

THE SAINT'S SAFETY IN EVIL TIMES.

NOTE.

The 'Saint's Safety' forms a moiety of the only remaining volume published by Sibbes himself. The full title-page is given below.* These two masterly discourses form Nos. 8 and 9 of the folio, entitled 'The Saint's Cordials.' (2d edition, 1637; 3d edition, 1658). Our text follows the edition of 1633. That of 1634 is the same book with a new title.—G

* Title-page—

THE
S A I N T S
SAFETIE IN
EVILL TIMES.

Delivered at St Maries in *Cam-*
bridge the fift of *November* upon occa-
sion of the POWDER-Plot.

Whereunto is annexed a *Passion-Sermon*,
Preached at MERCER'S CHAPPEL
London upon Good-Friday.

As also the Happinesse of enjoying Christ
laid open at the Funerall of Mr *Sherland*
late Recorder of *Northampton*.

Together with the most vertuous life and
Heavenly end of that Religious
GENTLEMAN.

BY

R. Sibbes, D.D., Master of *Katherine-Hall*
in *Cambridge*, and Preacher at *Graves-Inne* LONDON.

John 3. 30.

Let him increase, let me decrease.

LONDON,

Printed by M. Flesher for *R. Dowlman* at the Bra-
zen Serpent in Pauls Church-yard. 1633.

THE SAINT'S SAFETY IN EVIL TIMES.

Behold, he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth a lie.—Ps. VII. 14.

THESE be the words of David. The title shews the occasion, which was the malicious slander and cruel practices of Abithophel or Shimei, in the time of Absalom's rebellion. The words express the *conception, birth, carriage, and miscarriage*, of a *plot* against David. In which you may consider, 1. What his *enemies* did. 2. What *God* did. 3. What *we all* should do: his enemies' *intention*, God's *prevention*, and our *duty*; his enemies' *intention*, *he travaileth with iniquity, and conceiveth mischief*; God's *prevention*, *he brought forth a lie*; our *duty*, *Behold*.

His enemy's *intention* or *action* is set out by proportion to a bodily conception. The Holy Ghost delights to present unto us the plots of wicked men under the resemblance of a bodily conception and birth, by reason of the analogy between both. The mind hath its conceptions as well as the body. The seed of this conception was some wicked thought either raised up by the heart itself, or cast in by Satan, that envious man. Not only wicked men, but their devices, are the seed of the serpent. The understanding was the womb to conceive, the will to consent. The conception was the hatching of a mischievous plot; the quickening of it was the resolution and taking it in hand; the impregnation, growing big, and travailing of it, was the carriage of it the due time; the birth itself was the execution expected, but yet miscarried and stillborn. They intended the destruction of David, but brought forth their own ruin.

1. *Quo minor necessitas peccandi, eo majus peccatum.* For the conception, observe the aggravation of the sin, he conceiveth. (1.) He was not put upon it, or forced unto it; it was voluntary. The more liberty we have not to sin, makes our sin the greater. He did not this in passion, but in cold blood. The less will, less sin. *Involuntarium minuit de ratione peccati.* Here could be no plea, because nothing is more voluntary than plotting. Where the will sets the wit a work to devise, and the body to execute mischief, it shews the spreading and largeness of sin in any man; for the will being the desire of the whole man, carries the whole man with it.

Voluntas appetitus totius suppositi. Besides, when a man sins voluntarily, there is less hope of amendment, because his will is not counselable; if the defect were in the understanding of a man, then sound direction might

set it right ; but where the will is set upon a thing, and is the only reason of itself (as when a man will, because he wills) there counsel will not be heard ; for, tell a roving person that he is out of the way, he knows it well enough already, and means not to take your direction ; but tell an honest traveller that ignorantly mistakes his way, and he will thank you. So tell a popish atheist that he is in an error, he heeds it not, because he is a papist for bye-ends, not in judgment, and resolves to be so, bring what reasons you can, his hope being to rise that way. Though the will follow some kind of understanding, yet it is in the power of the will what the understanding shall consult and determine of ; and, therefore, unless the malice of the will be first taken away by grace, it will always bias our judgments the wrong way.

2. Neither was this plot only voluntary, but with delight, because it was a conception ; births are with more pain. Delight carries the whole strength and marrow of the soul with it ; much of the soul is where delight is.

3. Again, it was a spiritual sin. The spirit of a man is the chief seat of God's good Spirit, wherein he frames all holy devices and good desires. The spirit is either the best or the worst part in a man. Here Satan builds his nest and forges all his designs, his masterpieces, his powder-plots. The chief curse or blessing of God is upon the spirits of men. If men be raised never so high in the world, yet if they are given to a malicious and devilish spirit, they are under a most heavy judgment, carrying Satan's stamp upon them. Diseases that seize upon the spirits of men, as pestilential diseases, &c., are more deadly than those that seize upon the humours. Spiritual wickednesses are the most desperate wickednesses. Sins are more judged by the mind than by the fact.

4. And as it was a spiritual sin, so it was artificial. There was a great deal of art and cunning in it ; and in evil things, the more art, the worse. Art commends other things, but it makes sin the more *sinful*. *Doli non sunt doli, ni astu colas*. When men are witty to work mischief, and wise to do evil, then they are evil in grain. It is best to be a bungler at this occupation. Ingenuous men carry their hatred open ; but this plot was spun with so fine a thread as could not easily be discerned.

5. Again, they were very diligent in it, for it was a curious web. And as in weaving, head and hand, eye and foot, all go together, so here they mustered up all their wits. Judas is awake when Peter sleeps.

6. And which is worst of all, they were so well pleased with the brat of their own brain that they travailed of it. It increases guilt when men upon view and sight of their plot grow so far in love with it that they long to be delivered of it. The more the soul dwells upon any sinful plot, the more estrangement there is from God ; because the happiness of the soul consists in cleaving to God the fountain of all good. The more deliberation any man takes in sinning, the more his soul is pleased with wickedness. A heart long exercised in sin will admit of no impression of grace ; for the spirits are so absorbed with other designs that they are dry and dead to better things. Many thousands are in hell at this day for suffering their spirits to shove them too far into sin. Many suck out the delight of sin before they act it, as Esau pleased himself by thinking ' the day of mourning for his father would come, wherein he might be revenged of his brother,' Gen. xxvii. 41.

