

THE CHRISTIAN MAN'S CALLING.

PART II.

BY

GEORGE SWINNOCK

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

To the Worshipful GEORGE BATES, Esq. Doctor of Physic, one of the College, and Physician in Ordinary to his Excellent Majesty CHARLES the SECOND.

WORTHY SIR, that physic is honourable to the professors, and profitable to the natural body, and so to the body politic, of which they are members, is acknowledged by every one that is *sancæ mentis*, and doth not need hellebore. The heathen did not without reason highly commend Hippocrates amongst the Grecians, and Cornelius Celsus amongst the Latins, for being the first that ventured and waded into the depth of that mystery, and by writing transmitted it to posterity; they valued their pharmacias at so high a rate, that Apollo and Æsculapius, esteemed by some the first founders of physic, were adored as gods for the excellency of their invention.¹ The poet doth heroically trumpet the physicians' praise:

Ἰατρός γάρ ἀνὴρ πολλῶν ἀντάξιός ἄλλων.—Homer. *Iliad*. λ.

Omnibus est aliis medicus præstantior unus.

‘Of men physicians are the best,
And do by far exceed the rest.’

The word of God, which addeth real worth to whatsoever it extolleth, mentioneth physicians, (Gen. i. 2,) by way of honour, before the giving of the law, doth not only implicitly allow, (Exod. xxi. 19, 20,) but expressly command, if the old English translation may be credited, the use of physic. He giveth medicine to heal their sickness, Ps. cxlvii. 3; nay, the blessed God is pleased to style himself Jehovah-Rophi, the Lord the Physician, Exod. xv. 26; and the holy Jesus hath his name, though chiefly in a spiritual sense, from his healing nature and property.²

¹ Cicero de natura Deorum, lib. iii. p. 248.

² Ἰησοῦς ab ἰάομαι, *Sano*. Alii asserunt vocem esse pure Hebræam, *Jehoshua* ve *Jeshua*, et Græcum tantum in pronunciatione.

Health is the prince, the firstborn, as life is the king, of outward blessings. The widow in the Gospel disesteemed her substance in comparison of this jewel. The physician, therefore, which is *manus Dei*, as Hierophilus calls him—the hand of God to bring this pearl to us when we have lost it—may well be welcome and precious. Indeed, were it the divine pleasure to give all men a constant frame of health during their pilgrimage, as Hector Boetius saith of the isles of the Orcades, that the people live there a hundred and twenty years ordinarily in perfect health.¹ And Paulus Jovius reports of our country, that in old time the Britons lived long without physic: this were a wonderful favour; for he liveth miserably that lives upon medicines, and who, to uphold nature, is in a continual use of art.² This made Ambrose cry out, *Qui se medicis dederit, seipsum sibi negat*; ³ and Plato complain, that it is a great sign of a corrupt commonwealth where physicians and lawyers abound; ⁴ but, according to Cicero, *Mortalium nemo est quem non attingat dolor morbusque*. It is not more natural for man to beget a son than for his body to breed sickness.

‘Νοῦσοι δ’ ἀνθρωποῖσιν ἐφ’ ἡμέρᾳ ἢ δ’ ἐπὶ νυκτὶ
 Αὐτῶματοι φοιτῶσι κακὰ θνητοῖσι φεροῦσαι
 Σίγη ἐπὶ φωνὴν ἐξείλετο μητίετα Ζεύς.’—*Hesiod.*

Some tell us, that in every two years there is such store of ill humours engendered in one body, that a vessel of one hundred ounces will scarce hold them. Hippocrates himself saith, *Ultimus sanitatis gradus est morbo proximus*. Sure I am with the moralist, *Ipsi ceu Deo nullo est opus*,⁵ He is commander of heaven who needeth no help. And Melanchthon doth not without cause bewail his ignorance, and indiet him for cruelty, as *felo de se*, who condemned the means (physic) and the ministers (physicians) of health: *Barbara immanitate et inscitia deploranda contemnunt praecepta sanitatis, mortem et morbos ultra accersunt*.⁶ It is taxed as a piece of great folly in the Romans, who, when physicians came from Greece to Rome, banished them by the counsel of Cato, as sent by the subtle Greeks to torture the Romans.⁷

God and nature—that *nihil agunt frustra*—have appointed herbs not only for meat, but also for medicine, the virtue and value of which would never be found, nor the herbs made serviceable to their right ends, if some did not employ their time and talents in

¹ Nec domus et fundus, non æris acervus et auri,
 Egroto domini deduxit corpore febres.—*Horat.*

² Misere vivit qui medice vivit. ³ Amb. Ser. 22, in Ps. exix. ⁴ Cic. 3 Tusc.

⁵ Seneca.

⁶ Melanct. De Anima.

⁷ Mornæus De Verit. Relig., c. 8.

the search. The work, it is confessed, is full of difficulty ; but that addeth—as to the ignominy of those empirics who have but one panacea for all people and all diseases, so—to the glory of the ingenious workman. The nature of simples is said by some to alter according to the difference of the places in which they grow, or the constitutions of the persons to whom they are given. They tell us that opium in Turkey doth scarce offend any ; but with us, in a small quantity, it stupifieth ; that cicuta is a strong poison in Greece, but with us hath not such violent effects. Experience acquainteth us, that what helpeth one hurteth another in the same distemper ; nay, that the same patient may receive damage or advantage by his physic as the fit season of taking it is observed or neglected.¹ How miserable, then, are those places which are delivered up to the mercy—I should say cruelty and execution—of mountebanks, who undertake to cure all maladies with one remedy, (as their *aurum potabile*—or usually something worse, for this they often take—seldom give,) or at least the same sore in all constitutions with one salve. Surely the impudence and ignorance of these quacks was that which moved Agrippa to such a heat when he uttered, *Multo plus periculi à medicamento quam à morbo* ; and it may be said of such a one, with the poet, none knows

‘ Quot Themison ægros autumnò occiderit uno.’—*Juvenal.*

The medicines they prescribe are usually as ineffectual as that of the Frenchman who gave these verses in writing to his patients for the cure of all diseases:—

‘ Si vis curari de morbo nescio quali,
Accipias herbam, sed qualem nescio, nec quam ;
Ponas nescio quo, curabere nescio quando.’²

They are thus Englished:—

‘ Your pain, I know not what, do not foreslow
To cure with herbs ; but what, I do not know,
Place them well bruised, I know not where, and then
You shall be perfect whole, I know not when.’

But what a felicity is it to meet with persons both of much science and conscience in this profession, who understand and consider the cause of diseases, the nature of the ingredients, the constitutions of the patients, the difference of climates, and the proper seasons of administering physic, and accordingly prescribe

¹ In libellis qui vulgo versantur apud literatos, incautiores multa legunt, à quibus decipiuntur ; eximia illis, sed portentosum hauriunt venenum.—*Penottus Praef. de Mar. Med.*

² Becan. Sum. Theol., part i. cap. 16.

and apply it with faithfulness ! Such, honoured sir, through divine providence, hath been my happiness since I obtained the favour of your acquaintance. I should be sordidly ungrateful if I were not mindful how willing you have been upon all occasions—sometimes at midnight—to give your advice gratis to me or mine. But I must especially acknowledge, to the glory of the blessed God, with thankfulness to you—which I voluntarily promised to do publicly some years since, though I had not a convenient opportunity until now—your indefatigable diligence, and little less than miraculous success, about my dear consumptionate wife. The great philosopher saith, He that loseth a good wife hath lost half the happiness of his life. I must confess, to the honour of free grace, that she whom I have found a meet help was nigh unto death—a dead woman long ago in the judgment of all her friends—but God had mercy on her, and not on her only, but on me,¹ and her many small children also, and was pleased to make you the means of very much good to her: to him, therefore, as the author and principal efficient I do publicly give the praise. For,

‘ Deiecit et relevat, premit et solatia præstat,
Enecat et possit vivificare Deus.’

God only can command health. Physic is only the order in which he is pleased to work. Paracelsus, who boasted that he could make others immortal, died himself before he had attained seventy years, the age of a man. To the divine majesty therefore, the lepers under the law, after they were cleansed, were to offer their gifts, and all sorts after sickness, the ransom of their lives,² Exod. xxxi. And I do heartily acknowledge my great engagements to you as his minister and instrument, who were as careful of her, not for your fee,³ for you never would take a penny, scorning to cure a consumption in the body by one in the purse, as if you would cure by friendship as much as by physic, exactly answering the moralist’s⁴ description of a tender and ingenious

¹ Sanus sum, gratias ago Creatori, Languco, et in hoc laudo domini voluntatem.—*Hier. ad Paulum.*

² The same word *θεραπεύειν*, which signifieth to heal, signifieth to worship, because after healing men should worship.

³ Yet the physician is worthy of a liberal fee. The Abderites, when they wrote to Hippocrates for the cure of Democritus, whom they thought distracted because he always laughed at the ridiculousness of men’s lives, sent him word : Quicquid auri apud nos est, libenter persolvemus, etiamsi tota urbs nostra aurum efflet.—*Abderan. Epist. Hippoc.* Vis morborum pretia medentibus, Fori tabes pecuniam advocatis fert.—*Tacit. Annal.* lib. i. 11.

