

SERMON XXI.

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WHAT DISTANCE OUGHT WE TO KEEP, IN FOLLOWING THE STRANGE FASHIONS OF APPAREL WHICH COME UP IN THE DAYS WHEREIN WE LIVE ?

And it shall come to pass in the day of the Lord's sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, and the king's children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparel.—Zephaniah i. 8.

THAT this prophecy was synchronal with the reign of good Josiah, appears, verse 1 : and a heinous aggravation it was of Judah's sin, that they were unreformed under a reforming prince. Of *him* it was said, that "there was no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses ; neither after him arose there any like him." (2 Kings xxiii. 25.) Of *them* it may be said, that there was no generation that turned from the Lord, that departed from the law of their God, before them ; though afterwards there were that equalled, or exceeded, their wickedness.

The prophet, therefore, without the solemnity of a preface, immediately proceeds to sentence : "I will utterly consume all things from off the land." (Zeph. i. 2.) And how could more of wrath be expressed in fewer words ? "Consumption," and "utter consumption," and "utter consumption of all things," is certainly the abstract and epitome of final and total desolation. To silence all objections that might be made against this righteous sentence of God, the Lord commands : "Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord God : for the day of the Lord is at hand : for the Lord hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath invited his guests." (Verse 7.) 1. Judah was to be the *sacrifice*. They that would not offer a sacrifice of righteousness, shall be made a sacrifice to justice. 2. The armed Babylonians were to be the *priests*. 3. And the rabble of their enemies were to be the hungry *guests* ; who would not spare, but glut themselves with the spoil of Judah ; to teach them, (and us in them,) that if God be not sanctified in the hearts, he will be on the heads, of a people professing his name. (Lev. x. 3.)

Now in this "day of the Lord's sacrifice," however the main of the storm and hurricane would fall on the heads of the idolaters, and those "that swear by the Lord and Malcham ;" (verse 5 ;) upon all the apostates, and such as shook off the worship of God ; (verse 6 ;) yet some drops of the storm, a skirt of the shower of vengeance,

would light on a sort of second-rate sinners, "such as were clothed with strange apparel." Or if the sinners were the same, yet this sin would be accumulative; and when the ephah is brim-full, one single drop more will make it run over.

In the words, you may observe, 1. *The criminals*; 2. *The crime*; 3. *The punishment*.

1. *The criminals*.—And they were either, (1.) *The principals*: "The princes, and the king's children;" or, as the Septuagint render it, *Τους αρχοντας, και τον οικον του βασιλεως*, "The rulers, and king's household;" that is, the magistrates, nobles, and judges of the land; who, as they were lifted up above the level of the commonalty, ought to have gone before them in all examples of sobriety and gravity; whereas now their levity in what was decent and grave, and their affectation of what was novel and vain, had drawn the people into a participation of the same sin, and obnoxiousness to the same punishment, with themselves. (2.) *The accessories* were "all such" (of what order, rank, degree soever they were) "as were clothed with strange apparel."

Whose sin was the greater, and whose punishment should be the heavier, was of more difficult determination. For the grandees would plead, that some latitude was to be indulged there, in respect of their quality and character; and the inferior sort would argue, that they did but write after the copy set them by their betters. But leave we them to quarrel and debate the point among themselves; both are included in the same condemnation; and it may safely be referred to the Divine Justice, to admeasure out vengeance in proportion to their respective aggravations.

2. *The crime*.—To be "clothed in strange apparel," *מְלִבְּשׁ נְכָרִי*. The Septuagint render it, *ενδυματα αλλοτρια* which may denote, either, (1.) *Exotic and foreign apparel*: such as they fetch far, and [have] bought dear in the price, and must pay much dearer for in the punishment, when justice shall call them to a reckoning. The Jews are noted for a people exceeding fond, even to dotage, of foreign vanities,—foreign wives, foreign worship, and foreign gods too. We read that Ahaz chanced to spy an altar at Damascus that hugely pleased his humour; (God's altar at Jerusalem was a plain piece; but this, a rare specimen of curious art;) and he "sends to Urijah the priest the fashion of the altar, and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof." (2 Kings xvi. 10.) For if a prince has an itch to innovate in or make a change of his religion, a priest will easily be found that shall justify it,—that the pattern of Damascus is far beyond the pattern in the Mount; and that a model *secundum usum Syriæ*, is more decent and august than one *secundum usum Salem*. Or, (2.) It may denote *such as they had newly invented among themselves*: for they had fruitful, inventing heads, (though barren hearts,) which could conceive a vanity, and bring forth a lie, as soon as the most sickly soul could long for it. (Job xv. 35.)

This "strange apparel" (whether native or foreign) might be so

for the matter, or for the form. Light minds, constant in nothing but inconstancy, would always be varying either the stuff or the shape, the ground or the trimming; and it had been as easy to make a coat for the moon, as to have fitted the fickle humour of that unstable generation. And indeed, at last they had got their עֵקֶלֶיִם, "round tires like the moon;" (Isai. iii. 18;) the liveliest emblem of uncertain, desultory fancies that could have been invented.

3. *The punishment.*—Which is indefinitely expressed: "I will punish:" but how, or in what way, degree, or measure, he will punish, he reserves to himself. As there is not a greater threatening, than for God to promise an impenitent people that he will not punish them; so it looks very angrily, when God threatens to punish, but conceals the manner of the execution: as if it must needs be some "strange" punishment that God would invent on purpose for "strange apparel;" or some curse not written in God's book, that must fall on the heads of such a vertiginous and giddy people.

The crime, then, you have heard; the criminals you have seen; the punishment must be understood. In the mean time, from this text a fair occasion is offered to propose and answer this

QUESTION.

What distance ought we to keep in following the strange fashions of apparel which come up in the days wherein we live?

That the present generation is lamentably intoxicated with novelties, and as sadly degenerated from the gravity of some former ages, can neither be denied, nor concealed, nor defended, nor, I fear, reformed. And, what is more deplorable, some that wear the livery of a stricter profession, are carried away with the vanity; and even "the daughters of Zion" have caught the epidemical infection. (Isai. iii. 16.) And this has made this question, though *in re tenuis*,* to be of great importance: to which, yet, before I can give a direct and distinct answer, I must crave your patience, that I may lay down these preliminaries:—

1. That it is exceeding difficult to fix and determine upon the *minimum quod sic*, "the lowest degree" of conformity to these new fashions, "which is sinful;" and the *maximum quod non*, "the highest degree" of conformity to them, "which is not sinful." And that, because the decision of the point depends on many nice circumstances, which must all be duly weighed: and if the scales be not exact and true; the hand that holds them, steady; the eye that judges, clear; it will be impossible to form a judgment in the case.

2. That therefore Satan has herein the greater advantage to overreach us, our own hearts to betray and deceive us, because it is easy to slide insensibly from the lawful to the unlawful, when it is so hard to discern, to a hair's-breadth, where the one ends, and the other begins.

3. That pride will be sure to perplex and entangle the controversy. For, seeing a haughty heart will never confine its licentiousness to the

* "Though in reality of little consequence."—EDIT.

narrow rule of God, it must widen the rule, and stretch it to its own extravagancies. That lust which scorns to bow its crooked practices to the straight rule, will not fail to bend the rule, if possible, to its own crooked practices: for it is very uneasy to sit in the stocks of a man's own conscience.

4. That there may be some danger, as well as much difficulty, in the determination; since the universality of the corruption, like a deluge, has overspread the face of the earth, and interest is taken into the confederacy; with whom to combat, is an unequal contention. Pride and profit, glory and gain, have their distinct concerns in this controversy: and to decry the silver shrines of Diana, by which so many craftsmen get their livings, must raise a heavy outcry against the opponent. (Acts xix. 23—27.) And when obtaining custom shall second and back these corruptions, he must have *robur et æs triplex circa pectus*,* a very hardy spirit, that shall dare to cross the stream or stem the current of a prevailing luxuriancy. So that, to have a finger in this ungrateful debate, must engage him in Ishmael's fate,—to have every man's hand lifted up against him; seeing it is unavoidable, that his hand must be set almost against every man. (Gen. xvi. 12.)

5. That yet charity will lend us one safe rule,—that we impose a severer law upon ourselves, and allow a larger indulgence to others. The rule of our own conversation should be with the strictest; but that by which we censure others, a little more with the largest. For thus has the apostle taught us to proceed in things which in their own nature are indifferent. (Rom. xiv.)

6. Prudence will also afford us another excellent rule:—in dubious cases to take the safer side; not to venture too near the brink of a precipice, when we have room enough to walk secure at a greater distance. For, seeing the best that can be said of and pleaded for many of our fashions is, that in themselves they are adiaaphorous, which yet in their common use are sinful; it becomes a Christian to be cautious, and practise only that which is confessedly innocent and inoffensive. For he that will always do what may lawfully be done, shall sometimes do what is unlawful to be done.

7. A humble heart, crucified to the world, and making a conscience of its baptismal covenant, whereby it stands engaged to renounce the pomps and vanities of a wicked world, with all fomentations of and incitations to the flesh, will be the best casuist. Mortification would cut up the controversy by the roots, cure the disease in the cause, and cleanse the stream in the fountain. Nor can any determine for another, so well as he that is true to his soul might for himself.

8. That yet there are some modes of apparel, which so notoriously cross the ends of all apparel, so inconsistent with the rule of decency, so apparently transgressing the bounds of modesty, that no pretence

* HORATI *Carm.* lib. i. od. iii. 9.

“Or oak, or brass, with triple fold,
Around his daring bosom roll'd.”—FRANCIS'S Translation.

of an honest intention, no uprightness of heart, can atone [for] or excuse the evil of wearing them. As if, for instance, a garment was made of silk, wrought in such figures as did imitate the pictures of Aretine, and represent nakedness in all the most obscene and filthy postures; the use of such raiment would be a gross abuse, nor could any internal chastity alleviate the guilt of the outward immodesty.

9. Though some modes of apparel can never be well used, there are none but may be ill used: none so good, but they may become bad; though some so bad, that they never can be made good. And the reason of the difference is, because *bonum oritur ex integris, malum e qualibet defectu*; "all circumstances must concur to render a practice lawful; when the want of any one which ought to be present is enough to render it sinful."

10. Though sumptuary laws may justly be made, to retrench the excesses, yet none can lawfully be enacted, to compel men in the defects, of apparel. A law may say, "Farther thou shalt not go;" but not, "Thus far shalt thou go." And the reason is:—they that can reach the standard assigned by the law, may lawfully abate at the command of authority; when, perhaps, some cannot reach the lowest pitch without trenching upon their purses or consciences.

Having premised these things, I re-assume the question: *What distance ought we to keep, in following the strange fashions of apparel that come up in the days wherein we live?*

The resolution of which question will depend,

I. On an impartial inquiry, *wherein the sinfulness of apparel does lie.*

II. On some directions, *how to walk at a due distance from these strange fashions, that we partake not of the sin that may be in them.*

I. Let us, then, in the first place, *inquire, wherein the sinfulness of apparel does lie.*—And that difficulty will be best assailed by a further inquiry into these four particulars:—

(I.) *For what ends God appoints, and nature requires, apparel.*

(II.) *What is the rule of decency to regulate apparel?*

(III.) *From what inward principles these outward modes are taken up.*

(IV.) *What effects these fashions have, or may have, on ourselves or others.*

(I.) Let us, then, inquire, *for what ends God appoints, and nature requires, apparel.*—In the state of innocency and primitive integrity, nakedness was man's richest clothing. No ornament, no raiment, was ever since so decent as then was no-ornament, no-raiment. For as there was then no irregular motion in the soul, so neither was there any in the body, that might dye the cheeks with a blush, or cover the face with shame: "They were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." (Gen. ii. 25.)

But when they had once violated the covenant, and broken the law of their Creator, shame, the fruit and daughter of sin, seized their souls, and that in respect of God, and of each other: which latter

chiefly (as I conceive) to hide, the best expedient [that] their confused and distracted thoughts could pitch upon was, to stitch together a few fig-leaves, to make themselves aprons; till God, commiserating their wretched plight, provided better covering, more adequate to the necessity of nature, more comporting with decency; that is, "coats of skins." (Gen. iii. 7, 21.)

Wherein the Divine Wisdom so admirably contrived it, 1. That their apparel might *serve as a standing memorial of their demerits*.—That they might carry about them the continual conviction of their sin and the deserved punishment. For what less could they infer, than that they deserved to "die the death," when the innocent beasts must die, to preserve and accommodate their lives? 2. That their apparel might *direct their weak faith to the promised Seed*.—In whom they might expect a better covering, and from a greater shame,—that of their filthiness in the sight of God: in Him, I say, whom those beasts, probably slain in sacrifice, did typify. For that any were slain merely on the account of food before the flood, is not probable; when yet the distinction between the clean and unclean, on the account of sacrifice, is demonstrable. (Gen. vii. 2.)

Now God appoints, and nature (frail, faded nature) requires, apparel,

1. *To hide shame, to cover nakedness*.—That our first parents and their posterity, in their exile from Paradise, might not become a perpetual "covering of the eyes" and shame to each other. Whence it will follow,

(1.) That whatever apparel, or fashions of apparel, do either cross or not comply with this great design of God, [they] must be sinfully used.

(2.) That as any apparel, or fashions of apparel, do more or less cross or not comply with this end, they are proportionably more or less sinful.

But our semi-Evites, aware of danger, from these conclusions, to their naked breasts, will readily reply, that this will be of no great use to decide this controversy, because it is not clear, (1.) What parts of the body it is [which] God has appointed apparel to cover; nor, (2.) Which of them may be uncovered without shame; seeing that some, as the hands, the face, the feet, may be naked, without sin to ourselves or offence to others. To which I answer,

(1.) That the use of the parts, and their destined ends, are to be well considered in this case. The use of the face is chiefly to distinguish, (i.) *The sex*: the male from the female; (ii.) *The individuals*: one person from another. The use of the hands is, that they may be instruments for work, business, and all manual operations.