7. Yet this sin was not only spiritual and imminent, but transient likewise. It reached against the second table, and, therefore, against the principles of nature, and against society, out of which God gathers a church. There was false witness and murder in this sin. In this respect it is that

the sins of the second table are greater than the sins of the first, because they are against more clear light. A natural conscience hath a clearer eye in these things. Here is light upon light; for both grace and nature condemn these sins. Yet for order in sinning, the rise of all sin against man, is our sinning against God first, for none sin against men, but they sin against God in the first place, whereupon the breach of the first commandment is the ground of the breach of all the rest; for if God were set up in the heart in the first place, there parents would be honoured, and all kind of injury suppressed for conscience sake. The Scripture gives this as a cause of the notorious courses of wicked men, 'that God is not in all their thoughts,' Ps. x. 4. They forget there is a God of vengeance and a day of reckoning. The fool would needs enforce upon his heart, 'that there is no God,' Ps. xiv. 1, and what follows: 'Corrupt they are, there is none doth good, they eat up my people as bread,' &c. They make no more bones of devouring men and their estates, than they make conscience of eating a piece of bread. What a wretched condition hath sin brought man unto, that the great God who 'fillethe heaven and earth,' Jer. xxiii. 24, should yet have no place in the heart which he hath especially made for himself! The sun is not so clear as this truth, that God is, for all things in the world are because God is. If he were not, nothing could be. It is from him that wicked men have that strength they have to commit sin, therefore sin proceeds from atheism, especially these plotting sins; for if God were more thought on, he would take off the soul from sinful contrivings, and fix it upon himself.

But by whom and against whom was this plotting? by children of the church, not uncircumcised Philistines. Opposition is bitterest betwixt those that are nearest, as betwixt the flesh and the spirit in the same soul, between hypocrites and true-hearted Christians in the same womb of the church. Brethren they were, but false brethren; children, but strange children. Children by the mother's side, all bred in the same church, but had not the same father. Children by the mother's side only, are commonly persecutors. Popish spirits count it presumption to know who is their father, which shews them to be bastard children. The greatest sins of all are committed within the church, because they are committed against the greatest light; whereupon that great sin against the Holy Ghost (which, like Jonah his whale, devours all at once) is not committed out of the church at all. Oh! beloved, how should we reverence the blessed truth of God and gracious motions of his Spirit! If it be sin to kill infants in the womb, what is it to kill the breed of the blessed Spirit in our hearts!

But against whom was this plot directed? Even against David, a prophet and a king, a kingly prophet, a man after God's own heart, 1 Sam. xiii. 14; Acts xiii. 22, though not according to theirs; a sacred person, and therefore inviolable. 'Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm,' Ps. cv. 15, was a prohibition from heaven. David was a man eminent in goodness, and goodness invested in greatness is a fair mark for envy to shoot at. What men for sloth care not to do, for weakness cannot, or for pride will not, imitate, that they malign, sitting cursing and fretting at the bottom of the hill, at those which they see go above them, whose life giveth witness against them. When goodness shines forth, it presently meets with envy, until it come to the height to be above envy, as the sun at the highest hath no shadow. Envy hath an ill eye. It cannot look on goodness without grief. The spirit that is in us lusteth after envy. Pursuing of goodness in men, and men for goodness, is a sin of a deep dye,

because whosoever hates a man for goodness, hates goodness itself; and he that hates goodness itself hates it most in the fountain, and so becomes a hater of God himself; and if Christ were in such a man's power he should escape no better than his members do. For Christ is joined either in love or hatred with his cause and children. He and his have common friends and common enemies. Men think they have to deal with silly men, but they shall one day find that they have to deal with the great Lord of heaven and earth.

But what was the manner of carrying their design? This cruel plot was cunningly carried, for they kill him in his good name first, and accuse him as an enemy to the state, that so their slanders may make way for violence. Satan is a liar first, and then a murderer, yea therefore a liar that he may be a murderer the better. He is first a serpent, then a liar; and first a lion couchant, then a lion rampant. He teaches his scholars the same method. Cruelty marcheth furiously, and under warrant with privilege, when it hath slander to countenance it. Taint men once in the opinion of the world, and then they lie open to any usage. It is not only safe but glorious to oppose such, and thus virtue comes to have the reward due to wickedness, and passes under public hatred. The open cause and pretence is one, and the inward moving cause another, which perhaps lies hid till the day of 'revelation of the secrets of all flesh,' Rom. ii. 5, as in a clock the wheels and the hand appear openly, but the weights that move all are out of sight.

But what course took David herein? Innocency was his best apology, and when that would not do, then patience. He saw God in the wrongs he suffered, 'God bade Shimei,' &c., 2 Sam. xvi. 10. But this invites more injuries, therefore by prayer he lays open his soul to God. David's prayer prevailed more in heaven than Ahithophel's policy could do on earth. Carnal men are pregnant and full of wiles and fetches* to secure themselves, but godly men have one only refuge and hiding-place, yet that is a great one, namely, to run to God by prayer, as to their rock and tower of defence in their distresses. From all this that hath been said there ariseth these conclusions:—

First, that *even the best of God's saints are liable to be the subjects of the plots of wicked men.* (1.) From an antipathy between the two contrary seeds in them. (2.) Because God will not have his children love the world, therefore he suffers the world to hate them. (3.) They are strangers here, and therefore no wonder if they find strange entertainment from them that think themselves at home. There hath ever been from the beginning of the world a continual conspiracy of Satan and his instruments against God and goodness. Emperors and kings became Christians, but Satan never yet became a Christian, but hath always bestirred himself to maintain the first division, and never yet wanted a strong faction in the world.

Secondly, observe that *it is the character of a man wicked in an high degree, to contrive wickedness.* The reason is: (1.) Because it is a disposition of such as are given up by God to a reprobate sense, and it is reckoned among other vile sins, that they are full of maliciousness, and inventors of ill, &c. A son of Belial carries a froward heart and devises mischief, Prov. vi. 14. (2.) It shews that malice is so connatural to such, that they cannot sleep unless they cause some to fall; 'wickedness comes from the wicked' (as *naturally and speedily*), Prov. iv. 16, as poison from a spider. (3.) It argues such kind of men work out of a vicious habit, which is a stamping of a second ill nature upon the former, whenas their hearts are exercised

* That is, 'artifices.'—G.

to do mischief. (4.) It shews they are of the devil's trade, whose only work is to hurt and mischief all he can, those that are broken loose from him. Certainly such people as these are the children of the devil in an higher degree than ordinary. It is said, when Judas began to betray Christ, 'the devil entered into him,' Luke xxii. 3. He was the child of the devil in some degree before, but now the devil took stronger possession of him; his unnatural treason did in some sort change him into the very form of the devil. When Simon Magus sought to turn away the deputy from the faith, St Paul had no fitter terms for him than to style him, 'Thou full of all subtlety and mischief, and child of the devil,' Acts xiii. 10. And indeed there is no disposition so contrary to the sweet Spirit of God, which is a Spirit of love and goodness, as this is.