⁴ Senec de Benef., lib. vi. cap. 16.

physician. *Quare medico plus debeo? Quia ex medico in amicum transit, et me non arte quam vendit, obligat, sed benigna et familiari voluntate. Ille plus impendit, quam medico necesse est. Pro me, non pro fama artis, extimuit. Non fuit contentus remedia monstrare, sed admovit. Interea sollicitus assedit, ad suspecta tempora occurrit. Nullum ministerium oneri illi, nullum fastidio fuit. Gemitus meos non securus excepit. In turba multorum invocantium, ego illi potissima cura fui. Huic ego non tanquam medico, sed tanquam amico obligatus sum.* And through divine help as successful as if you had been appropriated, according to the custom of the Egyptians, to the study of that single distemper, and predestinated, according to Paracelsus's opinion, to its cure; wherefore, with that master of moral philosophy, *Nec medico in majus gratia referri potest, nec nautae si naufragum sustulit.*¹ I cannot be thankful enough to my physician, especially such a one whose worth the whole nation is acquainted with.

The truth is, that if I had been so unjustly ungrateful, as to have studied to conceal the great debt I owe you, there are so many witnesses of it, that I had but consulted my own shame. But as a public confession of my engagements, *in grati animi μνημόσυνον*, I present you with this treatise, the matter of which calls for your perusal, though the author craves your pardon. The work of Christianity in every relation and condition, the subject of it, is clearly consistent with, and necessary to, your calling. The divine and physician do both *convenire in uno tertio*; they are both for curing: the divine heals *corpus per animam*; the physician, *animam per corpus*. Every divine is a spiritual physician, and every physician ought to be a spiritual divine, though not by profession, yet in practice. Marcilius Ficinus was *simul et semel medicus et sacerdos*. Luke, *ὁ ἰατρὸς ὁ ἀγαπητὸς*, the beloved physician, was a divine evangelist, of whom Jerome excellently, *De medico corporum factus erat medicus animarum, cujus libri quoties leguntur in ecclesiis, toties divina pharmaca hominibus offeruntur.*² Theology is the mistress, all other sciences and arts but handmaids; and then they know their places, and serve for the right purpose, when they are, as the spoils which David took from the Gentiles, consecrated to the temple.

All ornaments to a person void of religion are but like flowers to a dead corpse, notwithstanding which it hath neither life nor loveliness. The oracle of Apollo judged Socrates the wisest man of his time; and his scholar, Xenophon, gives him this encomium, *Talis*

¹ Idem de Benef., lib. iii. cap. 35.

² Jerome in Epist. ad Philem.

fuit Socrates quem omnium optimum et felicissimum statuam; ¹ yet his other scholar Plato acknowledgeth him a great drinker; and his master Aristotle saith he was *Scurra Atticus*. Democritus, who was esteemed a famous philosopher, an expert physician, an excellent mathematician, a profound politician, *omnifarum doctus*, of whom Hippocrates writes, *Nihil in toto officio nature de quo non scripsit*. And Aristotle himself, who is styled *Regula nature, nature miraculum, ipsa eruditio, sol scientiarum, mare, sophia, Antistes literarum et sapientie*, are both by Lactantius clearly proved to be illiterate fools and speaking asses; *Nihil, inquit, inter hos et bestias nisi quod loquuntur*.² Learning without grace converts the blessings of God into the provision of lusts; as the pearl which beautifieth a man is the disease of the filth that breeds it, so those parts which render a Christian more comely, are mortal many times to others, being instruments of sin, and full to their corruptions. Like Belshazzar, they devote those golden vessels to the use of their idols, which should be serviceable to the sanctuary.

He that for parts and learning is nature's pride, and the very utmost she hath to shew, without religion, is but a learned dunce. *Quia Christi non habet condimentum, vanus est ejus labor, et peritura edificatio*, saith Jerome.³ *Neque enim prestantissima nature et industrie dona, aut alienius morbi acutioris cruciatus lenire, aut inquinatæ et rugientis conscientie ictus et laniatus repellere, aut fugientem revocare animam, aut Gehennæ flammæ quasi injecta guttula minuire, aut denique horribilis iræ Dei executiundo sustinendo vel oneri vel minimas vires subministrare possunt*, according to learned Reynolds.⁴ No, it is godliness alone which, as the diamond to the ring, addeth real value to all natural and acquired accomplishments, and which is the only ark for a soul to be sheltered in, when a deluge overfloweth.

He is the best scholar that knoweth the plague of his own heart, and hath got it healed with the blood of Christ. There is no grammarian like him that hath learned how to decline sin in every case; no logician like him who can find out Satan's subtleties, and evade his paralogisms; no arithmetician like him who hath learned to number his days, and to apply his heart to wisdom; and no musician like him who doth by a holy life, to the tune of truth in the inward parts, sing forth the praises of his God; he is best skilled in astronomy that hath his conversation in heaven, and

¹ Xenoph. de Dict. Socrat., lib. iv.

² Lactant., lib. iii.; De Sapientia, cap. 17, 20; lib. xxvi. cap. 8.

³ Jerome in Ezek. xiii.

⁴ Animalis Homo, p. 30.

walketh daily in the view of those celestial beauties and glories. None is skilled in economics but he who walketh in the midst of his house with a perfect heart. He is an excellent rhetorician that, like Jacob, can plead so as to overcome and prevail with God himself. He is the famous physician that makes it his chief study to procure his vitiated nature healed by the renewing work of the Holy Spirit. And he is the only politician who is wise to salvation. These things will appear to be truths when we all appear in the other world. Great parts without piety will bring at that day but the greater punishment. Field-officers that boast before the battle with their scarfs on their sides, and their plumes in their hats, at the head of their divisions, are glad when the army is routed, and all are taken, to throw away their gaudy feathers and gorgeous armour, and would willingly pass then for common soldiers. Oh, how glad would unsanctified scholars be, who are now cried up for sublime wits, for the quintessence of learning, for living libraries, and divine eagles, for *Magistri Sententiarum*, *Doctores Angelici*, *Seraphici*, if they could pass at the great day for the greatest naturals, and most ignorant innocents that ever were in the world!

Honoured Sir, I write these things, partly to shew that this tractate, though not physical, may properly enough be presented to a physician, when religion is so absolutely requisite in all; and partly to quicken all scholars to diligent endeavours after true piety, for a right management of their parts.

Though corruption cankers the greatest blessings, and makes them tributary to Satan, yet religion will reduce them to their obedience, and make them pay their homage and allegiance to the king of saints. This is in part discovered in the ensuing discourse, in that part which concerneth a saint's carriage in a prosperous condition. Indeed, extremes are dangerous, a middle estate is safest; as a middle temper of the sea, between a still calm and a violent tempest, is most helpful to convey the mariner to his haven. But the embroidered providences of God are like a curious piece of arras made up of several pieces, some whereof are crewell or thread, others silver and gold; some are cast down with loads of misery, others are loaden with extraordinary mercies; now both these conditions are great temptations, especially the latter.

The highest towers are soonest destroyed with lightning, and those boughs which are fullest laden are apt to break with their own weight. Excessive heat, as excessive cold, quickly degenerates into poison; but grace is a strong corrective that will not only pre-

serve it from being mortal, but also make it medicinal and useful to the health of the soul.

The good Lord grant that the vessel of your precious soul, when furnished with the largest sails of prosperity, may move the more swiftly; and in the greatest storm of adversity, be so ballasted with grace as to sail safely to your port of bliss; that in your short day you may be always purging out by faith and repentance your spiritual diseases, and visited with the divine saving health; that at the evening of your mortal sickness, the great physician may administer a cordial to you of his own living water, and that at the night of death, when your sun shall set, the Sun of righteousness may arise upon you with healing under his wings, and make your soul, as his body in the gospel, every whit whole.

Medicus medicorum tibi, una cum charissimâ conjuge, liberisque suavissimis, animis in hac vita saluberrimis benedicat, et pro summa tua in evangelii ministrum pietate, salutem in futura sempiternam retribuat. Ita precatur et, dum in vivis fuerit, precabitur.

Reverentiæ tuæ in Christo obstrictissimus,

GEORGIUS SWINNOCKUS.

E Musæo meo in Magna Kimbell, 11th Nov. 1663.

THE PREFACE AND EPISTLE TO THE READER,

WHEREIN THE RIGHT CHRISTIAN IS CHARACTERISED, OUT OF
THE GENERAL HEADS IN THE THREE PARTS OF
THE CHRISTIAN MAN'S CALLING.