(2.) That to cover or muffle-up those parts ordinarily, whose ends and use require to be uncovered, is to cross God's end and design, and, by consequence, sinful.

(3.) That to uncover those parts promiscuously, and expose them ordinarily to open view, for which there can be no such good ends and uses assigned, is sinful. For the general law of God must always

take place, where the special use of a particular part requires not the contrary.

(4.) And therefore all apparel, or fashions of apparel, which expose those parts to view, of which exposing God and nature have assigned no use, is sinful. It is true, I confess, our first parents, in that hasty provision which they made against their shame, took care only for aprons: but God—who had adequate conceptions of their wants, and what was necessary to supply them; of the rule of decency, and what would fully answer it—provided for them coats; that so the whole body (except as before excepted) might be covered, and its shame concealed.

2. Another end of apparel was, *to defend the body*, (1.) *From the ordinary injuries of unseasonable seasons*; (2.) *The common inconveniencies of labour and travel*; (3.) *The emergent accidents that might befall them in their pilgrimage*.—For the fall of man had introduced excessive heats and colds; they were driven out of Paradise, to wander and work in a wilderness, now overgrown with briars, thorns, and thistles,—the early fruits of the late curse; and clothes were assigned them in this exigency for a kind of defensive armour. Hence we read, that “Saul armed David with his own armour; and he armed him with a coat of mail.” (1 Sam. xvii. 38.) In the Hebrew it is: “Saul clothed David with his clothes; and he clothed him with a coat of mail.” And the word there used, *שָׁרָא* is of near cognation with that in my text, *לְבָשָׁא*. Hence, therefore,

(1.) Whatever modes of apparel comply not with this gracious end of God, in defending our bodies from those inconveniencies, are sinfully worn and used.

(2.) That it is a horrid cruelty to our frail bodies, to expose them to those injuries against which God has provided a remedy, to gratify pride, or to humour any vanity. And however our gallants hope to keep themselves warm, and to shelter their sin, under the screen of their own foolish proverb, “Pride feels no cold;” yet God has oftentimes made their sin to become their punishment, whilst, by an obstinate striving with the inconveniences of an ill-contrived mode, they have hazarded, if not lost, their healths, if not their lives, by a ridiculous compliment to some new fashion. But how they will stand before the righteous judgment-seat of God, when he shall arraign and try them as guilty of self-murder, in the great day of scrutiny, they may do well timely to advise upon and consider.

3. To these I may add, that when God made man his first suit of apparel, he took measure of him by *that employment which he had cut out for him*.—Man’s assigned work was labour; not to eat the bread of idleness, but first to earn it in the sweat of his face; which, though at first it was a curse, is by grace converted into a blessing. And accordingly God so adapted and accommodated his clothes to his body, that they might not hinder readiness, expedition, industry, diligence, and perseverance in the works of his particular calling. Hence these things will be exceeding plain:—

(1.) That God, having appointed man to labour, cannot be sup-

posed to have made any provision for, or given the least indulgence to, idleness. Intervals for rest,—to redintegrate the decayed spirits, —cessation for a season from hard labour, God allows, and nature requires : but exemption from a particular calling, or any dispensation for sloth in that calling, we find none. .

(2.) That God having suited clothing in all its forms and shapes so to the body, that they prejudice him not in the works of his particular calling ; whatever fashions of apparel do incommode him therein, and render him unfit or less fit to discharge the duties of it, are so far sinfully used.

(3.) That, therefore, they who, by unmerciful lacing, girding, bracing, pinching themselves in uneasy garments, can scarce breathe, less eat, and least of all labour, do apparently offend against this end of God ; and it is but just, that they who will not, or create an impotency that they cannot, work, should not eat, nor long breathe in the earth, whereof they are unprofitable burdens.

Plato calls the body, “the prison of the soul ;” (*σωμα quasi σπηλαιον*) and some have made the clothes the prison of the body ; wherein they are so cloistered, so immured in the cage and little-ease of a pinching fashion, that the body is made an unprofitable servant to the soul, and both of them to God. In the declining times of the Roman commonwealth, this vanity began to obtain, and is smartly noted by the comedian, as the folly of mothers :—

Quis matres student

Demissis humeris esse, victo pectore, ut graciles sient.

Si qua est habitior paulò, pugilem esse aiunt ; deducunt cibum :

Tametsi boni est natura, reddant curaturá junceus.

TERENTII *Eunuchus*, act. ii. sc. iii. 20.*

But thus has pride brought many to their coffins, who, after an uneasy life, spuu out in more pain with doing nothing than they had found in labour, after a few tedious days worn out in asthmas, catarrhs, consumptions, and phthisics, could never get freedom from the confinement of their clothes, till their souls had procured a gaol-delivery from their bodies. However, they cannot justly complain of Providence, who gave them their option, and left them to their own desires,—“rather to be out of the world, than out of the fashion.”

4. There is yet another end of apparel ; namely, *the adorning of the body*.—And in this all our wanton fashionists take sanctuary. Out of which that I may force them, or (so far as is sober and moderate) indulge them, I shall first premise a few observations, and then lay down some conclusions.

(1.) Let these few things be *premised* :—

(i.) That ornamentals, strictly taken as distinct from useful garments, do not come under the same appointment of God with neces-

* “ Their mothers try to keep their shoulders down,
And bind their bosoms, that their shapes may seem
Genteel and slim. Is a girl rather plump ?
They call her ‘ nurse,’ and stint her in her food.
Thus art, in spite of nature, makes them all
Mere bulrushes.”—COLMAN’S Translation.

sary clothing. For, First. It is ordinarily sinful to wear no apparel ; but not so, to wear no such ornaments. Secondly. The necessity of nature requires the one ; but no necessity or end of nature requires the other. God's ends, and nature's occasions, may be secured, and answered to the full, without these additional. Ornaments, then, are rather matter of indulgence, than precept ; of permission, than injunction.

(ii.) That plain, simple apparel, as it is a real, so it is a sufficient, ornament to the body. For if nakedness be our shame, apparel that hides it, is so far its beautifying and adorning. When, therefore, we say, " God gave clothes for an ornament," we do not say that he gave ornaments distinct from clothing.

(iii.) That ornaments are either natural or artificial :—*Natural* : such as nature has provided ; as the hair, given by God and nature to the woman, to be her " glory, and for her covering." (1 Cor. xi. 15.) *Artificial* : such as are the product of ingenuity and witty invention. In which, as God has been not illiberal, so man has been very prodigal ; and, not content with primitive simplicity, has " sought out many inventions." (Eccles. vii. 29.)

(iv.) It is evident, that God allowed the Jews the use of artificial ornaments, as distinct from necessary apparel : " Aaron said unto the people, Break off the golden ear-rings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. And when Moses saw that the people were naked ; (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies ;) then Moses stood," &c. (Exod. xxxii. 2, 25.) It seems, then, that to be stripped of their ear-rings was in some sense to be " made naked," to be exposed to shame in the sight of their enemies.

(v.) That yet there was some difference between the indulgence granted to the male, and that to the female, sex. And this Dr. Fuller observes from the order and placing of the words, " wives, sons, daughters ; " intimating that those sons were in their minority, " under covert-parent," as he explains it : * and so much seems to be implied in Isai. lxi. 10 ; where we find indeed the bridegroom's " ornaments," but only the bride's " jewels ; " as if the masculine sex was restrained to a more manly and grave sort of ornaments, whereas the female was allowed a greater degree of finery and gallantry. And when God permitted the Jewish women to borrow of their neighbours and inmates " jewels of silver, and jewels of gold," the use was limited to their " sons and daughters," and grown men [were] not considered : (Exod. iii. 22 :) which is also evidently inferred from Judges viii. 24, where the army conquered by Gideon are said to have worn " golden ear-rings ; for they were Ishmaelites ; " clearly implying, that their golden ear-rings were an ornament peculiar to the Ishmaelites, and not common to the Israelites.

(vi.) That though there might be something typical or symbolical in the jewels worn by the Jewish women, (as I conceive there was,) yet the use of them was of common right to the females of other

* " Pisgah-Sight of Palestine."

nations; as, indeed, they were of ordinary use long before the Jewish polity was settled: "The man took a golden ear-ring of half a shekel weight," a quarter of an ounce, "and two bracelets for her," Rebecca's, "hands of ten shekels weight," five ounces. (Gen. xxiv. 22.)

(2.) These things premised, I lay down these CONCLUSIONS:—

CONCLUSION I. *Whatever pretends to ornament, which is inconsistent with modesty, gravity, and sobriety, and [with] whatever is according to godliness, is no ornament, but a defilement.*—Modesty teaches us not to expose those parts to view which no necessity, no good end or use, will justify; humility teaches us to avoid curiosity in decking a vile body, which ere long must be a feast for worms; good husbandry will teach us not to lay out on the back what should feed the bellies of a poor family; and holiness will teach us not to keep such a stir about the outward, when the inward man is naked. Charity will teach us not to expend superfluously on thy own carcass, when so many of thy Father's children want necessary food and raiment; and godly wisdom will teach us not to trifle out those precious minutes "between the comb and the glass," *inter pectinem et speculum*,* between curling and painting, which should be laid out on and for eternity.

Let me recommend one place from the apostle: "While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." (1 Peter iii. 2—4.) Whence these things offer themselves to your observation:—

(i.) That "plaiting the hair, wearing of gold," or golden ornaments, are not simply and in themselves condemned; but only so far as they are either our chiefest ornament, or as we are too curious, too costly, excessive, or expensive in them: for, otherwise, the "putting on of apparel," which is joined in the same thread and texture of the discourse and sentence, would be condemned also.

(ii.) That the rule for regulating these ornamentals is, that they be visibly consistent with a "chaste conversation." I say, "visibly consistent:" it must be such a "chaste conversation" as may be beheld: "Whilst they behold your chaste conversation." That pure vestal fire of chastity that burns upon the altar of a holy heart, must flame out and shine in chastity of words, actions, clothing, adorning: for whenever God commands chastity, he commands whatever may feed and nourish it, manifest and declare it; and forbids whatever may endanger it, wound or weaken, blemish or impair it.

(iii.) That godly "fear" must be placed as a severe sentinel, to keep strict guard over the heart, that nothing be admitted that may defile our own hearts, nothing steal out that may pollute another's. We must keep watch over our own hearts and other men's eyes; neither lay a snare for the chastity of another, nor a bait for our own. This "chaste conversation" must be "coupled with fear."

* TERTULLIANUS.

(iv.) Which holy fear and godly jealousy will have work enough about the matter of ornament; that we neither mistake in our judgment, as if these "outward adornings" with gold, with plaited hair, were of such grand concernment; nor err in our practice, in an immoderate care and superfluous cost about them.

(v.) To render that rule which he hath laid down practicable, he gives us a pattern: "After this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves." (Verse 5.) Where note, First, That they must be "holy women" that are the standard of our imitation; not painting Jezebel, nor dancing Dinah, nor flaunting Bernice; but holy Sarah, godly Rebecca, prudent Abigail. Secondly. They must be such as were "in the old time," when pride was pinfeathered; not such as now, since lust grew fedged and high-flown: such examples as "the old time" afforded, when plain cleanness was accounted abundant elegance: such as the world's infancy produced; not such as an old, decrepit age, grown twice a child, recommends to us. Thirdly. They must be such as could "trust in God" to deliver them from evil, because they rushed not themselves into temptation: for it is hardly conceivable how any should "trust in God" to give them victory, who tempt and challenge the combat; or how they can expect that Divine Grace should secure them from being overcome, when by their enticing attire they provoke others to assail their chastity. If, then, "the daughters of Zion" will be the heirs of Abraham's faith, they must approve themselves the followers of Sarah's modesty.

CONCLUSION II. *Nothing can justly pretend to be lawful ornament, which takes away the distinction which God has put between the two sexes.*—That law, Deut. xxii. 5, is of moral equity and perpetual obligation: "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God." *That which pertaineth* אֲבִירָה—The word signifies any "vessel, instrument, utensil, garment, or ornament," military or civil, used for the discrimination of the sex: so Ainsworth.* And the Rabbins gloss it thus: "The woman shall not poll her locks, nor put on a helmet or a tiara on her head: neither may a man put on a coloured garment or golden jewels, where men use not to wear such jewels." God therefore will have the distinction between the sexes inviolably observed in the outward apparel; which is a fence about the moral law, to prevent those murders, adulteries, and promiscuous lusts, which under those disguises would more secretly and easily be perpetrated. And yet observe:

(i.) That there may be a case put, wherein in some exigency it may be lawful for the woman to wear the apparel of the man: and Asterius gives us one: Εγνων γυναικα και την κομην χειρασαν και ανδρικην περιβεβηνην εσθητα και ταυτην ανθεισεν, ινα ανδρος φευγοντος και κρυπτομενου μη χωρισθη. † "I knew a woman," saith he, "that polled her hair, and put on man's apparel, and that a flowered

* In *Pentateuchum*.

† *Homilie*.

garment, too; that she might not be separated from her dear husband, that was forced to fly and hide his head."

(ii.) What particular form of apparel shall distinguish the one sex from the other, must be determined by the custom of particular countries; provided that those customs do not thwart some general law of God, the rule of decency, the ends of apparel, or the directions of scripture.

(iii.) That yet there seems some distinctive ornament to have been provided by God, that the difference between the sexes might not be left to the arbitrary customs and desultory humours of men: as in the hair of the head, and in the manner of wearing it; or at least in the beard, which is ordinarily given to the one sex, and denied the other. And hence it seems probable that for women to poll, for men to nourish the hair at the full length, is a contravention to the discriminating badge and cognizance which the God of nature has bestowed upon them.

