

saving. But O! my heart misgives me. If God's word so far prevail for their conviction, what means that crackling noise [which] I hear, of fire and brimstone, prepared for their destruction? (Rev. xvii. 16; xviii. 8.)

Cease frightening one another with your purgatory-flames, that are but imaginary; and fly [from] the fire of God's wrath, kindled at his jealousy, that is likely to prey upon you unto all eternity.

SERMON XII. (VIII.)

BY THE REV. WILLIAM JENKIN, A. M.

NO SIN IS IN ITS OWN NATURE VENIAL; BUT EVERY SIN IS DEADLY, AND
DESERVES ETERNAL DAMNATION.

NO SIN VENIAL.

The wages of sin is death.—Romans vi. 23.

It was a censure more true than smart, which a late learned pen publicly, in this expression, pronounced against Popery: *Romana religio, in quantum differt a nostrâ, est mera impostura*:* “The now Roman religion, as it differs from ours, is a mere cheat, juggle, or” kind of “religious legerdemain.” And herein the imposture of that religion eminently appears, in that, under the varnish of Christian, most of it seems calculated only for hooking-in of worldly gain, and promoting of secular advantage. What bishop Senhouse (the Cambridge Chrysostom of his time) saith in his sermon upon Acts xix. 28, concerning Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen,—their crying of “Great is the Diana of the Ephesians;” “The shrines of Diana causing their shrieks for Diana, and their great gain by her raising up their great cry for her, showed there was *dolus in idolo*, ‘deceit in their contention for the idol,’”—may as truly be said of the Romish Demetrius, the pope and the Popish priests,—their eager outcry in the defence of the points of Popery; it being not Christ but mammon, not piety but money, not God but gold, that engageth them in their advancing of their doctrines and devotions. As St. Ambrose spake of Benjamin's sack, (Gen. xlv. 12, 13,) *Sacco soluto apparuit argentum*, “When the sack was loosed, the silver appeared;” resolve the most of their theology into that whereof it is constituted, and silver (gain, I mean) will be found to be the chief element of its constitution. Of this their own writers are fittest witnesses, whom I have cited in their own words for [the] proving of this my accusation. Æneas Silvius, afterwards pope, informs us, that “the Roman court gives nothing without silver. It sells,” saith he, “the imposition of hands, the gifts of the Holy Ghost; nor is pardon of sin given to any but such as are well-moneyed.”† A poet of their own

* DR. PRIDEAUX'S *Lectiones*. † *Nihil est quod absque argento Romana curia dedat. Ipsa manuum impositio et Spiritûs Sancti dona venduntur: nec peccatorum venia nisi nummatis impenditur.*—ÆNEAS SILVIUS, *Epist. lvi.*

saith, that "with them temples, priests, altars, prayers, yea, heaven, and God himself, are all set to sale for money;" * and that "Rome gives trifles and takes gold." † Another relates, that *Romana permutatio auri cum plumbo*, "the Roman change, of lead for gold," was grown into a proverb. ‡ "Only money reigns at Rome," thus speaks another, "and makes that lawful for the rich which is unlawful for the poor." § And, as he goes on, "Lay down but money and then that which was forbidden before as a heinous wickedness, shall now be dispensed with, and made no sin; but without money there is no dispensation." And, as my author Claudius Espencæus mournfully proceeds, "The vice [which] they esteem greatest is, to want money; and to have nothing, is the greatest piece of barbarity among them." And, as that plain-dealing Papist adds, "To heighten their abomination, they allow their very clergymen to dwell with whores and harlots, and to beget bastards, for a certain tax; which they do not only receive of the adulterous, but even of the continent and innocent persons; alleging for this, that even these might have taken whores also, if they had pleased." I blush to translate what he adds; namely, that "bastards, thieves, adulterers, perjured persons, are not only absolved for money, but admitted to all dignities and spiritual benefices; and for money, dispensations are granted for murders, though of presbyters, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, yea, of wives, nay, for witchcraft, incest with the nearest of kin; and," which is most amazing, "for uncleanness," *contra naturam cum brutis*, "for the" (not-to-be-named) "sin of bestiality." || And Rivet tells us, in his *Castigation of Petra Sancta*, the Jesuit, that there came to his hands a book, written by one Tossanus Denys, printed 1500, at Paris, *cum privilegio*; where, in folio 38, are taxed, at a certain rate, "all absolutions in the court of Rome for murdering of brethren and sisters, fathers, mothers, wives, and for the carnal knowledge of a man's sister or mother," *pro eo qui sororem, matrem carnaliter cognovit*. (In his thirty-seventh page of his *Jesuita Vapulans*.)

Chemnitius, in his *Examen* concerning the point of indulgences, gives us a copy of verses written over the altar in a Popish cathedral; of which verses, when I read them in Chemnitius, I could hardly say whether they more proved my foregoing accusation of, or provoked my just indignation against, Popery, that master-piece of painted atheism. All

• ——— Venalia nobis

Templa, sacerdotes, altaria, sacra, coronæ,

Ignis, thura, preces: cælum est venale, Deusque.—BAPTISTA MANTUANUS, lib. iii.

† *Si quid Roma dabit nugæ dabit; accipit aurum,*

Verba dat. Heu! Romæ nunc sola pecunia regnat.—Idem, *Eclog.* 5 et 9.

‡ *In proverbium jam dudum abiit Romana permutatio, plumbi videlicet cum auro.*—DUA-RENUS, *De Sac. Ec. Min.* lib. i. cap. 6. § *Regina rerum pecunia divitiis licitum facit quod in pauperibus est illicitum.*—CLAUDIUS ESPENCÆUS, *digr. II. ad cap. i. Epist. ad Titum.*

§ *Si spes refuserit nummi, quod interdictum fuit prius, jam libere fit et impud.* Quod velatur, numeratâ pecuniâ, dispensatur; quasi nullum sit peccatum majus quàm nummis carere: ut ille apud HORATIUM: *Credidit iugens pauperiem vitium;* (*Serm. lib. II. sat. III. 91*); *et ut alter: Nunc sit barbaries grandis habere nihil.* (*Lib. III.*) *Tara non excipit presbytericidas, parricidas, matricidas, incestos, denique contra naturam cum brutis, &c.*—Idem, *in Tit. pp.* (mihi) 478, 479. *Si nihil numeraveris, indispensatus manes.*—Clericos cum pellicibus cohabitare, liberosque procreare, sinunt; accepto ab eis quotannis certo censu, atque adeo alicubi a continentibus: *Habeant, aiunt, si velint.*—Idem.

the verses of that pitiful piece of poetry are too many to set down, some of them are these:—

*Ut tibi sit pœnæ venia, sit aperta crumena.
Hic datur exponi paradisis venditioni.
Hic si largè des, in celo sit tua sedes;
Pro solo nummo gaudebis in aethere summo.*

The sum whereof, and the rest, is but this: "Lay down your money, and doubt not of getting up to glory." The Romish Jeroboam (I mean, the pope) sets up the two calves of his golden faith and worship to preserve to himself his carnal kingdom; of which faith and worship, the greatest part is purely subservient to the pope's either coffer or kitchen, and of which kingdom, more truly than of war, money may be said to be the soul and sinews. If their doctrines may be witnesses to prove so clear an accusation, I might produce a far greater number than is needful to make up an ordinary jury, by mentioning those of auricular confession, pilgrimages, penance, images, prayers for the dead, indulgences, purgatory, sacrifice of the mass, merits, holiness of places, breaking faith with heretics, the pope's superiority over princes, dispensation with oaths, and this before us, of venial sin. All these arrows, if they were not levelled at the mark of gain, yet, sure I am, they most exactly hit and centre in it: strange they should meet so unitedly, if shot at rovers! If you consult the generality of their doctrines, most of the questions in the Popish catechism may easily be reduced to this one: "What shall we get for our paunches and purses?" A catechism not composed by Peter, the pope's pretended predecessor; (who, though he said, "Silver and gold have I none," Acts iii. 6, yet also said, "Thy money perish with thee," Acts viii. 20;) but by Judas, his bag-bearing pattern, in that question of his for betraying of Christ: *Quid dabitis?* "What will you give me?" It was ingeniously spoken by a late poet, when he thus versified:

*An Petrus Romæ fuerit sub iudice lis est:
Simonem Romæ nemo fuisse negat:*

"We are not sure that Peter ever sat
In Rome; but Simon did; we're sure of that,"

Simon,—that Simon who bartered and chattered for the Spirit with money, is constant resident at Rome; where, some hundreds of years, in many thousands of bargains, he hath been as successful in selling to fools, as ever was his predecessor unsuccessful in his attempt to buy of the apostles. Among all their doctrines of this earthen and muddy complexion, we shall this day more particularly produce this of venial sin; principally both set-up, and shored-up, that the pretended punishment of those in purgatory may be bought off by money; and that without any beholdingness to the blood of Christ, provided the purse will but bleed freely, as drawn by Romish priests, the common purse-leeches or religious cut-purses of the Christian world. And from hence it was, that sins, by Papists called "pardonable," have been rather termed "saleable,"—*venalia*, not *venialia*,—with a very small and venial alteration of the word "venial."

I wonder not therefore that Bellarmine, in his first chapter of venial sin, thus sets out: "We teach," saith Bellarmine, "by common consent, that there are some sins which, of their own nature, do not render a man

guilty of eternal death, but only of temporal punishment." * To which expression of his, orthodox Ames thus replies: *Nos unanimi consensu negamus illud quod Bellarminus affirmat communi consensu doceri*: † "We" Protestants "deny, with an unanimous consent, that which Bellarmine affirms is taught" among them "with common consent." My work this day is, to declare my concurrence with our Protestant divines, in their denial and detesting [of] the blasphemous doctrine of venial sin. Only I cannot but mention, as an encouraging entrance into this approaching employment, the wariness of Bellarmine's expression, in these words: *Communi consensu docemus*, "We teach by common consent:" for he could not say, as Dr. Ames, his answerer, "We teach our doctrine herein with unanimous consent." For, as Medina, an eminent Papist, confesseth, "the Popish doctors are infinitely at odds, and disagree among themselves, in finding out how a venial and a mortal sin differ." ‡ It is true, the black regiment, or rather the forlorn adventurers, of the Antichristian army strike home, and speak out for their general the pope and his cause in this point. Bellarmine tells us, that "some sins are so far from deserving eternal punishment, that God cannot punish them eternally without injustice." Gregory de Valentia saith, that "venial sin may be remitted without any infusion of grace." Sonnius, (the Papist, I mean,) that "they deserve pardon." Alphonsus a Castro, that *peccatum veniale non valet privare gratiâ*, "sin venial cannot deprive of grace." And that wretched Andradius, the worst of the crew, with his more devout brother, Bonaventure, asserts, that "for venial sins we do not so much as need repentance." The provincial council of Mentz dictate, that "many depart this life free from mortal sins; and for lighter sins they shall never be damned:" and that "it can hardly be understood how God should be just, should he punish any for venial sins with eternal punishment." § And that *concilium Senonense* declares, that "he who dies involved in venial sins," (among which it particularly mentions "idle words," of which, Christ saith, we must give an account, and by which we shall be condemned, Matt. xii. 36, 37,) "though he be unfit for heaven, yet neither is it fit he should go to hell, as being a partaker of grace; but [he] is to be purged by the fire of purgatory, out of which he is to be delivered by the prayers of the living;" || and that "whosoever thinks otherwise, is guilty of the Lutheran, Wiclevian [Wickliffian], and Waldensian heretical pravity."

* *Nos docemus communi consensu, peccata quædam, ex naturâ suâ, hominem non reddere mortis æternæ reum, sed tantum supplicii temporalis.*—BELLARMINUS *De Peccat. Venial.* cap. 1. † AMESII *Bellarminus Enervatus*, lib. ii. cap. 1. ‡ *Quâ ratione distinguatur peccatum veniale a mortali, non una est sententia doctorum, sed variant in infinitum doctores.*—MEDINA in *Primam Secundæ*, quæst. lxxxviii. art. 1. § *Cum multi ex hac vîdâ migrant, a lethalibus quidem criminibus immunes, levioribus tamen aliis alio magis implicatus; quorum tamen nemo, sive ob plura sive pauciora hæc delicta quotidiana, damnationem æternam sustinebit: non facile modus inveniri posset quomodò Deus, qui est in omnibus et erga omnes justissimus, non injustus videretur, si non post hanc vitam, per temporales et non æternas pœnas, omnium compensatio expectaretur.*—BINII *Conc. tom. ix. cap. 46, p. (mihi) 322.* || *Cum peccati tantum venialis reus reputè nonnunquam intereat, de omni verbo etiam otioso rationem redditurus; nec illi pateat aditus ad cœlestem Hierusalem, in quam nihil intrat co-inquinatum; nec item Gehennæ subjaceat, quippe qui gratiæ sit particeps, ac pœnæ tantum temporalis debitor: fit ut primùm purgetur ex iis quæ gerat in corpore, saltem tandem aliquando futurus, sic tamen quasi per ignem.*—

Idem, *ibid.* p. (mihi) 198.