READER, knowledge is the excellency of a man, whereby he is usually differenced from a brute. The knowledge of Christ is the excellency of the Christian, whereby he is differenced from a heathen ; a practical knowledge is the excellency of the true Christian, whereby he is known from the false one ; knowledge without practice is like a glass eye, all for show, and nothing for use ; right knowledge, like Rachel's mandrakes, is helpful to make the saint fruitful ; it hath not only eyes to see God's will, but also feet to walk in his way ; it is life eternal so to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. The spring of this knowledge may be in the head, and its rise in the understanding ; but it slideth down into the heart, breaketh out into the life, and so floweth along in the channel of grace and holiness, till at last it lose itself in the ocean of glory. Constaney in this holy course is the crown and character of the sincere Christian. An infirm soul, like a feverish body, hath an unequal pulse ; he is, as his fits are, now and then pious, when his worldly pleasures will give him leave, and his earthly profits allow him leisure ; but the sound soul, like the natural sun, is always running this spiritual race. Others, like the merops or woodpecker, may have gay feathers, make a great profession, but, as that bird, *ἐν τῇ γῇ νεοττῆναι*, they build their nests, lay up their treasures on earth ; but the upright soul hath his hopes and happiness in the other world, and therefore is always trading and sending thither : ' I have inclined my heart

to keep thy statutes always unto the end,' Ps. cxix. 112. Observe, first, The truth of his holiness, I have inclined, not my ears, nor my tongue, but my heart; secondly, The test of it, to keep, not my own inventions, nor others' traditions, but thy statutes; thirdly, The term of it, not for a fit or a start, but alway, without intermission, unto the end, without backsliding. The time of my subjection to God's statutes is till I enter upon my eternity, and time, with me, shall be no more, unto the end. 1. His obedience is real, not verbal, to keep thy statutes; action is the life of religion; the gracious person can as soon cease to be, as cease to do; his voice is like Elijah to Obadiah, As the Lord liveth, I will shew myself. Hypocrites, as they say of the nightingale and cuckoo, are *vox et præterea nihil*, nothing but voice and talk; their whole work consisteth in words, as if they were lawyers, to get their living by much speaking; but though those work only with their tongues, the Christian speaketh powerfully with his hands; his works praise him in the gate. 2. His obedience is cordial as well as real—I have inclined my heart. The wheels of his actions are regular in their motion, but his heart is the spring of the watch, which sets them a-going. His heart is the text, upon which his conversation is a living exposition. His comment may fail and fall short, but the text is ever sound and true. 3. His obedience is constant as well as cordial, always, unto the end. Always, in every place, passage, and providence, every calling, company, and condition, in every action, ordinance, and relation; wherever I go, and whatsoever I do, my heart is always inclined to keep thy statutes. Unto the end; as long as I live, till death put an end both to my labour and my life. The tradesman in his particular calling, who intendeth to make anything of it, spendeth most of his time at it; he is either buying in, or selling out his wares, or casting up his books, or fetching in his debts, some way or other furthering his calling. It is not the picture of wares on the stall, or the master's standing with his hands in his pocket, that will preserve his family, or prevent poverty from entering his shop like an armed man. The Christian in his general calling, if he will get anything by it, will have no leisure to be idle or loiter, but must be both diligent and constant at it. The great profession which some make, if religion be not their business, will never prevent their eternal perdition. How many vessels have suffered shipwreck for all their glorious names of triumph, safeguard, and good speed! The weapons of many soldiers, who pretend that they are listed under the Captain of our salvation, will, like rusty rotten muskets, recoil

and fly in their faces when they come, in an hour of death or day of judgment, to use them.

Nature hath made the roots of many trees bitter, whose fruits are very sweet, signifying to us that pleasures are not to be expected without pains. The heathen poet could see and say as much.

Ἄργος γὰρ οἶδεις Θεὸν ἔχων ἀνὰ στόμα
 Βίον δύναιτ' ἂν συλλέγειν ἀνευ πόνου.—*Eurip. Rhes.*

The Israelites could not enjoy the land flowing with milk and honey, till they had fought with, and conquered the Canaanites, and forced their way through grievous obstacles and oppositions. The saint must pass by the angel with a drawn sword in his hand before he can enter into paradise. His work is much and manifold, his enemies are many and mighty; and it will cost him hot water before he can display his colours upon the walls of the new Jerusalem, and receive his crown. If he should, like the wasp, intend chiefly his pastime and pleasure, and filling himself with the purest honey, he would quickly grow foggy, and be easily slain by his foes. He doth therefore like the bee, of whom some write that she never loseth a day from work abroad if the air will give leave; and when the weather is tempestuous she cleanseth her hive, carrieth out the filth, and keepeth watch and ward at her gates for fear of her enemies, and hereby she gets something to live upon when others starve.

The nature and necessity of this religious industry I have largely discussed in the first part of the Christian Man's Calling; the general heads of which treatise, as also of this second, and the third and last (which part, God continuing health and help, thou mayest see within a few months) I shall epitomise in this ensuing character of the true Christian.

The right Christian is one whose conversation is in heaven, though his habitation be on earth; he dwelleth here below, but he liveth above; religion is his mistress, to whom he hath surrendered the keys of his heart, and to whom in his life he is not a complimentary, but a real servant. The world may be in the suburbs, but God reigneth in the city. He useth the creatures, yet enjoyeth none but Jesus Christ. Heaven is the centre to which all the lines of his life tend, and in which they meet and end. Holiness is his highway, in which he daily walketh, and he thinks that day lost in which he makes not some progress towards his journey's end, eternal life. He travelleth in company with many civil and natural affairs, but he is specially watchful that they keep their distance

all the way. He is one that makes, not his own nor any other's, but God's will the rule of his worship. He is careful to pay his God his due to the utmost of his power, though to do it he is forced sometimes to compound with his family or particular calling, and to pay them short, yet he dares not pay his piety to God in counterfeit pieces, or in any coin but such as hath a divine stamp, the King of heaven's image and superscription on it.

He giveth religion the right hand of fellowship in his daily conversation, causing his servants' bodily and worldly business to wait till his Master, the blessed God, be served. He doth not mind godliness by the by, or when he hath nothing else to do, but prefer it in his practices, as well as his principles, before all other things whatsoever. He hath more manners than to let the Lord of glory wait his leisure; and more wisdom, when he is going to speak to the King of kings about matters of life and death, than to let the trifles of this world stay him by the way. He mindeth his business when he is about it, and dareth not do his holy work by halves; whether he pray, or hear, or read, or meditate, or whatsoever sacred performance he sets upon, he serveth his God with all his heart and with all his might. He so considereth the weight and consequence of his religious duties, the worthiness and holiness of God with whom he hath to do, that he believeth no labour to be great enough, no carriage to be gracious enough, for the manner of his worship; no love to be hot enough, no honour to be high enough for the object of his worship; nay, and his very all to be too too little for him. He is not only diligent in, but also constant at, this heavenly calling; when he is walking with men, he walketh with God; all the while he liveth in the flesh, he liveth after the spirit; religion is his daily and hourly companion; at his table, it is his sauce, which makes his meat savoury; in his shop, it is his scales, which makes his wares weighty; in his chamber, it is the hand that makes his bed easy; all his colours are laid in this oil of grace. His whole life, though it may have now and then a comma and a parenthesis in it, is but one continued and entire speech of prayer and praise to his Lord. He laboureth whilst he liveth, and neither desireth nor expecteth rest till the night of death bring him a writ of ease.

He is one that is persuaded religion to be the end of his creation, and of all the mercies that he enjoyeth, and so his God's end is ever in his eye, and he minds the message about which his God sent him into the world, whatsoever he omits. He is more rational than to conceive his heaven-born soul to be given him that he might live a

brute, to eat and drink, and sport and sleep; and more religious than to prefer his meat before his message, or himself before his Master. He often admonisheth himself (with Bernard in his studious cell), Soul, soul, remember for what end thou camest hither; and is a fellow-commoner with angels in obeying the precepts, and feeding on those pleasures which flow from the fountain of his being and happiness. He cannot think of the day wherein his Master will call him to an account, how he hath done the work about which he is set, and discharged the errand about which he is sent, without fear, and therefore dares not be false or unfaithful. He sets out in earnest for the undefiled inheritance, as knowing that it cannot be attained without violence. He believeth that the gate of life is strait, and none can enter in except they strive; that he must conquer if he will be crowned, and win the weight of glory if he will wear it. Therefore he overlooks all discouragements, overleaps all impediments, puts forth all his strength, and works in this, that he may rest in the other world. He judgeth the matters of his God, of his soul, and of eternity, to be infinitely more ponderous and weighty, more excellent and worthy, than the affairs of his family and of his body, which last but for a few days, and thence he is provoked and persuaded to give them the precedency in all his actions, to pursue them with industry against all opposition, and to persevere in them with constancy to his dissolution.

He is one that doth not only use diligence himself, but also bemoans the negligence of others; his soul weeps for others' wickedness in their eager pursuit of lying vanities, and careless neglect of real and saving mercies. When he beholdeth worldlings toying with mean trifles, and playing like children—only this difference, with greater baubles—take such pains to dig into the mines of the earth for gold, and then to find nothing but their own graves; when he beholdeth the greatest and wisest of the world, like Augustus, to play with nuts, or Alexander Severus with dogs, or Lucian's Jupiter, to spend their time in painting the wings of butterflies—to be so busy about nothing—he doth not, like Democritus, laugh at the ridiculousness of their lives, but with Heraclitus, mourn for their madness and misery. When he observeth amongst professors so much science, and so little conscience; so many Christians without Christ; so much talking of God's word, and so little walking in God's way; so many who, like trees, seem to aspire to heaven, and yet are rooted in the earth, contending vehemently, like fishes for a few crumbs that are thrown into the waters; like some resty jades, when good provender is before them,

to pick at straws that lie under their feet ; to ride, and run, and watch, and work for a thing of nought, for a few poor scraps that comes from the creature's table, when the flesh of Christ, which is meat indeed, and the blood of Christ, which is drink indeed, and all the dainties of the gospel are before them and offered to them,—he doth both wonder at and bewail their folly and frenzy.