(iv.) That, however, a prudent and cautious Christian will be well-advised, how his practice contravenes the plain letter of a law, when the distinctions, used to avoid the dint and turn the edge of it, are not very clear and satisfactory, but precarious and such as are contrived to ward off the force of an argument. As, if an instance should be given in that of the apostle: "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her." (1 Cor. xi. 14, 15.) *Εαν κομαζ*, "If a man wears his hair at the full length." Now the evasion used to escape the danger of this text is, that by "nature" is meant no more than the custom of the country; which, being a second nature, is able to warrantize whatever is conformable to it, as also to render whatever is opposite indecent and uncomely: and since the custom of our country is altered, the sin is banished.

But let it be considered, First, That the phrase, *αυτη η φυσις*, "even nature itself," seems to restrain the word to its proper and primary signification. Secondly. That the apostle could not well argue against long hair, nourished to its utmost extent, from the custom of the Greeks; since they, of all men, are famous for wearing it *promissæ* ["hanging down"]; which Homer notes as the common epithet of the Grecians, *καρηκομοωντες Αχαιοι*, "the Grecians that nourished their hair;" nor will it appear that they, from the Trojan war to the days of the apostle, had changed their custom, which they made much of, as that which rendered them formidable to their enemies. Thirdly. But supposing that custom only had formerly taught the men to wear their hair short, and women theirs at the utmost length; and that encroaching practice in process of time should introduce the contrary custom,—for women to poll, and men to nourish, their hair; yet how many millions of sins must be committed, ere the new custom could prevail to justle out the old, and legitimate the new, practice! So that they who plead this for themselves, do but acquit themselves at the cost of other men's condemnation. Fourthly. As the case stands with us, the custom is not so general, either for the

number or quality of the persons, (if by "quality" we understand those of a pious and religious character,) as to justify the modern deviation from a generally-received practice: but this I confess,—if the commonness of the custom be not extensive enough to take away the sin, it is yet so prevailing that it has taken away the sense of it in the consciences of very many professors.

CONCLUSION III. *Nothing ought to be allowed for ornament, which crosses the great end of all apparel,—covering of nakedness.*—The Israelitish women are said to have been "made naked unto their shame," (Exod. xxxii. 25,) when only deprived of their ear-rings, which were one part of their apparel; but amongst us, our English ladies will not acknowledge it any nakedness, any shame, to have their breasts exposed; and they will pretend,

(i.) That the parts which decency requires to be covered, and in whose nakedness shame doth lie, are only those which the apostle calls *ατιμότερα*, "less honourable," and *ασχνημονα*, "uncomely." (1 Cor. xii. 23.) To which I answer, First: That no parts of the body are in themselves "dishonourable and uncomely." Secondly. That yet the uncovering of any will be so, when no honourable use requires the uncovering. Thus the prophet calls the "uncovering of the locks, of the legs, the thigh," the "nakedness and shame of the Babylonians;" (Isai. xlvi. 2, 3;) which though it be meant of a necessitated nakedness,—which may be a reproach, but not a sin,—yet when that is done voluntarily which then was done necessarily, it will become both the sin and the reproach.

(ii.) It is pleaded, that what they do is not out of pride,—to glory in the beauty of the skin; nor out of lust,—to inveigle others to become enamoured at their beauty; but only to avoid the reproach of a morose singularity, and a little, perhaps, to comply with what has the vogue among the more genteel and well-bred persons. To remove this: First. It is a branch of holy singularity, rather to be sober alone, than mad for company. What Christian would not rather choose to lag behind, than strain himself to keep pace with a hairbrained age in all its endless and irrational usages? And, Secondly. Compliance with a vain, humoursome generation is so far from being an excuse, that it is an aggravation of the vanity of the practice.

But these are only the *causæ justificæ*, "the umbrages invented to palliate" the extravagancy: the *causæ suasoriæ* ["the persuasive inducements"] lie much deeper; which because we cannot in all make a judgment of, we must leave them to the censures of their own consciences. I dare not say, it is to allure or invite customers: though what does the open shop and sign at the door signify, but that there is something venal? Nor shall I tax the practice of ambition to show the fineness, clearness, and beauty of the skin; though, if it were so, I would ask, Who are concerned, I pray, to know what hue, what colour, it is of, but either their lawful husbands or unlawful paramours? In the mean time, this too plain is,—that arrogance and impudence have usurped the place, and produced the

effect, of primitive simplicity ; and women are now almost “naked,” but not at all “ashamed.”

CONCLUSION IV. *Whatever pretends to be an ornament, which obscures that natural ornament which God has bestowed, is not an ornament, but a defilement.*—“The harmony and symmetry of the parts each to other,” made and posited conveniently and proportionably to their proper ends and respective uses, “is the real beauty of the outward man :” *Κοσμος ἡ του καλλους ἁρμονια*.* Upon the front of this is engraved in capital letters, *Deus fecit* [“God made”]. God is not, we should not be, ashamed of it ; much less should we be a shame to it. The throne of this beauty is the countenance, which it is the will of God should ordinarily be uncovered, that the Workman may be seen in his workmanship. And yet this frontispiece, this portal of the fabric, which shows so much of divine art, God will have covered, when the exposing [of] it to view shall expose the soul to temptation. God would have us “turn away” our own “eyes from beholding vanity ;” and has provided a nimble covering, that with one twinkle we may prevent a dart shot at us out of the devil’s bow, by whatsoever hand or from whatsoever quiver. And so would he have us turn away the eyes of others too, when they may wound themselves, and suck poison from the flower of loveliness and beauty. Now if God would have the face covered, whose great end requires the open view, when the uncovering would do harm ; how much more would he have the breasts covered, whose uncovering may do harm, but can do no good, having no lawful end or use assigned for such laying open ! And if God would have the face, the seat of beauty, to be visible, what shall we say of those who by patching disfigure it, who by painting discolour it ; [so] that we may now seek God in his workmanship, and his workmanship in the face, and find neither ?

How had these wantons repined at their creation, and perhaps blasphemed their Creator, had he made them as they have marred themselves ! They had no doubt got a room in the chronicles amongst the prodigious and monstrous births, had they been born with moons, stars, crosses, lozenges upon their cheeks ; especially had they brought into the world with them a coach and horses. But here we shall be attacked with some

QUESTIONS.

QUESTION I. “Is it not lawful to conceal a gross deformity ?”

ANSWER 1. Yes, no doubt ; but not a natural deformity with an artificial vanity. He that gave thee thy ordinary clothing, expects [that] thou wilt use them to hide thy blemishes ; but will nothing serve thy turn but a fantastic vanity ?

2. It is lawful to hide a deformity, but not with a greater than that [which] thou wouldest conceal. A black patch, forsooth, is pretended to hide a blemish, either natural or, it may be, accidentally contracted. Well, be it so : I demand, then, What if God had

* THEOPHYLACTUS.

branded thy cheek, or stigmatized thy forehead, with a scar of the same figure and colour with that which thou hast invented to hide what thou now hast? Would not such a mark have been accounted a greater blemish than what thou now complainest of? Why, then, dost thou, vain woman, hide a blemish with a deformity? All the quarrel, I perceive, [which] thou hast against the natural is, that it was of *God's* making; and all the fancy [which] thou hast for the artificial is, because it was of *thine own*.

3. Much less is it lawful to hide a natural beauty with an artificial deformity: for what is this, but to be ashamed of what God has done exceeding well, and then to glory in what thou hast made a thousand times worse?

QUESTION II. "Is it not lawful to conciliate beauty where it is not, or to increase it where it already is?"

ANSWER 1. A humble submission to the Divine good-pleasure is the best remedy for imaginary or real defects. Has God made any of us vessels of coarser earth? Who shall say to the Potter, "Why hast thou made me thus?" (Rom. ix. 20.) "Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth." (Isai. xlv. 9.) The best covering for the defects of the face is, to lay our hand upon our mouth, and our mouth in the dust, and to be "dumb with silence, because" the Lord hath done it. (Psalm xxxix. 9.) "Wherefore then dost thou contend with him, who giveth not account of any of his matters?" (Job xxxiii. 13.)

2. True grace is the most excellent receipt for beautifying your face: "Wisdom maketh the face to shine." (Eccles. viii. 1.) There is something (though hard to say what it is) in an unaffected gravity, an unforced modesty, in an ingenuous, affable deportment, free and natural, without starch and pedantry, that recommends and endears more to the acceptation [acceptance] of the judicious than all the curious mixtures of artificial fading colours.

3. Perhaps the evil of thy supposed defect and shortness is more in fancy than in reality: thou art well enough, very well, if thou couldst think so. When we consider our moral blemishes, we deceive ourselves, that we are good, because not so bad as the worst: but when we reflect on our natural defects, we are apt to repine, because we are not as good as the best; and whilst we pore only on what we want, we lose the contentment, and our God the glory, of what we have.

4. And it should be considered that, as some, designing to make it burn the clearer, snuff the candle too low, and so near, till they quite extinguish it; and as others are always careening the vessel of the body with physic, washing and tallowing with external applications, till they sink it; so are many tampering continually to mend the feature and complexion,—which God made very well,—because it pleased him to make them no other, till they utterly spoil them.

5. But yet we must know, that there is "a mid-sized beauty, a moderate rate of comeliness," which the ancients called, *formam statam*; such a mediocrity as is below envy and above contempt: concerning which I observe,

(1.) That this moderate assize of beauty is the safest posture, and most secure from doing or receiving mischief, from tempting or being tempted, that we could be placed in. It is so in all outward concernments: the cedar of Lebanon is exposed to storms; the thistle of Lebanon, liable to be trampled on and trodden down by the insolent foot of every wild beast of the forest. (2 Kings xiv. 9.) And when we come to cast up our accounts in a dying day, or to give up our accounts in the last day, we shall find and acknowledge it to have been so.

(2.) It is lawful by natural means to recover what preternatural accidents have taken away. If sickness has impaired thy complexion and beauty, health will restore it: let the physician do *his* part, and restore health; and health will not be wanting to *hers*, and restore decayed comeliness better than the painter. That the physician is God's ordinance primarily to preserve life and restore health, I know: but whose the painter is, when employed about the redintegrating of faded beauty, you were best to inquire of Jezebel; for I confess my ignorance.

(3.) It is not lawful to aspire after, nor endeavour to procure, the highest pitch of beauty that is attainable by art, when nature has denied it in things of greater value and nobler use than perishing complexion. God has set due bounds to our towering thoughts. I cannot conceive it lawful for me to desire Paul's gifts, unless I had his employment; and we may possibly overshoot ourselves in begging for the highest measures of some graces, unless what God calls us to shall need them.

(4.) Nor is it lawful to endeavour to restore by art what the ordinary course of time and age has deprived us of. It seems to me that we should acquiesce in the devastations which time has made upon our bodies, otherwise than as a rate of health suitable to that declining may make us more lively, active, cheerful, and vigorous in God's work. "The hoary head is a crown of glory; and the beauty of old men is the grey head." (Prov. xvi. 31; xx. 29.) And are we ashamed of our glory? Do we despise our crown? Will nothing serve but juvenile hairs on an aged head? Must we needs try conclusions* to fetch back the spring in autumn? The former is indeed more pleasant, the latter more fruitful and profitable; who would exchange the harvest for the seed-time? Yet, such is our frowardness, youthful perukes must (if not make, yet) counterfeit black hairs, where age has made them grey; and thus, not seeking true glory in the way of righteousness, we affect and pursue a false, an imaginary honour in a way of unrighteousness.

Let this suffice for the first inquiry: *What are the ends for which God appoints, and nature needs, apparel?*

(II.) Come we to the second: *What is the true rule of decency in apparel?*—That all indecent apparel is a transgression of a general rule, "Let all things be done decently," (1 Cor. xiv. 40,) *εὐσχημονως*, "in a right scheme, in a decent habit,"—is easily granted: but to fix and settle the rule of decency, will be a matter of greater difficulty; especially since much controversy has been raised about it on another

* In the old meaning of "experiments."—EDIT.

and greater occasion. What influence it may have upon our main inquiry, will appear from this confessed truth,—that the suitableness or unsuitableness, and by consequence the lawfulness or unlawfulness, of all apparel to the person that wears it, will depend very much on its agreeing or disagreeing with this rule of decency.

There are six things, which in conjunction, as I conceive, will complete this rule:—1. *The outward condition*, 2. *The age*, 3. *The sex, of the wearer*; 4. *The climate*; 5. *The law of the land*; 6. *The customs of the place where or under which Providence has cast our habitation*.

1. *The condition of the wearer in outward respects*, is of great consideration: for though all men are made of the same metal and materials by creation, yet all are not cast in the same mould by Providence. One wears a public and politic, another a private, character: God has placed one on the throne, whilst he has set millions to grind at the mill; some are rich, others poor; some cut out for masters, others shaped for servants. And it seems to me, that there should be some distinction in the outward habit, proportionable to what Providence has made in the outward condition. But to render this observation serviceable to the main design, take these

PROPOSITIONS.

PROPOSITION I. *It is lawful, and in some respects necessary, that kings, princes, and magistrates, especially in the solemn exercise of their proper and respective offices, be distinguished by their robes from private persons, and from each other.*—All civilized nations have so unanimously concurred in this distinction, that we may receive it as the dictate of nature, the vote of universal reason. Jehoshaphat wore his royal robes; though the wearing them once had likely to have cost him dearer than the matter and making. (1 Kings xxii. 30—33.) Solomon's outward glory was the admiration of the queen of Sheba; and yet, when he shone in all his external lustre and splendour, [he] "was not arrayed like the lily of the field," (Matt. vi. 29,) which gloried only in the bravery of nature's own spinning. So short are the finest works of art of the coarsest manufactures and meanest pieces of the God of nature! And though Herod in his "royal apparel" was eaten by the worms, who fell to, and spared not what vengeance had set before them, before death had said grace; yet the sin lay not in the richness of his robes, but the rottenness of his heart; who, affecting to be more than a man, became less than a worm; and because he was ambitious of being a god, had not the civility usually given to men. (Acts xii. 21—23.)