Use 1. Learn hence therefore, as you love God, to abhor this hateful disposition. The serpent indeed was 'wiser than all the beasts of the field,' Gen. iii. 1, yet when he became an instrument of mischief, he was cursed above all the rest, Gen. iii. 14. Satan labours to serve his turn of the best wits; but what greater curse can befall a man than to serve the basest creature in the basest service, and that with our best abilities? Men of a devilish spirit carry God's curse under zeal,* yea, they carry the devil in their brain, in all their works of darkness; for, alas, what should the subtlety of foxes, and fierceness of lions, and malice of devils do, in an heart dedicated to Christ? Such men work from a double principle, the illness of their own disposition within, and Satan going with the tide of that, whose chief labour is to make a prey of men of the best parts, that by them he may either snare others, or else vex them that have so much wit or grace as not to be caught by his baits. This is a course contrary to humanity as we are men, contrary to ingenuity† as we are civil men, and contrary to religion as we are Christian men, and plainly argueth that such persons are led with another spirit than their own, even by the prince that ruleth in the air.

Our care and duty, therefore, should be to submit our spirits to the sweet guidance and government of God's good Spirit, to be contented that every device and imagination of our hearts should be captivated to higher and better reasons than our own.

We are not wise enough of ourselves that our own wills and wit should be our first movers. Everything is perfected by subjection to a superior; where there should be a subordination to higher wisdom, there to withdraw our understanding and wills, is mere rebellion. That which the prophet speaks is too true of many in these days, 'Thy wisdom hath made thee to rebel,' Is. xlvii. 10. Such are too wise to be saved.

Use 2. We need not be ashamed to learn some things of our very enemies. If they be so pragmatical for evil, why should not we be as active for good? I am sure we serve a better Master. True love is full of inventions; it will be devising of good things. So soon as ever our nature is changed, the stream of the soul is turned another way, the bent of it is for God. Alas, it is a small commendation to be only passively good, and it is a poor excuse to be only passively ill. A good Christian thinks it not enough to see good done by others, but labours to have a hand in it himself; and he that suffers evil to be done, which he might have opposed and hindered, brings the guilt thereof upon his own head. 'Curse you Meroz,' saith God, 'for not helping the Lord against the mighty,' &c., Jud. v. 23. What shall we think then of those that help the mighty against the Lord, that cast oil to kindle where they should cast water to quench, that inflame the rage of

* Qu. 'seal?'—Ed.

† That is, 'ingenuousness.'—Ed.

great persons, when they should labour to reduce all to a moderation? Of this spirit was that apostate which stirred up the emperor to kill man, woman, and child of the Protestants, with all their kindred and alliance, fearing lest any living should revenge the other's quarrel.*

We see God hath stooped so low as to commend his cause unto us, as if he stood in need of our help, and usually what good he doth to us is conveyed by men like ourselves; therefore, we should labour to appear on his side, and own his cause and children. In the house of God there be vessels of all kinds. Some are of more honourable use than others. Some make the very times and places good where they live, by an influence of good. Others, as malignant planets, threaten misery and desolation wherever they come. These are the calamities of the times. Men may know whether they be vessels of mercy or no, by the use they are put to; the basest of people are fit enough to be executioners; the worst of men are good enough to be rods of God's wrath. How much better is it to be full of goodness, as the Scripture speaks of Josiah and Hezekiah, &c.! Indeed, what is a man, but his goodness? Such men live desired, and die lamented. Yea, their very 'name is as the ointment of the apothecary poured out,' Cant. i. 3. They leave a sweet savour in the church behind them.

Now I come to their miscarriage. They brought forth a lie; a lie in regard of their expectation, their hopes deceiving them, but a just defeating in regard of God. It was contrary to their desire, but agreeable to God's justice. Neither were they disappointed only so as to miss of what they intended, but they met with that misery they intended not; yea, even with that very misery which they thought to bring upon David.

This defeating ariseth by five steps: 1, they were *disappointed*; 2, they fell into *danger*; 3, they were *contrivers* of this danger *themselves*; 4, there was a penal *proportion*, they fell into the *same* danger which they plotted for *another*; 5, they were a means of doing *good* to him whom they devised *evil* against; and *raised* him, whom they thought to pull *down*. David sped the better for Shimei's malice, and Ahithophel's policy. See all these five likewise in the example of Haman and Mordecai. 1, Haman missed of his plot; 2, he fell into danger; 3, he fell into the same danger which he contrived himself; 4, he fell into the same danger which he contrived for Mordecai; and 5, was the means of Mordecai's advancement. It had been enough to have woven a spider's web, which is done with a great deal of art, and yet comes to nothing; but to hatch a cockatrice's egg, that brings forth a viper which stings to death, this is a double vexation. Yet thus God delighteth to catch the 'wise in the imagination of their own hearts,' Luke i. 51, and to pay them in their own coin. The wicked carry a lie in their right hand; for they trust in man, which is but a *lie*; and, being liars themselves too, no marvel if their hopes prove deceitful, so that, while they sow the wind, they reap the whirlwind, Hosea viii. 7.

Reason. (1.) The reason of God's dealing in this kind is, *first*, in regard of *himself*. God will not lose the glory of any of his attributes; he will be known to be God only wise, and this he will let appear, then especially, when wicked men think to overreach him.

(2.) Secondly, in regard of his tender care over his children, they are as the apple of his eye; and as they are very near, so they are very dear to him. They cost him dear; they are his jewels, and he gave a *Jewel* of infinite price for them. He is interested in their quarrels, and they in his.

* Qu. 'Massacre of St Bartholomew, 1572?'—G.

If they be in any misery, God's bowels yearn for them. He is always awake, and never slumbereth, as we see in the parable, the master of the house waked while the servants slept, Mat. xxv. 1, *et seq.* God's eye is upon them for good. He hath them written in the 'palms of his hands, Isa. xlix. 16. Christ carries them always in his breast. Christ, who is the husband of his church, is Lord of heaven and earth, and hath all power committed to him, Mat. xxviii. 18, John xvii. 2, and will rule in the midst of his enemies. He is the only Monarch of the world, and makes both all things and persons serviceable to his own end and his church's good. He is higher than the highest. Satan, the god of the world, 2 Cor. iv. 4, is but his and his church's slave. All things are the church's, to further its best good.

(3.) Another reason is, *the insolence of the enemies*, whose *fierceness turns at length to God's praise*, Ps. ix. 16; for as he is a just Lord, so he will be known to be so by executing of judgment. It shall appear that there is 'a God that judgeth the earth,' Ps. lviii. 11.