He is one whose pious pulse is ever beating, and whose religious soul is ever breathing after his God and Saviour. His holiness, like the fire on the altar, comes down from heaven : and though it may sometimes abate, sometimes increase in its heat, yet it never goeth out day nor night. He is holy, as his God is holy, in all manner of conversation. Though his godliness, like a simple of a predominant quality, give a tincture to all the mixtures of his natural and civil actions, yet it gives the greatest relish and savour to his spiritual compositions, which belong to the sanctuary. He is always circumspect in his carriage, because he is ever in the view of God's eye ; but he is most pious when he comes solemnly into God's presence, knowing that great princes are more curious of their near attendants than of those that are at a further distance. He considereth that holiness becometh God's house, that dead duties are no way suitable to a living God, that the ordinances of his God are edged tools, and not in the least to be jested with, that his soul and eternal estate are at stake in every performance, and therefore, as David, he danceth before the ark with all his might ; he prayeth, he heareth, he singeth, he communiceth, he doth all with heat and heartiness, with love and liveliness, as for his life, as for his soul, as for his everlasting salvation. The vessel of his soul moveth steadily, and saileth swiftly on the waters of the sanctuary, being ballasted with a holy fear, and furnished with the sails of a living faith. He goeth to duty, not for duty, but to give glory to his God in them, and to receive grace from his God through them, that he might by them be made partaker of the divine nature. He prayeth with reverence, as to a God, and with confidence, as to a father, and gets his whole living by this trade of begging. He believeth his prayer to be answered when his petition is denied, and never goeth from the beautiful gate of God's temple without some alms. As in the presence of the Lord, he gives audience to his word, and is known to be one of Christ's sheep by his ear-mark, of hearing his voice and following him. He layeth up the jewel of the word in the cabinet of his heart, and layeth it out as occasion serveth in his conversation. He goeth to the sacramental board as to his dying bed, and thinks no prepara-

tion great enough for the reception of the Lord of glory. His first question at the table, is, with the church, 'Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?' and with the Greek to Philip, Sir, I would fain see Jesus: and if Christ be absent, whoever or whatever be present, the cup, though it be gold, hath no worth, no wine in it, for he goeth from the table more hungry and unsatisfied than he came to it. He goeth to ordinances, as Zaccheus to his sycamore tree, to have a sight of his Saviour, and as Moses to the mount, commune with his God, and then only he is at ease, when he can accomplish his end. He counts that prayer the best prayer wherein he enjoyeth most of his Saviour; that sermon the best sermon that giveth the deepest wounds to his sins, and those elements the only sacrament that are a taste and seal of this eternal salvation.

He is one that of all seasons hath the highest respect for the Lord's day, as having experimentally found that to be the day of his greatest spiritual feasts. He needeth no priest, as the Jews had to sound a trumpet the day before, and give notice of the ensuing Sabbath, for he longs for it more than lovers for the day of their wedding, and the whole week to him is but a preparation for the heavenly works of that honourable day. He emptieth his heart overnight of those ill humours which may be contracted by the world's coarse fare, that he may have the better appetite to those dainties which shall be set before him on that day. In it he cheerfully meditates on God's works, and carefully attendeth on God's word. He worketh the work of him that sent him into the world all the day long, and wisheth the day longer for the duty's sake. He esteemeth every part of this golden season precious, and doth gather up the fragments of it, that nothing be lost. At the night of this market-day for his soul, he calls himself to a reckoning what he hath got, how much he hath gained, and counts it an ill day if he be not more informed in his judgment, or reformed in his affections, and more conformed in his conversation to his Lord Jesus Christ.

He is one that frameth his kitchen, his natural actions, as well as his chapel, his spiritual, according to the rule and square of religion. He doth not feed without fear, but eat his bread before the Lord, as knowing that it doth not nourish by its own power, but by divine providence, and that it is the means of preserving his life, not the end of his living. He feedeth his flesh, but doth not pamper it, as fearing that God, who alloweth him sufficient for his need, but not provision for his lust. He keeps a strict hand on this unruly horse, his appetite, lest, if the reins lay on its own

shoulders, it should run on and wander to his ruin; yet, because his body is his soul's beast, on which it dependeth very much in its motions, he rules over it with reason, not with rashness; useth it as a servant, not as a slave, and alloweth it convenient refreshment and rest. But his recreation is not his occupation, only his sauce, which he useth sparingly, to make his meat, his work, relish the better, and go down the pleasanter.

He is one that mindeth his general calling in his particular, and tradeth with his temporal stock for the true riches. His care is to make the maid to know her place and wait on religion; and his fear lest at any time she should usurp authority over her mistress. If the world smile on him, he dares not trust it, but endeavours, when its possessions flow in upon him, that his affections may not flow out upon it. When he aboundeth in goods, he aboundeth in thankfulness to the giver, and desireth more to improve his wealth aright, than to increase it. If the world frown upon him, and he decrease in the means of the earth, he laboureth to decrease in earthly-mindedness, and rejoiceth at the taking away of the fuel, when he findeth thereby the fire to go out. Howsoever the wise God throw him, he falls like a die upon a square, having learned in all conditions to be contented, how to abound and how to be abased.

He is one that is holy at home as well as abroad, and walketh in the midst of his house with a perfect heart. His house is a little church, consecrated to the dearest Redeemer, wherein his God is praised and worshipped, and a true though small resemblance of the highest heavens. 'Holiness to the Lord' is written on all the vessels, rooms, and, in his desire and endeavour, on all the inhabitants in it. It is the grief of his soul to have a cursed Ham, or scoffing Ishmael, or profane Esau in his family; and oh, how his heart aches for fear any should drop out of his house into hell! He is a priest to pray for them, a prophet to instruct them, and a king to govern them according to the word of God. He is specially watchful to set them a good pattern, knowing that he, like the admiral in a navy, carrieth the light for all the rest, and they are prone to imitate his practices, whether right or wrong.

He manifesteth religion in every relation, and filleth them up with suitable conversation. He is not like the earth, light in one part, and always dark at the same time in others, but as the heavens, at all times, and in all parts light. As he is a parent, he doth not, like Æsop's ape, hug his child to death with fondness, nor bring up his children to bring down his family, but bringeth

them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He desireth more to see them gracious than to see them great, and takes more thoughts for their immortal spirits than for their fading flesh. He provides for their bodies, and gives them such education as may make them serviceable to men; but he prefers their souls, and is mainly solicitous about that breeding which may make them serviceable to the blessed God. As he is a son, he labours to approve himself the most dutiful child in the country. He honoureth his parents, both inwardly and outwardly, in his language and carriage, and submitteth to them in all things in the Lord. He yieldeth obedience to his earthly out of conscience to his heavenly Father, and payeth his duty both to God and man in the same action. If he be rebuked for his faults, he is not only patient to submit, but also pious to reform, and kisseth the rod for teaching him his lesson. Though his parents be wicked and careless of his weal, yet he is tender of their welfare. He dareth not discover their nakedness, nor disobey their lawful precepts, because they themselves are profane, but he serveth them with the more care to win them to Christ; and is so affectionate towards them that he doth not only to his power supply (if need be) their poverty, but would lay down his natural life to prevent their eternal death. If he be a husband, in his behaviour towards his wife he imitateth his head in his carriage towards his body: he nourisheth and cherisheth her as the Lord the church. She is in his eye the fairest of women, and in his judgment the fittest for him of any in the world. He chose her more for her weight in grace than in gold, and he valueth her not according to her estate in the earth, but in the covenant. Whatsoever she be, either for person, or portion, or parts, or parentage, he esteemeth and affecteth her more for her piety, and because of God's ordinance, than for any or all of them. If she err, he seeketh to draw her home with the cords of love; if she continue in the faith, he seeketh to confirm her with the bands of kindness. Love is his whetstone to provoke her to obey him; and love is his loadstone to allure her to obey God. His love is one ingredient in all compositions; and his love is her cordial in her sick and sad conditions. He loveth her outward man above all his means, and affordeth it what her necessity and conveniency require, and what his estate will allow; but he is exceeding tender of her inward man, praying with her, and for her, instructing her, and using all helps that Christ may be her husband, and heaven her jointure. If she be a wife, she is subject to her husband, as the church is to Christ. She doth not question his place nor quarrel with his power, but in

obedience to God's ordinance honour his person, and obey his lawful pleasure. Though he command what is below her, or painful to her, if not sinful, she doth not complain of, but comply with his commands. Her clothing is the satin of sanctity, the purple of purity, the white linen of innocency, and the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Her meat and drink is to do the will (under God and in subordination to him) of her husband. If he be satisfied, and her God not disobeyed, whoever be displeased, she is contented. She reverenceth him as her head, and loveth him as her heart ; and as she is one with him in name and condition, so she endeavours, as much as may be, to be one with him in nature and disposition. She is faithful to his eternal, as well as his temporal estate, and more careful to have him rich towards God than rich in this world. She is mindful of her household, as well as her husband, and is a meet help to him, not only in his personal, but also in his domestical concerns. 'The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchant's ship, she bringeth her food from far. She riseth while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field and buyeth it ; with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard ; she girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good, her candle goeth not out by night ; she layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff ; she stretcheth out her hands to the poor, yea, she stretcheth out her hands to the needy. She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness ; she looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Many daughters have done virtuously, but she excelleth them all.'

