in your families? to instruct them in the things of God? to be holy, diligent, and faithful? What harm is there in all this? Would it do you or yours any injury? Would it hinder either your profit or pleasure? Can "godliness," which hath "the promise of this life, and that which is to come," undo you?

* EPICTETUS.

Should that which pleaseth God displease you? Is it an unpleasant thing to see the beauty of holiness in your family, and to have yours serving God and you faithfully? Is it an unpleasant thing to have God's commendation and peace, and to have good hopes that all yours are God's, and shall be delivered from the wrath to come, and be heirs of a crown of glory? If you talk of pleasure, no pleasure like them that are in duty, and at the end of duty. Well, now, what have you to say against your duty? You cry, "Pish! this is the way to be a slave, a mope, a fool." Is it true, indeed, that to be enlarged for God in one's place is a slavery? How come such to be so full of peace and joy? Is that the state of slaves? Nobody is about to debar you of moderate liberty and recreation. But will you call nothing liberty and recreation, but that which exposes you and yours to ruin? "But if you take this course, you shall be poor; if you and your servants may not lie, cheat, break sabbaths, you shall never be able to live." How, then, come so many honest men, that would not do any of all these things for a world, to live so well? Were Abraham, Joshua, David, Cornelius, all such poor men? If diligence, honesty, and holiness undo men, what will make them? I hope you will not say, that cursing, lying, fraud, idleness, sensuality, and carelessness, are better ways of thriving. Well, once more, what have you yet to say against what I have been persuading you to? Will you now without delay bewail your former neglect, and in good earnest set to your work, like a man that in some measure knows the power of divine precepts, the worth of souls, and the greatness of that charge that lieth upon you? O that there were in you such a heart! O that all masters of families were resolved for that which humanity, reason, interest, reputation, and their comfort call for, as well as the law of God and men oblige them to! What blessed families then should we have! what noble corporations! what glorious cities! Might not *Jehovah-Shammah* be written then upon our gates, and "Holiness to the Lord" upon every door? O when shall it once be?

Now, in hopes that some honest hearts are affected with what hath been spoken, and are desirous to engage with all their might in their duties, I shall briefly add a few

HELPS FOR THE BETTER PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTY.

1. *Get a heart inflamed with love to God.*—This will make you much more concerned for his honour than your own; this will cause you to promote his interest with vigour, and remove whatsoever may be prejudicial to it. Love will break through difficulties, and make duty easy; love will engage you, body, soul, estate, head, tongue, hand, heart, all for God: then you cannot live without prayer, and instructing your servants. If the love of God dwell in you, I never fear the disputing your duty.

2. *Get a deep sense of the worth of souls upon your spirits.*—Remember, He that made them values them highly; He that bought them and paid dearly for them, judged them worth his heart-blood. They that are wise, believe that their utmost care for them is not too much; their loss is an irreparable loss; and if they are saved and secured, all losses are tolerable, light, inconsiderable. A due sense of the worth of a soul would

make you wonderfully careful to prevent its miscarriage, greatly solicitous to make sure its happiness.

3. *Beg of God a spirit of wisdom and government, that you may know how to go in and out before your house, like a man of prudence and religion.* (1 Kings iii. 9.)—You know whence “every good and perfect gift” comes; and if any man lack wisdom, they must ask of Him that is ready to answer such requests, who will give liberally and not upbraid. (James i. 5, 17.) Beg of God the gift of grace and prayer and utterance; beg experience and knowledge; and use and improve fruitfully what talent God hath given you already. A wise man instructed of God is a priest of God, and the only man fit to do his work.*

4. *Study the scriptures much.*—Attend upon a conscientious, powerful ministry, and read some practical books: there you will find the most excellent precepts; there you will meet with the most commendable precedents; there you have the most powerful motives to your duty, the most successful helps; in a word, there you will meet with the assistance of God’s Spirit: by them you will be kept from any unrighteous thing. (Psalm cxix. 11.)