(4.) Again, God's children will give him *no rest*. When he seems to sleep, they will awake him with their prayers. 'They will not let him go without a blessing from him,' Gen. xxxii. 26. They will prevail by importunity, as the widow in the gospel, Luke xviii. 5. Having to deal with a just God, in a just cause, against common enemies, his as well as theirs, they bind him with his own promises; and he is content to be bound, because he hath bound himself first. He will not lose that part of his title whereby he is known to be a 'God hearing prayers,' Ps. lxxv. 2.

Obj. But it will be objected that wicked men do not only set themselves against the people of God, but prevail over them, even to the scorn of the beholders. Tully could say '*The gods shew how much they esteem of the Jewish nation, by suffering them so often to be conquered.*'* Hath not anti-christ a long time prevailed, and was it not foretold that the beast should prevail? Rev. xiii. Where is, then, the *bringing forth of a lie*?

Ans. I answer, (1.) the enemies have power, but no more than is given them of God, as Christ answered Pilate, John xix. 11. They prevail indeed, but it is for a time, a limited time, and that a short one too, ten days, &c., Rev. ii. 10: and what is this to that vast time of their torment? The time will come, when there shall be no more time for them to persecute in.

(2.) Besides, even when they do prevail, it is but over part only, not over the whole. They prevail over persons, it may be, not over the cause: that stands impregnable. They prevail over men's lives, perhaps, but not over their spirits, which is that they chiefly aim at. A true Christian conquers when he is conquered. Stephen prevailed over his enemies when they seemed to prevail over him. God put glory upon him, and a spirit of glory into him, Acts vii.

(3.) The church's enemies may prevail in some place, but then, as the sea, they lose in another. The more they cut down God's people, as Pharaoh did the Israelites, the more they multiply; and the more they are kept straight,† the more they spread and are enlarged. God suffers the enemies of his truth to prevail, in some passages, to harden their hearts the more for destruction, as Pharaoh prevailed in oppressing the Israelites,

* This is one of only two notices of the Jews, that are found in the voluminous works of Cicero. It occurs in Orat. Pro L. Flacco, c. 28. As Sibbes rather paraphrases than translates, the true and vivid original may be given:—'. . . Nunc vero hoc magis, quod illa gens, quid de imperio, nostro sentiret ostendit armis; quam cara Diis immortalibus esset, docuit, quod est victa, quod elocata, quod servata.'—G.

† Qu. 'strait?'—Ed.

and Herod in killing John, &c. But yet, lay the beginning and the end together, and then we shall see they prevailed not, and so far as they did prevail, it tended only to hasten their own ruin, because the present success lifts up the heart. We see antichrist prevailed, but spiritually, only over those 'whose names were not written in the Lamb's book of life,' Rev. xiii. 7, and outwardly over the saints; for so it was prefixed, Rev. xviii. 24, that he should *make war with the saints, and overcome them*: and this was objected as a fiery dart against the Christians in those times, that therefore they might think their cause naught, because they were so prevailed over;* but they, by help of the Spirit of God, understood so much of the Revelation as concerned themselves, and used this as a weapon, confessing that they were the conquered people of God, but yet the people of God still. But the chief stay and satisfaction of the soul herein, is to look to the day of the righteous judgment of God, when we shall see all promises performed, all threatenings executed, and all enemies trodden for ever under Christ and his church's feet.

Use 1. This is a point of marvellous comfort, when Israel can say, 'They have afflicted me from my youth, but yet they have not prevailed over me,' Ps. cxxix. 1. The gates of hell may set themselves against the church, but shall not prevail. The church is not ruled by man's counsel. We neither live nor die at man's appointment. Our lives are not in our own hands, or Satan's, or our enemies', but in God's. They can do no more, they shall do no less, than God will, who is our life, and the length of our days. God may give way a while, that the 'thoughts of many may be revealed,' Luke ii. 35, and that his glory may shine the more in raising his children, and confounding his enemies; but he will put a period in his due time, and that is the best time. There is a day of Jacob's trouble, when his enemies say, 'This is Sion, whom none regards,' Jer. xxx. 7; but God sets bounds both to the time of his children's trouble, and to the malice of the wicked. 'Their rod shall not rest over-long upon the back of the righteous,' Ps. cxxv. 3. God will put a *hook into the nostrils* of these leviathans, and draw them which way he pleaseth.

Use 2. Again, we see here that mischievous attempts are successful in the end; for did ever any harden themselves against God and prosper long? Let Cain speak, let Pharaoh, Haman, Ahithophel, Herod; let the persecutors of the church for the first two hundred years; let all that ever bore ill-will towards Sion, speak, and they will confess they did; but kick against the pricks, and dash against the rocks. The greatest torment of the damned spirit is, that God turns all his plots for the good of those he hates most. He tempted man to desire to *become like God*, Gen. iii. 5, that so he might ruin him; but God *became man*, and so restored him. God serveth himself of this archpolitician and all his instruments; they are but executioners of God's will while they rush against it. Joseph's brethren sold him that they might not worship him, and that was the very means whereby they came at length to worship him. God delights to take the oppressed party's part. Wicked men cannot do God's children a greater pleasure than to oppose them, for by this means they help to advance them.

Why wicked plots miscarry. The ground of the miscarriage of wicked plots is, that Satan and his, maintain a damned cause, and their plots are under a curse. Every one that prays, 'Thy kingdom come,' prays by consequence against them as opposers of it; and how can the men and plots of so many curses but miscarry, and prove but as the untimely fruit of a

* Cicero, *ante*.—G.

woman? They are like the grass on the house-top, which perks above the corn in the field, but yet no man prays for a blessing upon it. When men come by a goodly corn-field, every one is ready to say, God bless this field, &c. Beloved, it is a heavier thing than atheistical spirits think of, to be under the curse of the church; for as God blesseth out of Sion, so usually the heaviest curses come out of Sion. Woe be to the Herods and Julians of the world, when the church, either directly or indirectly, prays against them.

Use 3. This is a ground of staying the souls of God's people in seeming confusion of things. There is an harmony in all this discord. God is fitting his people for a better condition even when they are at the worst, and is hardening and preparing the wicked for confusion, even when they are at the best. 'The wicked practise against the righteous, but God laugheth them to scorn,' Ps. ii. 4; for he seeth all their plottings, and his day is a-coming. Whilst they are digging pits for others, there is a pit a-digging and a grave a-making for themselves. They have a measure to make up, and a treasure to fill, which at length will be broken open, which, methinks, should take off them which are set upon mischief from pleasing themselves in their plots. Alas! they are but plotting their own ruin, and building a Babel which will fall upon their own heads. If there were any commendation in plotting, then that great plotter of plotters, that great engineer, Satan, would go beyond us all, and take all the credit from us. But let us not envy Satan and his in their glory. They had need of something to comfort them. Let them please themselves with their trade. The day is coming wherein the daughter of Sion shall laugh them to scorn. There will be a time wherein it shall be said, 'Arise, Sion, and thrash,' Micah iv. 13. And usually the delivery of God's children is joined with the destruction of his enemies; Saul's death, and David's deliverance; the Israelites' deliverance, and Egyptians' drowning. The church and her opposites are like the scales of a balance; when one goes up, the other goes down.