If he be a master, he carrieth himself towards his servants as one that hath a Master in heaven. He knoweth that his servants are made of the same mould, and may be heirs of the same happiness with himself ; that though there be a civil, yet there is no natural or spiritual distinction, and he treateth them answerably in all his actions. He commandeth them, as Abraham his household, to keep the way of the Lord ; is more careful that they mind God's worship than his own work, and is more sorrowful when God is disobeyed than when his own affairs are neglected ; he useth his servants, but dareth not abuse them by overworking or under-

keeping them ; he giveth to them what is just and equal, both in their work and reward ; but he is more diligent to teach them, and more desirous they should learn, the trade of Christianity, than his own calling.

If he be a servant he liveth like the Lord's freeman, walking at liberty and seeking God's precepts. He denieth sinful subjection to any, but he yieldeth civil subjection to all whom his God hath set over him. Though his master be froward and crabbed, he serveth him with fear and conscience, as persuaded that his respect and obedience is due not to man's nature, but to God's order and ordinance. If his master be holy, he does not slight him because a brother, but counts him worthy of double honour. He honours him for his relation as his master, and for his religion as his Christian master. He is diligent in his duty whether his master be present or absent, knowing that the eye of his God is ever on him, and as having the fear of his God ever in him. Whether his master be good or bad, courteous or churlish, he is faithful in his calling, doth his work as to the Lord, hoping that of the Lord he shall receive his reward. He serveth his Maker in serving his master, and doth all in singleness of heart as unto Christ, looking at last for the inheritance of a son.

He is one that is holy in every condition, as well as in every relation, and walketh in all weathers in the way of God's commandments. In prosperity he giveth God praise, in adversity he is patient, in both pious. He suiteth his carriage not according to his company, but according to his condition ; he seeth by experience that as fat bodies are most liable to diseases, and the best meat to be blown with flies, so prosperous men are most prone to profaneness ; therefore though his mountain be never so strong, he is not secure ; but the more wealth he hath, the more watchful he is lest it should be a provocation to wickedness ; his heart is not the more lifted up for the greatness of his heaps, but in a high wind he keepeth a low sail, because that is most safe. His substance is not the object of his confidence, for he seeth it is a sandy foundation ; he trusteth not in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth him all things richly to enjoy. He is sensible of others' sufferings, notwithstanding his own safety ; and though his own drink be wine, yet it is purl-royal in which he tasteth his brethren's wormwood. He valueth himself not by the confluence of creatures, but by the unsearchable riches that are in Christ, for he believeth no other wealth will be current in the other world. He beholdeth many to be high whose lives speak them to be now

under God's hatred, and in the road to hell; and therefore he rateth himself not by his houses, or lands, or temporal possessions, but by his right to the Father's house, the inheritance of the saints in light, and his eternal portion. He giveth God the praise of all his plenty, believing that not his own diligence, so much as God's gracious providence, is the original of his prosperity. He is therefore chiefly glad of power, and riches, and outward mercies, because he may get his God the more glory and honour, and hath opportunity thereby of being the richer in good works. He doth, like the industrious bee, work hard in this summer of prosperity, and lay in provision, that he may have some honey of comfort to feed upon in a winter of scarcity and misery. He is not afraid of the snow when it cometh, being prepared for it with double clothing. In the hard weather of adversity he keepeth his spiritual health, nay, he increaseth it, and is made thereby partaker of God's holiness. He dares not murmur at instruments, much less quarrel at the efficient; but he seeth God's hand at the bottom of the warrant for his correction, and that keeps the king's peace in his breast. He knoweth that though second causes may intend evil, yet the first cause, whose will must stand, intendeth his good; and so he patiently submitteth to his punishment, because it tendeth to his profit. He justifieth God when he condemneth him; and though God kill him, yet he will love him and trust in him. He rejoiceth in the tree of his comforts, the God of all consolation, when the fruit is fallen off; and though the fig-tree doth not blossom, nor the vine yield her fruit, yet he rejoiceth in the Lord, and is glad in the rock of his salvation. When he is scourged he feels the strokes, yet not to fret at the rod, but to find out the root whence it grew—his sin, that he may amend what he hath done amiss. Indeed, as soon as the disease sheweth itself, he inquires into the cause; as soon as the messenger appeareth, he asketh his errand, and despatcheth that as suddenly as he may, to hasten his departure.

He is not only religious in his duties to God, but also righteous in his dealings with men. Though he be married to religion, yet in this she is not like his wife, she is not a keeper at home; but wherever he goeth she beareth him company. He is not like a hypocrite, tender of the first table and careless of the second; nor like a heathen, who will not wrong his neighbour of the least mite, but robbeth God of millions; but he exerciseth himself to keep a conscience void of offence towards God and towards all men. He trafficketh for grace when he is trading about his goods, and

laboureth that therein he may do good both to himself and others. Every place he is called to is a temple, all his works are worship, and every man he deals with is a monitor to remember him to offer sacrifice to his God.

When he is alone he is at leisure to be serious with his own soul, and to inquire into its case and condition. In his greatest company he is alone to himself, and in his greatest secrecy in company with his God. The truth is, he is never alone, for the Father is always with him; and he thinks what a holy man (Dr Sibbes) was wont to say, *My God and I are good company*. Yet he often sequestereth himself from the crowd, that he may enjoy the sweetest kisses from Jesus Christ. He can tell how to be solitary as well as how to be sociable, and hath many a time found the golden and silver mines in solitary places where were no inhabitants. He hath had many a good turn in his garden or private chamber, when he hath walked unseen, and Christ hath been his fellow-traveller. No bread hath been more sweet than that which he hath eaten in secret, when Christ hath been his fellow-commoner.

He is for company as well as for privacy, but he is for good fellowship; he delights only in them that are true Christians. He chooseth rather to travel alone than with thieves, wicked men, that will conspire to rob him of his precious grace, at least of his precious time. He is a companion of all that fear God and keep his statutes; he chooseth to converse with saints, though he useth sometimes, as his occasions and relations call him, to converse with sinners. He doth not, like the cameleon, turn himself into the colour of his company; nor, like liquid things, take his form from that place in which he is; but as a solid body, keeps his figure wherever he be; nay, he endeavoureth, as those that carry strong scents about them, to perfume all persons and places in which he cometh. If he be among the good he watcheth their words, their works, that he may receive some good from them, and do some good to them. He hopes that his heart, as cold as it is will get some heat by being so near such glowing coals; and he provoketh them, to his power, and in his place, to love and to good works. The communion of saints is a great comfort to him in his pilgrimage, and an article both of his creed and his practice. If he be among the bad, his work is to make them better; and he is watchful that they do not make him worse. Though he cannot avoid the company of sinners, yet he is careful to avoid the contagion of their sins. He knoweth that it is hard for sheep to be in the midst of such thorns and to lose no part of their fleece;

therefore when he seeth he can do no good, he hasteneth away, lest he should receive some evil.

Godliness is his business, not only amongst all persons, but also in all seasons. He doth not put on religion, as some their best clothes, on some high or some holiday only, but it is his ordinary and his constant attire. Every week-day is with him a Lord's-day, for he liveth in the fear of the Lord all the day long. When he openeth his eyes in the morning, he lifteth them up to his Maker, both with praise for the last night's protection, and in prayer for the ensuing day's providence. He sets out for the other world before he undertakes his worldly works, and expecteth no blessing on them till he have first begged it. He dares not venture abroad fasting, for fear of infection from those many ill fumes and vapours which he is sure to encounter. He spendeth the greatest part of the day in his particular vocation, but so that in it he is limited and directed by religion. He buyeth as one that possesseth not, selleth as one that hath a soul to save, useth the world as not abusing it, because the fashion of this world passeth away. His prudence guideth him, and his piety swayeth him so to follow his shop as not to neglect his closet, and so to take care of the bodies, as one that must give an account of all the souls, in his family. He is tender of his time all the day long, to redeem it from needless talk and vain company, and very unwilling to cut such a precious commodity to waste. He watcheth his heart through the whole day, knowing how treacherous an inmate it is, and that he walketh constantly amongst enemies, which are neither few nor asleep. He usually calleth his soul to a reckoning at night how it hath behaved itself in the day, and so makes his factor faithful, by accounting with him frequently. As God is the Alpha, the beginning, so he is the Omega, the ending of the day; for he doth not commit his body to his bed before he hath asked his Father's blessing, and commended his soul into the hands of his Redeemer. When he hath washed off the dirt that his soul hath contracted by touching and meddling with worldly things, in the blood of his Saviour, and bewailed them before the Lord, then he can lie down with comfort, and God giveth his beloved sleep.