PROP. II. *There is a lawful difference of apparel, arising from the difference of wealth, titles, and honours, though distinguished by no public office.*—Which our Saviour seems to approve of: "They that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses." (Matt. xi. 8.) Courtiers, then, may assume a garb somewhat above that of meaner persons, suitable to the glory of the prince on whom they attend. And our Lord and Saviour, in his practice, justifies some diversity, who used

both a more liberal diet and agreeable clothing than John the Baptist, whose "raiment was of camel's hair, with a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey." (Matt. iii. 4.) One garb was decent enough in the rude wilderness, which had been uncomely to Him whose habitation was much in the city.

Should I quote that "rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared deliciously every day;" (Luke xvi. 19;) it would be answered, that he was a riotous glutton, a swine out of Epicurus's sty; and he bespeaks our indignation, not our imitation. And yet I might rejoin, that his sin lay in pampering his carcass in the dining-room, when poor Lazarus could not get the scraps and crumbs that fell from his table. The truth is, it is a parable which always speaks a truth, and is founded in a truth, though the manner of teaching be artificial and feigned; nor do I doubt but our Saviour modelled his parable by, and calculated it for, the innocent and allowed customs of his own country. Nor shall I make further use of that man that came into the assembly with his "gold ring and goodly apparel," (James ii. 2,) than to observe, that the sin lay neither in the one nor the other; but in the partial idolizing [of] a grandee, merely on the account of his external habiliments; when the poor good man was thrust down to the footstool, if not trampled under foot. (Verses 3, 4.)

PROP. III. *No ability of the rich will warrant him in wearing any apparel inconsistent with the ends of God's appointment.*—The purse is not the adequate measure of the lawfulness of apparel: conscience may be straitened, when the purse is enlarged. I note this for the sake of those who always defend themselves with a proverb as wicked as it is dull: "If my mind stand to it, and my purse pay for it, what has any to do with it?" I will tell them who has:—*Nature*, whom thou hast enfeebled; those *souls* that thou hast tempted; *thy own*, which thou hast defiled; and *God himself*, whose ends in giving apparel thou hast neglected and transgressed: each of these have cause of action against thee. A man, then, may be civilly able, who is not morally able, to follow the fashions: the purse may bear the charge, when conscience cannot give thee a discharge, for thy vanity.

PROP. IV. *No measure of wealth can justify those garbs which speak pride, vain-glory, in the wearer.*—I grant, that raiment may indicate no pride in one man, who out of his abundance can spare the charge of [it], which it would speak in another, whose incompetent estate cannot reach the expense, and yet his ambitious mind affects the gallantry. Yet still pride and vain-glory are abominable to God in the rich, as in the poor; in the king, as in the beggar. Difference, then, of apparel may be allowed; but pride and vain-glory have no toleration.

PROP. V. *It is sinful to aspire after those costly garbs which are above our estates to maintain.*—A poor man may be as covetous as the rich, and ordinarily is more; because covetousness lies not merely in the having, but in the immoderate and inordinate desiring to have, what he does not want. And a mean man may be vain-glorious and

proud in his rags, and sometimes of his rags; because this humour lies not so much in the wearing, as in the lusting to wear, glorious trappings, beyond what his estate is able to support. And this I note for the sakes of those aspiring persons, who, when they cannot for their lives reach the chargeable matter, yet show their good-will to bravery, in imitating the cheap vanity of the form and shape.

PROP. VI. *Every man, in the account of God, clothes above his ability, who withdraws from works of necessity, justice, and mercy, to maintain his pride.*—No man is supposed able to do a thing, till he be able to do it when God and man have their own. The rich man's conveniencies must be retrenched by the duties of justice; his superfluities; by the acts of mercy: and when these are subtracted out of the total sum of thy income, the remainder is clearly thy own, only in the Lord.

There is a certain order of things which we must strictly observe. If food and raiment come in competition, the belly must carry it: food was *before* sin, raiment brought in *by* it. If justice and mercy come in competition, justice must carry it: we must pay what we owe, and then give what we can spare. If the necessities of another are competitors with mine, mine own must take place; because I am bound to love my neighbour *as*, but not *before*, myself: but if the necessity of a Christian stands in competition with my own superfluities, his exigence is to take place of my abundance; for no man is really able to be fine, till he has paid all he owes to God and man, to creditors and petitioners.

2. *The age of the person* will allow some diversity of apparel.—One thing may become little children playing in the market-place with their fellows, which would be ridiculous in the grave senator, when he sits in the gate of his city. When we are children, we think; we understand, we speak as children; when we become men, it is hoped, we may “put away childish things.” (1 Cor. xiii. 11.) But what was the reproach of the Grecians, *Ἕλληνες αἰεὶ παῖδες*, may more justly be thrown in our dish: The English, in the matter of apparel, “have always been children.” Is it not nauseous to see a lady of eighty smug and spruce up, as if she was in the flower of eighteen? to trick and trim, as if they were new come in, when they are just going out of the world? to harness out, as if for a wedding, when they should be preparing for the winding-sheet? when the coffin is making, and the grave a-digging, and the worms ready for them, but they ready for neither! And hence I infer,

INFERENCE I. *That for aged persons by any habits or dresses to represent themselves as young and youthful, is sinful.*—Their glass tells them [that] they are old; but they believe it not. Time has snowed grey hairs on their heads; and they acknowledge it not. Would they have others believe [that] they are what they would seem? Then they would have them believe a lie: a lie may be told by visible, as well as audible, signs. Or are they ashamed of the hoary head? Then are they ashamed of what God has made their glory. Or hope they to catch some young birds with that chaff?

Silly birds are they that will be so caught: but, in the mean time, how abominable is the cheater!

INFER. II. *All youthful periwigs and paintings, which are sinful in youth, are doubly sinful in the aged.*—Time has ploughed deep furrows in the face; and they will fill them up with ceruse and vermilion. The clock of time has given warning for their last hour; and they will set it back to noon. The sun is almost setting in the west; and they will outvie Joshua, not content [that] it should stand still there a while, but would force it back “ten degrees,” as on “the dial of Ahaz.” (2 Kings xx. 11.)

3. *The sex* may be allowed a share in the decision of this point: for the female has a greater latitude than the male. It was so with Israel of old, when the bride was allowed her “jewels,” but the bridegroom must rest content with an inferior sort of “ornaments.” It would be a culpable effeminacy for the man to affect and imitate all the lawful little ornaments of women.

Nevertheless this indulgence is clogged with some humbling considerations.

(1.) Has God indulged them a fairer liberty? the very indulgence argues the sex’s weakness: it speaks her the weaker vessel, because she needs it. Small reason have they to glory in a privilege which is but a badge of their infirmity! As if a nobleman’s servant should be exalted for his laced livery, and silver cognizance, which is but the mark of a more honourable servitude!

(2.) Has God indeed indulged that sex with a greater latitude? how should it humble them, that they have transgressed the bounds of Heaven’s indulgence! God has given them a longer tether; and must they needs break it? Will nothing serve, nothing satisfy, unless they range abroad in the boundless waste of their own capricious wills and fancies?

(3.) Know, therefore, that the same authority that has given the liberty, has assigned due limits to it; which that they may be better understood, I shall open that of St. Paul: “I will that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with brodered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works:” (1 Tim. ii. 9, 10:) a divine glass, wherein that sex may contemplate both their glory and their shame.

(i.) Here they may behold their real *glory*; which consists, First, In being adorned “in modest apparel,” *εν καταστολη κοσμιω*: that no steam, no smoke, no vapour, flame of immodesty without, discover a latent fire of lust burning within. *Τη αυτη περιβολη μηνυουση των ψυχων την σεμνοτητα*: “That the very apparel should indicate the gravity of the soul:” so Theodoret.* Jude 23: “Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh:” a soul spotted with lust will stain the garment. So Theophylact, speaking of ancient women: ‘*Ας και απο του σχηματος και καταστολης δει κοσμιας φαινεσθαι*.† “They ought,” says he, “to appear modest by their very habit and clothing.”

* *In locum.*

† *In Titum iii. 3.*

Secondly. In being adorned "with shamefacedness," *μετα αιδου*. The face will bear a proportion to the heart, and the habit to both. Rolling eyes, wandering looks, out-stretched necks, fawning smiles, and lenocinating glances, disparage the most modest apparel. "The daughters of Zion," equivocally so called, were "haughty" in heart; and it soon appeared in the haughtiness of their necks. (Isai. iii. 16.) An humble soul will adorn its ornaments, when proud gestures and postures deform them. Thirdly. In being adorned "with sobriety," *μετα σωφροσυνης*. Moderation of affection toward outward things is a Christian's holiday-suit; not to over-prize them, or over-use them. This temper should shine through all our garments. Fourthly. "With good works," *δι' εργαων αγαθων*. And there is no doubt [that] had less been laid out in good clothes, more had been expended in good works. But rich clothing has beggared charity; and since women shone in apparel, their light has shone less bright to the "glorifying [of] their Father which is in heaven." (Matt. v. 16.) Fifthly. Here is the rule by which all is to be regulated: "As women professing godliness." Godliness must be your caterer and cook for the belly; godliness your tailor and sempster for the back; godliness must be consulted what to buy, how to make up what you have bought, and how, and when, and where to wear what you have made up. But did godliness advise to paint or patch the face? to curl or crisp the hair? From what principle of godliness can these vanities proceed? by what rule of godliness are they ordered? or to what end of godliness are they designed?

(ii.) In this gospel-glass they may view their own *shame*: and it lies in that wherein they most of all glory,—curiosity and costliness. First. In *curiosity*: doing much to no purpose, and nothing with a world of pains; "plaiting the hair," *εν πλεγμασιν*, or, as St. Peter phrases it, *εμπλοκη τριχων*, curling, crisping, twirling, variegating into a thousand shapes,—into rings, into mats, into shades, folds, towers, locks. (1 Peter iii. 3.) Tertullian inveighs bitterly against this sort of impertinency: *Quid crinibus vestris quiescere non licet: modò substrictis, modò relaxatis, modò suscitatis, modò elisis?** "What ails you," says he, "that you cannot let your poor hair be quiet; but sometimes it must be bound up, by-and-by dishevelled and loose about your ears? one while staring up in towers, and presently polled and notched close?" *Alie gestiunt cum cinnis coercere; alie ut volucres et vagi elabuntur*:† "Some of you are all for curling it up into rings, others for a loose mode." "Nay," says he, *affigitis nescio quas enormitates sutilium atque textilium capillamentorum*.‡ "Not content with that, you stitch—or I cannot well tell what—monstrous extravagances of false locks and artificial hair and periwigs." O that I could give you a real prospect of a converted Magdalene! She "wiped" our Saviour's "feet with the hairs of her head;" (Luke vii. 38;) as if she would take a holy revenge on that which had been the effect of her own pride, and the cause of ensnaring others; as if she thought nothing too precious for Him that had rid her soul of

* *De Habitu Mulierum.*† *Ibid.*‡ *De Cultu Feminarum.*

seven devils; as if she had found more honourable employment for her locks, than when they were woven into nets to catch poor silly souls, decked with ribands to be a lure to gazing youth. Secondly. Their shame lies in the excessive *costliness* of their ornaments,—in “gold and pearls.” O the reproach, that a little refined earth should be accounted the glory of the rational creature! that we should esteem that our treasure which came out of oyster-shells! that we should be at such vast charge to paint a walking sepulchre; to embroider a tabernacle, whose cords ere long must be cut asunder, whose stakes in a while must be plucked up, and whose canvass covering must shortly be fretted into rags by the consuming moth!

In a word: God has given the woman some grains of allowance. She that takes more, forfeits all the rest. Look to it, lest, whilst you adorn with gold, God should call you “reprobate silver;” (Jer. vi. 30;) and when you load yourselves with jewels, you be not found in God’s balance much too light. (Dan. v. 27.)

4. *The climate where we dwell* may be of some consideration to fix the rules of decency. God has provided us wholesome cloth, and expects we should cut our coat according to it. When the Sovereign Lord “appointed the nations the bounds of their habitations,” he, as a careful and common Parent, provided suitably for all the inhabitants of the earth. Some he ordered to dwell under the equinoctial line; others under the polar circles. To these he gave numerous flocks of sheep; that, as they needed more and warmer clothing, they might have it of their own growth: to those he gave the silk-worm; that, as they required less and lighter apparel, they might have answerable provision. But luxury has rummaged every corner of the earth to fetch home fuel to feed the insatiable fire of lust; which the more it eats, the more it hungers. Alexander Severus and Aurelianus, those great emperors, are reported never to have worn a garment of entire silk all their lives; which is now become the ordinary wear of every nurse of a village. Emperors then were not clothed as servants are now. It was above one hundred and fifty years after Christ, that some idle monks brought into Europe these silk-spinsters: and truly it is no great credit to the wear, that they who first brought in strange religions and new fashions of worship, should be the men who first introduced strange attire and new fashions of apparel. But so it is: whilst we pursue exotic “lying vanities,” we “forsake our own” domestic “mercies.” (Jonah ii. 8.)

5. *The laws of the land* ought to carry a great stroke in the decision of what is decent. It were to be wished, that evil manners might at length beget good laws. But we are not sick enough with this surfeit, to make us feel the need and submit to the prescription of state-physicians. Such was once the extravagancy of this nation in the prodigious breadth of their shoes, that they were restrained to six inches at the toes. O monstrous excess, where the excess itself was accounted moderation! But because I find no sumptuary laws in force at present, let us look a little back into former ages, and step a while into foreign countries.