5. *Do as you would be done by.*—Remember, “what measure you mete to another, shall be measured to you again.” (Matt. vii. 2.) I believe David would scarce have been so ready to pass such a sentence as he did, if he had well considered who was at the bar; (2 Sam. xii. 1—7;) and it is likely a less punishment than burning might have been pronounced against Tamar, if Judah had remembered who was the father of her child. (Gen. xxxviii. 18, 24.)

6. *Take heed of pride, selfishness, and sensuality.*—These are the great make-bates; these make the world so full of confusion and trouble; from hence come war and fightings; (James iv. 1;) this brings such disorder, misery, and sorrow unto kingdoms, cities, houses. If, instead of these, we had humility, public-spiritedness, temperance, the world would be quickly well-mended with us. (Prov. iii. 10.)

7. *Think much upon your account, death, judgment, heaven, hell, and eternity.*—I had almost said, Believe this truly, and think of it frequently, and be unfaithful if you can. I am persuaded, that every wilful omission of a known duty, and commission of known sin, hath much of atheism and unbelief in it. It is but yet a little while, and master and servant must be equal; death knows no difference; the worms and rottenness will seize as soon on the one as the other; and this might a little teach us humanity and moderation. Consider that account that must be given of our opportunities of service, and every talent we are intrusted with. Suppose God’s messenger were just ready to knock at your door, and you were surely to appear before God before to-morrow morning; what meekness, diligence, faithfulness, would you then exercise, and how hardly brought to do any thing to hazard God’s displeasure! how full of good counsel to every body! Why, how knowest thou, O man, but this hour may be thy last? (Luke xvi. 2; Heb. ix. 27.) This was that which did not a little prevail with Job to do his duty, and not to despise the cause of his hand-maid: “What then,” said he, “should I do, when God shall rise up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer

* HERODES.

him?" (Job xxxi. 14.) Let death, when he comes, find you doing the best work, and faithful in your place. I shall conclude this with the advice of that gallant emperor: "Let it be thy earnest care constantly to perform every thing thou art about with justice to every one; which you may well do, if you go about every act as your last." *

IV. I am now come to the last thing which I promised to do, and that is, to show *what is the duty of servants*. And that I shall perform in the same method as I did before:—

(I.) By giving them some *cautionary directions*.

(II.) Some *positive directions*, and pressing these with some *motives*; and give them some *helps*, for the better performance of their duty.

(I.) I shall give servants some

CAUTIONARY DIRECTIONS.

1. *Let servants take heed of pride*.—This was the sin of the angels, this made them devils; (1 Tim. iii. 6;) this was the sin of our first parents, this made them rebellious to God. A humble heart is ready for any work or state that God in his providence calls him to; any thing but sin will down with a humble man. Remember, pride unfits for the service of God and man, makes one think himself fitter to command than to be commanded: that makes one go on heavily with their work, impatient of reproof, ready to answer again, malapert, saucy, ready to commit other sins to gratify their pride. A proud servant will scorn to be catechised, called to an account, or be kept under those bonds that reason and religion set. Humility doeth nobody any harm, brings no dishonour or inconveniency; but is as good a security to reputation, comfort, and profit, as any thing I know.

2. *Take heed of disobedience to the lawful commands of your master*.—Think not that your arrogance, bigness, and parentage will bear you out. It may be, you think scorn that your master should correct you; and you say in your mind that you will give him as good as he brings: know this, that if you have a master that may be low-spirited, weak, or poor, and, it may be, such an one that is loath to deal with you as law and religion give him leave, yet are you too strong for God? Is he afraid of your swelling and big looks? Will he count you innocent? Are not your rebellion and disobedience to your master disobedience and rebellion against God? And can his purity suffer long, or his justice bear such impurity always, without some signification of his displeasure? Must the great ones of the world that break his laws feel his power? and shall such a despicable wretch as thou go unpunished? Remember, what is said of disobedience to the lawful commands of magistrates holds here: "Whosoever resisteth shall receive to himself damnation." (Rom. xiii. 2.)