He is one that visiteth the sick rather out of conscience than out of courtesy, and more to inquire of their spiritual than of their bodily welfare. If ever men be serious and come to themselves, it is when in their own thoughts they are dying and going from all others; therefore he will by no means neglect such a price, but improve it to the utmost for their eternal peace. He will for the

time become a physician, and so wisely considereth the spiritual state of his patient, and accordingly ordereth his prescription. If the patient be a scandalous person, one whose disease seemeth to be desperate, he giveth the stronger physic. He dares not be so unfaithful as scarce to touch his festered wounds for fear of putting him to pain, but endeavoureth to search them to the bottom. He sets before the soul the heinous evil and horrid end of sin, the unspeakable madness and unconceivable misery of sinners, and the certainty of all this under the hand of God himself. He useth the law's hammer to break the heart if possible, thereby to prevent hell. He dares not give the least cordial till he hath found his former physic to have had some considerable operation. If the person be one of a moral civil life, yet one whom he fears in a natural estate, he commends civility, but discovers its defects, and prefers sanctity in all his discourse. The substance of his speech is concerning the nature and necessity of regeneration, as the only means appointed by the God that cannot lie for the obtaining of salvation. He speaks so affectionately, with so much love to his dying friends, that you may perceive the working of his heart in the motion of his lips. He labours for life to save poor souls from eternal death. Oh how eager and earnest is he to persuade his sick friends to be holy and happy! If he meet with a patient that is pious, yet perplexed with doubts and fears, he hath his cordial juleps, the gospel promises, to preserve such a soul from fainting. He looks for some savoury expression from this dying Christian, that may stick upon him whilst he hath a being. When he heareth a dying sinner cry out of the world's falseness to him in this his extremity, though he had been a faithful drudge to it all his time, he layeth up that saying in his heart, and hopes he shall love the world the less whilst he liveth. When he heareth the dying saint commend the faithfulness of his God in owning him, now all the world leaves him; when he heareth him tell how fast a friend, how choice a good, how vast a portion the blessed God is, how sweet his ways are, and bless the time that he spent in praying and reading, and examining his own heart; he thinks, there is somewhat for me; and when he goeth home, he beggeth that he may set the greater price upon his God, and take the more pains in holy duties till he comes to that hour.

When it comes to his own turn to go up to mount Nebo and die there, he expires, like the Arabian phœnix, in a bed of sweet spices, the exercise of the graces of the Holy Spirit. He considereth his infinite obligations to his dearest Saviour, and that he hath but a very short time now to work in, (for he is going to receive his

reward,) and therefore he will endeavour, like his Redeemer, how much service soever he hath done his God in his life, to do, if it be possible, the most by his death. Both his house and his heart were set in order beforehand, and now he hath nothing to do save to die. But oh how sweetly, if not hindered by his disease, doth this dying swan sing ! He raiseth up himself with Jacob to bless his children, (if he have any,) and commandeth them with David to know the God of their fathers, and to serve him with perfect hearts and willing minds. He commits his fatherless children to God, and bids his widow to trust in him. He wisheth all his friends and acquaintance to mind the one thing necessary, and to choose the good part which shall never be taken from them. ‘ My friends,’ saith he, ‘ if ye will believe a dying man, one that dares not look God in the face with an untruth in his mouth, one that speaks not by notion or hearsay, but by experience, seek first the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof ; give all diligence to make your calling and election sure ; honour God in your health, if ye would have God to own you in your sickness. I have served him so many years ; I have found him a good master ; his ways the most pleasant delightful ways, and surely his end, which I am now going to possess, will be perfect peace. Alas ! all other things are vanity and vexation of spirit. Relations are vanity ; possessions are vanity ; wives, and children, and brethren, and sisters, and friends are vanity ; houses, and lands, and honours, and treasures are vanity ; all things jointly, everything severally is vanity. I thought them so, I used them so. I am not deceived ; I find them so. No person in the world can give me the least cordial ; no things in the world can afford me the least comfort. Were either the persons or the things of this world my portion, how poor, how pitiful would my condition now be ! Oh turn the world off before it turn off you, as ye see it serveth me ! Oh get the world taken out of you before ye are taken out of it, or ye are undone for ever ! Hear the conclusion of the whole matter, Fear God, and keep his commandments. It is the time I have spent in his service, the talents I have employed according to his command, and the seasons that I have improved for his praise, which now, through his grace in Christ, as evidences of my uprightness, yield me both courage and confidence. I have been a poor weather-beaten passenger, tossed up and down in the tempestuous sea of this world, with the high winds of men and devils’ rage ; but how it revives me that I am in sight of my blessed harbour and eternal haven ! I am going to reap the fruit of all my hearty diligent service ; I would say, of my Saviour’s bloody sufferings. I have

many a time heard what great things God had promised, and Christ had purchased for them that believe; I am now going to see, and, beforehand, conclude that the half is not told me. I am confident, when I come to the Father's house, and enjoy those blissful mansions and rivers of pleasures which are there, I shall have cause to say to them, as the Queen of Sheba to Solomon, It was a true report which I heard in the land of the living, of thine excellency and worth; howbeit I could scarce believe the words until I came, and mine eyes had seen it, and behold the half was not told me. Thy beauty and thy glory doth infinitely exceed the fame which I heard. My dear friends, farewell; remember the words of a dying Christian. Godliness is the greatest gain; piety will be most profitable at last. Make religion your business; exercise yourselves to godliness, be constant, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.' And thus, like some sweet perfume that is burnt, he leaves a sweet savour behind him, whilst his soul ascendeth in the flame, and is honourably conveyed by glorious angels into heaven's blessed court.

This is the substance of the whole, which I fully intended to have finished, as thou wilt perceive in the beginning, in this treatise; but the importunity of some persons, and the stationer's desire to have it in two parts, hath caused me to publish this second, and to reserve the rest for a third part.

Herein, reader, I have drawn the saint's picture, by which thou mayest perceive somewhat of the beauty of his person, and the excellency and loveliness of his life. This indeed is the true life, all other but the shadow of living. Let conscience be judge. Is it not a thousand pities that men created with rational spirits,¹ and capable of such a noble employment, as, like those celestial courtiers, to wait always on, and to walk with the King of saints, should, like silly pismires, spend their time and strength only in hoarding up heaps of earth? By it thou mayest also behold the vast difference between the conversation of the gracious and the graceless. How the wicked, or men of this world, resemble the swan, for all her white feathers and stately neck. Though she live amongst fish, she lives upon weeds; though they live amongst the weighty mercies of eternity, the love of God, the blood of Christ, and the embroidery of the Spirit, yet they live upon the trash and toys of this present time. Now the men of the other world, like that princely bird the eagle, are of piercing sights and lofty flights, live above, make little account of things here below, not stooping to them but

¹ O curvæ in terras animæ et celestium inanes.—*Pers.*

when necessity calls them, and then in subordination to their chief end. Friend, if thou art a stranger to those heroic designs and noble delights of true Christians, repent speedily of thy folly, or else I must say to thee, as the bold tragedian did to Pompey, ‘ The time shall come that thou shalt fetch deep sighs, and therefore sorrow the more because thou sorrowedst no sooner.’ If thou art experimentally acquainted with them, give God the praise, (whose free grace makes thee to differ,) and remember in thy prayers,

Thine and the church’s servant, for Jesus’ sake,

GEORGE SWINNOCK.

THE CHRISTIAN MAN'S CALLING.

PART II.

But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself unto godliness.—1 TIM. IV. 7.

Exercise thyself unto godliness.

As the blessed God is compared to the sun, Ps. lxxxiv. 12, and the dearest Jesus to the Sun of righteousness,¹ Mal. iv. 2, so godliness is frequently in Scripture compared to light², John i. 15, partly in regard of its excellency. Light is the purest and most immaterial of all bodies. Its clarity and beauty do render it lovely. Its birth is noble, from above; it is a beam darted from the sun's most glorious body;³ it is the great ornament of the world, without which the whole universe would be but a dismal dungeon of dreadful darkness. So grace is excellent; godliness is the excellency, and purity the comeliness of the rational creature. There is a beauty in holiness as well as the beauty of holiness, and indeed such a beauty that none ever saw it but admired it, yea, and was enamoured with it. It is of a celestial extraction, its father is in heaven; it is the picture of God's own perfections, therefore called the divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4; the righteous is, therefore, more excellent than his neighbour, Prov. xii. 26. The godly, though poor, are gold, jewels, and vessels of honour; when their ungodly neighbours, though rich, are dross, dung, and vessels of dishonour. Holiness is the life and glory of the little world man, without which, notwithstanding all the flowers of his natural and acquired

¹ Deus lux vocatur propter summam sapientiam, sanctitatem et felicitatem.

² Pii omnes *κοινωνίαν* habent cum Christo luce, merito ergo nomine lucis sanctitas vitæ significatur.—*Zanch. in Eph. v. 8.*

³ *ἡλὸς ἀπὸ ἡλῆ*, i.e. splendore.

accomplishments, he is but as a body without a soul, both uncomely and unsavoury.

Partly in regard of the universality of its influence. It is said of the sun, the fountain of light : ' His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof,' Ps. xix. 6.¹ Its light is of as large extent as its heat, for light is the chariot in which heat is conveyed to the lower world ; light peeps in as well at the peasant's cottage as the prince's court, and frisks up and down not only in the stately parlours, but also in the homely prisons. The sun, though locally in heaven, is yet virtually on the earth, gilding the mountains, glistening in the valleys, dancing up and down in the pleasant meadows, viewing all countries and kingdoms, enlightening all at once with his splendour, and everywhere overspreading the face both of sea and land ; thus true godliness is of a universal extent. The light of holiness doth accompany the true Christian at all seasons, not only in his higher and nobler, but also in his lower and lesser actions. Whether he be in his closet or at his calling, whether he be solitary or in company, in every relation in which he standeth, and in all conditions to which God calleth him, he walketh always as a child of the day, for the light of godliness still attendeth him.