As for that council (if we may so call the conventicle) of Trent, it requires that "all bishops should take care that prayers, and the sacrifices of the Mass, should be devoutly offered for the dead, and accurately performed, to free them from the punishment of venial sin." * The same Trent-assembly clearly discovers that they hold that it is not necessary to confess venial sins. It is true, therefore, as I said, that those bored slaves (Exod. xxi. 6) of the pope thus tearingly express themselves in the asserting of venial sin. But yet it was honestly said by Bellarmine, however, that this doctrine of the veniality of sin is taught in the Antichristian synagogue only with a "common," not an unanimous, "consent." For the learnedest of the Papists, as Vega, Altissiodorensis, Almain, Azorius, Durand, Fisher, [bishop] of Rochester, (who lost his head for his maintaining the pope's headship,) but especially Gerson, chancellor of Paris, liberally assert that all sin is mortiferous or deadly; and that none is venial, or deserving of pardon: to all which I add, that, for the first seven hundred years after Christ, the doctrine of venial sin was never taught by any father or doctor, or maintained in any council. Nor can Bellarmine, after his strictest search into the fathers, nor could he, nor dares he, name one of them that ever used the very name or word of "venial sin."

THE MAIN POINT.

This being premised as an encouragement to our conflict, namely, that the best soldiers of the enemies' army are come over to our side, (a sign of their ensuing overthrow,) you may take up the truth of this doctrine concerning venial sin either in an affirmative or negative proposition, which you please. If in an affirmative, receive it thus: *Every sin is of its own nature mortiferous and deadly, deserving eternal punishment.* If in a negative, take it thus: *No sin deserves pardon;* or thus: *No sin is exempted from deserving eternal death;* or, as it is usually expressed, *No sin is venial in its own nature.* In the discussing this great truth, I shall (God willing) discourse by way of, I. *Explication.* II. *Confirmation.* III. *Application.*

PART I. EXPLICATION.

I. In the *Explication* I shall proceed by way of,

- (I.) *Concession*, or granting what is not to be denied;
- (II.) By way of *negation*, or denial of what is not to be granted; that by both the question may be cleared, by being freed from the fogs of Popish objections.

FIRST BRANCH OF THE EXPLICATION.

(I.) For the first way of explication, namely, of *concession*, I grant,

THE FIRST CONCESSION.

1. *All private offences of man against man have a pardon from man due to them.*—And that it is so, the scriptures fully discover, (Eph. iv. 32; Col. iii. 13; Rom. xii., &c.,) in requiring mutual forgiveness. It is well expressed by Chamier: "There is no sin of any against us but is

* *Curent episcopi ut fidelium vivorum suffragia, Missarum scilicet sacrificia, orationes, elemosynæ, aliaque pietatis opera quæ pro fidelibus defunctis fieri consueverunt, piè et devotè fiant.*—BINIUS, *Conc. Trid.* tom. ix. sess. xxv. p. (mihl) 419; et sess. xiv. can. 7, p. (mihl) 389.

venial." * But how weak is Bellarmine's argument from hence, to prove that venial sins do not hinder God from loving us! "If all offences," saith he, "dissolve the love of God, by the same reason should they dissolve love and friendship between man and man: But this they do not: Therefore," &c. †

I answer, The consequence is not only false, but blasphemous; for the favour of God, and the reasons for which that is preserved or dissolved, are not to be paralleled with the friendship of man, and the reasons for which this is either maintained or destroyed. "Nor are the offices of man to man to be equalized with the duties of man to God; and so neither the offences." † To make this plain, I argue,

(1.) *From Popish principles.* (2.) *From undeniable reason.*

(1.) *From Popish principles.* For,

(i.) Do they not constantly declare, that though a man, be he never so high,—he neither doth nor should inflict great punishments upon his inferiors for light and small offences; yet that God inflicts grievous torments upon his children for the least, even venial, sins, even the torments of purgatory, not less than those of hell, but only in duration, (if you will believe Bellarmine,) the least whereof, as Aquinas tells us, is greater than the greatest in this life?

(ii.) Do not the Papists grant that there are many kinds of offences which do not destroy human friendship, nor ought, which yet exclude from God's love? § As when a man, out of a good intention of helping or benefiting his friend, proves hurtful or offensive to him,—this excludes not a man from his friend's favour; but when a man, out of a zealous intention to please God, doth offend him, (as Paul did, who thought he did God good service in persecuting the church,) he doth, with Paul, in that case, sin mortally, and deserve exclusion from the favour of God.

(2.) I argue *from undeniable reason*, the sum whereof is this: Man offended by man hath causes to continue still his love to man, which God offended hath not.

(i.) Man, by the bond of a precept, is bound to forgive man; but God is not capable of such a bond.

(ii.) Man offended is a finite creature; and therefore offences against him are comparatively small and inconsiderable: but offences against God are against an infinite Majesty; and therefore infinite.

(iii.) Offences against man are mutual,—the offended to-day may be the offender to-morrow; but God never can wrong his creature, no, though he hurts it: "What iniquity have your fathers found in me?" (Jer. ii. 5.)

(iv.) Man offended may be, and perhaps hath been, benefited by the man offending; but to God no good of ours can extend.

* *Nullum est peccatum cujusquam in nos non veniale.*—CHAMIERI Panstrat., de Pec. ven. p. (mibi) 182.

† *E'adem ratione concludere possit Bellarminus Deum teneri peccata hominibus remittere, quia homines inimicos suos diligere debent, et injurias ipsis quoad vindictam condonare.*—AMESII Bellar. Ener. De ven. Pec. p. 11. "By the same mode of reasoning, Bellarmine may conclude that God is bound to grant remission to sinners, because men are commanded to love their enemies, and not to avenge the injuries which they inflict, but to forgive them."—EDIT.

‡ *Non est æquum, hominum in homines officia æquari officis hominum in Deum; itaque neque peccata. Ac proinde nullum est peccatum cujusquam in nos non veniale, at hominum in Deum nullum veniale; multa certe mortalia, ipsis fatentibus Papistis.*—CHAMIERI Panstrat. de Pec. ven. § Idem, ibid.

(v.) A man offended oft warns not the offender that he should not offend or wrong him; but God hath a thousand times admonished, exhorted, entreated, threatened, against offending of him.

THE SECOND CONCESSION.

2. I grant, *though all sins deserve eternal punishment, and though no sins are venial, yet that all sins are not equal, nor do they deserve equal punishment.*—The Papists would willingly fasten this stoical dotage upon us, of holding the equality of sin, (as did the Jovinianists of old,) in requital for our maintaining the damnableness of all sin; but what they say herein of us is a mere slandering of us. This calumny Duræus, in his eighth book against our famous Whitaker, (*quantum nomen!**) hath cast upon learned Calvin,—that “he held all sins were equal, because he held all were mortal.” † The like also saith Gautierus, in his Chronological Table of the fourth age; where, speaking of the Jovinianists, their making all sins equal, he impudently tells us, “Calvin’s doctrine is conformable to those who held all sins equal, because it makes them all mortal.” ‡ But blessed Calvin both purgeth himself from the calumny, and confutes the argument on which it is grounded, in the third book of his “Institutions,” cap. iv., by this invincible answer: *Scio*, saith he, *quàm iniquè doctrinam nostram calumniantur, &c.*: “I know how unjustly the Papists calumniate our doctrine: they say [that], by our making all sins mortal and damnable, we set up the paradox of the Stoics of the equality of sins. But,” saith he, “the very doctrine of the Papists themselves will fully clear us. For I demand of them, Do they not acknowledge that among those sins [which] they call ‘mortal’ there is an inequality, and that one mortal sin is greater than another? And therefore they cannot charge me with making all sins equal, because I hold they are all mortal.” § How is, then, the doctrine of equality of sins more to be fathered upon Calvin than upon the Papists themselves?

It is our constant doctrine, that sins and their punishments are unequal, though all sins are mortal. We teach, Though all sins deserve eternal punishment, yet not the same degree of eternal punishment; but some a lesser degree than others. Though all sins deserve a punishment extensively infinite, yet not intensively equal. We agree to that old expression of *Aliis mitius ardent nonnulli*; “The flames of hell shall be less torturing to some than to others:” for some it will be more tolerable at the day of judgment than for others: some are beaten with more, others with fewer, stripes. (Luke xii. 47, 48.) As among the Jews there were several degrees of capital punishment for several offences, so are there in hell several degrees of punishment suited to the degrees of sin. Of which truth the words of Christ are a clear proof; (Matt. v. 22;) which tell us of the punishment inflicted by “the judg-

* “How great a name!”—EDIT. † *In eo Calvinus peccata paria facit, quòd omnia mortalia et æternis dignis suppliciiis censuerit.*—DURÆUS *Contra Whitakerum*, lib. viii.

‡ *Non parùm conformis est doctrina Calvinii nolentis audire peccata venialia, sed omnia definitis mortalia.*—GAUTIERI *Tab. Chron. sect. 4ti.* § *Scio quàm iniquè doctrinam hanc nostram calumniantur. Dicunt enim paradoxum esse Stoicorum de peccatorum æqualitate. Sed suo ipsorum ore, nullo negotio, convincuntur. Quæro enim, Annon inter ea ipsa peccata quæ mortalia fentur, aliud alio majus agnoscant? Non igitur protinus sequitur paria esse peccata, quæ simul mortalia sunt.*—CALVINI *Instit. lib. III. cap. iv. sect. 13.*

ment," which was the *consessus singularum civitatum*, "the assembly belonging to every city," consisting of three-and-twenty; by whom the punishment inflicted was, according to the best writers, killing with the sword. In the same scripture next we read of the punishment inflicted by "the council," or sanhedrim, consisting of seventy elders, for greater offences; which punishment was stoning. And, lastly, there is mentioned the punishment of *γεεννα πυρος*, called "hell-fire," which was by the old idolaters exercised upon their infants, who were sacrificed in the valley of Hinnom: Christ, by the similitude of these earthly punishments, which passed one another in sharpness and severity, setting forth the degrees of punishments in the place of the damned.*

This will yet be clearer, if we duly consider the case to which Christ is speaking, concerning which we may thus understand Christ expressing himself: "Heretofore men have been deterred from murdering others, because the law commands that murderers should be cut off by the sword: but I would have you take heed of anger, because that is to be punished in the next world as severely as murder is punished in this. But if any to his anger shall add evil-speaking, he shall be punished with a greater punishment; as stoning is a greater than that by the sword. And if his evil-speaking be very grievous and heinous, he shall suffer more exquisite torments, such as those sustained who were burnt in the valley of Hinnom." See Grotius on the place. And hereby Bellarmine's cavil is answered; who, to prove that all sins are not mortal, and deserving eternal punishment in hell, argues thus: "Here are" saith he, "two temporal punishments less than that of hell-fire; and because *he* is only guilty of hell-fire, *who* breaks out into such an outrageous anger as to call his brother 'fool,' therefore the other degrees of anger are venial sins, as being only threatened with temporal punishments." But this erroneous sophister perverts the true sense of this text, not considering that the true import thereof is this,—that all the three degrees of anger here mentioned by our Saviour are *totidem homicidia*, "so many murders," as Pareus speaks; and that the three degrees of punishment expressed here, are three degrees *unius specie pœnæ*; of "one punishment in kind and nature," which is, eternal punishment in hell; and that a less degree of torment in hell is understood by "the judgment" than by the word "council," and a less by "council" than by "hell-fire;" and that all the three degrees of punishment here expressed by Christ, equally intend the punishment of the damned in hell, though not in equality of punishment to be inflicted on the offenders.† Thus Irenæus of old interpreted this text. "Not only," saith he, "is he guilty of killing to damnation who kills his brother, but even he who is angry with him without a cause." † So St. Austin, *De Verbo Domini: Omnes cruciabantur; sed magis ille, minus ille*: "All

* *Kpweis est consessus 23 virum singularum civitatum; summus autem ille synhedrion vocatur. Kpweis pena usitatissima erat gladius. Cum autem supra lapidationem nulla pena in usu Judaico esset, quasivit Christus aliunde nomen horrendi cruciatu, qui et gladium et lapidationem excederet, scilicet, gehennæ ignis.*—GROTIUS in locum. † *Tres iracundiæ species totidem facit homicidii species; et per hoc lethales omnes coram Deo, licet impariter.*—DAVENANTIUS, PAREUS *Contra Bellarm. de Amis. Grat.* p. 90, 91.

† *Non solum qui occidit, reus est occisionis ad damnationem; sed qui irascitur sine causâ fratri suo.*—IRENÆUS, lib. II. cap. 46.

shall be tormented; though some more, some less." Thus also Barradius and Maldonat, Bellarmine's fellow-Jesuits, (though not greater sophisters, yet better expositors, than Bellarmine,) interpret this text; ingenuously confessing, that by "judgment" and "council," as well as by "hell-fire," the eternal death of the soul is to be understood, though with a gradual difference of the punishment.*

THE THIRD CONCESSION.