3. *Take heed of negligence, idleness, carelessness*.—By this you rob your master of what in honesty you should and might have got for him; by this you secretly waste your master, and answer not that trust that is put in you, and is justly expected from you; by this you give just occasion of displeasure to your master; by this you break your promise made

* ANTONINI *Meditationes*, lib. ii. sect. 2. ARRIANI *Diat. in Epict.* lib. iii. cap. 15.

to your master, and provoke God highly. Remember what a sentence the wicked, slothful servant must shortly hear. (Matt. xxv. 26, &c.)

4. *Take heed of mere eye-service.* (Col. iii. 22.)—Is the eye of God nothing to you, and his warnings insignificant? Doth not he in plain words forbid this? O how many such servants be there, that, when their master is by, are very diligent, but when his back is turned, then how lazy, how wanton, how careless! Would you be served thus yourselves, if you were masters? Doth God take no notice at all? And if he do, how do you think he liketh such doings? Is it a small matter to make light of his presence? And if it be so, you shall shortly find, to your cost, that his eye was, more than your master's, upon you; and if you will not believe his knowledge, observation, and eye, his hand shall shortly give you such a demonstration of both, as you shall not be able to slight.

5. *Take heed of lying.*—By a lie you deny God's knowledge; you make one fault two; you make yourself an enemy to human society: that is a sin which is hateful to every honest man, and abominable to the Lord: the liar shall be shut out of heaven, and have his portion in that lake that burns for ever. (Prov. vi. 17; Rev. xxi. 8.) I spare to speak how it spoils a man's credit, and feeds jealousies in a master, and maketh him scarce believe you when you speak truth. O, little do servants think what folly they are guilty of, by covering their faults with a lie: little do they think how dear that sin must cost them, either here by deep repentance, or hereafter by intolerable torments.

6. *Take heed of purloining or embezzling any part of your master's goods for your own use.* (Titus ii. 10; Luke xvi. 6.)—Meddle with nothing but what is your own, and is allowed you: you would be loath any one should call you a thief. I pray, then, take care of that which will make you deserve such a name: do not consent to any that are in the least guilty in that kind; be not partners with a thief, and make not yourself an accessory to another's wickedness by concealing any unfaithfulness of that nature in your fellow-servants, after you have roundly warned them yourself; eat not of the junkets that sensuality, wantonness, and theft have provided. If you would know what such doings tend to, in a word I may tell you: they pamper lust, many times end in uncleanness, murder, a prison, a halter. And, if that were all, it were not so bad in comparison: by this you wrong God and man, sear your conscience, and make way for a world of other sins, and bring speedy and sure damnation, except a thorough repentance prevent it.

7. *Take heed of bad companions.* “*Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*”—O how many hopeful youths are blasted by wicked company! I am not ignorant of the high pretences of love that such may have, and what excuses they may palliate their wickedness with; but please none, to displease God; never count *him* your friend, nor one that will do you a kindness, *that* would lead you to sin, the devil, damnation.

8. *Take heed of disclosing your master's secrets.*—Do not speak any thing that may wound his reputation; make no mention of his faults without you are called to it lawfully, and then not without deep regret and trouble, upon the account of God's honour and his soul. Some servants make nothing of prating against their masters and mistresses

behind their backs, little considering that this is a sin that God will not overlook. Is this ingenuous? Is this likely to mend him, and do him any good? Can you design God's glory by it? How do you think your master will like it, if it should come to his ears? This is neither pleasing to God nor man.