Haman's wife had learned this, that if her husband began once to fall before the Jews, he should surely fall. Wicked men have an hour, and they will be sure to take it; and God hath his hour too, and will be as sure to take that. The judgments of the wicked are mercies to the church. So saith David, 'He slew mighty kings, Og king of Bashan, for his mercy endureth for ever,' &c., Ps. cxxxvi. 20.

God hath but two things in the world that he much regardeth; his truth, and his church, begotten by his truth;* and shall we think that he will suffer long, wretched men who turn that wit and power which they have from him against his truth and church? No, assuredly; but he will give them up by that very wit of theirs, to work their own destruction; they shall serve their turn most whom they hate most. God sits in heaven, and laughs them to scorn. Shall God laugh, and we cry? They take counsel together on earth, but God hath a counsel in heaven that will overthrow all their counsels here. Mark the bitter expressions in Scripture, 'Why do the heathen rage,' Ps. ii. 1, without fear or wit? 'Go to now, saith God, gather a council,' &c., Isa. viii. 9. Beloved, it goes to the heart of proud persons to be scorned, especially in the miscarriage of that which they count their masterpiece; they had rather be counted devils than fools. Let us *work wisely*, saith Pharaoh, when he was never more fool, Exod. ii. 10. They usurp upon God, and promise themselves great

* 'God hath but two things,' &c. This sentiment, which is repeated in the 'Fountain Sealed,' is quoted by Bishop Patrick in his 'Friendly Debate,' against Bridge. See Taylor's edition of Patrick, vol. v. pp. 509-10.—G.

matters for the time to come, whereas that is only God's prerogative, and they neither know what the womb of their counsels, nor what the womb of to-morrow, may bring forth. That which they are big of may prove an abortive, or a viper to consume the womb that bred it. 'Go to now,' saith the prophet, 'all ye that kindle a fire: walk in the light of your fire, but take this of me, you shall lie down in sorrow,' &c., Isa. li. 11. The Scripture is full of such expostulations and upbraidings. 'Man is become like one of us, saith God,' Gen. iii. 22. When men will have a way of their own, and think themselves wiser than God, then it stands upon God's honour to outwit them. 'Yet God is wise,' saith the prophet, Isa. xxxi. 2. You think to go beyond God. Deceive not yourselves. *God is wise*, and you shall find him to be so. He hath a way to go beyond you. Do not many men spin a fine thread, and weave a fair web, when by their turnings and devices they turn themselves into hell? 'Woe be to them that dig deep,' saith the prophet, 'and think to hide their counsels from the Lord,' Hosea ix. 2, 3. God hath an eye to see into the most secret and dark conveyances of business. God hath a key to open the closet of their hearts, let them be never so close locked up. Oh, that men would more fear this all-seeing eye of God, and be wise for themselves, and not against themselves. It is a miserable wisdom when men are wise to work their own ruin. Beloved, when men have had all their plots, God hath a plot still beyond them. He takes them failing in something or other. Their devices are like a curious clock; if the least thing be out of frame, all is marred. God suffers them to spin a fine thread a great while, and at length cuts the web, and there is an end. And they may thank themselves for all this, for they carry a justification of God in their own breasts. They perish because they will perish; and this will be the torment of all torments to graceless persons, that they pulled destruction upon themselves. Malice blinds the understanding in Satan and his instruments; for, if their malice were not above their wit, would they, to gratify their ill affections, knowingly rush into the displeasure of God, and into such courses as will unavoidably bring their ruin? Malice drinks up the greatest part of its own poison. 'His own iniquity shall take the wicked himself,' saith Solomon, 'and he shall be holden with the cords of his own sin,' Prov. v. 22.

This may be enlarged to all sinful courses. Every sinner worketh a deceitful work, and *bringeth forth a lie*. Augustine saith well, *every sin is a lie (a)*. Men would be happy, yet they will not live so as they may be happy; what more deceitful than this? It will be the complaint of every sinner at length, that was Eve's, the 'serpent hath deceived me,' Gen. iii. 13. It was St Paul's complaint, Rom. viii. 8, and it will be the complaint of all sinful wretches at the last day. What hath pride profited us? what can the favour of men, upon whom we bear ourselves, do us good now? Sin promiseth us contentment, continuance, secrecy, full satisfaction, &c., but doth it make good this? Were ever any, when the beginning and ending was laid together, established by wickedness? Take it from God himself (we have a commission to speak it), 'Say, it shall not go well with the wicked, though they escape an hundred times,' Eccl. viii. 12, 13, yet it is but a reprieve for some further service which God hath to do by them. 'Be not deceived, God is not mocked,' Gal. vi. 7. When we can be more subtle than the devil, or more strong than God, we may think to thrive by sin. Can we think God will alter the course of divine justice for us? had we not better believe this than find it so hereafter? Beloved, hell is for those to feel that will not believe. Certain it is, that those who will sin, notwithstanding God's

justice, shall be severely punished, notwithstanding his mercy. God is not more peremptory in any one thing than in this, 'If any man bless himself in an ill way, my wrath shall smoke against him,' Deut. xxix. 19, 20; therefore it is a good prayer, *Lord, give me not over to lying*, that is, not to trust in that which will lie and deceive me.