3. My third concession is this: *Though no sin be venial, but every sin deserves eternal death; yet no sin of its own nature necessarily and infallibly damns, but the sin against the Holy Ghost.*—All other sins may possibly be pardoned: (Matt. xii. 31 :) every sin that admits of repentance is pardonable. All sins are remissible, *secluso finalis impenitentiae respectu*, "which are not followed with final impenitence," as is that against the Holy Ghost. Other sins make a man liable to death; this, pertinaciously opposite to the terms of life. This is that sin unto death mentioned in 1 John v. 16, 17. And hereby the argument of Baily, the Jesuit, for venial sin, is obviated; who from this scripture, which mentions "a sin not unto death," and "a sin that is unto death," argues, that some sins are of their own nature venial, and not deserving death, though other sins are mortal, and do deserve death. It is true, St. John distinguisheth between "a sin not unto death," and "a sin unto death;" but by both expressions he intends sins mortiferous in their own nature, and such as deserve eternal death. By the "sin not unto death," he understands a sin notwithstanding which a man may avoid eternal death, and may be pardoned, though it deserves eternal death; and by "a sin unto death," he intends a sin which whosoever commits can never be pardoned, and therefore can never escape eternal death; and hence he would not have such a sinner as commits it prayed for. And that by the "sin not unto death" he doth not mean a venial sin that deserves not death, is plain from this very text, where the apostle saith, that life shall be given for them that have not sinned unto death, by the prayers of the faithful. But I desire to know why life should be given for him that sins not unto death, if his sins were venial, and did not at all deserve death. Certainly, the sin which the apostle calls "a sin not unto death," had meritoriously taken away the life of the soul, and so cannot be accounted venial, but in some kind mortal; and it is as plain from the text, that, by the "sin which is unto death," the apostle means not a sin which is mortal, or only deserving death, as distinguished from venial sin; because the apostle forbids the praying for him that commits that sin which is unto death.

Now if the apostle forbids praying for him whose sin is mortal, as only deserving death, then it would unavoidably follow that none should be prayed for that commit mortal sins, or sins deserving death, but only they who commit venial sins; which is contrary to Christ's both precept and example, who both commands us to pray for persecutors,

* *Tres hi gradus supplicii pœnam significant gehennalem.*—BARRADIUS, lib. vii. cap. 17. *Per concilium, capitale pœnam intelligit; per civilem capitis pœnam, sempiternam animæ mortem intelligit. Christus et eum qui irascitur, et eum qui fratrem suum levcem et eum qui stultum appellat, eâdem inferni pœnâ, non eâdem pœnâ gravitate, dignum docet.*—MALDONATUS in Matt. v. 22.

(and no Papist can deny that persecution is a mortal sin,) and did himself, as also did after him that blessed martyr Stephen, pray for his persecutors. And so clearly true is this, that Bartholomæus Petrus, a Papist, and professor of Douay, in his Continuation of Estius's Comment on the Epistles, on 1 John v. 16, ingeniously confesseth,—that “by ‘a sin not unto death’ is to be understood, a sin from which a man may arise by repentance; and that by ‘a sin unto death’ we are to understand, a sin from which a man can never arise by repentance.” And that a mortal sin may be said to be not unto death, he illustrates by the speech of Christ concerning Lazarus's sickness: “‘This sickness,’ saith Christ, ‘is not unto death;’ (John xi. 4;) namely, because Lazarus was to be recalled to life: and so ‘a sin not unto death’ is a sin from which, and from death by which, a man may be recalled;” * as “a sin unto death” is a sin from which, and from death by which, a man cannot be recalled. Thus also Lorinus and Justinian, both Jesuits, expound this place of John, expressly and fully.†

THE FOURTH CONCESSION.

4. My fourth concession is this: *Though no sin be venial in its own nature, and deserving of pardon, yet this hinders not but that sin is venial by an extrinsic cause; namely, the grace and mercy of God in Christ.*—Though “venial sins,” as the Papists call them, in themselves are mortal; yet mortal sins, through grace, are venial. All the sins of the elect, and of those in the state of grace, are, though in themselves damnable, yet pardoned through grace, and not damning. “There is no condemnation to them,” saith the apostle, “that are in Christ Jesus.” (Rom. viii. 1.) Though the least sin makes us guilty of damnation, if God should deal with us strictly, and *secundum legis rigorem*, “according to the rigour of the law;” yet the greatest cannot effect this guiltiness of damnation, where mercy through Christ is conferred upon the most unworthy. Sins in themselves unworthy of pardon, are venial to the guilty, *ex benignitate Judicis*, “by the goodness of the Judge,” and remissible to the debtor, *ex liberalitate Creditoris*, “by the bounty of the Creditor.” † Though *ex peccati natura* [“from the nature of sin”] every sin excludes from salvation, yet *ex misericordiâ Dei* [“from the mercy of God”] no sin doth so. Though

* *Peccatum non ad mortem dicitur apostolo, quod est mortale quidem, sed agitur ejus penitentia. Videbitur hoc mirum alicui, quod peccatum quoddam mortale dicatur non ad mortem esse. Sed meminisse debet quod Salvator (Joan. xi.) dicebat: Infirmas hæc non est ad mortem; cum tamen Lazarus ex eâ infirmitate mortuus fuerit: sic in proposito peccatum mortale, cujus vera penitentia agitur, non est ad mortem.*—BARTHOLOMÆUS PETRUS in 1 Johan. v. 16.

† *Comparatio hæc inter peccata aptius fit, intelligendo de peccato, non veniali, sed mortali.*—LORINUS in loc. “The comparison here drawn between sins is rendered more apt by understanding it, not of venial, but of mortal, sin.”—EDIT. *Peccatum non ad mortem non potest peccatum significare veniale: cum enim dicat Johannes, oranti pro peccato non ad mortem dandam esse vitam, planè indicat hoc peccatum non ad mortem spiritualem vitam adimere; quod si spirituali vitâ destituitur qui peccat non ad mortem, mortifero scelere obstringatur, necesse est.*—JUSTINIANUS in loc. “A sin not unto death’ cannot signify a venial sin: for when John says that life shall be given to him who prays for the sin not unto death, he plainly indicates that this sin not unto death destroys spiritual life; but if he who sins not unto death is destitute of spiritual life, he must necessarily be guilty of deadly wickedness.”—EDIT. † *Venialia dicuntur peccata ab eventu; non quod per se veniã digna sunt. Sunt venialia reis ex benignitate Judicis, remissibilia debitori ex Creditoris liberalitate.*—RIVETUS, tract. iv. quæst. 13.

sin be not exempted from desert of punishment, *quia vindicari non debet*; yet it is exempted, *quia Deus vindicare nolit*: though not "because it ought not to be punished;" yet "because God," through Christ, "will not punish it."

And hence it follows, (1.) That as all the sins of reprobates are deadly, not only *ex merito*, "because of their merit," but also *ex eventu*, and "in the event;" because no sin is venial in itself, but only by God's mercy: so likewise, (2.) That the reason why the sins of the regenerate exclude them not from the favour of God, is not from their own nature, but merely from God's mercy, all sins deserving that exclusion. Yea, hence it follows, (3.) That though damnation be actually inflicted upon some for their sins, (namely, unbelievers,) yet remission and salvation may be bestowed upon others, notwithstanding they have committed those very sins for which others are damned. To unbelievers, whoredom is damning, and excludes them from the kingdom of God; (Eph. v. 5;) and yet David's adultery excluded not him from that kingdom. The murdering of Christ was imputed to Judas and Pilate; and yet not to those who slew Christ with "wicked hands," whom Peter wills to "repent, and be baptized, for the remission of sins." (Acts ii. 23, 38.) God pardoned David's adultery with Bathsheba; but might not Antony's with Cleopatra. Lot's incest was, Herod's might not be, forgiven. Solomon's idolatry was, and Jeroboam's might not be, remitted. Yea, hence I fear not to assert, that greater sins may be pardoned to some, when smaller may damn others: an idle word may destroy one, when murder and adultery may not another.

And this fully answers Bellarmine's argument for the veniality of sin. It is this: "If all sins be mortal of their own nature, and only venial to believers because of their faith; then all sins should be mortal to unbelievers, and venial to believers. But this," saith he, "is false,—that all sins of unbelievers should be mortal, and all sins of believers venial; for if they be venial to believers, then much more are they so to unbelievers." But why so, O cardinal? "Because," saith he, "the sins of believers are more grievous and heinous than the sins of unbelievers, as being committed against more light and love." Now this argument is easily answered by my fourth concession. It is not false that sins, though smaller *in genere peccati*, "in the kind of sin," should be mortal to unbelievers, and greater sins venial to believers; for as they are mortal to both of their own nature, so by accident, through the mercy of God, pardoning to believers both their smaller and greater sins, their sins become venial in the event; which accident being deficient to unbelievers in their sinning, *nequaquam eorum peccata facit venialia, sed ut sunt sint mortalia*; "it makes not their sins venial, but leaves them, as they are in themselves, mortal;" as learned Pareus, in answer to Bellarmine.* "We grant," as Gerhard expresseth it, "that the pardoned sins of believers are more heinous than those of unbelievers; but

* *Fideles gravius peccantes, venialiter peccant: ergo multò magis venialiter peccant infideles, levius, peccantes.*—Sic BELLARMINUS. Respondet PAREUS: Antecedens factum est intellectum per se; verum est ex accidenti, propter misericordiam Dei venia delentis, non levia tantùm, sed omnia, peccata fidelium respicientium; quod accidens cum in peccatis infidelium deficiat, nequaquam ea venialia facit, sed mortalia sinit, ut sunt sua naturâ omnia eorum peccata.—PAREUS *Contra Bell. de Amis. Grat. cap. 11.*

hence it cannot be inferred, that some sins of unbelievers are venial. For that the sins of believers are venial, it is not from the nature of their sins, but from the mere grace of God, pardoning and not imputing their sins; and therefore to all unbelievers their sins remain such as they are of their own nature, that is, mortal, or mortiferous.*

This also stops the mouth of that desperate or despairing Papist, Coton, who thus argues: "To hold that all sins deserve eternal punishment, and that none can live without sin, is the ready way to drive men to the precipice of despair, especially when dying." He should have said, "It is the ready way to drive the priests, those silly quacks, into despair of purging the purse with the pill of purgatory." But the answer is easy. This argument only becomes those *quibus Dei misericordia est ignota*, as Chamier speaks, "who are strangers to the mercy of God in Christ," and will not trust to it for salvation. It is not the smallness of sin, but the greatness of Christ, that saves us. This pitiful Papist draws a damnable conclusion from a divine principle. The principle is, "No sin is venial;" "Therefore," saith he, "despair;" but "Therefore," say we, "believe; go out to Christ for free remission through his blood, whereby all sin, mortal in its nature, is venial to the believer." And let me tell thee, O thou blind Papist, though thou sinnest much in making sin small, yet thou sinnest more in making my Saviour so.

I shall conclude this fourth concession with manifesting the consent herein of the learnedest of the Papists with our Protestant divines. Aquinas saith, "Eternity of punishment is due to every sin of the unregenerate," *ratione conditionis subjecti*, "in respect of the state of him that commits it, who wants that grace whereby sin is only remitted." † And Cajetan, upon those words of Aquinas, tells us, that "grace is the only fountain whence floweth remission of sin; and nothing maketh sin venial or remissible, but to be in grace; and that nothing maketh sin irremissible and not venial, but the being out of a state of grace; and that which maketh sin venial or not venial is, the state of the subject wherein it is found." For if we respect the nature of sin as it is in itself, it will remain (without grace) eternally in stain and guilt, and so will subject the sinner to eternal punishment, and is mortal. So that "remissibility or irremissibility of sins must not be considered according to the sins themselves, but according to the subject's being or not being in the state of grace." ‡ Fisher, bishop of Rochester, though a

* *Certum est renatos, per peccata mortalia contra conscientiam commissa, gravius Deum offendere quam infideles, quibus tantum cognitionis lumen, ac tantus beneficiorum divinorum cumulus, non obtigit. Sed ex eo nondum inferri potest, quædam peccata infidelium esse sed naturâ venialia: quod enim in renatis quædam sint venialia, id non est a naturâ peccatorum, sed ex solâ Dei miserentis et peccata non imputantis gratiâ; ergo in non-renatis et infidelibus, omnia omnino peccata sunt et manent talia, qualia sunt ex naturâ eorum, hoc est, mortalia.*—GERHARDI Loci Communes, de Pec. act. p. 306. † *Peccato non debetur pena æterna ratione suæ gravitatis, sed ratione conditionis subjecti, scilicet hominis, qui sine gratiâ invenitur, per quam solum sit remissio pænæ.*—AQUINAS, *Prima Secundæ*, quæst. lxxxvii, art. v. ad 1, p. (mihi) 275. ‡ *Sola gratia est principium remissionis pænæ. Remissibilitas et irremissibilitas tam culpæ quàm pænæ attenduntur pænæ status subjecti, scilicet, esse in gratiâ vel non: status gratiæ convenit remissibilitas positivè; status vero culpæ extra gratiam convenit irremissibilitas positivè.*—CAJETANUS in locum prædictum, p. (mihi) 275.

most bitter adversary to Luther, yet, concerning the veniality of sin, he thus speaks to Luther: "In this, that sin is venial by the mercy of God, I am, Luther, wholly of thy mind."* Azorius confesseth, that "the remission of venial sin is a free and supernatural benefit, and afforded to none that are not in a state of grace."†

Thus far are our concessions concerning the veniality of sin, or our granting what is not to be denied; which was the first part of my explication.