The Lacedemonian *ephori* were exceeding punctual, καθ' ἑκάστην πολυπραγμονεῖν τα περὶ τὴν στολὴν, εἰ ἕκαστα αὐτῆς μὴ ἀπολείπεται τοῦ κόσμου τοῦ δεόντος.* "That a daily inspection should be exactly made into the matters of apparel, that nothing herein might vary from what was decent, and of necessary comeliness." *Julius Cæsar lecticarum usum, item conchyliata vestis et margaritarum, nisi certis personis et ætatibus, ademit* : † "Julius Cæsar prohibited the use of sedans and litters, as also of purple or scarlet and pearls, except to some certain persons of such and such years." And Tacitus, the grave historian, highly commends the prudence and policy of that law : *Præclarè prudenterque Cæsar ordines civium veste discriminavit ; ut scilicet qui locis, ordinibus, dignationibus antestant, cultu quoque ab aliis discriminarentur* : "Cæsar," says that author, "with admirable prudence, distinguished the several ranks of the citizens by their apparel ; so that they who were advanced above others in offices, degrees, and honours, should also be differenced by their proper habits."

6. That which completes the rule of decency is *common honesty* : by which I understand "the general received practice of such who in all other things are of a laudable conversation." The apostle seems to proceed by this rule : "Whatsoever things are comely," or "honest," ὅσα σεμνά : "whatsoever things are of good report," ὅσα εὐφήμα : "think on these things." (Phil. iv. 8.) Where he refers the decision of what is decent to their outward senses : (1.) To their eyes : "Whatsoever things are comely." First see how well the fashion becomes the back of a sober, grave Christian, before you put it on your own. First consider how a dress sits on the head of a modest, chaste virgin, before you try the experiment yourselves. (2.) He refers the matter to their ears : "Whatsoever things are of good report." We should be like that famous artist, who lay close behind his picture, to hearken what every man's judgment was of it : so should we listen what the generality of sober Christians speak and judge of the new modes and fashions. Their censure is enough to create a suspicion of the "appearance of evil ;" from which the apostle commands us to "abstain." (1 Thess. v. 22.) Again : "Provide things honest in the sight of all men ;" τα καλά, such as carry a conviction of their "comeliness" with them. (Rom. xii. 17.) Again : "Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." (2 Cor. viii. 21.) Let the inward garb of your souls, the frame of your hearts, be such as may approve itself to God ; the outward garb and deportment of your bodies, such as may have a good report of good men.

Only here I must recommend to you these CAUTIONS.

CAUTION I. *All customs that will authorize and warrant your imitation must be rationabiles consuetudines, "reasonable customs : " such as clash not with, offend not against, any maxim of right reason.* —It is a maxim of reason, that the particular modes of apparel should answer the general ends of all apparel : no custom will justify that mode

* *ÆLIANI Variæ Historiæ*, lib. xiv. cap. 1.

† *SUETONIUS in Vitâ Julii Cæsaris*.

which exposes shame and nakedness to public view. Another maxim of reason, that what was appointed to preserve life, should not be perverted to destroy it. A maxim of reason, that none should glory in that which sin and shame brought into the world : and therefore no apparel should make us proud, since all apparel was thus introduced. If an inveterate custom shall plead time out of mind, and bolster up itself with antiquity, let it know that *nulla consuetudo occurrit rationi* ; “ no custom, how ancient soever, can prescribe against the law of right reason.”

CAUTION II. *All fashions of apparel that will justify themselves by custom, must be able to plead universality among them that in other things make a conscience of their ways and actions.*—The custom of a few good men, or of many wicked men, will be an unsafe rule by which to judge of decency. One speckled bird will not warrant us all to be jays and magpies. A single Cato would abhor those garments which Varro calls *vestes vitreas*, “ glass clothes,” and which Suidas terms *tunicas interlucentes*, “ latticed garments ;” wherein, under the pretence of covering, the debauchees of Rome discovered, their nakedness : nor should a thousand precedents encourage one sober Christian to herd with those in this, who in many other things give a demonstration that they are under no ties of conscience.

CAUTION III. *Not only customs which cross the ends of nature and the rules of scripture, but such as are vain and trifling, contribute nothing to the rule of decency.*—Our blessed Saviour has left us a smart word : “ That every idle word,” *παν ῥημα αργον*, “ that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.” (Matt. xii. 36.) And if of “ every idle word,” no doubt of every idle action and practice. If we could, then, certainly tell what an “ idle word” is, we might with the same labour learn what an idle action is. If indeed an “ idle word” in that text denote “ a false or blasphemous speech,” I see not how we can make any use of it here : but with the leave of that learned paraphrast who thus glosses it, I conceive [that] an “ idle word” is somewhat below that, and does signify “ whatever speech is not designed for some good end and use, either natural or moral ; discourse that has no tendency to any thing that is good or useful.” And if so, what may we judge of vain apparel, which complies not with any end of God, of nature ; which neither hides, nor warms, nor adorns the body ? But thus much of the second inquiry.

(III.) I come to the third : *From what inward principles these outward fashions of apparel are taken up.*—As is the heart, so is the man ; and as is the man, such commonly will the garb, the apparel, all his outward behaviour and deportment, be. An evil mind will give an evil tincture to every thing [that] he uses : “ Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure.” (Titus i. 15.) Only we must here remember what was before observed,—that though an evil principle will make the action that proceeds from it sin, a good one will not serve to convert an indifferent action into good, if there be not a concurrence of all other circumstances which ought to be pre-

sent. But hence we shall gain one general rule:—All fashions of apparel, however lawful in themselves, that spring from or give indications of an evil heart, are sinfully used. Augustus Cæsar was wont to say, that “rich and gay clothing was either the sign of pride or the nurse of luxury.” * Perhaps he might be mistaken; nor can any such necessary connexion between pride and costly apparel be demonstrated as shall *infallibly* prove them sinful. Nevertheless, when at any time they do so spring from an evil principle, they may, without violating the law of charity, be doomed as evil. It was an argument of the sobriety of that great emperor, what the same author reports of him,—that “he never wore any apparel but such as his wife, his sister, or daughter, made for him.” Nor indeed do we read of any such trade as that of a tailor in all the scripture; which argues the simplicity and plainness of their habits, that they needed little art and skill, little labour and pains, to make them up.

There are four main principles, amongst some others, from whence these strange, uncouth fashions may and, I fear, ordinarily do arise:—levity of mind, vain-glory, flattery, and idleness.

1. *Levity of mind* is certainly an evil frame,—if that may be called “a frame” which never abides so long as to form an acquired habit. “This various humour has thus much of good in it,”—that if it chops on an evil and incommodious fashion, it will never continue long in it: *Aliquisque malo fuit usus in illo*. Perhaps there is no fashion so foolish as the folly of men,—that they will not abide in any. If it was evil, why did you take it up? if good, why did you lay it down? Δὸς σοῦ σταμεν † I could wish they would or could “tell us where they will fix.” It is strange to hear our gallants cry up, and cry for, that mode to-day, which they will decry and throw away to-morrow: and, yet more strange, to hear a new-born fashion extolled for “the most commodious, convenient, useful, that ever appeared;” and yet, when a newer mode starts up before them, to decry it as “absurd, ridiculous, and inconvenient;” and all the epithets which yesterday were studied to adorn it, are transferred to the latter. “Remember this,” says the prophet, “and show yourselves men.” (Isai. xlvi. 8.) Will you always be children, tossed up and down with every wind of novelty that blows from every quarter of the compass? Nay, herein worse than children, who in time will out-grow their toys and trifles; whereas our *γεροντοπαίδες*, “old boys and old girls,” of fifty, sixty, or more, grow more morose in their inconstancy. And if we would have a stuff that should suit these various shapes, and also agree with their levity, it must be all of changeable taffata.

2. Whatever modes of apparel do indicate or proceed from a *spirit of vain-glory*, are sinfully used. Vain-glory is nothing but *appetitus gloriæ inordinatus*, † “an inordinate desire of glory;” when a person, not content with a moderate repute, such as may vindicate him from contempt, and render him serviceable in his station, must be τῆς

* SÆTONIUS. † “Afford us a place where we may stand.”—EDIT. † FRANCISCI TOLETI *Summa de Instructione Sacerdotum*, lib. viii. cap. 6.

μεγας, aut Cæsar aut nullus*, "either all or nothing." And the malignity of it lies, either, (1.) In hunting after applause for some excellency that he would be thought to have in him, when he has it not: or, (2.) In aspiring after glory, on the account of some little worth, far more than the thing deserves: or, (3.) In being ambitious of glory from that which really deserves reproach and contempt. Hence we have these

RULES.

RULE I. *It argues a vicious frame of heart, to affect the appearance of being rich by costly apparel, when one is really poor.*—It is no very commendable quality, to desire to be thought rich, though a man be what he would be thought. We should rather give the Donor his glory of them, and glorify him with them, than make them matter of ostentation. But to affect the appearance without the thing, is somewhat that deserves a harder name than I shall give it. What a despicable thing was the poor jay in the fable, when every bird had re-assumed her own feathers, and stripped the silly creature naked of its fool's coat! What folly, to be accounted rich, when thou art poor! and by that which makes thee so! What vanity, to desire the shadow, when thou hast not the substance, and when the shadow eats out the substance! which is the case of too many amongst us, who hang their whole inheritance on their backs; and even that is not yet paid for, but must be set on the backside of the mercer's book.

RULE II. *It argues a proud spirit to affect admiration and applause from clothing.*—They that have no solid excellency, commonly court the notice of the world by some exterior adventitious bravery. How do our gallants expect reverence, if not adoration, for their whistling silks and ruffling periwigs; and that all should rise and bow to their state, port, and grandeur! Thy silks and periwigs are but excrements; and the latter, perhaps, of one that died of the foul disease, or at the gallows. Tertullian nips this humour severely: *Ne exuvias alieni, forsan immundi, forsan nocentis et gehennæ destinati, sancto et Christiano capiti suppires.*† "O, do not," says he, "wear on thy sacred and Christian head the hair of another, perhaps some foul-discased fellow, perhaps one that was a malefactor and is now in everlasting burnings!"

RULE III. *It argues the most wretched, forlorn spirit that can be imagined, to hunt for applause from such fashions as are a shame to thy profession, to thy person, family, age, sex, and species.*—If it be sinful to affect glory from beauty, what is it then to affect it from a borrowed, a counterfeit beauty? If from thy own curled, crisped hair, what then from false hair? If from so mean a thing as thy own red and white, what then from painting, patching, and an adulterate complexion? *In Deum delinquent quæ cutim medicaminibus unguunt, genas rubore maculant, oculos fuligine collinunt; displicet*

* "Some great one," Acts viii. 9.—EDIT.

† TERTULLIANUS *De Cultu Femi-*

narum.

*illis nimirum plastica Dei.** "They grievously offend God that daub their skin with ointments and slobber-sauces, that besmear their cheeks with vernilion, that black their eye-brows with *stibium*. It seems, they are ashamed, forsooth, of God's handy-work." *Quod nascitur opus Dei est; ergo quod fingitur diaboli negotium est.*† "That which is natural, is God's own work; and therefore that which is counterfeit and artificial, is the invention of the devil."

3. That apparel that proceeds from or indicates a *fawning, adulatory spirit*, is worn with the sin of the wearer. This was Judah's sin, in her "strange," exotic attire, servilely crouching and accommodating herself to their potent neighbours' fashions, that they might insinuate and screw themselves into their favour and affections. Nothing passed for genteel and gallant, but what was *à-la-mode*, "after the mode" of Babylon; which seems to be the colloquing humour of Frenchified English, whose business it is to lie watching for the first post that may bring them the blessed news, in what dress the queen and court appeared in the last masque, ball, or play at the Louvre.

Some mischiefs have always fatally attended this frenzy: One, that we seldom imitate the modes of apparel of another nation, but we learn their immoralities, and commonly their idolatries. A second is, that the Divine Justice commonly plagues a people by that nation [which] they most dote on. A third is, that it is very seldom that any nation is fond of the vanities of another, but they barter away realities to purchase those vanities. For when lust is clerk of the market, all shall go, rather than forego the dearly-beloved vanity.

4. Whatever fashions or modes of apparel are the result of *idleness*, are justly condemned as sinful. There are a sort of *malè feriata ingenia*, "brains whose employment it is to do nothing with a world of study," who do *magno conatu magnas agere nugas*; well noted by the divine poet:—

"Much curiousness is a perpetual wooing,
Nothing with labour, folly long a-doing." †

How many mis-employ their souls only to undo them! as if God had given them immortal spirits capable of serving him, and they should use them only in contriving how to adorn, but indeed pollute, the body!

(IV.) Proceed we now to the last inquiry: *What are the consequences or effects which these modes and strange fashions of apparel have upon ourselves or others?*—Every Christian is bound to consider his ways, whither they tend, and in what they are likely to issue; not only that his ends and aims be right, but that his actions be such as may reach them. There is, 1. "The end of the work," *fnis operis*; and, 2. "The end of the workman," *fnis operantis*. The end of the work is either, 1. "Such as follows necessarily or naturally from it," *fnis per se*; or, 2. "That which accidentally or contingently follows thereupon," *fnis per accidens*. Thus far, then, we may determine:—

* TERTULLIANUS *De Cultu Feminarum*.
"Church Porch."

† Idem, *ibid*.

‡ HERBERT'S

1. *For sober persons to imitate the fashions of the loose, so as to take away all external distinction between the virtuous and debauched, is culpable.*—The apostle would have chastity visible in the “conversation,” and particularly in the apparel, (1 Peter iii. 2—4,) which is one thing that fills up our conversation. God would not have the world huddled up in a mist, that all outward difference between the precious and the vile should be taken away. Tertullian is very earnest with sober women, that in their visiting the sick, going to the public worship, in all their civil visits and congresses, they should apparel themselves so, *ut sit inter ancillas Dei et diaboli discrimen,** “that there be a visible discrimination between the servants of God and the handmaids of the devil.” It is pity there are any such profligate wretches; but seeing there are and will be so, it is a thousand pities but they should be known by their attire. It was so of old: we read of a young man, met by “a woman with the attire of an harlot;” and she was no hypocrite,—her heart was as whorish as her habit. (Prov. vii. 10.) Judah took Tamar upon suspicion for one of the same character, partly by her veil, but more by her sitting “in an open place” by the highway-side. (Gen. xxxviii. 14.) But we may now take up a lamentation, “As is the profane, so is the professor; and as is the harlot, so in this particular are many whom we hope to be chaste.” If a wise man would not willingly be seen abroad in a fool’s coat, why should a modest virgin walk the streets in the garb of the debauched and prostitute? Or, if they will needs do it, let them not be angry if others judge them as bad as those whom they are ambitious to imitate. I could wish, therefore, (though with small hopes to see it take effect,) that as once there was a proclamation that all courtezans should be known by their striped veil, so we had the same or some like law revived, that there should be a visible mark of discrimination between two such contrary parties.