9. *Take heed of murmuring, discontent, and repining.*—Some servants are of such a temper, nothing will please them: their food is not dainty enough, their clothes not fine enough, and nothing contents them. The truth of it is, if you be of this proud, peevish, discontented humour, let me tell you, take it how you will, the worst bit you eat is too good for you: your betters are thankful and fruitful with a great deal coarse diet. If your food be wholesome and sufficient, your clothing warm and decent, remember that you have reason to bless God. Consider well what you deserve, and how glad some of your betters would be of your leavings. And, suppose you be wronged, use lawful means for your redress: blessed be God, this city hath excellent laws, and an injured servant may be heard and helped. But if that may not be, and you be really injured; suppose you do your duty, and cannot have a good word; nay, instead thereof, many a heavy curse, many a causeless blow; suppose you are beaten for that for which you should be commended; remember that patience, nay, thankfulness, would much better become you than murmuring; for if "when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps." (Matt. v. 10—12; 1 Peter ii. 20, 21.)

10. *Lastly. Take heed of sinning to please your master.*—If a master command one thing, and God another, you need not be long a-determining which you should obey. If your master or mistress should be so wicked as to put you upon sinning, let Joseph's answer be yours: "How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Gen. xxxix. 9.) If your master put you upon telling of lies, cheating, using of false weights or measures, breaking the sabbath, or any thing that is clearly against God's honour and your souls, you must first, with all the humility and meekness you can for your soul, plead with him, urge the commands of God, the fear that you are in of displeasing of him, and wounding your own conscience; and if you cannot by such means pacify him, tell him meekly of his danger in putting you upon sin, and that, come on it what will, you neither can nor will obey him. (Dan. iii. 18.)

(II.) I come now to lay down

SERVANTS' DUTY POSITIVELY.

1. *Honour your masters.*—Labour to get and keep a true valuation of them in your hearts. To this end, observe what is excellent in them; remember your relation to them, their care over you: let this put you upon praying for them, and being affectionately concerned for them; let your words be always humble, meek, and obliging; let your behaviour be with all the respect and sweetness you can. Remember what counsel the apostle gives you in this thing: "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour." (1 Tim. vi. 1;

1 Peter ii. 18.) Be very loath to displease them ; fear to offend, lest in so doing you either offend God yourself, or cause them to do it. I have sometimes thought that carriage of Naaman's servants towards their peevish and unreasonable master very well worth others' imitation : the text saith, " His servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it ? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean ?" (2 Kings v. 13.) Love, fear, and honour your masters : in so doing, you please God and them too.

2. *Obey your masters sincerely, cheerfully, universally, and constantly, as long as you stand in that relation to them.*—You must do what you do for your masters, as you would do it for yourself : your masters' concerns must be looked upon as your own. Yea, " whatsoever you do, you must do it heartily, as to the Lord," (Col. iii. 23,) out of conscience and respect to God's command and honour. A flattering outside service, without the heart, love, and good-will, is neither acceptable to God nor man. Let your obedience also be cheerful ; go not about your work with an ill-will. Cheerfulness would not be a little helpful to yourself ; your work and time would then seem nothing in comparison. (Eph. vi. 7.) God loves a cheerful giver, a cheerful worker, a cheerful sufferer ; and I believe no master but reckons himself better served by him that goes cheerfully and nimbly about his business, than one that doth obey but with a sour, discontented look, and a heavy countenance.

By this you cannot but win upon your masters, and even compel them to love you, speak well of you, and do well by you. Let your obedience also be universal ; that is, in all things that God gives you leave. (Col. iii. 22.) It is not for you to pick and choose, nor dispute and grumble. Some servants are for easy, pleasant, and more honourable works ; and here they may be commanded : but if they be at any time set about what liketh not their proud, lazy, ungodly humour, they are ready to put it off upon another ; it may be, to excuse it with a lie ; perhaps, like rebels, flatly to deny obedience. If a master put him upon strict observation of the Lord's day, upon learning his catechism, and minding his soul, then his base heart beginneth to rise, as if his master did undervalue him, when he put him upon the service of God ; as if he judged it a liberty and privilege to serve the devil ; and as if it were an unsufferable injury to be commanded to escape the wrath to come, and a drudgery to be called-upon to look diligently after the securing of holiness and happiness : such as these look as if they were ripe for hell, and would not be long before they would come thither. O that none of you that hear and read these lines may be found in this number ! Think nothing below you but sin : your disobedience cannot be without sin, if your master command not a sin. Lastly, let your obedience be constant : it must begin and end with your relation to your master.