An unsound Christian, like an aguish body, hath his cold as well as his hot fits, his sick as much as his well days. As a meteor he hangs in the air, and sometimes moveth towards heaven, and presently falleth again towards the earth. At some seasons he is very precise, at other times very profane. In some things, though they be of small consequence, he is zealous and fiery hot ; in other things, which are of greatest concernment, he is frozen and key-cold, Mat. xxiii. 23. Religion is this man's good humour, which is now and then upon him ; but godliness is the constitution of a real Christian, the divine nature his second nature.² As the sinner polluteth with sin, so the saint perfumeth with sanctity, whatsoever he toucheth. Godliness is the highway of the righteous, Prov. xvi. 17, and they are travellers always going on in their journey towards their heavenly country. Some walk in this highway a little for recreation, with some company which they are related to, or have a dependence on ; but they quickly grow weary, and give over. Others are seen sometimes in this road when their ends call

¹ Sol semper ambulat, nunquam quiescens, et sua luce omnia illustrat. — *Zanch. in Eph. v. 8.*

² In luce ambulat, *i.e.*, in purissimis actionibus versatur. — *Grot. in 1 John i. 7.*

them, and their interests command them ;¹ and as thieves, whose constant haunts are in the woods, do sometimes cross, nay, ride in the highways a mile or two together to execute their own designs the better, in robbing the honest countrymen ; but to these it is a byway, not a highway. The true saint is the right traveller, who, though in a mist he may a little miss it, and through mistake turn out of it, yet quickly discovers his error, and walketh in it from morning to night. This light shineth in upon him in his chamber, in his shop, at his table, in all other places, as well as when he is in God's temple.

How the Christian may be always running this race set before him, and wherever he be going, or whatsoever he be doing, make religion his business, hath been in part discovered in my former discourse, the substance or epitome of which I have given the reader in the preface to this ; what remaineth I shall here present to thee, is reducible to these three particulars :—

First, I shall speak to the manner of exercising thyself to godliness, and that—

1. In thy special relations.
2. In all conditions, whether of prosperity or adversity.
3. Thy dealings in general with all men.
4. In all companies, whether good or bad ; and therein I shall speak both to thy choice of companions and thy carriage in company.
5. In solitariness, or when thou art alone.
6. On a week-day from morning to night.
7. In visiting the sick.
8. On a dying bed.

Secondly, I shall speak to those means which must be minded by all who would drive this high and heavenly trade, and make religion their business.

Thirdly, I shall lay down some awakening motives, to quicken all sorts of persons to follow this honourable and profitable calling.

¹ *Ea est vera pietas quæ præponit divina humanis, et perpetua temporalibus.*

CHAPTER I.

How Christians may exercise themselves to godliness in the relations of parents.

First, Thy duty is to make religion thy business in thy relations.

The body of godliness parteth itself into these three principal members—our duty towards God, towards ourselves, and towards other men. The three adverbs of Paul are the most substantial nouns in religion. ‘The grace of God, which bringeth salvation, and hath appeared to us, teacheth us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live *righteously, soberly, and godly* in this present evil world.’¹ Godliness is here strictly taken, and relates to the immediate worship of the blessed God; sobriety includes our carriage in reference to ourselves in particular; righteousness concerneth our dealings with, and deportment towards others, whether our relations or those that are nearer, or strangers and those that are further off. In those three channels the stream of godliness runneth.

That which I am now persuading thee to, is to exercise thyself to godliness in thy relations. Be not like the moon in her increase, lightsome only in one part, holy only in one relation, and at some times; but like the sun, lightsome in every part, holy in every relation, and at all times. Hypocrites carry religion as thieves do a dark lantern up and down for their own ends; and as the lanterns have light on one side, as much as will serve their own turns and designs, but the greatest part is darkness, so is the holiness of a hypocrite; it may shine upon a private respect in one relation, but it doth not appear at all in another; when the godliness of a sincere soul is as a candle set up in the midst of a room, which giveth light round about, especially to them that are near it.²

The excellency of a member consisteth in its fitness for, and serviceableness in, those peculiar offices to which it is designed; much of the excellency of a member of Christ consisteth in his ability for, and fidelity in, those several relations with which he is invested. Oh, it is lovely to behold a ring, which way soever it is turned,

¹ Illic itaque tribus partibus summam Christianæ perfectionis comprehendit apostolus.—*Marl. in Titus ii.*

² Verus Dei cultor non patietur, quoad in se erit, eum exulare a domo sua.—*Culv. in Acts x.*

sparkling gloriously with divers diamonds—I mean a Christian acting and exercising graces suitable to every relation. Indeed, relation graces are the grace and glory of religion.

There are three relations in a family¹—parents and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants; in each of these Christians must make religion their business.

1. I shall begin with the first of these. Men and women, as they are parents, must exercise themselves to godliness.

I shall divide the duty incumbent on parents into these two generals:

1. In relation to the souls and spiritual estate of their children.

2. In relation to the bodies and temporal estate of their children.

First, In relation to the souls of their children. The souls of children are of infinite value, and they are committed by God to the parents' charge, therefore herein their greatest care must appear: 'Ye fathers, bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,'² Eph. vi. 4. Many are careful to educate their children in the favour of great men, but, alas! who brings up his children in the fear of the great God? Augustine saith,³ his mother travailed in greater pain for his spiritual than for his natural birth; but surely there are few Monicas in England. Most mothers are so senseless of the worth and weight of their children's souls, and so careless what becomes of them in the other world, that when their sons and daughters come to die, they may bespeak them, as Cratisiclea in Plutarch did her dying child, *Ah quo, pueri, estis profecti?* Ah, my dear children, whither are ye gone? Whether to heaven or hell, whether to matchless and endless mercy, or unspeakable and unchangeable misery, I know not. Mothers too too often prove monsters, and are cruel to the children of their own bodies;⁴ as the mother of King Edward the martyr, who cruelly murdered her son. 'Even the sea monsters draw out the breast to their young ones; the daughter of my people is become cruel, like the ostrich in the wilderness,' Lam. iv. 3. The sea-horses, or sea-calves, or seals, or whales, according to different expositors, have teats, and give suck to their young, but the daughter of Zion permits her little ones to perish like the ostrich, Job xxxix. 14, 15, 16. If it were such a crime, and caused such sad complaint, for mothers to neglect and

¹ τρεῖς συζεύξεις ἐξ ὧν ὀκτὶ σύνισταται.—*Arist. Polit.*, i. 3.

² Bone Deus! quam paucos reperias qui tam sunt solliciti quomodo pie et honeste vivant filii, quam curant ut amplam relinquant illis hereditatem, qua post obitum illorum splendide et otiose delicientur.—*Musculus in Gen.* xviii.

³ Augustine, *Confess.*, lib. v. cap. 9.

⁴ Improbis ille puer, crudelis tu quoque mater.

famish the bodies of their little ones, what is it to starve their souls?

Dudilius relates a sad story of Bochna, a woman who had but two sons, that whilst she was walking with one toward the river, she heard the other cry, and hastening back she saw a knife sticking in him, which killed him quickly; and she returning to the other child, thinking to solace herself in him, but in her absence he was fallen into the river and drowned. The negligence of parents is often the cause of children's eternal death; but as the law of man hangs those mothers that kill their children's bodies, so the law of God will damn them that kill their children's souls. Some fathers also, worse than bloody Herod, murder the souls of their own children. Philip, the king of Spain, out of an unnatural zeal, suffered his eldest son Charles to be murdered in the Spanish Inquisition, for favouring the Protestant party. Woodman, the martyr's father, betrayed him to the bishops, who put him to death. It is barbarous to deprive one's child of natural life; but oh, how bloody is it to deprive them of eternal life! If he be cruel that sends them to the grave, what is he that sends them to hell! Surely such are not *parentes* but *peremptores*. The holy apostle observeth that the wicked world, like a carcase, will every day be more unsavoury than other. In the last days perilous time shall come, that like the serpent Satan, the older it is the more wily and wicked it will be; and one argument whereby he proves it is this,—men shall be 'without natural affection,' 1 Tim. iii. 1, 3. He doth not say without human affection, which is a love to men, as they are men; nor without Christian affection, which is a love to saints, as they are saints; but without natural affection, which is a love to such to whom they are bound by consanguinity or affinity, and so are taught by a special instinct of nature to be tender of. Some parents have less pity for their relations than the parable mentions Dives to have had in hell: 'I pray thee, father, send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come to this place of torments,' Luke xvi. 27, 28.

It is no wonder that many children, instead of being great comforts, prove grievous crosses to their parents, and bring their hoary heads to the grave with sorrow; for they were not only brought forth in sin, but also brought up in sin. How can it be rationally expected that ground never sowed with good corn should bring forth any other than weeds; or that they should not be undutiful to the fathers of their flesh, who were never taught their duty to the Father of spirits? Aristotle observeth that the raven, an unclean creature,

is careless of his young, and ἐκβάλλει τοὺς νεοττοὺς, (Hist. vi. Cap. 6,) expelleth them out of his nest, so unnatural is he. But Ælian (de Animal. iii. Cap. 43) taketh notice that as this bird doth neglect her young, so the young do neglect the old ones, and sometimes set upon them when they are not able to resist, and wound them. It is most just with God that that ground which fathers will bestow now no pains on to dress, should bring forth such thorns and briers as shall be pricks in their eyes, and pierce their very hearts with anguish and sorrow. The speediest way to turn thy children into swords to wound thy very soul, is to suffer them for want of pious education to wander from God and his word. Such parents, like Eli, bring up their children to bring down their houses, and to bring their own souls to the earth with grief.