SECOND BRANCH OF THE EXPLICATION.

(II.) I come now to the second branch of explication, which is to be by way of *negation*, or denial of what is not to be granted.

That which I peremptorily deny is this,—*that any sins are exempted from deserving eternal punishment, upon the account of any imaginary or imaginable smallness or levity of sin.*

It is ingeniously expressed by learned Rivet, in his *Catholicus Orthodoxus*, against Baily, the Jesuit, upon this occasion, that "there are some who" *de alieno corio sunt liberales*, "cut large thongs out of a hide that is none of their own,"—that, he means, of God's mercy; who measure God's judgment according to their own rule; and, "like foolish debtors, will be judges of their own cause against their Creditor." "That guilty malefactor," saith he gravely, "is unwise, who extenuates his fault before his judge, to whom his whole cause is known: nor is it less imprudent to diminish our sins before that God who can both" *convincere et cogere*, "convince us of our debts, and compel us to make satisfaction."‡ Bellarmine; then, and his complices, are none of the wisest or honestest, who dictate to us, that some sins are so light and little, that they deserve no eternal punishment, but are venial:

1. Some in *genere suo*, "in their kind" of sin; as when the will is carried out to that which contains in itself a kind of inordination indeed, but yet such as is not contrary either to the love of God or our neighbour; as an officious lie, or an idle word: and that,

2. Some sins are venial *ex imperfectione operis*, "by the imperfection of the work:" and these, saith Bellarmine, are of two sorts:—§

(1.) Some are venial *ex surreptione*, "by their unexpected stealth and creeping" into the soul; and these are sudden motions of lusts, anger, revenge, &c., which get into the mind before reason can deliberate whether they are to be admitted or no; and so they are not *perfectè voluntaria*, "have not the full consent of the will."

(2.) Other sins are venial "by the imperfection of the matter," *ex parvitate materiæ*, which are committed in a light and small matter; as

* *Quòd peccatum veniale solùm ex misericordiâ Dei veniale sit, hoc ego tecum, Luthere, sentio.—Contra Lutherum, art. 32.* † *Venialis remissio peccati gratuitum et supernaturalè est beneficium Dei: nemini extra gratiam Dei constituto peccatum veniale dimittitur.—AZORIUS, lib. iv. cap. 10. Nisi quia est ab homine justo, Dei gratiâ et charitate prædito, commissum, perpetuò puniretur.—Idem, lib. iii. cap. 9.* "It would be eternally punished, were it not committed by a just man, endued with the grace and love of God."—

EDIT. ‡ *Agnoscimus quorundam deliria, qui, quod dicitur, de alieno corio sunt liberales; stultitiam debitorum, qui, adversus Creditorem suum, judicium proferunt in propriâ causâ. Certè reus qui coram iudice suo culpam extenuat, cum res tota iudici perspecta est, imprudenter valdè se gerit; nec minus stultè facit, qui debitum suum vel negat vel minuit apud eum qui convincere potest et cogere.—RIVETI Sum. Controv. tract. iv. quæst. 13.* § *Vide BELLARMINUM De Amiss. Grat. lib. i. cap. 3.*

the stealing of a halfpenny, which neither hurts our neighbour nor destroys love.

Against these we oppose, that there is no sin but deserves eternal punishment *per propriam naturam et intrinsecam rationem*, "by its own proper and intrinsecal nature." As the least drop of water is water as truly as the whole sea, so the least sin is as truly sin as the greatest; and the least sin, according to the rigour of the law, deserves an everlasting penalty. The imperfection of sin as to degree takes not away from it either the reason of sin, or the merit of penalty, as Medina, Azorius, Durand, and others confess.* Azorius tells us, from Durand, Vega, Cajetan, that the law of God forbids venial sins; even all sin, both great and small: and that the arguments of the Protestants prove that venial sin is against the law of God.† To which I add, that it implies a gross contradiction, to say that the least sin should be said to be a sin, and yet to be venial, and deserve pardon. For if it deserves pardon, then also freedom from punishment; and if freedom from punishment, then it hath no guilt; and if it have no guilt, then it is no sin. Most true is that speech of Altenstaig, in his *Lexicon Theologicum*: *Nullum peccatum habet rationem ad merendam veniam; imò, potius demeretur*: ‡ "Sin, as sin, cannot deserve to be pardoned; but it deserves not to be pardoned." Nor can Bellarmine with his sophistry prove, that the small sins before mentioned are in their nature venial. It is little less than blasphemy what he dictates concerning a sin venial *ex genere suo*, ["from its nature,"] as an idle word, an officious lie, &c.,—that it is not against a perfect and a rigorous law; that the law which forbids it is not perfectly a law, and hath not perfectly *rationem legis* ["the form or substance of a law"]. But this is false, to say no worse: for that law truly binds the conscience to perform it; and therefore it is truly a law. And that it truly binds the conscience, is clear, both because it is made by Him who hath *jus leges condendi*, "a right of making laws," and also because it hath a sanction, a threat, namely, the giving an account, and condemnation also. (Matt. xii. 36, 37.) And when Bellarmine argues that sins which he calls venial *ex surreptione*, "by stealth into the soul unawares," are not perfectly voluntary, and therefore are venial:

1. It is acutely observed by the learned Chamier, that "a sin may be by surreption or inconsiderateness, and yet it may be voluntary also; surreption not being properly opposed to voluntariness, but to election; when, upon weighing of circumstances, a thing is chosen. For it often falls out, that the will is carried to a thing, though by a sudden and inconsiderate motion: as Peter denied Christ with his will, though suddenly and inconsiderately; and yet thereby Peter committed [a mortal sin.]" § And "though a sin of surreption be not voluntary in

* Vide MEDINAM in *Primam Secundæ*, quæst. lxxxviii. art. 1; AZORIUM, lib. iv. cap. 8; DURANDUM, quæst. vi. † *Dicendum est, ut docuerunt Durandus, Cajetanus, et Vega, Veniale peccatum est quidem contra legem Dei, quia reverà lex Dei prohibet et gravia et levia; id quod adversariorum argumenta comprobarunt.*—AZORII *Instit. Moral.* lib. iv. cap. 8. ‡ ALTENSTAIG, *sub tit. Peccatum.* § *Surreptionem existimamus opponi, non voluntati, sed τῆ ἀπορροπῆς, id est, electioni; cùm, omnibus cognitis pensativisque circumstantiis, unum eligitur denique. Nam sæpe accidit ut motu subitaneo et inconsiderato voluntas ipsa ad aliquid feratur: ut voluntate Petrus negavit, sed subitanè; et peccavit*

the highest degree, yet is it with a true and proper consent," as Ames speaks.*

2. But, besides, the nature of sin, its *formale*, or "that wherein it consists," is not its voluntariness, but its transgression of the law. The law of the Creator, not the will of the creature, is the rule of right and wrong. Voluntariness aggravates, but involuntariness excuseth not, sin.

3. It is excellently observed by the learned Davenant, "That may be said to be voluntary, not only which is committed with an express and actual willingness; but that which is not hindered by the will, when it is bound to hinder it: but the will is bound to command its reason, that it should be wakeful and watchful, to suppress all the motions of inordinate concupiscence." †

4. Further: Doth not the law prohibit and condemn all affections and motions, whether deliberate, or by surreption and indeliberate?

5. And hence it was that holy Paul, complaining of the sin that dwelt in him, (Rom. vii. 17,) was afflicted, not only for the deliberate motions of sin, but also for those that were indeliberate and involuntary: and would he have mourned under them, if they had not been sinful?

6. To conclude this: Doth not the surreption and indeliberate stealing of depraved motions into the soul, proceed a *pravitate damnabili*, "from a damnable and depraved principle" of nature? Must it not then be sinful and depraved also?

And when Bellarmine argues for the veniality of sin from the *parvitas materiae*, "the smallness and slightness of the matter" in which sin is committed,—as the stealing of a halfpenny, or a penny,—I wish he had remembered, that, according to this doctrine, if Bellarmine should steal a penny from his poor neighbour ten thousand several times, he should not yet, after all, commit a mortal sin; since if the stealing of one penny be but a venial sin, ten thousand venial sins cannot make up or amount to one mortal sin. ‡ Besides, the smallness of the matter in which a sin is committed is so far from extenuating, that it often aggravates, the sin committed: as it is a greater sin to murder a man for sixpence, than for a hundred pounds; to deny my starving friend a penny-loaf, than twenty seams of wheat. And thus divines commonly aggravate Adam's sin, by his breaking the command of God in so small a matter as was the forbidden fruit. And whereas Bellarmine tells us that the stealing of a halfpenny or a penny is not against the law, because, saith he, *lex non disertè prohibet furtum oboli*, "the law doth not expressly mention any prohibition of stealing a halfpenny or a penny:" what, if I should ask cardinal Robert whether the law any where expressly forbids the stealing of a thousand pounds? and whether the stealing of such a sum is therefore not against the law, because the law

Iamen etiam mortaliter. Itaque et hæc quoque quæ per surreptionem fiunt, voluntaria sunt, idèoque et peccata verè; inquam, peccata.—CHAMBERUS, lib. vi. cap. 10.

* *Est voluntarium, non quidem in summo gradu, sed vero et proprio consensu.*—AMESII Bellarm. *Enerv. de Pec. ven.* p. (mih) 16.

† *Voluntarium reputatur, non modò quod expressè et actuali voluntate committitur; sed quod ab ipsâ voluntate non impeditur, quando tenetur impedire. Tenetur autem voluntas imperare rationi, ut pervigil sit in compingendis omnibus inordinatæ concupiscentiæ motibus.*—DAVENANTII *Determin. quæst.* xxxi. p. (mih) 145.

‡ *Fide PETRUM MOLINÆUM in Thesisibus Sedanensibus.*

expressly forbids it not? Doth not the general prohibition of theft contain under it all the kinds of theft? Doth not this command, "Thou shalt not steal," forbid the stealing of any thing that is another's, whether the thing be great or small, even as the law forbidding adultery forbids that sin with any woman, noble or ignoble, rich or poor, bond or free? In the overthrow of Jericho, it was not expressly forbidden to steal a Babylonish garment, or two hundred shekels of silver, or a wedge of gold; and yet because of the general prohibition, Achan died for stealing that garment, the two hundred shekels of silver, and the wedge of gold. (Joshua vi. 19; vii. 21.)

Besides, that which violates one *apex* or "tittle" of the law, breaks the law, and offends God. How deeply holy Austin was humbled for stealing of an apple, though stolen when he was a child, appears by his "Confessions." Surely, in Bellarmine's divinity, Adam's taking but an apple, and that from his wife, was but a venial fault. In military discipline, a soldier is hanged for stealing of a trifle, or of what is of a very inconsiderable value. The stealing of the least thing is against a great both command and Commander. And whereas Bellarmine argues, that the stealing of so small a thing as a halfpenny hurts not our neighbour, and therefore it is venial and not forbidden; it is answered: The law forbids not only the hurting of our neighbour in forbidding to steal, but it forbids the violation of justice too. The law forbids inward lust; but how doth inward lust hurt our neighbour? God in his commands respects his own purity, as well as our neighbour's utility.

Further: it is evident that the veniality of a sin committed against our neighbour cannot be gathered from its not hurting him; * for in many cases even Bellarmine will grant, that a sin against our neighbour is damnable, though it hurt not our neighbour at all; yea, though it prove very profitable and advantageous to him. Take an instance in this true story:—A worthy physician, some years since, had a female patient under cure, to whom her lewd husband first gave the foul disease, and soon after he gave her also a draught of rank poison to kill her; but the poison, meeting with the distemper, by its violent operation, overcame the disease, and cured the woman. According to Bellarmine's divinity, he should not, by giving her the poison, have sinned mortally, because he was not only, by his murderous endeavours, not hurtful, but very beneficial, to his wife.†

Still I follow Bellarmine, urging this argument, that the stealing so small a thing opposeth not charity to man, or love to God. I answer: Though a small theft do not *expectorare* or *espugnare* *charitatem*, as Dr. Davenant expresseth it, "destroys not love and charity;" yet it doth *pugnare cum illâ perfectâ charitate*, "oppose that perfect love and charity which the law requireth;" "and it riseth from that inordinate lust which the law forbids, and which is contrary both to the law and love which the law requireth." † I add: "Herein lies the great mistake

* Joseph's brethren sinned mortally in selling their brother, though by that selling him he was highly advanced. † *Vide Theses Sedanenses, de Pec. ven.* † *Neque illud rectè dicitur, hujusmodi peccata non pugnare cum charitate. Reverà non expectorant aut espugnant charitatem hominis renati: sed pugnant tamen cum illâ perfectâ charitate quam lex imperat, et oriuntur ab illâ inordinatâ concupiscentiâ quæ est charitati et legi divinæ contraria.*—DAVENANTIUS ubi supra.

of Bellarmine in this point, in that he judgeth of the nature of mortal sin by the extinction of charity; whereas it consists in any swerving or declination from the law of God and charity.* And when Bellarmine argues, that *præcepta de minimis non sunt propriè præcepta*, "commands concerning the least things are not properly commands;" beside that full answer I have formerly given, as to proving [that] those commands are most truly commands, I cannot but here subjoin that smart expression of Gerhard, who tells Bellarmine thus arguing, "Satan himself was deficient in this piece of Bellarmine's sophistry;" and that "Satan could not more speciously have covered his temptation to the eating [of] the forbidden fruit, than by saying, 'Tush! this is but a little command, about a trifle,—an apple; and, indeed, it is properly no command at all.'"† And truly I should say, that Bellarmine might have taught Satan in this point, were it not that I look upon him in this, and in the greatest part of his polemics, as taught, even to a high degree of proficiency, by that schoolmaster both of himself and his blackest society; I mean, that of the Jesuits.