3. Another duty of the servant towards his master is *faithfulness*. (Titus ii. 10.)—Ingenuity calls for it : he is unworthy of trust that doth not answer it. The master reposeth much confidence in his servant ; and that should oblige him to the greatest fidelity. You must be faithful in word and deed. Speak well of your master behind his back, and keep-up his reputation and credit ; and if you cannot do that without

falseness to God, if you can say no good by him, say no harm, except lawfully called to it ; and if you do perceive your master's carelessness and wickedness make him go down the wind, and neglect his duty, it may be faithfulness in you humbly to advise him in some such language as this : " Sir, I entreat you, give me leave in a few words to express my true affection, respect, and faithfulness to you ; and, for God's sake, take it not unkindly at the hands of your poor servant, if I acquaint you with that which I have with regret of heart observed too long in you. Many a good customer we lose for want of your presence in the shop ; your frequent absence makes us have little to do ; your credit (to my sorrow, God knows, I speak it !) begins to grow much lower than it was wont to be ; my mistress takes-on heavily ; we have but few choice wares, and no cash, and little credit to fetch more ; and we cannot hold long at this rate. I beseech you, sir, leave off your company-keeping, and look into your books, and consider how things be. O how loath am I to see you or yours do otherwise than well ! Sir, I beseech you, be not angry. I come not to teach you, but to entreat you, and humbly to desire your serious consideration of what I shall further crave leave to speak. Sir, I beseech you, forget not us, your poor servants : we want your help in your family ; your instructions, your prayers, your holy examples would be no small comfort to us. In thus doing, I am persuaded, God would bless you, your trade and credit might soon be recovered, we should serve you with joy, and bless God for you, and you and yours fare the better for ever." Now, who but a madman, or incarnate devil, could choose but relish such sweet counsel as this, though from a servant ? Then you must be faithful in your deeds. Give nothing away without your master's leave. (Zech. v. 2, 3.) If you will be giving, give what is your own ; give where and when God commands you, and spare not. Labour to preserve and increase your master's estate all you can by good and lawful means ; for this is that which is commanded by Christ in the parable, hath his gracious approbation and plentiful reward : " Well done, good and faithful servant : thou hast been faithful in a little : enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Your faithfulness must be further expressed by endeavouring, all you can, the good of your master's children. Labour to instil into them good principles, encourage them in the learning their books and catechism, and obedience to their parents. Do what you can to prejudice them against sin, and by your sweet examples to be in love with God and godliness betimes. I might add also, it is no small expression of faithfulness to do all the good you can for your fellow-servants : (Titus ii. 10 :) give them good counsel, pray for them, help them all you may, and carry it so before them, that they may easily discern an excellency in you, and that you have a loving design upon them, and mean no more harm by all you speak or do, but God's glory, your master's profit and comfort, and their souls' salvation.

4. *Be very diligent in your master's business.*—Dispatch what he sets you about with what speed and expedition you can. A slothful servant is a wicked servant : by idleness and carelessness you may do your master more wrong in a day, than you may make-up in a twelvemonth. Besides, you must remember your strength and time is your master's,

and all of it must be improved for him, except so much as God calls for, or your master giveth you.

I come now to *exhort servants to the performance of these duties*; and, that I may (if possible) prevail, I shall lay before them a few

MOTIVES TO ENFORCE THIS DUTY.