2. *That apparel which we find to gratify or awaken corruption in our own souls, though it may be no sin in itself nor in another to whom it is no such temptation, is a sin for us to wear.*—We are commanded to “make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” (Rom. xiii. 14.) In vain do we complain that the fire burns and rages, if we pour oil into the flame to feed it: take away the fuel, and the fire goes out of itself. If we were true to our own souls, we might find how difficult, if not impossible, it is to wear gorgeous apparel, and not to be proud of it; to wear gaudy apparel, and not to feel some vanity awakened within us. That God who forbids any sin, forbids all fomentations of it, all incitements to it. If, then, any apparel or mode of apparel shall cherish or excite lust in the heart, whatever it is to others, it is sin to him to whom it becomes such a provocation. What comfort is it to see another drink a potion without harm, when thou already feelest thyself poisoned by it?

3. *Whatever becomes a bait to sin in another, ought to be worn with great caution; and the ends of the wearer, and the wear itself, to be duly considered.*—In order to which, I lay down these

* *De Cultu Feminarum.*

PROPOSITIONS.

PROPOSITION I. *To design evil, though the effect follow not, is sinful.*—The heart is often criminal, when the hand is not, cannot be so. He that “hunts for the precious life” is a murderer, though God break the neck of and defeat the murder. A man may “conceive mischief” which he cannot “bring forth,” because Providence makes it abortive. And by this rule all they are cast who use or abuse lawful apparel for unlawful ends, though they happily miscarry in them.

PROP. II. *An evil that is the effect of its proper cause, is imputed to him that gave or laid the cause, though he designed not actually the effect.*—We are responsible to God for all the evil that naturally and necessarily flows from our actions, whatever our designs are or may be. And the reason is, because it is supposed that we do know, inasmuch as we ought to know, all the natural and necessary moral products of our own actions. And this will condemn some of our filthy fashions, which of themselves produce these accursed effects. And though God can bring good out of evil, or restrain the evil that it follow not from that which otherwise would produce it; yet because we cannot, it is evil in us not to prevent it.

PROP. III. *An evil which we ordinarily know hath followed and probably will follow any action of ours, will be charged on us, if we yet shall adventure upon it.*—For what, if there be no natural and necessary connexion between that evil and that action? yet if we see the event to be evil, we are bound to prevent it, if it be in our power. He that knows the damning nature of sin, and what it cost to atone and expiate it,—the worth and price of souls, and what it cost to redeem them,—would not be an accidental instrument of the devil, to lead into the one or destroy the other, by any action of his which he may well and conveniently refrain.

PROP. IV. *To be an accidental occasion of sin to another in the remotest order of contingency, though it may not be sin in us, yet will be some part of our affliction and trouble.*—As he that should kill a man accidentally, beside and against his intention, and it should be found “chance-medley” by the verdict, would be deeply concerned that he should send a soul—it may be, unprepared—into eternity.

II. Having now dispatched the first general inquiry, namely, *Wherein the sinfulness of apparel does lie*; I proceed to the second: *What directions God has given us to walk at a due distance, that we partake not of the sin that may be in them.*—To which when I have subjoined a few considerations to press you to such a cautelous walking, I shall conclude this discourse.

DIRECTION I. *Be not ambitious to appear the first in any fashion.*—Affect not to take the mode by the fore-lock. Keep some paces behind those that are zealous to march in the front of a novelty. When the danger is sinning, it is valorous enough *tutus latere post principia*, “to bring up the rear.” When custom has familiarized the strangeness, when time has mellowed the harshness, and common usage has taken off the fierce edge of novelty, a good Christian may

safely venture a little nearer, provided he leap not over those bounds prescribed by God, by nature, and decency. It is time enough to think of following, when the way is well-beaten before us. A modest-Christian, in conscience as well as courtesy, will not think scorn to let others go before him.

DIRECT. II. *Strive not to come up to the height of the fashion.*—Study not the criticisms, the niceties, the punctilios of it. You may be modish enough in all conscience, without straining to reach the *ακριβοδικαίον* [“strict exactitude”] of those super-fineries which ill-employed wits have teemed and spawned amongst us. A general conformity, without forwardness or frowardness, is one branch of that great rule laid down by the apostle: “Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.” (Phil. iv. 5.) There is a golden mean (had we the skill to hit it) between the peevish singularity of some, who morosely admire obsolete and antiquated garbs, such as came in with the Conqueror, or perhaps were worn by Evander’s mother; and the precise exactness of others, who make it religion to depart a hair’s-breadth from the newest fashions. He that expresses the general usage of the nation, without curiosity in the finer strokes and smoother touches of elegance, is the man whom I would take, and propound to you, for a pattern.

DIRECT. III. *Follow no fashions so fast, so far, as to run your estates out at the heels.*—*Tuo te pede metire.** Costly apparel is like a prancing steed: he that will follow it too close, may have his brains knocked out for his folly; or rather his empty skull shattered; for the brains are supposed to have gone long before. Advise first with conscience, what is lawful; then with your purse, what is practicable. Consult what you *may* do, and next what you *can* do. Some things may be done by others, which you may not do; and there are some things which you might lawfully do, if you could conveniently do them. “All things” indifferent “are lawful” in themselves; “but all things are not expedient” to some under some circumstances; and what is not expedient, so far as it is not so, is unlawful. (1 Cor. x. 23.)

If you will drink by another man’s cup, you may be drunk, when he is sober; and if you will clothe at another man’s rate, you may be a beggar, when he feels not the charge. But how many have run themselves out of their estates into debt, and from the height of gallyantry sunk to the depth of poverty, forced either into a gaol or out of their country, whilst they would strain to keep pace with a fashion that was too nimble and fleet for their revenues?

DIRECT. IV. *Follow lawful fashions a-breast with your equals.*—But be sure you get right notions, *who* are your equals. Some may be less than your equals in birth, who are more than so in estates: pedigrees and titles will not discharge long bills and reckonings. And some may be your equals in both, who are not so in that wherein equality is most valuable. Walk, then, hand-in-hand with them who

* ERASMI *Adagia*, p. 60. “Measure yourself by your own foot.” Tantamount in meaning to the old proverb, employed by our author himself in this sermon, “Cut your coat according to your cloth.”—EDIT.

are "heirs together" with you "of the grace of life," (1 Peter iii. 7,) who are partakers with you of the same "precious faith;" (2 Peter i. 1;) with those who have the same hopes with you "of the common salvation." (Jude 3.) Why should we zealously affect a conformity to them in apparel, from whom we must separate in a little time for eternity?

Abraham was a great prince; and yet he "dwelt in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise." (Heb. xi. 9.) And if a tent would serve him and them, why make we such ado for palaces? Abraham had a promise that he should be "heir of the world;" (Rom. iv. 13;) and yet he confessed he was but a stranger, a pilgrim, a sojourner, even in the Land of Promise; (Heb. xi. 13;) and was always in a travelling garb and habit, ready at an hour's, a minute's, warning to dislodge, and follow whither God should call him. Why then do we clothe as if we were at home, citizens of this world; when we are but tenants-at-will, and have here "no certain dwelling-place?" (1 Cor. iv. 11.)

DIRECT. V. *Come not near those fashions whose numerous implements, trinkets, and tackling require much time in dressing and undressing.*—No cost of apparel is so ill bestowed as that of precious time in apparelling. And if common time be so ill spent, what is the solemn, sacred time, laid out in such curiosity! How many sabbaths, sermons, sacraments, prayers, praises, psalms, chapters, meditations, has this one vanity devoured! Let me recommend the counsel of holy Mr. Herbert to you:—

"O, be dress'd!
Stay not for t'other pin! Why, thou hast lost
A joy for it worth worlds! Thus hell doth jest
Away thy blessings, and extremely flout thee;
Thy clothes being fast, but thy soul loose, about thee!"*

O the wanton folly of our times, when, as one expresses it, "it is almost as easy to enumerate all the tackling of the Royal Sovereign, as the accoutrements of a capricious lady!" and perhaps it requires not much more time to equip and rig-out a ship for the Indies, than a whimsical madam, when she is to sail in state with all her flags, streamers, pennons, bound for a court-voyage. With less labour did Adam give names to all the creatures in Paradise, than an attire-herald shall give you the nomenclature of all the trinkets that belong to a lady's closet. And yet all this is but to consume a whole morning to put on [that], which must waste the whole evening to put off.

DIRECT. VI. *Suit your apparel to the day of God's providence, and to the day of his ordinances.*—There is a day wherein God calls aloud for "baldness;" and do we cross his design with ranting periwigs? Does he bespeak "sackcloth," and are we in our silks and satins? (Isai. xxii. 12, 13.) How absurd is it to appear in the high rant, like Zimri with his Cozbi, when the church of Christ is mourning before the Lord! (Num. xxv.) And yet more incongruous [is it], when God calls, and they that fear his name answer his call,—in a day of solemn fasting and prayer, afflicting their souls before him, and

* HERBERT'S "Church Porch."

accepting the punishment of their sins,—for a gallant to come ruffling into the assembly, as if he designed only his diversion, and to trifle out a tedious, painful hour, till he may adjourn his little self, with all his splendid equipage, to the devotion of the play-house. Thus did the builders of Babel answer each other, when vengeance had poured confusion on their hearts and tongues,—[one] reaching the hammer when his fellow called for the axe : and thus do we answer our God, who calls for “weeping and mourning,” and we return mirth and jollity and gorgeous apparel.

God by an express law granted this privilege to the new-married man,—that for a twelvemonth he should be exempted from the wars. (Deut. xxiv. 5.) And yet though this indulgence held good when the country was in danger of invasion, no exemption was to be pleaded when the church was exposed to God’s indignation. Then “call a solemn assembly : gather the people, sanctify the congregation : let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.” (Joel ii. 15, 16.) There was no discharge in this war.

But how well was it resented * by Heaven, when—at the denunciation of the Divine displeasure against Israel, that he would “not go up” with them—“the people mourned, and no man did put on him his ornaments!” (Exod. xxxiii. 3, 4.)

DIRECT. VII. *In all apparel, keep a little above contempt, and somewhat more below envy.*—He that will veer nigh either extreme, shall never avoid offence, either for sordidness or superfluity. Let not your garments smell either of antiquity or novelty. Shun as much an affected gravity as a wanton levity : there may be as much pride in adhering to the antique garbs of our ancestors, as there is in courting the modern fooleries. A plain cleanliness is the true medium between sluttishness and gaudiness. Truth commonly lies in the middle between the hot contenders, virtue in the middle between the extreme vices, and decency of apparel in the middle between the height of the fashion and a mere running-counter and opposition. Only because our corrupt hearts are more prone to the excess than the defect, I laid the rule, to keep a little more below envy than above contempt.

DIRECT. VIII. *Let the ornament of the inward man be your rule for the adorning [of] the outward.*—Take measure of your bodies by your souls ; that is, Consider well what graces, excellences, and virtues will adorn a soul ; and let something analogical be made the trimming for the body. The apostle will have “women adorn themselves in modest apparel ;” (1 Tim. ii. 9 ;) and especially the graver sort, “that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness ;” (Titus ii. 3 ;) *ἡ κατὰ στήματι ἱεροπρεπείς* ; which the Tigurine Version renders, *in habitu qui religionem deceat*, “in such a habit as becomes religion ;” and Beza, *in habitu qui sanctimoniam deceat*, “in such a habit as becomes holiness.” Now it may be inquired, “What ! is apparel capable of modesty or immodesty, of holiness or unholiness ?” But the meaning is, The garment, the manner of dressing or wearing, must be such as indicates and discovers such qualities lodging in the

* See note †, p. 117.—EDIT.

soul. And indeed if we could get the soul suitably adorned, it would cut out, make up, put on, and wear suitable ornaments. The apostle Peter commands us all to "be clothed with humility." (1 Peter v. 5.) Humility is a very proper wear for a sinner: and if the soul be thus clothed, you may trust her to clothe the body. When the inward man is new-framed and new-fashioned, let it alone to frame and fashion the outward attire. The Platonists say that *anima format sibi domicilium*, "it is the soul that forms its house to dwell in:" and she that is so rare an architect as to build the house, will take care that it be conveniently tiled.

DIRECT. IX. *Get the heart mortified, and that will mortify the habit.*—Let grace circumscribe that, and that will circumscribe the long hair and sweeping train, with all the impertinent superfluities that wait on vain-glory. Heal the heart of its inward pride, and that will retrench the excesses of the outward. I do not wonder that we find it so difficult to convince idle women, that these gaieties and extravagancies of curled hair, painting, and patching, are sinful, when we cannot convince them of the evil of impenitency and unbelief.

The most compendious way of reforming persons, families, nations, and churches, is to begin at and deal with the heart; as the shortest way to fell the tree is by sound blows at the root. Could we lay the axe to heart-pride, the branches would fall, the leaves wither, the fruit fade, with one and the same labour. It is an endless labour to demolish this castle of pride by beginning at the top: undermine the foundation, and all the glory of the superstructure falls with it. As a pure living spring will work itself clean from all the accidental filth that is thrown into it from without, so the cleansing of the heart will cleanse the rest. And when the Spirit of Christ shall undertake this work,—to convince the soul effectually of sin, of the sin of nature, and the nature of sin,—all these little appendices and appurtenances of vanity will fall and drop of course. For this was our blessed Saviour's method: "Cleanse the inside of the cup or platter, and the outside will be clean also." (Matt. xxiii. 26.) And if we could (as supernatural grace only can) "make the tree good," the fruit would be good by consequence. (Matt. xii. 33.)