As wild and weak is that argument which Bellarmine grounds on that of Luke xii. 59: "Thou shalt not depart thence till thou hast paid the last mite." "Lo! here," saith Bellarmine, "'the last mite' can intend nothing but some small, venial sin, to be expiated in the prison of purgatory." But this bold sophister perverts this text, and plays too saucily with a most serious and severe scripture. For, by "the last mite" or "farthing" we must not understand sins, but the punishments due to sins, and the *minutissimas partes pœnarum*, "the smallest parts of punishment in hell." Thus the learnedest of even Popish expositors expound that place: as Brugensis and Jansenius, who make, and that truly, the meaning thereof to be this: "Thou shalt, in the suffering of eternal punishment," *pœnas luere extremas, quantas exhibet extremus justitiæ rigor*: ‡ "Thou shalt undergo the extremity and rigour of punishment from justice." So that "the prison" there mentioned (verse 58) is not meant of purgatory, but "of hell," as Tertullian expressly saith, and "utter darkness," as Augustine; § and the payment of "the last mite" or "farthing," as Augustine expounds it, imports as much as, *Nihil relinquetur impunitum*, "'No part of the punishment shall be abated;' but the wicked shall be there punished," as he expresseth it, *usque ad fœcem*, "to the drinking the last drop and dregs of the cup of God's wrath."

It is but a wretched shift of Bellarmine, when he tells us that his venial or lesser sins are not *contra*, but only *præter*, *legem*, not "against," but only "beside, the law;" by which distinction, this blasphemous sophister not only falls foul upon Andrew de Vega, and other Papists,—whom he

* *In eo labuntur adversarii, quòd peccati naturam mortiferam ex sold extinctione charitatis didjudicant; cum illa in quâlibet declinatione a charitate et lege divinâ se exerat.*—DAVENANTIUS ubi supra.

† *Serpentina diaboli primævos homines decipientis calliditas non poterat speciosiori schemate pingi atque velari, quàm quòd primorâialis illa lex, de non comedendo arboris vitæ fructu, sit præceptum de re minimâ, ac proinde non perfectè et in rigore præceptum, cujus transgressio magnoperè a Deo curetur.*—GERHARDI *Loci Communes, de Pec. act. cap. 19, propè finem.*

‡ *Ei qui non dederit operam, ut redeat in gratiam cum læso a se fratre, contingit, ut, carceri inferni traditus, sine aliquò debiti remissione, exactum jus experiat.*—JANSENIUS in *Matt. v. 26.* Sensus est: *Suummo læcum jure agetur: non liberaberis, donec ponas lueris extremas, tantas quantas exiget extremus justitiæ rigor.*—BRUGENSIS in *Matt. v. 26.*

§ *De Sermone Domini in Monte, lib. i.*

very roundly reproveth for granting that venial sins are properly against the law,* telling them, that, upon that principle, they can never maintain the possibility of a perfect impletion of the law, because, as he saith, they can never get off cleverly from that scripture, "He that offends in one point is guilty of all,"† (James ii. 10.)—but, which is worse, he audaciously wounds the purity and perfection of the divine law, to shelter his venial sins. Further, as that learned Baronius observes, ‡ were these venial, small sins of Bellarmine only beside, and not against, the law, we ought not to call them "sins," but "indifferent actions," and so account them lawful; for that which is forbidden by no law is lawful. And further: if this doctrine were true, he that abstains from venial sins should do a work not of precept, but of counsel only, and so of super-erogation; the Papists teaching that every good work not commanded by God, is a work of super-erogation. But how absurd would this be,—to say, that by abstaining from a sin, a man doth a work of super-erogation.

I shall only add that censure passed upon Bellarmine by Dr. Featley, who saith, that here Bellarmine, for saying some sins are not against but only beside the law, may well be accounted to be beside himself. And as for Coton, that proud Papist, who tells us "there is no proportion between eternal death and an idle word," and therefore "an idle word is not to be so severely punished:" I answer, that as the great and righteous Judge of sin and sinners is fitter to judge of the proportion between the least sin and eternal punishment than any weak and guilty malefactor; so the will of God, forbidding any sin under an eternal penalty, is a sufficient reason of that penalty, and makes the punishment proportionable to the demerit of the sin. I shall only chastise the intolerable insolence of this Popeling by asking him one question; and it is but this: What proportion is there between eternal death, and the eating a morsel of flesh in Lent, or a woman's spinning a yard of thread on a holy day? If you Papists forbid these under pain of damnation, (as you do,) and that merely because the church appoints it so, ye blind hypocrites, may not divine prohibition be allowed to make a proportion between a sin and eternal punishment, as well as that which is human, yea, diabolical? In the latter of which expressions, I am not too severe, as long as we hold 1 Tim. iv. 1—3 to be canonical.

The sum of all is but this: The smallness of sin alters not the nature thereof. Its nature stands in this,—that it is against the law. If it be not prohibited, it is no sin; if it be, it is damnable, be it greater or smaller. I conclude this whole first part of my discourse, its expository part, with that holy and excellent advice of St. Austin, lib. ii. *Contra Donatum: Non afferamus stateras dolosas, &c.*: § "Let us not bring deceitful balances, to weigh in them what we will, and how we will, according to our own pleasure, saying, 'This is heavy; this is light:' but let us fetch a divine balance out of the holy scriptures, and in them

* *De Justif.* lib. iv. cap. 14. † *Videndum est illis quid respondeant apostolo Jacobo, dicenti, Quicumque totam legem servaverit, offendet autem in uno, factus est omnium reus.*—BELLARMINUS *De Justif.* lib. iv. cap. 14. ‡ BARONIUS *De Peccat. venial.* p. 98. § *Non afferamus stateras dolosas ubi appendamus quod volumus et quomodo volumus pro arbitrio nostro; dicentes, Hoc grave, hoc leve est: sed offeramus divinam stateram de scripturis sanctis, et in illâ appendamus peccata; vel potius a Domino appensa recognoscimus.*—*Contra Donat.* lib. ii. cap. 6.

let us weigh our sins ; or rather let us judge of them as they are there weighed."

PART II. CONFIRMATION.

II. I have said what I intended as to the explication of this great truth,—the denial of venial sin, both as to concession and negation : I proceed now to the second branch of my discourse about this point ; and that is, the *confirmation* of it.

And my first, and more immediately scriptural, argument shall be this :—

ARGUMENT I. *No fault is venial in itself that deserves eternal death : But every sin deserves eternal death : Therefore no sin in itself is venial.*

The first proposition, or major, is granted by the Papists, who tell us that the nature of sin's veniality stands in its not deserving eternal death ; and therefore no sin is venial that deserves eternal death.

The minor, or second proposition, namely, that "every sin deserves eternal death," I shall clearly prove *by scriptures and reason*.

1. *By scriptures*.—And I shall name three. The first is that which I named for my text : "The wages of sin is death." (Rom. vi. 23.) The second is, "The soul that sinneth shall die." (Ezek. xviii. 4.) The third is that of Deut. xxvii. 26 : "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them."

To these scriptures Bellarmine answers, but very miserably.

To that of Rom. vi. 23, "The wages of sin is death," Bellarmine answers, that "when Paul saith, 'The wages of sin is death,' it is only meant of mortal sin, and thus is he to be understood : 'The wages of mortal sin is death.'" But I answer, [that] with as good reason, in all the places of scripture wherein we are dehorted from sin, he may cast this shameful gloss upon them, and say, that we are in them dehorted not from all sin, but only from mortal sin. As when the scripture saith, "Eschew evil," (1 Peter iii. 11,) Bellarmine may add this gloss, and say, "We are not forbidden to shun all evil, but only mortal evil." And so when Paul saith, "Abstain from all appearance of evil ;" (1 Thess. v. 22 ;) that is, as Bellarmine expounds it, "Abstain from all appearance of mortal evil." And, "Abhor that which is evil ;" (Rom. xii. 9 ;) that is, mortal evil. Yea, when we pray to be delivered from evil, (Matt. vi. 13,) that, with Bellarmine's comment, is only mortal evil, not all sin.

But, further : I would ask any Papist only these two easy questions :

QUESTION I. What is the meaning of these words, "The wages of sin is death ?" (Rom. vi. 23.) The Papist will answer, "By these words, the apostle means that sin deserves death." Let Benedict Justinian, the Jesuit, upon Rom. vi. 23, speak for all ; who gives it thus : "By the desert of sin eternal punishments are inflicted." *

QUEST. II. I demand, What is the meaning of this word "mortal," when Bellarmine thus expounds this text : "The wages of mortal sin is death ?" All the Papists, with Bellarmine, readily answer, that the meaning of "a mortal sin," is a sin that deserves death. Now, reader, be pleased to add to the apostle's proposition, "The wages of sin is death," that is, "Sin deserves death," Bellarmine's exposition : "The

* *Simplerni cruciatus peccati merito redduntur.*—BENEDICTUS JUSTINIANUS in Rom. vi. p. 191.

wages of 'mortal 'sin is death,' that is, of a sin that deserves death; and Paul's proposition will be turned into a gross tautology, and be made to speak thus: "Sin deserveth death that deserveth death;" a wretched deprivation of the sacred text, whereby they show that, rather than they will renounce a gross error, they will make the divinely-inspired apostle to speak gross nonsense. Besides, it is evident that in this sixth chapter to the Romans the apostle dehorts the converted Romans from all sin; particularly in verse 2: "Shall we continue in sin? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" Now will any dare so wretchedly to interpret Paul, as to say that the Christians are here dehorted only from some sins, and not from all? If any would offer so to expound the apostle, I would instantly stop his mouth by two arguments taken from the context, wherein the apostle dissuades from sin,

(1.) *By a reason taken from being "baptized into the death of Christ."* (Verse 3.)—Now when we are so baptized, is not all sin washed away and destroyed? And,

(2.) The apostle useth another reason to dissuade from continuing in sin; and that is, *the consideration of their former yielding themselves to sin.*—Whence he argues, they ought now as much to serve righteousness, as formerly they had served sin. (Verse 19.) Whence it will follow, that as they had formerly served not only greater but smaller sins, so now they ought to cast off the latter as well as the former, even all sin whatsoever.

Now if Paul by these two arguments dehorts from all sin, why should he not then do so by this next argument, namely, the issue of sin: "The wages of sin is death?"

As to that place of Ezek. xviii. 4, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," Bellarmine answers [that] the prophet only intends that threat against mortal sins, grievous and heinous abominations, not against smaller sins which he calls "venial." But he abuseth the scripture; for the prophet, there setting down the standing rule of divine justice, that none should die but for his own sins, makes no exception of lesser sins from being within the compass of that commination; not saying, "The soul that grievously sins," but, "The soul that sins, shall die." *Univerè dictum est*, "It is universally expressed," as Pareus notes. But, to put all out of doubt, that lesser as well as greater sins are threatened to be punished with death by the prophet, it is plain from verse 31 of that chapter, where the prophet plainly declares his meaning to be of sin in general, without any restriction: "Cast away from you," saith he, "all your transgressions; and make you a new heart: for why will ye die?" All sins, therefore, which opposed "a new heart," are they commanded to cast away, and are here clearly discovered to be deadly.

To that place of Deut. xxvii. 26, "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them," Bellarmine still gives the old answer. "By 'the words of this law,'" saith he, "are not meant the words of the whole law, as if God had threatened a curse against all sins in general; but only of mortal sins, some grosser sins of murder, incest, idolatry," &c. But this is a cursed gloss put upon a divine curse; for the words here used, "the words of this law," are the same with those of verse 8, where the very same expression, "the words of

this law," intends "the words of the whole law;" and evident it is that here all those sins are intended which are opposed to legal righteousness: "Do this, and live:" but such are all sins in general. But the apostle, whom I ever took for a better expositor of scripture than either Bellarmine or the pope, leaves no place for dispute in this matter; who, in Gal. iii. 10, citing this very place of Deuteronomy, denounceth the curse, not against those that commit some gross sins against some part of the law, but against those "that continue not in all things that are written in the book of the law;" that is, those that commit any sin whatever.

Thus I have made good by scripture this proposition, namely, "Every sin deserves eternal death."

2. I shall now proceed to prove it *by two reasons*, the first where of is this:—

REASON I. Every transgression of the law deserves eternal death: Every sin is a transgression of the law: Therefore every sin deserves eternal death.