1. *Consider, if you do conscientiously perform the fore-mentioned duties, you will bring no little honour to your great Master who is in heaven.*—You will show the power of his precepts, the beauty and excellency of his laws, and make religion to be thought well of: by this you will leave a strange conviction of the worth of grace upon the conscience of your master. Whereas, if you should be faulty in any of the fore-mentioned particulars, if you make any kind of profession, it is ten to one if God and religion do not presently suffer for your fault: “Is this your saintship?” and, it may be, all the people of God may be railed-at and wounded for your sake. For God’s sake, be faithful in the performance of your duty; and in so doing you will put to silence those that may condemn you, and cause them to “glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

2. *Consult your own interest here; it will be more in your way than you, it may be, at first imagine.*—I might tell you what respect and love it must needs beget in the heart of your master; and when he hath opportunity, he cannot but speak well of you: it will bring you in a more considerable revenue of peace and content: by this you discharge your duty, and your conscience may have peace in it; you draw others’ eyes and love, and make you a lasting interest, which in time may signify more than at present you are aware of.

3. *Consider, your time is but short.*—Suppose you suffer a little hardship, seven years will not last always: yet a little while and you must have your liberty, and then you and your master may be companions. Methinks the thoughts of your time being out should make you the more patient and faithful. Remember that the longest time is but short, and ere long it must be furled together; and then it will be nothing, who is master and who is servant, but who is faithful.

4. *Consider, that reason, honesty, and ingenuity, do all call upon you to be faithful, and perform your duty.*—Why should your master give you meat, drink, clothing, wages, or a calling, for nothing? Do not honesty and common justice require that there should be some proportion between what he gives you, and you him? Did you not promise and engage to be a faithful servant? Do not your indentures bind you to it? Doth not ingenuity oblige you to be faithful to him, who hath been ready to take care of you in sickness and in health, and to tender you next a child? I might add, The command of God requires it; but because I hinted that in the beginning, I shall not here repeat it.

5. *Consider, how great a reward you shall have in the other world.*—Your “labour shall not be in vain in the Lord:” there shall be a sure reward to the righteous. Suppose your master give you not that encouragement that your fidelity doth deserve; yet be not disheartened; you have a Master who is more ready to take notice of a little good in you, than a great deal of bad; I mean the great God. Therefore, be of

good cheer, "knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ." (Col. iii. 24.) Yet a little while, and he will right the wronged, recompense the diligent, reward the faithful. You shall, ere long, know you served a Master that was most kind, generous, and noble. Shortly you shall not be called servants, but friends; not friends only, but children; not children only, but heirs, joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive," what wages our great Master will give to all that make it their business to have always "a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man," and that do faithfully fill-up their relation to their earthly and heavenly Master with duty.

6. *Consider the danger of not performing of your duty as a servant.*—By this you declare clearly, that you have no true grace in your hearts. As I said in the beginning, I say again, He that is not relatively good, is not really good; a bad servant is never a good Christian: by this you give us just reason to fear that you are servants of the devil. I spare to speak of your reputation; for I am ready to think, that, if all other arguments and motives have lost their cogency, that cannot have much power. Know this, if you be not faithful to your master, God will judge you as unfaithful to himself; and woe be to that servant whom God himself shall call "wicked and slothful:" what follows, but,—"Take him, bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth!"

And now, sirs, what will you do? Are you resolved for your duty, or no? Have I been all this while beating the air? Have I not showed you what the Lord your God requireth of you? Have I desired any thing of you but what I have given you scripture-warrant for? And is scripture nothing with you? Can you prove that I am mistaken, and lay heavier burdens than God lays upon you? Why, then, be at the trouble to turn to the scriptures you see quoted in the margin. I dare not charge any thing upon you but what I have received of the Lord. And are you angry with God's commands? Dare you impeach your Maker of injustice? What harm is there in any thing that he enjoins you? Could you mend his laws, and make them better? Which of his prohibitions can you find fault with? Are you displeased that God forbids pride and arrogance? Would you indeed have leave to be like the devil? Do you desire liberty to damn yourself, and bring confusion into the house where you dwell? What a sweet world should we have, if every proud fool might have his will! What should masters do with servants, if their commands should have no power upon them? Who but a madman will judge idleness, carelessness, and prodigality, commendable qualities in a servant? Is it so unreasonable a thing for a master to expect something to be done when his back is turned, as well as when he is present? What commerce could be carried on between man and man without truth? Are you desirous that God should give you leave to lie, and are you willing to have it known that you are of this mind? Is it a slavery to have your hands tied from picking and stealing? Would you have a licence to steal, and a badge of your privilege that every one might read? Are wicked, profligate wretches