This is the unhappiness of us ministers, all other professions are believed when they discover danger, but 'who believeth our report?' Isa. liii. 1. We are men's 'enemies, because we tell them the truth,' Gal. iv. 16; we labour to take away the sweet morsels from men, their Herodiases (*b*), and to divide betwixt men and their sins, which they love better than their souls. No creature but man, loves that which will be its own bane. Only wretched man seeks happiness in the way to misery, and heaven in the way to hell. I beseech you therefore, as you would not be deceived, (as indeed who would?) take heed of the deceitful works of darkness. Satan that tempts us is but a lying spirit (which he is not ashamed to confess), 1 Kings xxii. 22, and sin is like unto him. What got Ahab by his vineyard? Judas by his thirty pieces of silver? what got Haman, and so of the rest, by their sins at the last? Men are usually ashamed of an ill bargain, because the very thought thereof upbraids them with weakness and folly. Whatever we get by sin for the present, it will prove the worst bargain that ever we made. Oh, therefore, let us use our wits and parts to better purpose; if we will needs be plotting, let us plot for eternity; that is worth the plotting for. Let us plot how to avoid Satan's plot. Our time is short, opportunity, the flower of time, shorter. Our talents are many, our accounts strict, our judge impartial. Let us be 'sowing to the Spirit,' Gal. vi. 8; let us labour to be like our Judge, who went about doing his Father's work, John xvii. 4, and came to destroy the works of the devil, 1 John iii. 8. Oh, beloved, shall we build up that which Christ came to destroy? All his miracles tended to good; he wrought the salvation of those that wrought his destruction; he shed his blood for those that shed his blood. Satan is all for mischief, and rather than he will not do hurt, he is content to be set about drowning of swine, Mark v. 14. And such are all those that are led with his spirit, men witty to destroy and acute to malice others, who take a great deal of pains to go to hell and carry others with them. Those that are skilful in the story of nature, write of the scorpion, that he whets his tail often upon stones, that so it may be sharp and ready for a mischief. Some crooked wits there are which make it their exercise to vex the quiet of the land; it is as natural to them as poison to a scorpion.

But our happiness is, how to be like the idea, the pattern of all grace, and the glory of our nature, by whom we hope to be saved. Our happiness is to bring forth fruit, and our own fruit 'in due season,' Ps. i. 3; to have opportunity, ability, and a heart to do good. How comfortable is death when it takes men so doing? The time will be ere long, when it will comfort us above all things in the world besides, that we have been honoured to be instruments of doing good, and stood in the gap to hinder evil. Beloved, we serve a good master. We shall not lose a good word for a good cause. There is a 'book of remembrance, Mal. iii. 16, for every good word and work we do. When wicked men have beaten their brains, spent their spirits, and wasted their strength, what becomes of them at length? A conscience often wounded will receive no comfort, but take God's part against itself. When the other powers are wearied, then conscience comes and doth its office; then the eyes of the soul are open to see what it would not see before, then sin that 'lay at the door,' Gen. iv. 7 (*c*), at the going out

of this life, lieth in our faces. Pleasure and profit, for which wicked men project and contrive so much, comes all to nothing; but sin itself, and the punishment of it, abides for ever. Men, like popes, will dispense with themselves, and conceit a latitude and breadth in their courses, that they may do so and so, and yet do well at last, but who tells them this? Is it not a spirit of illusion? Indeed, punishment is often deferred; it comes not like thunder and lightning all at once, yet as sure as God is true, sin will be bitterness in the end. When the honey is gone, the sting will remain.

To conclude this point; when we are tempted to any hurtful design, let us look upon Christ, and that great project for our redemption undertaken by him, and reason thus with ourselves: hath he plotted and wrought my salvation, and shall I plot against him in his members?

I beseech you, stir up your hearts to conceive and bring forth good purposes. Satan is an enemy to all strong resolutions and masculine conceptions, endeavouring to kill them in the very birth. Alas, how many good thoughts are conceived whilst the word is hearing, which yet prove abortive and stick in the birth! How few actions come to their due ripeness and perfection! I am sure our encouragements to good are far more than our encouragements to evil. We serve a better master, and for better wages. They may prosper for a time, but nothing is more wretched than the happiness of wicked men; it first hardens them, and then destroys them, Prov. i. 32.

Our only way is, 1, to get into Christ 'the true vine,' John xv. 1, then we shall take and bear fruit presently, and draw and suck out of him the same disposition.

2. And then lay up good principles, and look with a single eye to the main end of our life, and see that all the particular passages of our life tend to that. It is an argument of a narrow heart to be wise in some particular business, for some particular end, and yet to be careless in the main. Other creatures are carried by a particular instinct to some particular thing. A spider is witty to catch flies, a bird to build nests, &c. As man hath larger parts, so he should have larger aims.

That which we should especially labour for is, 1, to be good in ourselves; and 2, to do all the good we can to others, even as God our Father is good, and doth good; and the further our good extends, the more we resemble our Father. Such as we are, such are our thoughts, such are our devices. A good man will devise of liberal things, &c. Every vermin can do mischief. We see some are never in their element but when they are plotting or working mischief, as if they were born for no other end but to exercise the graces of men better than themselves. It is a poor commendation to be counted a cunning person for self ends. Alas! the heart of man, which is 'deceitful above measure,' Jer. xvii. 9, hath abundance of turnings and windings in it, and can suggest tricks enough to circumvent the best of us.

I come, in the third place, to our duty, which is to 'behold,'—the ordinary beacon kindled to discover some extraordinary thing.

Quest. But what is here to be beheld?

Ans. Behold the subtlety, malice, and restless endeavour of the enemies of goodness. Is it not a matter with grief to be beheld, that one member should tear another? that one, professing the same religion, should study to supplant and devour another? Behold, likewise, their bootless enterprise, *they bring forth a lie.*

But especially behold the mercy of God to his children; his wisdom in

discovering, his justice in confounding, the mischievous practices of their enemies, making them the workers of their own ruin.

The things which especially deserve our beholding are either, 1, things excellent, and so are all God's works in their season, yea, justice itself; or, 2, things rare, as comets and eclipses; or else, 3, great things, as stars of the first magnitude, &c.

Even such, and much more, is God's mercy to his children, and justice against his enemies. Behold what great things he hath done for them, Ps. cxxvi. 2. Shall the heathen say so, and shall not Israel much more? Beloved, we ought to seek out God's works, and shall we not take notice of them when they are offered to our view? This is especially the duty of the saints of God. 'All thy works praise thee, and thy saints bless thee,' saith David, Ps. cxlv. 10. The works of God praise him by our mouths and by our tongues. Were it not for some few that by a more divine light and spiritual eye see more of God than others do, what glory should God have in the world? God hath not brought us on the stage of this world to be mere gazers, but to extract something out for our own use, and to give him the glory of his excellencies. But we are too wise to admire anything. It is a matter too mean for our parts to take notice of God and his works. You have some that can see nothing in the works of God worth the admiring; and yet they will have men's persons in admiration, in hope of some advantage by them. We are apt to admire any outward excellency, like the disciples, before the Holy Ghost came upon them, who stood admiring of the goodly stones of the temple. When our minds are thus taken up, it were good if we heard Christ speaking to us as he did to them, 'Are these the things you wonder at?' Mark xiii. 1.