The second proposition, or minor, that "every sin is the transgression of the law," is contained in the express words of scripture, where sin is called "the transgression of the law;" (1 John iii. 4;) from which every sin is a swerving, and thence hath its both nature and name also: and it is granted by the learnedest among the Papists, that all sins, even venial, are against the law; so Durand, Gerson, Vega, Azorius, Cajetan, with others. And Augustine's old definition of sin, that it is *dictum, factum, concupitum contra legem*, that "sin is that which is either said, done, or desired against the law," falls in with them, or rather they with it. And therefore Bellarmine's distinction of some sins that are only *præter*, "beside," and not *contra*, "against," the law, is grossly false; for if all sins are forbidden by, all sins are contrary to, the law.

The major, or first proposition, that "every transgression of the law deserves eternal death," is most certain. But I prove it thus:—

Whatever deserves the curse of the law, deserves eternal death: But every transgression of the law deserves the curse of the law: Therefore every transgression of the law deserves eternal death.

The major, or first proposition, cannot be denied, unless we will hold that the curse of the law only contains temporal evils; which is horribly false: for if that were true, then Christ hath not delivered us from eternal death by delivering us "from the curse of the law." (Gal. iii. 13.)

The minor, or second proposition, that "every transgression of the law deserves the curse of the law," I prove from that clear and full scripture: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. iii. 10.) According to the rigour of the law, the least breach thereof makes us cursed; and this was the law's unsupportable burden,—that when we were bound to do "all things in the law," and were unable to do them, we were yet cursed for not doing them.

REASON II. My second reason to prove that "every sin deserves eternal death" is this:—

That which deserves an infinite punishment deserves eternal death: But every sin deserves an infinite punishment: Therefore every sin deserves eternal death.

The major, or first proposition, is denied by none, there being no infinity of punishment mentioned or imagined but in that called in scripture "eternal death."

The minor, or second proposition, that "every sin deserves an infinite punishment," I thus prove:—

If Christ laid down an infinite price to redeem us from every sin, then every sin deserves an infinite punishment: But Christ laid down an infinite price to redeem us from every sin: Therefore every sin deserves an infinite punishment.

The consequence is evident, that "if Christ laid down an infinite price for every sin, then every sin deserves an infinite punishment;" because it had been an unjust exacting of punishment upon Christ, had there been required of him the laying down of an infinite price for a finite evil, that required only a finite punishment to be inflicted for it.

The minor, or second proposition, namely, that "Christ laid down an infinite price to redeem us from every sin," is undeniable by those that will neither deny scriptures nor catechisms. For that Christ redeemed us by an infinite price, hath not only the consent, but it is the ground of the comfort, of all Christians: *Infnitas personæ facit infinitatem pretii*: "An infinite person made the price of infinite value." And that Christ laid down this infinite price for all sins, is with the like consent and comfort embraced by all that believe the scriptures aright, which abound in texts that express it. "He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." (Psalm cxxx. 8.) "The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) "He gave himself, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." (Titus ii. 14.) Hence it was a prayer of faith, "Take away all iniquity." (Hosea xiv. 2.) And, "The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all;" (Isai. liii. 6;) and, "The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world;" (John i. 29;) and, "He shall save his people from their sins;" (Matt. i. 21;) from every sin, and every sin perfectly.

ARGUMENT II. My second argument to prove that no sin is venial, is this:—

Whatsoever is contrary to the loving of God with the whole heart, is not venial, but mortiferous: But every sin is contrary to the loving of God with our whole heart: Therefore every sin is mortal, and so not venial.

The first proposition, or major, is undeniable; because he that loves not God with his whole heart, sins against the express words of the command in Matt. xxiii. 37. And the loving God "with all the heart" is called "the great command," and is preferred before the love of our neighbour by Christ, in verses 38, 39. Since therefore there are many commands of love to our neighbour which cannot be violated but we must needs sin mortally, as the Papists grant, it will evidently follow, that a transgression of the command of loving God "with all the heart" must needs be a mortal sin.

The second proposition, or minor, that "every sin opposeth the loving of God with all the heart," and that whoever sins, loves not God with all the heart, is as true as the former.

Bellarmino therefore dares not here answer by denying this truth absolutely, but by a lame and lamentable distinction: he answers here, that to love God "with all the heart" may be taken two ways:—

1. *Non prælatione.*—To love God so entirely and perfectly as that “nothing is preferred before” God’s love. And this love of God, saith Bellarmine, is both the meaning of the command, and such alone also which venial sins do not oppose.

2. *Non admissione.*—To love God so perfectly as that a man is so wholly taken up with the love of God, that “no” sinful and vicious thought at any time can “creep or steal into” a person’s heart. But, saith Bellarmine, such a love of God as this is not commanded in this life; and this love of God, he confesseth, is opposed by venial sins. For answer to this impious distinction of Bellarmine: It is both most false and frivolous.

1. As he tells us that it is not necessary to the love of God “with all the soul,” that all vicious thoughts be hindered from admission into a man. For this is clearly opposed not only by St. Austin of old, but by others, even Papists, of late. St. Austin tells us, that “to love God with all the soul, is to confer all the life, thoughts, and understanding upon him from whom we have them all; and to suffer no part of the life to give way to be willing to enjoy any thing else; but whatsoever else comes into the mind to be loved, is to be carried thither.”* Victor expresseth it thus: “A man should burn with so hot a love to God, that nothing should creep into any faculty of the soul that either diminisheth love to God, or carries it anywhither else.”† Anselm excellently thus, on Matt. xxii: “In the understanding, no place is to be left for error; in the will, nothing is to be willed contrary to God; in the whole memory, nothing is to be remembered whereby we may the less think of him.”‡ Aquinas thus also: “A man must so love God, if ‘with all the heart,’ as to subject himself to him and follow the rule of his commandments in all things; for whatsoever is contrary to his law, is contrary to his love.”§

Alvarez expressly opposeth Bellarmine in these words: “To love God, is to admit nothing into the heart contrary to God.”|| Theophylact most fully: “To love God ‘with all the heart,’ is to cleave to him with all the parts and faculties of the soul; to give ourselves wholly to God; and to subject the nutritive, sensitive, and rational faculty to his love.”¶ Now according to these explications of the love of God, the least sins (which Papists call “venial”) are contrary to it; for in them there is not a pleasing of God in all things, not a forsaking of all things contrary

* *Diliges Deum ex toto corde, et ex totâ animâ, et ex totâ mente; id est, Omnes cogitationes, omnem vitam, et omnem intellectum in illum conferes, a quo habes ea ipsa quæ confers. Quùm autem aũ toto corde, totâ animâ, totâ mente, nullam vitæ nostræ partem reliquĩ, quæ vacare debet, et quasi locum dare, ut aliã re velit frui; sed quicquid aliud diligendum venerit in animum, illuc rapiatur quò totius dilectionis impetus currit.*—AUGUSTINUS *De Doctr. Christ.* lib. i. cap. 22.

† *Hominem tanto Dei amore flagrare debere comonstrat, ut nihil prorsus in ullam animæ facultatem irrepere sinat, quod suam erga Deum dilectionem diminuat, aut aliõ transferat.*—VICTOR in *Marc.* xii. ‡ *In intellectu nullam relinquo errori locum; in voluntate nihil velis illi contrarium, in memoriã tuã nihil reminiscens quo minus de illo sentias.*—ANSELMUS in *Matt.* xvii. § *Est de ratione charitatis, quòd homo sic diligit Deum, ut velit se in omnibus ei subicere, et regulum præceptorum ejus in omnibus sequi; quicquid enim contrariatur præceptis ejus, contrariatur charitati.*—THOMÆ *Secunda Secunda*, quæst. xxiv. art. 12.

¶ *Diligere Deum est nihil in corde divinæ dilectioni contrarium admittere.*—ALVAREZ *De Aus. Div. Grat.* lib. vi. disp. li. sect. 4. ¶ *Ἀγαπᾶν τὸν Θεὸν ὁλοψύχως, τούτο ἐστὶ τὸ δια πάντων τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς μερῶν καὶ δυναμένων αὐτῶ προσεχέειν, ὅστε ὅλους ἑαυτοῦς οφειλομένον δίδῶναι τῷ Θεῷ, καὶ ὑποταττειν καὶ τὴν δρεπτικὴν καὶ τὴν αἰσθητικὴν καὶ διασθητικὴν ἡμῶν δυνάμιν τῷ ἀγαπῆ τοῦ Θεοῦ.*—THEOPHYLACTUS in *Matt.* xvii.

to his will; yea, in these venial sins, there is an admission of a contrary and unlawful love of the creature into the heart, and not a total subjecting thereof to God.

2. But, secondly, in every venial sin, there is the preferring of something before God, and therefore a manifest transgressing of the law of loving God. As to a formal and explicit preferring the creature before God, so as to account the creature a more excellent good than God is, this all those do not that live in the grossest and most mortal wickednesses, as the Papists acknowledge; for men may live even in the heinous sin of persecution, and yet think thereby they serve and set up God. But as to a virtual and interpretative preferring the creature before God, this men do in the least sin; they carrying themselves so, as if the creature were to be preferred before God; they fearing not, for the love of the creature, to offend God, and, injuriously to his justice, to break his commandments. And how may a man be said to show by his carriage more respect to the creature than to God, if not by breaking the commands of God, and contemning his will, for the creature? To shun the dint of this answer, the Papists are forced to this wretched shift; which is to answer, that he who sins venially, prefers not the creature before God, because he knows that venial sins will not dissolve that knot of love and friendship between God and him. But what a pitiful excuse is this for venial sin! since, as Baronius well observes, (*De Pec. ven.* p. 106,) they who commit venial sins, thinking these sins will not dissolve the favour of God, either think such sins are so light and slight that they deserve not the dissolution of God's favour; or they think, though they do deserve that dissolution, yet that God will deal so graciously with them, as that for such sins he will not exclude them from his favour. If they think that they do not deserve the dissolution of God's favour, they grossly err, yea, grievously sin against God, by judging their sins to be light and little, and by a bold fixing of limits to God's justice; as if God could not justly punish their sins with that penalty which he tells us they deserve. But if they think that their sins do deserve the dissolving of God's favour, and that it is merely from the grace of God that they who commit them are not excluded from it, then it follows that they, for the love of the creature offending God by these sins, prefer the creature before God and his favour: for whosoever for any creature dares do that which may justly exclude him from God's favour, doth prefer the creature before the favour of God. Nor doth their knowledge that these sins do not exclude them from the favour of God, when yet they will commit them, extenuate or excuse their contempt of God's favour, of which they are guilty; but, contrarily, it aggravates that contempt; since though they know it is by God's grace and favour that their smaller sins do not exclude them from his love and mercy, yet they abuse the clemency and goodness of God to a licentiousness in sin, which is almost the highest contempt of divine favour imaginable.

ARGUMENT III. My third argument, to prove that no sin is venial, or deserving to be pardoned, shall be drawn from *the nature of pardon*. Whence I thus argue:—

An opinion that overthrows the nature of God's pardoning of sin is impious and erroneous: But this opinion, that some sins are venial, and

deserve to be pardoned, doth thus overthrow the nature of God's pardoning of sin : Therefore this opinion is impious and erroneous.

The major, or first proposition, is evident.

The minor, or second proposition, I prove thus :—If pardoning of sin designs an act of free grace and favour in pardoning, which God, according to strict justice, might not have done ; and if the doctrine of sin's veniality and deserving to be pardoned makes pardoning an act of justice, so that God cannot but in justice do it ; then the opinion of sin's veniality overthrows the doctrine of divine pardon : But the pardoning of sin designs an act of free grace and favour, which God might not have done unless he had pleased ; and the doctrine of sin's veniality makes the pardoning of sin an act of justice which God cannot but do : Therefore the Popish doctrine of venial sin overthrows the doctrine of divine pardon.

The major, or first proposition, is evident, and will be granted by all.

The minor, or second, I prove thus, in both its parts :—

As to its first part : it is most manifest that pardon designs an act of free grace and favour. It is needless to multiply scriptures (which to do were most easy) in so clear a point : “Forgiveness of sin according to his grace.” (Eph. i. 7.) “According to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions.” (Psalm li. 1.) “I obtained mercy,”* saith pardoned Paul. (1 Tim. i. 13.)

For the second part of the minor, that “the doctrine of the Papists about the veniality of sin makes the pardoning of sin an act of justice, which God cannot but do if he will do justly,” is no slander cast upon the Papists in this point : I pray, let them be judged in this case by their own confessions. The council of Mentz professeth, as we heard, that they cannot understand how God should be just, if he punish any for venial sins with eternal punishment.† Sonnius (the Papist, I mean) tells us, that venial sin is *venid dignum*,—“Venial sin is worthy of pardon.” And Bellarmine, that “they hold with a general consent, that venial sins make not a man guilty of eternal death ;” and he asserts, with intolerable blasphemy, that “God should be unjust, if he punished venial sins eternally ; justice requiring a forbearance to punish that offence which deserves not punishment.”‡ From all which it follows, that divine pardon is so far from being an act of free grace, in the account of a Papist, that when he recites his Pater-noster, if his devotions agree with his doctrines, he may rather say, “Lord, pay us,” than, “Forgive us our debts.”