the best companions? Can you desire their company in the other world? Is backbiting threatened by God in his word, and shall it be excused in you? How would you like one that were always grumbling, and never content nor pleased? Is this temper hateful in another, and lovely in you? Is there any wrong done you, when God bids you have a care of hazarding your soul to get your master a groat? Which of all the cautions that I have given you are really prejudicial to your true credit, pleasure, or profit? * Well, I perceive you have nothing, nay, I am sure you can have nothing, justly to object against them. And dare you now venture still to be proud, disobedient, idle? Do sinners venture on still, in spite of master, minister, and the divine prohibitions? But be it upon thy peril; for, as sure as God lives, he will call you to judgment. Will half an hour's junketing make amends for the loss of a soul for ever? What is there in all the duties that are commanded, that you have any thing to object against? Are you troubled that your master must be honoured? Should we not have sweet doings, if masters and servants were fellows? If you yourself should ever live to be a master, tell me plainly, how would you like it to be slighted by your servant? Is "obedience" a word you mislike? What is a servant good for without obedience? what is he but a burden to the earth, worse than the dung itself? Are faithfulness and diligence displeasing to you? And, I pray, who is pleased with unfaithfulness and idleness, but wicked ones, fools, and the devil? And are such as these to be pleased, rather than God, parents, masters? Well, once more: what have you to say against your duty, why it may not be practised speedily? Have you weightier arguments against it, than I have for it? Come, produce your strong reason, and show yourself a man. Are the precepts of the mighty God nothing? Are his injunctions of no validity at all? Are you not at all concerned for his honour? Is the gratifying a cursed lust a matter of greater importance and necessity than God's glory? So little, he will take care of himself, and raise him honour out of your shame and ruin, if you regard not God. Have you no respect to yourself? Will your peace, reputation, and profit prevail nothing with you? Is the quiet of the family, the glory of a city, the prosperity and safety of a kingdom, a small matter with you? Why, all this seems in some measure wrapped-up in servants' fidelity. Have the promises and rewards of the great Master little efficacy? Is heaven, glory, and eternal happiness, worth nothing? The truth of it is, if all this be nothing, I know not what is something. But what do you think of judgment, wrath, and hell? If the former motives signify little, doth this so too? Then I must confess, I know not what to add more; but you must take your course, and take what follows; but know this, that you were warned, and counselled, and pleaded with, till you had nothing to say, or, if you had, I am sure nothing to purpose, and that shortly you will be silenced. But God forbid that all servants should be of this mind; some, yea, many, I hope better of, though I thus speak; but the general complaint that sounds in our ears, makes us judge such reasonings as these not altogether needless.

And now, for the sakes of some that I hope resolve for duty, I shall add

• EPICTETUS.

a help or two for the performance of their duty; and so I shall conclude.

HELPS.

1. If you would be good servants, *labour to be Christ's free-men.* (1 Cor. vii. 22; Rom. vi. 18.)—Cast-off the service of Satan, and be no longer commanded by him: remember how cruel, how false, how unreasonable a master he is; consider, what can he pay his servants in at last? and know, it is impossible to serve two contrary masters at once. Be not servants to your lusts; cast them off as things that will not profit; and, instead thereof, “yield yourselves to the Lord,” and “serve him with all your might;” and so “be holy, as he is holy, in all manner of conversation,” and “the grace of God will teach you to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live holily, righteously, and soberly in this present world;” that will teach you to reverence, obey, to be faithful and diligent to your earthly master, as knowing your “labours shall not be in vain in the Lord.” If the fear of God be but in your hearts, it will teach you wisdom, make you hate every evil way, and to do that which is honest and just to your master. A good Christian cannot be a bad servant.