DIRECT. X. *Whatever fashions of apparel you have found a temptation to your own souls when worn by others, in prudence avoid them.*—You may reasonably suspect, that what has been a snare to you, will be so to another. For though all are not guilty of the same actual sins, yet all have the same seeds of sins in them; and what has awakened your pride and lust, may awaken the same corruptions in your neighbour.

DIRECT. XI. *Let all your indifferences be brought under the government and guidance of religion.*—Indifferent things in their general natures are neither good nor evil; but when religion has the main stroke in managing and ordering them, it will make them good and not evil. Advise with God's glory what you shall eat, what you shall drink, and what you shall put on; that will teach us to deny ourselves in some particulars of our Christian liberty: "Whether ye eat,

or drink, or whatsoever ye do" else, "do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor. x. 31.) Than which, all the masters of the art of eating, all the mistresses of the science of dressing, cannot give you a more approved directory.

DIRECT. XII. *Use all these indifferent things with an indifferent affection to them, an indifferent concern for them and about them.*—Treat them, value them, as they deserve. Clothes commend us not to God, nor to wise and good men: why are we then so solicitous about them, as if the kingdom of God lay in them? The apostle, in consideration that "the time is short," would have us "use this world as not abusing it," because "the fashion of this world passeth away." (1 Cor. vii. 29, 31.) Yet a little while, and there will be no use, because no need, of them. But God and the world are commonly of contrary judgments; and "that which is highly esteemed among men is" oftentimes an "abomination in the sight of God." (Luke xvi. 15.) Lukewarmness is a temper hot enough for what is neither good nor evil. How great, then, is our sin, who are stone-cold in those matters wherein God would have us "fervent in spirit;" but where he would have us cool and moderate, all of a flame!

DIRECT. XIII. *Lastly. Seek that honour chiefly which comes from God only.*—The world is never so wise or so good that we should much value its good word or approbation, but oftentimes so bad and foolish that its commendation is our reproach. What evil have we done, that an evil world should speak well of us? To be accounted honourable by Him, and made beautiful by Him, is true honour, real beauty. In his judgment stands our absolution or condemnation; in his sentence, our life or death; to Him and by Him we stand or fall. (Rom. xiv. 4.) What a wretched honour is it that we receive from apparel, which is no part of ourselves, and for which we are beholden to the trivial skill of a tailor, or attire-woman! But the true reason of the affectation of these vanities lies in that of our Saviour: "How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" (John v. 44.)

CONSIDERATIONS TO PRESS TO SUCH A CAUTELOUS WALKING,
THAT WE PARTAKE NOT IN THE SINFULNESS OF STRANGE
APPAREL.

1. Let us seriously consider, *how apparel came into the world.*—"Sin brought-in shame, and shame brought-in apparel, and apparel has at last brought-in more sin and shame."* The old riddle has here found an Œdipus:—

Mater me genuit; peperit mox filia matrem.

In the state of primitive integrity, man was clothed with original righteousness. He wore the glorious "image of Him that created him in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness." (Col. iii. 10;

* This translation, though partaking of paraphrase, conveys a correct meaning of the Latin verse; which occurs in another form, and with a shorter version, in page 439 of "the Morning Exercises," vol. i.—EDIT.

Eph. iv. 24.) But sin has now stripped him of his glory, and exposed his shame to the view of God, his Judge. How great, then, is that pride, when we are proud of what should abase us! how vile that glory, that glories in its shame? It was good advice of Chrysostom: 'Ἡ τῶν ἱματιῶν περιβολὴ ὑπομνησις ἡμῖν γενεσθῶ διηνεκῆς τῆς τε τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐκπτώσεως, καὶ τῆς τιμωρίας διδασκαλία ἦν διὰ τὴν παρακλήν το τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένος ἐδεξάτο.* "Let the wearing of our apparel be a perpetual memorial to us of the good things we have lost, and an instruction what penalties mankind is liable to by disobedience." For, as Gregory Nazianzen reasons, Εἰ μὲν ἦμεν ὅπερ ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐγενόμεθα, οὐκ ἂν πάντως τοῦ δερματινοῦ χιτωνοῦ προσεδεθήμεν, ἐπιλαμπουσης ἡμῖν τῆς πρὸς τὸ Θεῖον ὁμοιωσεως.† "If," says he, "we had continued the same [as] we were at first created, we had had no need of a coat of skins, the divine image shining in our souls." And therefore Chrysostom's inference is very clear: Τα ἱματία οὐχ ἵνα καλλωπιζώμεθα δεδοται, ἀλλ' ἵνα τὴν ἀπο τῆς γυμνοτήτος αἰσχυνὴν κρυπτάμεν.‡ "Clothes were not given us to set forth our beauty, but to cover that shame that proceeded from nakedness." But Tertullian excellently prosecutes this argument: *Si tanta in terris moraretur fides, quanta in cælis merces ejus expectatur, nulla omnino vestrum, sorores, ex quo Deum cognovisset, et de eâ, id est, femina, conditione didicisset, lætiores habitum, ne dicam gloriosiores, appetisset; ut non magis in sordibus ageret, et squalorem potius affectaret, ipsam circumferens Evam lugentem et pœnitentem, quod plenius quod de Evâ trahit (ignominiam dico primi delicti, et invidiam perditionis humanæ) omni satisfactionis habitu expiaret*:§ "If there was as much faith on earth as there is reward for it in heaven, there is none of you, since the time she knew God and understood her own condition, that would have affected a joyful, much less a splendid, garb; but rather have lien in sackcloth and ashes, carrying about her an Eve within, that laments and repents; that so she might compensate with the most mortified habit that [which] she derived from the first Eve; I mean, the scandal of the first sin, and the odium of having been the ruin of mankind." Alas! what pleasure could we take in these vanities, did we consider them as the effect of so sad a cause? And what would the gold of Ophir, the pearls of the ocean, the jewels of the Indies, signify to a soul that was taken up with reflections on its exile from Paradise and the loss of God's image?

2. It deserves to be laid to heart, *how we came into the world, how we must go out, and how we shall rise again.*—Holy Job confessed, that when he was reduced to beggary, he was somewhat better than when he was born: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither;" (Job i. 21;) that is, to the earth, the common mother of us all. And we may add, "Naked shall I rise again. I shall see my Redeemer at the last day with these eyes, but, I hope, not in these clothes." (Job xix. 25—27.) And so the apostle: "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we

* *Homilia xviii. in Genes.*

† *Oratio de Morte.*

‡ *Tom. vi. p. 241.*

§ *De Habitu Mulierum, in initio.*

can carry nothing out." (1 Tim. vi. 7.) And why then all this ado to spruce-up a rotten carcass for the short time that we are to tarry here? We brought nothing in, but filth and guilt; and if we carry out these, we had better never have come in. Naked we came hither; and if we go naked hence, it had been better to have stayed behind. To what end, then, all this waste? and all this superfluous cost is but waste. A little will serve nature; less will serve grace; but nothing will satisfy lust. A small matter would serve *him* for his passage and pilgrimage that has God for his portion: any thing would suffice for this short parenthesis of time, were we but well harnessed out for eternity. Consider, Christians! God has provided "meats for the belly, and the belly for meats;" clothes for the body, and the body for clothes: but God will "destroy" them all, as for those low ends and uses for which nature or vanity does now employ them. (1 Cor. vi. 13.) Therefore, says the apostle, "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content." (1 Tim. vi. 8.) Simple food, plain apparel, will answer all the demands of nature; and what is more than this is either evil, or comes of evil, or leads to evil. If it be food, nature is satisfied; inquire no further: acknowledge God in it, crave his blessing on it, bless him for it, and glorify him with it. If it be raiment, inquire no further; God sent it, he indulged it; own his bounty, and bless the Donor. Neither the length of life, nor the comfort of life, consists in the abundance of what thou enjoyest. (Luke xii. 15.) And how do you expect to rise again at the last day? It was an affectionate speech of Tertullian: *Atque utinam miserimus ego, in illo die Christianæ exultationis, vel inter calcanea vestra, caput elevem, videre in cum cerussâ et purpurisso et croco et in illo ambitu capitis resurgatis; an depictam angelî in nebula sublevent obviam Christo:* * "I would to God such a miserable sinner as I might rise up in the day of the Christians' general triumphing, to see whether you will rise again with your white, red, and yellow painted faces, with your curls, towers, and periwigs; or whether the ministering angels will take up in their arms any painted lady to meet the Lord Jesus Christ in the clouds."

3. And let it have a just place in your consideration, to humble you, that *God once borrowed man's greatest bravery from the beasts.*—He made them "coats of skins." (Gen. iii. 21.) That he clothed them, spoke his mercy; that he clothed them with skins, intimated their vileness. Now, have we since that mended the matter, who borrow our choicest materials for clothing from the excrement of a worm? If man himself (in the notion of the philosopher) and his life be but *ὄναρ σκιάς*, "the dream of a shadow," and his clothing the excrement of a worm; I wonder how he can be proud of it, or draw matter of pride from it. "A shadow" is nothing; "a dream of a shadow" is something less than nothing: and yet such is man. A worm is vile; but the excrement of a worm is the vilest vileness: and such is all the glory of man in his ruff and pageantry. Nay, man himself is no better: "Man, that is a worm; and the son of

* *De Cultu Feminarum.*

man, which is a worm?" (Job xxv. 6 :) מְנוּשׁ רָמַחַ וּבֶן-אָדָם מוֹלֵעָה
 Here are two words rendered "man:" the one signifies "sickness and misery;" the other, "earth and dust." And here are two words rendered "worm:" the one comes from a root that signifies "to lift up the head;" the other signifies "purple and scarlet:" to teach us that man at his best state, when he lifts up his head highest, is but a wretched worm. Some are longer, some are brighter, worms than others; some, perhaps, may be glow-worms; but all are worms, earth-worms, clothed by the worms, and at last shall be a feast for worms. Art thou proud of thy make? Remember, thou art but a worm? Art thou proud of thy outward shape? Remember, thou art a debtor still to the worms; and be proud if thou canst. Only know that "man that is in honour, and understandeth not" who made him, why He made him, and that answers not the ends of his Creator in his creation, "is like the beasts that perish." (Psalm xlix. 20.)

4. Let it have its due weight in your hearts, that *you have another man, a new man, an inner man, to clothe, to adorn, beautify, and maintain.*—Think not, with the atheist of Malmesbury, that you have enough to do to maintain one man well; for you have two. And shall all the care, all the cost, be bestowed on the case, the cabinet, the shell, when the jewel is neglected? Think with yourselves, when you are harnessing out for some sumptuous feast, when the "gold ring and the gay clothing" go on, to conciliate respect in the eyes of others: "Have I on my wedding-garment? Am I ready for the marriage of the Lamb? Have I on the white garment, 'that the shame of my nakedness appear not' before a pure and holy God?" (Rev. iii. 18.) Look into the gospel-wardrobe: Christ has provided complete apparel to clothe you, as well as complete armour to defend you; and he commands you to put on both. Would you have a chain for your neck, which outshines the gold of Peru; or a tiara for your head, which shames that of the Persian kings? "Hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother;" and you have it. (Prov. i. 8, 9.) Would you have clothing of wrought gold, and wear those robes [which] "the King's daughter" glories in, when she is brought-in to the King of glory, that he may take pleasure in her beauty? (Psalm xlv. 11—13.) Would you wear that jewel "which in the sight of God is of great price," beyond those celebrated ones of Augustus or Tiberius? Then get "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit." (1 Peter iii. 4.) Would you have that which dazzles the diamond, and disparages the orient pearl? "Adorn" your souls "with modesty, shamefacedness, sobriety, and good works, as women professing godliness." (1 Tim. ii. 9, 10.) Would you have the whole furniture of the gospel? You have it provided by the apostle: First "put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, lying." (Col. iii. 8; Eph. iv. 25.) "Anger" ferments to "wrath," "wrath" boils up to "malice," "malice" swells up to "blasphemy," and all these break out into "lying." And "put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved,

bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another." (Col. iii. 12, 13.) And, for an upper garment, "be clothed with humility:" (1 Peter v. 5:) and that your clothes may not sit loose and indecently on you, but close and fast, gird yourselves with the girdle of truth. (Eph. vi. 14.) And would you have all in one? Then "put on the Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. xiii. 14.) This is the counsel of eloquent Chrysostom: *Εἶδε τὴν οἰκουμένην γυμνὴν ὁ σαματι γυμνὴν, ἀλλ' ἀρετῆς γεγυμνωμένην. Εἶδε τὸ πλάσμα ὁ ἐκλάσε, καὶ ἤλεθσεν ὁ ἐποίησε· καὶ δίδωσιν ἐνδύμα τοῖς γυμνοῖς ἑαυτον.** "God looked down from heaven, and saw the whole world naked; not naked as to the body, but despoiled of virtue. He saw the sin that they had committed, and he had mercy on them in the transgression they had transgressed; and to these miserable naked ones he bestowed a garment, even himself."

Here, then, is your real ornament, your truly gorgeous apparel; if you have but faith to apply it, skill to use it, decently to put it on, and comely to wear it. In a word: would you have the faithful mirror, that will impartially discover all your spots, all your stains, and help you to judge whether they be "the spots of his children," (Deut. xxxii. 5,) such as are consistent with the truth and power of godliness; and which will not only reveal them, but wash them away? Then take the glass of God's word; therein view and dress your souls every day: but be sure you forget not what manner of persons that glass has represented you to your own consciences; but "be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." (James i. 22—24.)