ARGUMENT IV. My fourth argument shall be taken from *Christ's rejecting of this pharisaical depravation of the law of God,—that some commands of the law, and some sins against those commands, are so small and slight, that God will not require a perfect fulfilling of the law as to lesser and smaller commands, nor the necessary avoiding of such sins as are against those smaller commands.*—The words of Christ are these : “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” (Matt. v. 18.) The Lord Christ by

* *Misericordiâ donatus sum.*—BEZA. “I have been endowed with mercy.”—EDIT.
 † BINIUS, tom. ix. cap. 46. ‡ *Injustum est punire peccata venialia pœnâ aternâ.*
 —*De Amis. Grat. lib. i. cap. 14.*

these words, wherein he shows it is impossible that any thing in the law, though accounted never so small, should pass from it, but all must be fulfilled with a perfect satisfaction, opposeth the Pharisees; who—taking it for granted, that there was necessarily required to righteousness and life a perfect fulfilling of the law; and yet finding that it was impossible to keep the *minutissima legis* [“the least commands of the law”]; as, to abstain from all sinful inward motions in the mind and heart, from “every idle word,” &c.; to have such a perfect conformity to the law, that there should be no lusting contrary to it—coined this distinction, that some of the commands of the law were small, and some great; and though none could in those little commands against sinful motions of the heart perfectly satisfy the law, yet if he kept the great commandments of the law concerning outward acts and works of the law, he should be just before God; since those commands of little things were but little commands, and therefore would not condemn a man for transgressing of them, provided that he performed the external works commanded in those great commands. Now “Christ vehemently denies that there are any commands of the law so small and minute as that God would not much regard them; or of which, in the stablishing [of] the righteousness of the law before God, a man should give no account for the breaking of them, but God would account him righteous, whether he observed them or no. And therefore, to show the necessity of fulfilling the law in the most perfect and exact manner, Christ assures, [that] there should not pass from the law ‘one jot or tittle’ thereof that should not be fulfilled.”* Not a “jot,” the least letter, not a “tittle,” the least point, but was so highly accounted of by God, that before they should pass away without being fulfilled, “heaven and earth should pass away.” So that there was required to the fulfilling of the law, that all things in it, even to the least *aper* or “tittle,” should be fulfilled. To which doctrine of Christ agrees that of Moses and Paul, (Deut. xxvii. 26; Gal. iii. 10,) who denounced a curse not only against those who continued not in the great things, but in “all things, written in the law;” and of James, who saith, “Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” (James ii. 10.) And this “one” is here to be taken for *any one*: as, Luke xv. 4: “If he have a hundred sheep, and lose one,” that is, *any one*: so, Matt. x. 42: “Whosoever shall give a cup of cold water to one,” that is, to *any one*, “of the least” believers, &c. So that *unum*, “one,” is equivalent to *quodlibet*; as here, “One jot or tittle of the law,” that is, “*Any one* jot or tittle of the law, shall not pass away,” but must “be fulfilled.”

ARGUMENT V. My fifth argument is taken from *that macula, or stain, or filth, that every sin, even the least and lightest, leaves behind it.*—This stain, left behind the commission of every sin, is by several considered several ways: either as an habitual aversion from God;

* *Christus fortissimè negat esse quædam mandata in lege ita minuta, quæ Deus non multùm curat; quorum etiam, quamvis non impleantur, non sit habenda ratio in statuendâ justitiâ legis coram Deo. Ut itaque perfectissimam legis impletionem necessariam esse Christus ostendat, ne unum quidem literæ apicem cadere pronuntiat, quod non sit necesse impleri.*—*CHEMNITH Harm. cap. li. p. 337 (mibi). Cujus præstantissima commentaria in hunc locum opto ut insipientes lectores et perlegant.* “Whose most excellent comments upon this passage I wish my readers to peruse and read through.”—EDIT.

or as an habitual conformity to the law of God; or as the impairing of inherent grace, (the beauty of the soul,) and the weakening of its acts; or as a greater habitude and inclination to sin. In regard of some or all of these left upon the soul after the commission of any sin, it is said, that sin defiles and pollutes; (Matt. xv. 11, 18; Rev. xxii. 11;) and that every sin is a "spot," (Eph. v. 27,) and "filthiness." (2 Cor. vii. 1; James i. 21; Ezek. xxiv. 13; xxxvi. 25.) And when a man repents of sin, and hath sin pardoned to him, he is said to be "washed" and "cleansed." (1 Cor. vi. 11; 2 Cor. vii. 1; Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 33.) And because we are said to be "cleansed from all sin," (1 John i. 7,) therefore all sins, even such as Papists call "venial," leave a spot and stain upon the sinner, even as Vasquez, the Jesuit, confesseth.* Now since there is this stain and [which] defilement befalls us after every sin, there follows an exclusion for all sin from the kingdom of heaven, into which no unclean thing shall enter; (Rev. xxi. 27;) and that exclusion, Bellarmine tells us, is proper to mortal sins: † and indeed that which excludes from heaven, must needs deserve eternal death, and so be mortal. And that this exclusion is not to all, perpetual, it is not from the nature of sin, nor from the cleansing virtue of any purgatory-fire; but merely of God in Christ pardoning and purifying.

ARGUMENT VI. My sixth argument is taken from *the power of God justly to forbid the least sin under the pain of an eternal penalty.*—Now if God can justly prohibit the least sins under an eternal penalty, then may he justly punish those sins prohibited with that eternal penalty. And that God may prohibit the least sin under an eternal penalty, is evident, not only because the will of God forbidding any sin under an eternal penalty is a sufficient reason of that penalty, and makes the punishment proportionable to the demerit of the sin; but because God hath actually prohibited, under pain of eternal punishment, things in themselves lawful and indifferent; (as abstinence from several kinds of meats, blood, &c. ;) and, therefore, surely he may forbid all sin under that penalty. Yea, God, in the covenant of works made with Adam, actually prohibited all sin under the penalty of eternal death; which is evident, because if God promised eternal life to Adam upon condition of perfect obedience, certainly the commission of the least sin would have made Adam liable to eternal death: for, He that performs not the condition prescribed in the covenant cannot obtain the reward; but, contrarily, deserves the punishment appointed against those who violate the covenant: But if Adam had committed the least sin, he had not performed the condition prescribed in the covenant, which was perfect obedience: Therefore he had deserved the penalty appointed against the violaters of the covenant. And if the covenant of works bound not Adam to avoid every sin for the escaping of eternal death, then it bound him (as the covenant of grace binds us) to repent of sin for the escaping of eternal death; there being no remission of any sin, or avoiding of eternal punish-

* *Negari non potest hominem verè manere pollutum ex peccato veniali quod semel commisit, donec ab eo justificetur: nam qui a peccato veniali justificatur, verè dicitur ab eo emundari.*—VASQUEZ in *Primam Secundæ*, disp. cxxxix. cap. 4. "It cannot be denied that a man remains truly polluted with a venial sin which he has once committed, until he is justified from it: for he who is justified from a venial sin, is truly said to be cleansed from it."—EDIT. † *De Amis. Grat.* lib. I. cap. 5.

ment for it, without repentance. But under the covenant of works there was no obligation to repentance for sin. For if there had been any obligation to repentance for sin, there must have been a promise of pardon upon repentance; but that is false, because the promise of pardon belongs only to the covenant of grace, pardon being only bestowed through Christ.

ARGUMENT VII. Seventhly. I argue from *the typical remission of sins in the Old Testament*.—For they were then commanded to offer sacrifices, not only for greater and more enormous offences, but for their lesser sins; (as those of infirmity and ignorance, which the Papists call and account “venial;”) as is evident from Lev. iv. 2, 13, 22, &c.; and v. 17. Now those sacrifices respected that only sacrifice of Christ by which all our sins are expiated, as Christ was made a curse for us that he might deliver us from the curse. (Gal. iii. 13.) And from this, saith the learned Walæus, *inictè demonstratur*,* “it is invincibly demonstrated,” that every sin of itself is mortal.

ARGUMENT VIII. Eighthly. I argue from *the infinity of evil that is in every sin, to its desert of an infinite punishment*.—That every sin is an infinite evil, is most certain. I mean not, that it is infinite *intensivè*, “as to itself or bulk,” as I may say; for as the sinner is but finite, so sin is a privation but of a finite rectitude; and if every sin were infinite in its intensiveness, all sins would be equal. But yet two ways sin is infinite:—1. *Objectivè*, because committed against an Infinite Majesty. 2. *Extensivè*, and in respect of its duration, because its stain and defilement last for ever, in regard of the sinner, who cannot of himself repent. In like manner there is an infinite punishment due to sin. I mean not, a punishment infinite *intensivè*; for a finite creature cannot be capable of an infinite torture; but yet an infinite punishment is due to sin two ways, as sin was said to be two ways infinite:—1. A punishment is due to sin, infinite *objectivè*, by the sinner’s being deprived of that Infinite Good against whom he hath here offended, and whom he hath here neglected and despised. 2. A punishment infinite *extensivè*, in respect of its duration for ever; because the stain contracted from sin committed in this life endures for ever: and therefore the wicked, who continue for ever *fedè*, “filthy” and “unclean,” continue for ever *Dei consortio indigni*, “unworthy of ever having communion with God.” *Qui nunquam desinit esse malus, nunquam desinit esse miser*: “He that never ceaseth to be evil, never ceaseth to be miserable.” The most venial fault, therefore, being an infinite fault, deserves an infinite punishment. That it is an infinite fault, it is plain, because it is against the infinite majesty of the Lawgiver, and because its stain of itself, and without the mercy of God, endures for ever.

ARGUMENT IX. Ninthly. That all sins, even such as Papists call “venial sins,” deserve an eternal punishment, is evident, because *the least sins of reprobates, “idle words,” shall be punished with eternal punishment*.—That those least sins shall be punished eternally, is plain from Matt. xii. 36, 37: “Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” This

* *Synopsis purioris Theologiae, de Pec. act. p. (mili) 176.*

condemnation here mentioned by Christ plainly imports an eternal punishment; for in the day of judgment there will be no condemnation to a temporal punishment. And that therefore the least sins deserve eternal punishment is evident; because, otherwise, the punishment which shall be inflicted for these sins would not be just and proportionable to their demerit.

Nor can the Papists shun the force of this argument, by saying, that it is merely by accident that venial sins are punished with eternal death; not in regard of themselves, but because of the condition of the subject of these venial sins; which sins by accident in reprobates cannot be repented of, because they are joined with mortal sins that exclude grace necessary to repentance. This pitiful shift, I say, will not at all help the Papists; for these smaller sins, which they call "venial," are, of and by themselves, the cause of condemnation to an eternal punishment, as is evident from this place, Matt. xii. 36, 37; where Christ proves that an account shall be given of "every idle word," because by our "words we shall be condemned;" by which expression he manifestly shows, that those "idle words" of which he spake, though Papists count them venial, are yet of themselves a sufficient cause of condemnation to eternal punishment. And besides, if it be unjust, as Bellarmine blasphemously speaks, to punish venial sins with eternal death, because they deserve it not; and if a venial sin by its conjunction with a mortal sin in a reprobate is not made greater or deserving of a greater punishment, but retains the same nature that it had before; it will then unavoidably follow, if of itself and in its own nature it deserves not eternal punishment, that as it is in a reprobate joined with a mortal sin, it cannot deserve eternal punishment, and, by consequence, it is not punished with an eternal punishment; for if it were, God should punish sins beyond their desert.

Nor can the Papists come off, as Baronius well observes, by saying, "Though a venial sin by a conjunction with mortal sin is not made more grievous and heinous, yet it is more durable by that conjunction, as having thereby an eternal duration of that stain which follows it; because without repentance, which by a mortal sin is hindered, there is no taking away of that stain." This subterfuge, I say, is very insufficient; for the faults in reprobates, which Papists call "venial," either in themselves do or do not deserve eternal death: if they do not deserve eternal death, then they are punished beyond their desert, which is blasphemy to say; if they do deserve eternal death, then that desert of eternal death is founded in the heinousness of the faults themselves; and eternal death is inflicted, not alone for the duration of the stain of those sins, but for the demerit of the offences themselves; to which the scripture expressly agrees, which testifies, that eternal punishment in the day of judgment shall be inflicted for those "things done in the body." (2 Cor. v. 10; so, Matt. xxv. 42, 43.)