2. *Be not a stranger to the Bible.*—When others are foolishly squandering away their time, do you solace yourself with the word of God; let that be much read by you, and labour to lie under the powerful impression of the prohibitions, precepts, promises, threatenings, and examples that are there; and then you cannot do amiss. I remember, it was the advice of an excellent moralist, that we should oft in our actions think what Socrates, Zeno, Plato, or some wise philosopher, would do in such a case.* I had rather you would think oft, “What would such an one as Eliezer, the servant of Abraham, do in such a case?” Read how he carried himself; how naturally he was concerned for his master's interest; how diligently, faithfully, and prudently he goes to work; how importunately he addresses himself to God; and how heartily he prays for prosperity and success in his master's business; how much he advanceth his master's credit; and how naturally [is] concerned for his master's son; and with what integrity and expedition he dispatcheth his business. Go you and do likewise. The example of Joseph and Obadiah, who were good in bad houses, are well worth your consideration. I might add the example of the centurion's servant, whom his master giveth this character of,—that he was as ready to obey as *he* was to command. (Matt. viii. 9.) I shall add an example or two more: though you find them not in the scripture, yet they are according to the scripture; one of them I knew well: a certain servant, that it is probable was converted by the father, was so faithful, diligent, lively, full of spiritual discourse and importunate prayers for the children and family, that it proved a means of the conversion of some of them. Here is a servant worth gold. Another servant I knew, good for earth and heaven too, that, after other endeavours upon a fellow-servant, spent some time at midnight to pray for him; and, being very importunate, the voice was heard into the next chamber, where he lay; at which, out of curiosity, he rose in his

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shirt to listen, and heard one pray for him, by which prayer he was converted. Study, therefore, the scriptures, and present the examples you find there to your imitation.

3. *Get a strong love to your master.*—Love will put you upon any work : love will set head, hand, and feet a-working, and tongue a-going : love makes heavy things light, hard things easy : love is a mighty engine ; it can do any thing ; love will make you forget length of time. In a word, love is like to make one faithful, obedient, and diligent.

4. *Be humble, meek, and patient.*—The humble man thinks nothing below him which is his duty : and if to do his duty be to be vile, he will yet be viler still. The humble, God will guide, exalt, and save. (Matt. xviii. 4 ; 1 Peter v. 6.) Humility displeaseth none but the devil.

5. *Be much in good company, and hearken to their advice.*—Be constant in prayer, and beg of God to make you faithful ; and be conscientious in your attendance upon a powerful, faithful ministry. In a word, live much in the thought of your great account ; and in thus doing, I question not but you will find grace to be faithful to God and man, and be accepted of your master here, and rewarded by God hereafter.

Thus I have, according to my poor ability, set the duty of masters and servants before them. O that there were a general resolution in both to put these duties into practice ! O then what a blessed reformation should we soon have ! How soon would our great troubles cease ! How soon would our complaints be silenced, and our sorrows be turned into joy ! O that all sorts and degrees of men would but reform *one*, and fill-up their particular places and relations with duty ! Then O what happy times, what happy days, should we yet enjoy ! Christians, let us join in our prayers and utmost endeavours for the promoting of this glorious work ; and then our God would bless us, and we should bless him for ever.

SERMON XIX.

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THE SINFULNESS AND CURE OF THOUGHTS.

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.—Genesis vi. 5.

I KNOW not a more lively description in the whole book of God of the natural corruption derived from our first parents, than these words ; wherein you have the ground of that grief, which lay so close to God's heart, (verse 6,) and the resolve thereupon to destroy man, and whatsoever was serviceable to that ungrateful creature. That must be highly offensive which moved God to repent of a fabric so pleasing to him at the creation ; every stone in the building being at the first laying pro-