5. Nor let it be forgotten, *who they were in all ages, recorded for the most curious and profuse in the mystery of ornamentals.*—We find Jezebel "painting her face, and tiring her head," and immediately eaten by the dogs; only, out of civility or loathing, they left some fragments of her abominable carcass. (2 Kings ix. 30—37.) Amongst the rest, I could wish her skull were set in a ring, to serve as a death's-head, to mind our painting ladies of their mortality. The prophet Ezekiel represents the spiritual whoredoms of Judah under the terms of their corporeal luxury: "For whom thou didst wash thyself, paintedst thy eyes, and deckedst thyself with ornaments." (Ezek. xxiii. 40.) That great nothing, Bernice, had got a stock of impudence, that she durst face a court of judicature; and "came," *μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας*, "with abundance of pomp and fantastical bravery." (Acts xv. 23.) We must not forget that great strumpet, Cleopatra, who wore an union, or pearl, worth fifty thousand pounds; which in a prodigal frolic and bravado she dissolved in vinegar, and in a glass of wine drank off at one draught. And it might cool the fervour of our ladies to their braveries, when they read of "a woman arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls;" and presently hear that she was "the Mother of Harlots." (Rev. xvii. 3—5.) And when

* *Homilia evi. de Christo.*

Platina, their own historian, informs us, that Pope Paul II. painted his face, (a shame in a woman, a greater in a man, and yet greater in him that would be styled "the head of the catholic church,") I hope they will not condemn the Protestants of incivility, if they now and then style his successors "the Whore of Babylon." St. Jerome tells us that Maximilla, the pretended prophetess, but really the whore of Montanus, painted her eyes with *stibium*. And history rings with the effeminate luxury of the monster of men, Heliogabalus, who never wore one suit twice, and studded his shoes with pearls and diamonds. Poppæa, the infamous wife of execrable Nero, had the bridles and all the furniture of her mules of pure gold; and with the same metal, or at least silver, were they shod. But let these be patterns, not to provoke your imitation, but stir up your indignation.

6. *And how heinous is that sin, to endeavour to procure the acceptance of men by that which is an abomination to God!*—And must it not highly provoke his Majesty, to see the critics of artificial beauty put out God's work in a second edition, *auctiorem, non emendatiorem*;* as if it had been incomplete as it came first out of God's hands? Yet such is the operose study of our fashionists: what nature made black, they will make white; what age has made white, they will have black. Time has made them bald, but by false hair they will restore youth; as if they would commit a rape upon nature, alter her course, make rivers run up to their fountains. God gave thee short hair; but thou, perverse man, wilt cross him, and make it long; and what thou canst not really do, yet thou wilt pretend to do, and counterfeit, at least, contradiction and opposition to his will: the worst sort of hypocrisy certainly in the world, when men would seem more wicked than they are, nay, than they can be! and because neither nature gave nor God allows this extravagant length of mane, they will supply nature by art, to the affront of God! St. Jerome smartly rubs these painted butterflies: *Hæc ad speculum pingitur, et in contumeliam Creatoris conatur pulchrior esse quam nata est.*† "Here is a lady," says he, "that paints her face by the advice of her glass; and, to the reproach of her Creator, would appear fairer in the eyes of men than ever nature made her." How displeasing is it to God, to be displeased with what he has done, that they may please the worst of men! *Displicet illis nimirum plastica Dei*:‡ "They are angry with, or ashamed of, God's handy-work," who, in Cyprian's language, may disown these wretches for any of his handy-work. *Hæc non sunt membra quæ Deus fecit, sed quæ diabolus infecit*:§ "These are not the limbs, the members, which God made; but such as the devil has marred and metamorphosed."

I know, both painting and periwigs have their palliations and excuses:—

(1.) They that ruffle in their waving perukes, and look like the locusts that "came out of the smoke of the bottomless pit," whose "faces were as the faces of men, and they had hair as the hair of

* "With many additions, but no emendations."—EDIT.

† *Adversus Helvidium.*

‡ TERTULLIANUS.

§ CYPRIANUS.

women;" (Rev. ix. 8;) do plead that they wear them upon good advice, for their health's sake, to divert catarrhs, to prevent consumptions.

ANSWER (i.) And is it indeed so, that the nation is become almost one great hospital? Are the generality of men among us just dropping into consumptions? Then what other lust, what debauchery, has introduced a sinful necessity, and then taught them to plead it? But is it not evident, that the corruption is much larger than the pretended occasion? (ii.) But if cutting off the hair be in some degree useful for that end, are periwigs therefore so? Can no other thing substitute the place of hair, but such a vanity? (iii.) But if this vanity be any ways useful, what does the curling contribute to it? and what does the change of the colour conduce to that effect? Is it no colour but one contrary to the natural, that will do the deed? Or if it must be so, what does the immoderate length signify to that end? How much more ingenuous had it been, to have confessed the sin, and yet persisted in it, than to palliate it with such slender, thin excuses!

(2.) They that are for painting the face, do plead [that] they, good women, do it only to please their husbands, that they may keep a room in their affections, now grown old, and not so taking as in their youthful and florid days. And they think they have a clear text that will justify their pious intentions: "She that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband." (1 Cor. vii. 34.)

To which I answer, with Peter Martyr, *Curent ut velint placere maritis; modò id faciant citra fictionem et mendacium; et de seipsis cogitent, an vellent decipi et falli, ut pro viro pulchro et formoso ducerent fœdum et deformem*:* "Let them do so with all my heart; let them strive to please their husbands: but be sure they do not cheat and abuse him, whilst they please him. For let them make it their own case: would they be so choused as to marry a deformed, ill-looking fellow, whom they took for a handsome and beautiful person?" "An understanding man," as Chrysostom, "would see his wife's face as God made it. And," says he, "when women have once taught their husbands, to be in love with painted faces, they will rather send them to professed whores, than tie them closer to themselves; because common harlots are a thousand times more expert in these adulterations than honest women." And if it be a sin to sophisticate and adulterate wares and merchandise, how much more to paint the face! And Austin, in express: *Fucari pigmentis quo mulier vel candidior vel rubicundior appareat, adulterina fallacia est, quâ etiam ipsos maritos non dubito nolle decipi*: † "For a woman to paint her face, that she may appear either more fair or more ruddy, is an adulterating fallacy; and I am confident, husbands would not willingly have such a trick put upon them." To conclude: if the husband be a wicked man, he will suspect his wife's honesty the more, and be tempted *par pari referre* ["to return like for like"]:

* *Loci Communes*, p. 383.

† *Epistola ad Possidium*.

if a good man, he will need none of these artifices to secure his affections, but out of conscience will acquiesce in his own choice and the law and will of God.

7. And weigh it seriously, *what a long train of sins waits upon this stately lady, vain-glory.*—Pride never walks the streets alone, nor without a vast retinue of lusts to adorn her pageantry. He that will be profuse in one instance, must be covetous in another: riotous spending is accompanied with penurious sparing. A great fire must have great store of fuel to feed it; and an open table requires abundance of provision to maintain it. Pride must be maintained by oppression, fraud, cozenage. If the tradesman's wife lashes it out in the streets, the husband must fetch it in one way or other in the shop: they that spend unmercifully, must gain unconscionably. The mill will not grind, unless some lust brings grist unto it. A gentleman anticipates his rents in the country: he comes up to town, to vamp his lady and fine daughters with the newest fashion. He ransacks the court and city for the fashion, searches the shops for materials to furnish out the pomp. He returns home; and then his poor tenants go to rack: the sweat is squeezed out of their brows, the blood screwed out of their veins, the marrow out of their bones, that they may pay the unconscionable reckonings and monstrous bills that his own prodigality has drawn upon him.

Nor is it one single sin that fills the train of pride. God is robbed of his worship, the poor of their charity, the creditor of his just debts, posterity of those portions which parents are bound to lay up for their children. Pride drinks the tears of widows and orphans, revels with the hard labours of the indigent, feeds on the flesh of thousands. Elegantly Tertullian: *Brevissimis oculis patrimonium grande profertur; uno lino decies sestertium inseritur; saltus et insulas tenera cervix fert; graciles aurium cutes calendarium expendunt*:* “A vast estate is enclosed in one small locket; a necklace of almost eight thousand pounds hangs on one single string; a slender neck carries lordships and manors; and the thin tip of the ear wears a jewel or pendant that would defray the charges of housekeeping for a twelvemonth.” This is the evil of what the apostle calls *ἰματισμὸς πολυτελεῖς*, “costly apparel.” (1 Tim. ii. 9.)

8. *And how many precious souls hath this one vanity destroyed or endangered!*—Not with meat, but—which is more sinful, because less necessary—with superfluous apparel. How oft has thy own clothing been thy own temptation! as the proud horse is made more proud with his bells and trappings. Is it not enough [that] we have a devil to tempt us, but we must be so to ourselves? How often has apparel drawn out the seeds of corruption, which else had lien under the clod, and never sprouted! How often has it blown up the sparks of concupiscence, which else had lien buried under the ashes! Is not Satan malicious enough, subtle enough, but we must do his work for him, or render it more feasible?

And how do you endanger the souls of others! Wicked men are

* *De Habitu Mulierum.*

hardened in their pride by your example: they triumph in you as their converts and proselytes: they glory that the professor is now "become as one of" them. Others are tempted to think all religion a cheat, when it cannot prevail with those that pretend to it to deny *one* vanity, when it professes to deny *all*. Who can expect [that] a man should deny his profit and gain, that cannot deny an expensive and chargeable foolery? Or how will that man deny himself in the bulk, when he cannot refuse the blandishment of so small a branch of it? And how many poor innocent souls, perhaps a little inclinable to entertain better thoughts of religion, have been seduced to unchaste thoughts, designs, and actions! Nay, how many may be in hell, whom thy bewitching, whorish attire hath first drawn into sin, and then sent down to hell! Say not, (if thou art a Christian, thou wilt not say it,) "I will use my liberty, and wear what I judge convenient: if others will take offence and stumble, it is their sin, not mine; the offence is taken, not given. If they took an occasion, I gave them no cause; and therefore let them be damned at their own peril." But didst thou know—or seriously consider what thou knowest—the price of a soul's redemption, thou wouldest not hazard its damnation. "Silver and gold" and "corruptible things" may damn a soul, but could not ransom and recover a soul. (1 Peter i. 18.) What a cut would it be to thy heart, couldest thou lay thine ear to the gates of hell, and hear the roarings, cursings, and blasphemies of that miserable crew; how they blaspheme Divine Justice, curse themselves and, amongst others, thyself, that wast an occasion to send them thither, with thy tempting braveries! Hear Tertullian: *Quid igitur in te excitas malum illud? &c.*: "Why, then, dost thou provoke lust in thy own heart?" *Quid autem alteri periculo sumus? &c.*: "Why do we endanger the souls of others?" *Qui præsumit, minus veretur, minus præcavet, plus periclitatur: timor fundamentum salutis est, præsumptio impedimentum timoris*:* "He that presumes, fears little, uses little precaution, and runs into great danger. Fear is the original of security, but presumption the enemy to fear."

I easily grant that there is a great difference between a cause and an occasion of evil. A cause is much more than an occasion; yet is not the latter so small and light a matter but that many of God's weighty laws were grounded on this,—that the occasion of sin in themselves and others might be avoided. The civil law determines, that if archers, shooting at rovers, should kill a man passing on the road, they shall make satisfaction; that they who dig pit-falls to catch wild beasts, if accidentally a man falls into them, they shall be punished; and that he shall be severely punished that, being set to watch a furnace, falls asleep, whence a scarefire ariseth. But the New Testament is very full: we are not to lay a stumbling-block nor an occasion of offence, nor to use our liberty in that wherein our "weak brother is offended." (Rom. xiv. 13, 21.)

9. Lastly. Let us lay it to heart, that *pride is the forerunner of destruction, whether personal, domestical, or national.*—"Pride goeth

* *De Cultu Feminarum, in initio.*

before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall :” (Prov. xvi. 18 :) a truth so obvious to the observation of Heathens, that Seneca could say,—

*Quem dies vidit veniens superbum,
Hunc dies vidit fugiens jacentem.*—*Thyestes*, act. iii. 611.*

There is the pride of the rich, who “boast themselves in the multitude of their riches ;” (Psalm xlix. 6 ;) there is the pride of the ambitious, who swell with titles and dignities ; and there is the childish pride of women and effeminate men, who glory in apparel. And though this last may seem below the notice of the Divine Nemesis, [vengeance,] yet these light and small things draw down great and heavy judgments. What more trifling and ludicrous than those fopperies mentioned in Isai. iii. 18—23 ? “Their tinkling ornaments ;” as if they would imitate morris-dancers or hobby-horses : “their round tires like the moon ;” an emblem of their lunacy and levity : their “nose-jewels ;” very uncomely, sure, in such Epicurean swine. And though many of them seem to be innocent, as “bonnets, ear-rings, and mantles ;” yet God threatens “that instead of sweet smell there shall be a stink ; and instead of a girdle a rent ; and instead of well-set hair baldness ; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth ; and burning instead of beauty.” (Verse 24.) All which threatenings were punctually accomplished in the Babylonish captivity, whither God sent them, to spare the cost and trouble of fetching home their new fashions, their “strange apparel.”

Archbishop Usher and Mr. Bolton, two great lights of our church, have long since forewarned us, that God would punish England by that nation which we were so ambitious to imitate in their fashions of apparel. And how much is the ground of fear increased since their days ! The plague is never more easily conveyed than in clothes ; and it is to be feared that, with their strange, apish fashions, we have imported their vicious manners, if not their idolatries. The degeneracy of the Romans in this point prognosticated their declining greatness ; and there is no more easy observation than that, when a people cease to be great in generous and noble achievements, they begin to affect this trim way of glory by apparel.

But I must conclude. The use and application must be your own. This sermon will never be complete, till you have preached it over to your souls by meditation, and to the world by a thorough reformation. And if you slight this advice and counsel, yet remember the text, however :—that God “in the day of his sacrifice will punish all such as are clothed with strange apparel.”

* “The morn beheld him vain and proud ;
The night, enveloped in his shroud !”—EDIT.