And hence it was that Scotus, Biel, Vega, and Medina,—because they saw that if venial sins were punished eternally, they should be so punished because of what they were in themselves, and in their own nature, and by the demerit of the offence,—labour to put off all, by asserting that the punishment wherewith the damned in hell are punished for

venial sins is not eternal, but temporal, and that it shall at length have an end, though their punishment inflicted on them for mortal sins shall last for ever.* But others of their own fraternity condemn this justly for an absurd opinion, particularly their great Vasquez, the Jesuit, thus confuting it: "If," saith he, "the opinion of Scotus be true," namely, that the venial sins of reprobates shall not be punished in hell eternally, "it will follow, that we may pray for those in hell, that they may be freed from the punishment due to their venial sins; if that punishment, after they have suffered long enough, be by God to be taken off."†

ARGUMENT X. Lastly. I argue *from the ridiculous absurdity of the doctrine of veniality of sin, to the erroneousness of it.*—The way, say the Papists, how sins venial come to be expiated and removed is either in this life, or in the next: in this life, by "sprinkling with holy water, confession to a priest, beating the breast, whipping, saying the Lord's Prayer, crossing, eating no flesh, giving to the church," &c. ; † in the next life, venial sins are only expiated by the most torturing flames of purgatory, greater than any tortures here in this life,—yea, as tormenting as hell-fire, setting aside its duration, as the Papists say,—and oft to be endured many hundreds of years. I demand then, If in this life a venial sin may be expiated with a toy, as sprinkling with holy water, and crossing, or the doing that which oft is, and always should be, done with cheerfulness, as giving alms, and yet in the next world it requires so many years of torturing flames to expiate it, what is the reason of this difference of the ways of expiating venial sin, that here it may be done with a sport, and there it requires such long and inexpressible tortures in fire a thousand times hotter than any here in this world, and as grievous as the torments of hell? To this question the Papists answer: "The sinner is in the fault, who did not by so light and easy a way expiate his sin while here he lived. Here he neglected his duty; and therefore there he smarts for it." "But then I demand again, Was that neglect of doing his duty in this world a mortal sin, or was it a venial sin? If a mortal or damnable sin, it should have carried the offender to hell; if a venial sin, the difficulty again returns, Why may it not be expiated as easily as other venial sins are?"‡§

Having now produced what I judged sufficient for confirmation of this truth against the veniality of sin, I could add many allegations out of the fathers, which abundantly testify their consent with Protestants, in this point. As out of Jerome, who hath these words *in Gal. v.*: "It matters not whether a man be excluded from blessedness by one sin, or by more; since all alike exclude."|| Out of Nazianzen: "Every sin is the death of the soul."¶ Out of Augustine especially, beside what I have

* SCOTUS in *Quart. Sentent. distinct. xxi. quest. 1.* † *Si vera sit sententia Scoti, sequitur posse nos orare pro iis qui sunt in inferno, ut citius solvantur a pœnâ debitâ pro his peccatis; siquidem illa tandem, postquam satis passum sit, a Deo dimittenda est.*—VASQUEZ in *Primam Secundæ, disp. cxli. cap. 2.*

‡ *Confiteor, tundo, conspergor, conteror, oro, Signor, edo, dono: per hæc venialia pono.*

§ *At ego rursus quæro, Istud peccatum sitne mortale, an veniale? Si mortale, in purgatorio non venit; si veniale, cur non eodem jure censetur quo reliqua venialia?*—SADEEL *De verâ Peccat. Remissione*, p. (mihi) 609. || *Non refert an uno quis excluditur peccato a beatitudine, an a pluribus cum omnia similiter excludant.*—HIERONYMUS in *Gal. v.*

¶ *Παρά ἀμαρτία θάνατος ἐστὶ ψυχῆς.*—NAZIANZENUS in *Orat. funeb. in Mortem Patris.*

formerly mentioned in this discourse; who (*Epist. cviii.*) saith, "Our little sins, if gathered together against us, will press us down as much as one great sin. What difference is there between a shipwreck caused by one great wave, and by the water that sinks the ship which comes into it by little and little?"* The same father (*In Johan. tract. xii.*) speaks thus: "Little sins, neglected, destroy as well as great ones."†

PART III. GENERAL APPLICATION.

But, to avoid needless prolixity, I shall but very briefly dispatch this whole discourse, with but naming the heads of those many inferences from it, which have taken me up much time elsewhere: and these inferences might be,

1. *Speculative and controversial.*

2. *Practical.*

1. *For controversial inferences:*

First. *If every sin, even venial, be damnable, (as breaking the law, as hath been proved,) and none can live without them, (as Papists confess,) it is clear then, that now none can in this life perfectly keep the law.*

Secondly. *If no sins be venial, but all mortiferous and damnable, and make us guilty of eternal death, then down falls meritum ex condigno, "merit by the worthiness of any works."*—For to be guilty of death, and to deserve eternal life, cannot stand together.

Thirdly. *Purgatory is but a fable, if no sins be venial.*—Why should that fire burn, if it be not purgative? Or rather, how can it burn, if it have no fuel?

2. *The practical inferences, which are many, I shall but name.*

First. *If every sin be damnable and mortiferous, then sin is of a very heinous nature.*—There is more malignity in an idle word, and injustice against God in a vain thought, than that all the world can expiate; more weight in it than all the strength of angels are able to bear.

Secondly. *If the least sins are mortiferous, what then are the greatest?*—If a grain presseth to hell, if an atom can weigh down like a mountain, what then can a mountain do? If whispering sins speak so loud, what then do crying ones,—bloody oaths, adultery, murder, oppression?

Thirdly. *If every single sin be damnable, what then are all our sins, millions of sins, sins of all our ages, conditions, places that ever we lived in, relations?*—If all were, as St. Austin speaks, *contra nos collecta*, "gathered into one heap against us," what a heaven-reaching mountain would they make?

Fourthly. *If every sin be damnable and mortiferous, God is to be justified in the greatest temporal severities which he inflicts upon us.*—As God never punisheth so severely here but he can punish more, so he never here punisheth so severely but we deserve more and greater severities. Pains, flames, sword, pestilences, those *tonsuræ insolescentis generis humani*, "those mowings down of so many millions," are all short of damnation, deserved by sin. God is to be justified in sending such judgments as the Fire of London, and the Tempest lately in Utrecht.

* *Peccata parva, si contra nos collecta fuerint, ita nos opprimunt sicut unum aliquod grande peccatum. Quid interest ad naufragium, utrum uno grandi fluctu navis obruat, an paulatim subrepens aqua navem submergat?*—AUGUSTINI *Epist. cviii.* † *Minuta peccata, si negligantur, occidunt.*—*In Johan. tract. xii.*

Fifthly. *They who instigate others to sin, are damnable and mortiferous enemies to souls.*—They draw to an eternal punishment. Soul-murder is the greatest; and soul-murderers most resemble the devil in carriage, and shall in condemnation. How deeply dyed are those sins and sinners that are dipped in the blood of souls!

Sixthly. *It is no cowardice to fear sin.*—Of all fear, that of sin is most justifiable. It is not magnanimity, but madness, not valour, but foolhardiness, to be bold to sin. Surely, the boldness of sinners, since sin deserves eternal death, is not from want of danger, but discerning.

Seventhly. *How excusable are ministers and all Christian monitors, that warn against sin!*—They bid you take heed of damnation; to warn against which with the greatest, is the mercifullest, severity.

Eighthly. *What a madness is it to be merry in sin! to make a mock of it!*—What is this but to sport with poison, and to recreate ourselves with damnation? If here men are counted to play before us when they are sinning, it will be bitterness in the end. There is no folly so great as to be pleased with the sport that fools make us, nor are any fools like those that dance to damnation.

Ninthly. *Unconceivably great is the patience of God toward sinners, especially great ones.*—God's patience discovers itself eminently, in that he spares damnable sins, though he sees them, hates them infinitely more than we can do, is able to punish them every moment, is infinitely the sinners' superior; yea, seeks to prevent their punishment by warning, entreaties, threats, counsels; yea, puts forth daily acts of mercy and bounty toward those who sin damnably; yea, he waits, and is long-suffering, oft scores and hundreds of years, though this waiting shows (not that he will always spare, but) that we should now repent.

Tenthly. *It is our interest to be holy betimes.*—It is good that as much as may be of that which is so damnable should be prevented. Shouldest thou be converted in old age, it will be thy extreme sorrow that it was so late, though thy happiness [that] it was at all. Early repentance makes an easy death-bed, and makes joyful the last stage of our journey unto eternal joys.

Eleventhly. *No smallness of sin should occasion boldness to commit it.*

(1.) *Parvitas materiæ aggravat.*—In some cases the smallness of the inducement to sin, "the slightness of the matter of thy sin, aggravates the offence." To deny a friend a cup of water, is a greater unkindness than to deny him a thousand pounds: what, wilt thou stand with God for a trifle, and damn thy soul for a toy? Wilt thou prefer a penny before God and glory?

(2.) *Parva difficilîus caventur.*—"Small sins are more difficultly shunned." A small bone of a fish easily gets into the throat, and it is hard to avoid it. And,

(3.) *Parva viam muniunt ad majora.*—"Small sins dispose to greater;" the wimble makes way for the auger.

(4.) *Minuta et multa sunt ut unum grande.*—"Sins many, though small, are as one great one:" a heap of sands presseth to death, as well as a sow of lead. A ship may sink by water coming in at a leak, drop by drop, as well as when overwhelmed with a great wave, as Austin speaks.

Twelfthly. *I note the great reason why Christ should be dear to us.*—Thou canst not be without him, no, not for thy little, thy least sins, and those of daily incursion. O that this doctrine might make you and me prize Christ more, as long as we live! Because the best cannot live without small sins, neither can they live without a great Saviour. None of us can live without these smaller sins, as the very Papists grant; but O that we may take a wiser course to get pardon of them than they do, by our looking upon God's pity through Christ's blood as our only purgatory! The Pharisees of old saw that we could not live without breaking the law in smaller things, as we have shown before; but let us more study than they did God's design in giving a law which fallen man is not able to keep. The apostle tells us God's design herein: He aimed at Christ, (Rom. x. 4,) who was intended by God as his end in giving such a law which fallen man could not keep; namely, that sinners might seek after his righteousness, by seeing their own inability to keep it. How much do we want Christ at every turn, for our smallest inadvertencies, impertinent, wandering thoughts, in the adjacent defects and defilements of our holy things! Lord, I want thy blood as often as I fetch my breath!

Lastly. *I infer the happiness of believers under the covenant of grace.*—*Ex rigore legis* ["According to the rigour of the law"] the least sins damn, and none of us but every day and in every duty commit them. But here is the comfort,—we are delivered through Christ from that damnation which we deserve for all those unavoidable defects and evils that attend the best in their best observing [of] the law of God; we being loosed under the covenant of grace from that rigid exaction of the law which suffers no sin to go without eternal punishment, and delivered by Christ from the necessity of a perfect and exact fulfilling [of] the law of God under pain of damnation. It is true, the law still commands even believers' perfect obedience; and it is a sin in believers under the covenant of grace, that they do not obey the law of God to the utmost perfection thereof. But here is our happiness, that Christ hath obtained that the imperfection of our obedience shall not damn us; but that our imperfect obedience to the law shall through him be accepted. If indeed there were only the law and no Christ, no obedience but that which is absolutely perfect could be entertained by God; but now, though by the law perfect obedience be required, yet by grace imperfect (if sincere) obedience is accepted. For under the covenant of grace, strictly and precisely, under pain of damnation, we are only obliged to that measure of obedience which is possible by the help of grace; and hence it is that Christ's yoke is called "easy;" (Matt. xi. 30;) which cannot be understood of the law in its rigour, but as mitigated by the covenant of grace: that yoke would not be easy, but intolerable, if it propounded no hope of salvation but under that impossible condition of perfect obedience to the law. And "His commands are not grievous;" (1 John v. 3;) but so they would be, if their exactions were rigorous in requiring perfect obedience, under pain of damnation, of us that cannot perform it. But for ever blessed be God, that though our best obedience be imperfect, yet the perfect obedience of Christ imputed to us supplies the defect of ours; yea, that our imperfect obedience doth not only not damn

us, (though the imperfection thereof deserves damnation according to the rigour of the law,) but that it is ordained to be the way to our salvation: I mean, not its imperfection, but it, notwithstanding its imperfection.

Reader, if thou art a believer, till thy love to Jesus Christ prompts thee to a more suitable ejaculation, accept of this for a conclusion of this whole discourse:—

“A saving eternity, Father of mercy, will be short enough to praise thee for Him who hath delivered us from those many millions of sins, the least whereof deserve a damning eternity. Dear Lord Jesus, who hast saved us from the least sin that ever we had or did, help us to serve thee with the greatest love that our souls can either admit or express. And as, through grace, the guilt of the least sin shall not lie upon us, so neither let the love of the least sin lodge within us. Thou who hast made our justification perfect, daily perfect what our sanctification wants. And never, Lord, let us put limits to our thankful returns for those satisfying sufferings of thine, that knew no bounds, no measure.”

SERMON XIII. (XI.)

BY THE REV. EDWARD VEAL, B.D.

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THE GOOD WORKS OF BELIEVERS ARE NOT MERITORIOUS OF ETERNAL SALVATION.

WHETHER THE GOOD WORKS OF BELIEVERS BE MERITORIOUS OF
ETERNAL SALVATION.—NEGATUM EST.*

Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.—Psalm lxii. 12.

THERE is scarcely any sin more natural to us than pride, and no pride worse than spiritual pride. It was the condemnation of the devil. And spiritual pride shows itself most of all in those high and overweening thoughts [that] we are apt to have of our own worth and excellency. Though when we have done evil we are filled with guilt, yet, if we but think [that] we have done well, we are tickled with conceit: one while we are conscious [that] we have offended God, another while we are ready to believe [that] we have obliged him. We can scarcely be enlarged in a duty, pray with any life or warmth, hear with attention and affection, but we are ready to take our Lord's words out of his mouth, and greet ourselves with a “Well done, good and faithful servant.” (Matt. xxv. 23.) And that too not only as if the work were wholly our own, but as if we had deserved something by it.

* “The proposition is denied.”—EDIT.