Beloved, it is our duty to observe special occurrences, not out of any Athenian curiosity, but to begin our employment in heaven now, whilst we are upon earth; to take occasion from thence to bless God. We should compare the rule and the event together, and observe what truth or attribute God makes good by that which is so fallen out; see how God commenteth upon himself by his own actions; and from observation of particulars it is good to rise to generals, as Deborah from the destruction of one enemy to the destruction of all. 'So let all thy enemies perish, O Lord,' Judges v. 31. This was Moses's song, and Hannah's, and the Virgin Mary's, &c. They mounted from a consideration of their own particular, and had their thoughts enlarged with the mercy and justice of God, to others in succeeding generations.

And among all God's works we should more take notice of his mercy to the church than of his justice towards his enemies, because his justice is, as it were, a foil to give lustre to his mercy. God delighteth more in mercy, as being his proper work, issuing from his own bowels, than in works of justice that are occasioned by the malice of men. God is wonderful in his saints, and more in saving them than in destroying his enemies. Considering, therefore, that mercy bears the chief office in the great works of God, we ought to dwell most in consideration thereof, and feed our thoughts more with the meditation of his saving works to his church than of the ruin of his enemies.

We pray *hallowed be thy name*. Unless we practise what we pray for, we mock God, and deceive our own souls. Let not God lose any glory by us; let not us lose such a pledge of future happiness as glorifying God is. 'Oh that men would praise the Lord,' saith David, who, fearing lest God should lose any glory from his creatures, stirs up angels and all creatures

to 'bless the Lord,' Ps. cxlviii. 2, 3. God takes it very unkindly when we do not observe especially, the excellent pieces of his workmanship. 'A fool considereth not this,' &c., Ps. xcii. 6.

The Lord hath done marvellous things for his church of late, whereof we should rejoice. We should do as Moses did when he came out of the sea, and as the church, in resemblance of that deliverance from Egypt, did, who sang the song of Moses, being delivered from their spiritual Pharaoh, Rev. xv. 3.

We see now the vial poured upon the sun, we see the prophecies against antichrist's kingdom in fulfilling. God hath vouchsafed to strengthen our faith by experience. We have something to lay hold on, which may encourage us to expect more from God, and to look for those hallelujahs to be sung from all creatures in heaven and earth, upon the utter confusion of antichrist; which, whosoever labours to hinder any kind of way, hinders the glory of God, and the joy of his people.

It is good to observe how the Scripture sets out the enemies of God's church, in a double representation, 1, as terrible, terming them lions, bulls, &c.; 2, as base, comparing them to chaff and dust before the wind, dung, &c., Ps. x. 4, that when we see them in their present ruff and jollity, we should stay ourselves with consideration of their future baseness. Faith looks on things as present, because it looks upon them in the word of Jehovah, who will give a being to all his promises and threatenings; and therefore faith is called the subsistence of 'things not seen,' Heb. xi. 1, (d) because it gives a kind of being of things to the mind and affections of man, as if they were present. Therefore the believing of the final deliverance of God's people, and the ruin of his enemies, cannot but raise up the souls of good men to a marvellous degree of joy and thankfulness to God. Who would not fear to cleave to antichrist, if they did but present to themselves by faith, the certain ruin of that state, which the Scripture sets down, in a prophetic manner, as a thing already present? 'Babylon is fallen,' &c., Rev. xviii. 2.

But to come to a more particular application, suitable to the present time. The occasion and the text are as parallel as may be. Our gunpowder-plotters (e) were as pregnant in mischief as ever these. For conception, it could not but come from beneath the vault. There was the very quintessence of devilishness in it. Satan emptied all his bowels, as it were, in this project. If all the devils in hell were set awork to devise the like, they could hardly do it. There was scarce from the beginning of the world, a design more prodigious and unmerciful, of greater depth and extent of villany. Were [it] not [for] this anniversary commemoration of it, posterity would hardly believe that a plot so hellish could be hatched in the hearts of men, of English men, of Catholic men, as they would be termed, of men so borne withal, notwithstanding their dangerous correspondency with foreign enemies, and but half subjects, their better parts, their spirits, being subject to another visible head, who can untie the bond of allegiance at his pleasure.

Neither did they only conceive this hellish wickedness, but were big of it, and kept it close many months, and pleased themselves in the same, as monstrous and misshapen as it was. There wanted neither wit, nor counsel, nor combination, nor secret encouragement to effect it.

Nay, it was an holy villany, sealed with oaths, sacrament, and all the bonds of secrecy that could be invented. Oh horrible profanation, to set God's seal to Satan's plot. But God, who delighteth to confound all pre-

sumptuous attempts, discovered it when it should have come to the birth, and so it proved but the untimely fruit of a woman.

They brought forth a lie, for whereas they intended to have blown up king and kingdom, churchmen and church, statesmen, yea, the whole state itself, all at once, without any warning to prepare themselves for another world, they not only missed of this, but brought that ruin upon themselves which they intended to others; whereas they thought for ever to have established their (religion, shall I call it, or idolatry, or) superstition, they have by this means made it more odious than ever before; as the northern gentleman could say, that though he was not able to dispute, yet he had two arguments against popery, equivocation and the gunpowder-treason. But they turn it off easily, as they think. Alas! it was but the plot of a company of unfortunate gentlemen. It was our happiness that they were unfortunate; whereas if it had succeeded well, they would have had other terms for it. Successful villany goeth for virtue.

Well, the net is broken, and we are delivered. God thought of us when we thought not of him, and awaked for us when we were asleep (here is a place for *behold*), for what a miserable face of things would there have been if their plot had succeeded!

Now what return shall we make for all this? They conceived mischief, let us conceive praise, and travail of holy resolutions to give up ourselves to God, who hath given us our king, our state, yea, ourselves to ourselves. He hath given us our lives more than once, every one of us in particular, especially in the last heavy visitation.* But had it not been better for many in regard of their own particular, to have been swept away in that deluge, than to live longer to treasure up further wrath to themselves? Many are not content to go to hell alone, but they will draw as many others as they can into their fellowship here, and torment hereafter. Oh beloved, the preservation of such, is but a reservation to further judgment! What good got the king of Sodom by being delivered once, and then after to be consumed with 'fire and brimstone from heaven? Gen. xix. What got Pharaoh by being delivered from ten plagues, and then to perish in the sea? Exod. xiv. What are all our temporal deliverances, if we live still in sin, go on in sin, die in our sins, and so perish eternally? Blessings, without return of due thanks, increase the guilt of sin, and the increase of guilt causeth the increase of judgments.

The most proper homogeneal way of thanks, is to stir up ourselves to a greater hatred of that religion. They would fain free it, as if it were the fault of some persons only; but alas! what can be else distilled from those dangerous points they hold (as that, *the pope hath temporal jurisdiction over princes, that he may excommunicate them; that he may, out of fulness of power, dispense with the oath of allegiance: that he cannot err; that subjection to him is a point of absolute necessity to salvation, &c.*) What, I say, can be distilled from these opinions, but treason in a people that live under a prince of a contrary religion? The dispositions of many of them are better than their positions.

However perhaps the present pope† may be more moderate and neutral, yet this is the infusion of their religion wherever it prevails, and these tenets shall be acted and in full force when they please, and it will please them when it shall be for the advantage of the Catholic cause. This was Bellarmine's tenet, *If the pope should err in commanding vice or forbidding virtue, the church is bound to believe vice to be good, and virtue to be ill, or*

* The plague.—G.

† Urban VIII (f).—G.

*else it should sin against conscience; for it is bound to believe what he commands.** Thus they make the judgment of man the rule of truth and falsehood, good and evil; whereas truth is truth, and that which is false is false, whether men think so or no. There is an intrinsical evil in evil, which the judgment of any man cannot take away; and the truth and goodness of things stands upon eternal grounds, not flexible or alterable by the will of any creature; otherwise it were all one as to think the course of the sun should be guided by a dial. Is there any hope of their coming to us when they had rather have the rules of nature and religion, which are as unmoveable as a mountain of brass, to vary, than be thought to confess that the pope may err! which indeed is the grand and leading error of all. But how should we expect our words should prevail, whenas the great works of God prevail not at all with them? The efficacy of error is so strong in many, that though they should see the vial poured out 'upon the throne of the beast,' Rev. xvi. 10, yet will they not repent.

For ourselves, we cannot better shew our thankfulness for this deliverance, by means whereof we enjoy our lives and our religion, than to preserve that truth, that is grounded upon the foundation of truth, which hath been derived unto us from those that went before, who held out the same truth; that hath been sealed by the blood of so many martyrs; that hath been established by the authority of gracious princes; that God hath given witness to by so many deliverances; that concurs with the confessions of all reformed churches; that God hath blessed with a constant tenor of peace, even to the rejoicing of all neighbour churches, to the envy of our enemies, and to the admiration of all.

We see all countries round about us in a confusion, and we, as it were the 'three young men in the fiery furnace,' safe, Dan. iii., without so much as smoke or smell of fire; as if we were the only people of God's delight. Now, what is that which God careth most for amongst us, but his truth? which, if we suffer, as much as in us lieth, to take any detriment, God may justly make us the spectacles of his wrath to others, as others have been to us. Beloved, God hath a cause and a people in the world, which he esteemeth more than all the world besides. Let us therefore own God's cause and people; his side one day will prove the better side.

I beseech you consider, what hurt have we ever had by the Reformation of religion? hath it come naked unto us? hath it not been attended with peace and prosperity? hath God 'been a barren wilderness to us?' Jer. ii. 31. Hath not God been a wall of fire about us? which, if he had not been, it is not the water that compasseth our island could have kept us. So long as we keep Christ's truth, Christ will keep us. Otherwise, trust to it, Christ and his truth will leave us. No nation under heaven hath so much cause to say 'Behold' as we have. Men are ready upon all occasions to be sensible of civil grievances (as in Solomon's time gold was as stones in the street, 2 Chron. i. 15, ix. 27), but we should be sensible of the spiritual favours we enjoy. If we look upon other kingdoms abroad, what nation under heaven hath the like cause to bless God for religion, for prince, for peace, &c., as we have? Beloved, we cannot better deserve of our king, church, and state, than to give up our lives to God who hath thus blessed us. The greatest enemies of a church and state, are those that provoke the highest Majesty of heaven, by obstinate courses against the light that shineth in their own hearts. It is seriously to be considered what Samuel saith to the people; and therefore, if not for love of our-

* See original in note g.—G.

selves, yet for the love of our king, religion, and state, let us take heed of provoking courses, and take heed of tiring the patience of God over-long. To conclude all, it is prayer that gets, but thankfulness witnessed by obedience that keeps, blessings. And what can our thoughts devise, our tongues utter, or our lives express, better, than the praise of our good God, that ever loadeth us with his benefits? that so God may delight still to shew himself unto us in the ways of his mercy, and think thoughts of love towards us, and dwell amongst us to the world's end.

NOTES.

(a) P. 306.—Augustine saith well, every sin is a lie. From *De Civitate Dei*, xlv. iv. 1, 'Unde non frustra dici potest, omne peccatum esse mendacium.'

(b) P. 307.—'Sweet morsels . . . their Herodians.' This is probably a misprint for Herodias, and the reference to *Mat. xiv. 3, 6, Mark vi. 17, 22.*

(c) P. 307.—'Sin . . . lay at the door,' *Gen. iv. 7.* For very interesting remarks on this passage, in the sense of Sibbes's quotation, consult Kalisch *in loc.*, specially page 139 (*Hist. and Critical Commentary on Old Testament . . . Genesis.* 1858).

(d) P. 310.—'The *subsistence* of things not seen,' *Heb. xi. 1.* ὑπόστασις is rendered 'substance' in our authorised version. Professor Sampson of America *in loc.* accepts Sibbes's translation, and observes, 'It is not only true of faith, that it is a "firm persuasion" of the existence of such things, but that it gives them, so to speak, "*present subsistence*." It gives them the force of present realities. This sense, therefore, includes the other, and is for this reason preferable, that, while it expresses all that is expressed by the other, it gives more fulness and strength to the apostle's words' (*Critical Commentary on Hebrews.* New York, 1856).

(e) P. 310.—'Our gunpowder plotters.' Sibbes preached numerous sermons on the anniversary of the memorable conspiracy known by the name of 'the gunpowder plot.' It was so designated from its design having been, by springing a mine under the Houses of Parliament, to destroy the three estates of the realm. It was discovered on Nov. 5th. 1605. An excellent summary of the facts will be found in a small volume dedicated to 'the plot,' by the Rev. Thomas Lathbury of Bristol, and a full 'history' in the standard work of David Jardine, Esq.

(f) P. 311.—'The present pope . . . Urban VIII.' Consult Ranké (*History of the Popes*, ii. 104, *seq.*) for the extraordinary career of this very remarkable pope. His bearing toward England at the time of Sibbes's sermon explains the half-favourable opinion expressed. He was raised to the tiara in 1623, and died in 1644.

(g) P. 311.—This extraordinary quotation will be found in Bellarmine, *De Pontifice*, book iv. c. 5—'Si autem Papa erraret præcipiendo vitia vel prohibendo virtutes, teneretur Ecclesia credere vitia esse bona et virtutes malas, nisi vellet contra conscientiam peccare.'

G.