Motives.

I shall offer thee two or three arguments to quicken thee to mind the spiritual good of thy children, and then acquaint thee wherein it consisteth.

First, Consider thy children's natural condition. A child in the Latin is called *puer, quasi purus*, as if pure (Berni. de Orig. Ling. Lat. ;) but it is not meant absolutely but comparatively. They are white paper compared with them who have blotted their lives with many sins; but children have much impurity in them; they bring a world of wickedness with them when they first come into a wicked world; and therefore in the Hebrew are derived from a word which signifieth evil, unrighteousness, wickedness, because as soon as they know how to do anything they do things that are evil. Ignorance and folly are the two cords with which Satan binds them to that stake, at which many burn for ever; like condemned prisoners, they go out of a dark dungeon to execution. They are children of wrath, because children of disobedience. Ground that is barren is nigh to cursing, and therefore hath need of manuring, but especially ground that aboundeth in weeds should be dunged and dressed. Truly such soil are thy sons by nature, and therefore there is a necessity of their religious nurture. They are trees void of good fruit, and unless they be by pious education changed and ingrafted into Christ, they will be cut down for the unquenchable fire. Thy children are by their births more defiled in their souls than in their bodies. Ah, thou canst

not conceive how filthy their inward man is, and therefore it becometh thee to get them washed by the blood and Spirit of Christ, lest they perish in their pollution. The first receiver into which thy child is taken, and the first bed in which thy child is wrapped, are both spun and woven of sin and shame ; and surely thou wantest the compassion of a father if thou dost not strive to mend that by education, which thou hast marred by propagation.

It is said, ' There was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead,' Exod. xii. 30. Are there not many dead in thy house ? nay, are not all thy children naturally ' dead in sins and trespasses ' ? What cry dost thou make to God for their quickening ? What care dost thou take for their enlivening ? We read of the pelican, that if her young ones are stung or bitten with serpents, she will wound herself till she bleed, and give them her own warm blood to recover them. And when thy children are wounded and stung mortally by the old serpent the devil, canst thou sit still, and never stir to recover their dying, gasping souls ? Remember that young lapwings are soon caught up by every buzzard.

Puerilitas est periculorum pelagus, Youth is an ocean of dangers. Within, without, on every side they are beset with perils ; the flesh is most strong and stirring, the world is most amiable and taking, besides, the wicked one is subtle and tempting, ever striving to hale them to hell ; and what shall they do, in the midst of such enemies, if they have no defensive weapons ? A blind man may easily be led into a pit. Thy children are all born blind, therefore it will not be hard to lead them to hell. Children are compared to arrows, Ps. cxxvii. 4, 5. Now we know that sticks are not by nature arrows ; they do not grow so, but they are made so ; by nature they are knotty and ragged, but by art they are made smooth and handsome. So children by nature are rugged and untoward, but by education are refined and reformed, made pliable to the divine will and pleasure. They are also compared to corner-stones, Ps. cxlvi. 12, which are rough and unfit for use, as they are taken out of the quarry, and therefore must be hewn and carved before they are laid in the foundation. ' Truly thy children are averse to all good, and need much pains, and much polishing,' Ps. cxlvi. 12, that they may be serviceable to the sanctuary.

As the culture of the earth doth help to deliver it from the barrenness of its own nature, so the pious education of children is a special means, through divine assistance, to heal the viciousity of their depraved natures. Socrates confessed of himself that his

natural inclination was exceeding bad, but by the study of philosophy, he altered and overruled it, (*Cic. Tuscul. lib. iv. 9, in fin.*) The saving knowledge of Jesus Christ will do infinitely more in young persons towards the mastering and conquering their vicious propensities. Though the best find the corruption of nature, like a simple of a predominant relish in a compounded medicine, to give too much tincture to other superinduced qualities, yet grace will cast it down, even there where it cannot cast it out.

Secondly, Consider thy affection to thy child. This near relation commandeth entire affections.¹ Love usually, like a stream, runneth swiftly downward from parents to children. The truth is, parents must needs love their sons if they love themselves; for the child is the parent multiplied; the son is the father in a later and newer edition; a child is the father's bowels. 'Receive him,' saith Paul of Onesimus to Philemon, (ver. 12,) 'who is mine own bowels;' because he had begotten him in his bonds. A spiritual son is the bowels of a minister; a natural son is the bowels of his father; for to this the apostle alludeth. Where there is any similitude of ourselves, either in qualities and accidents, as between some friends; or in substance, as between parents and children,—upon such naturally the beams of love do extend; and the greater the likeness is, the hotter is the love. The likeness in substance being the greatest—for children are the branches sprouting from the body of their parents—the love here must needs be hottest. The Greeks call their children *φίλατα*, most dear; the Latins, *cari*, darlings. There is an ocean of love in a parent's breast.

Now, how wilt thou manifest thy love to thy children, if thou dost not teach them God's law? Is he a loving father that trims and adorns his children's clothes, but starves their bodies? Surely, then, they are cruel parents who feed their children's dying flesh, but murder and fanish their immortal spirits. What respect dost thou shew to a pearl of great price, if thou strivest to make the cabinet glorious, and neglectest all care of the jewel? How little are thy poor children beholden to thee, if thou providest for their backs and their bellies—feeding them to the full, till they kick with the heel at thee, and clothing them above thy purse, till they grow proud and contemn thee—when thou hast no care to feed them with the bread of life, and to clothe them with the graces of the Spirit? Is it true love to be tender of thy neighbour's plants, and murder his person? Surely no more to be careful of the vege-

¹ Omnis in Ascanio chari stat cura parentis.—*Virg. Æne.* Filius est aliquid patris.—*Aquin. Q. Disp. de pec. Orig., Art. 8.*

tative or sensitive faculty of thy children, that the soul may like salt preserve the body from putrefaction, and suffer the rational part eternally to perish.

Plutarch reporteth of the elephant, that her natural affection is such to her young, that if she see them fallen into a deep pit, she will, though it be present death, leap down after them. Thy children are falling into the bottomless pit; they are not yet in the place of torments; now how wilt thou shew thy love to them? God doth not require thy perishing with them, but thy prevention of their perdition. Surely thy love should work forcibly to keep them out of the fiery lake.

Gregory the Great, seeing the merchants of Rome setting forth many beautiful British boys to sale, sighed and said, Alas! that such fair faces should be under the power of the prince of darkness. Oh, what pity is it that thy lovely and beloved children should be void of grace, and under the power of the devil!

The moralist¹ assureth us, that such is the force of natural affection, that even vicious men desire that their sons may be virtuous; and good men that their children may be better. How strong, then, should the stream of thy affections run towards their salvation, when grace and nature both meet together in one channel! A learned writer² giveth this reason why that clause is inserted in the second command, 'Visiting the sins of the father upon the children;' because those that have not a spiritual principle to make them forbear idolatry and false worship, may yet be moved to forbear it out of a natural principle; that they who will not avoid sin out of love to God, may yet do it out of love to their children. Parents' love should move them to loathe sin for their children's sake, and to endeavour that their children should do so too. The great naturalist³ can tell us, that to love is to desire good things for the persons beloved, and to labour to attain them.

Thirdly, Consider the time of their youth is the principal time. 'To everything,' saith the wise man, 'there is a season,' Eccles. iii. 1. Now it is a great part of spiritual wisdom to observe and improve those seasons. It is folly in a high degree to stay till an opportunity is gone; and it is the top of wisdom to wait till an opportunity is come, and then to make use of it. When the tree is small, it may be easily bent which way you will; but when it is grown to some bigness, it will sooner break than bow. When thy children are young, thou mayest probably persuade and prevail

¹ Πατήρ ὡς ἡπίος.—*Sence*.

² Tertul. Advers. Mar., cap. 14.

³ Arist. Ethic., lib. ii. cap. 4.

with them to mind holiness and heaven, (while they are under the rod they are usually under rule;) but if then they be neglected, and be once grown headstrong, it will be easier with blows to break their backs, than with counsel and admonition to break their hearts. The only time to back colts is when they are young, before their mettle be too high; afterwards they are unruly and untractable. What physicians observe of natural, is true of spiritual diseases:¹ the best way to subdue and expel them is to take them at their first rise, then to apply means for their riddance. When once diseases have corrupted the blood, and are turned into the habit of the body, it may be beyond the most able person's skill to remove them. Thy children, when little, are wax, most apt to receive impressions: then, therefore, stamp God's seals on them, lest Satan mark them for his servants and his sufferings.²

Take a bladder whilst it is wet, and newly taken out of the beast, and a little breath will fill it out; but let it alone till it is dried, and all the wind in the world cannot do it. Be diligent to fill the heart of thy child with grace and godliness whilst it is young and tender, and there is great hopes, through the blessing of God, of accomplishing it; but delay it till his heart be hardened through custom in sin, and thou mayest work long enough at the labour in vain: Prov. ix. 18, 'Correct thy son betime, whilst there is hope,' saith Solomon; implying that if correction be deferred, the expectation in it will be frustrated: by losing the season thou mayest lose thy son. It is vain of servants to speak of salting their meat when it is already stinking and unsavoury. The best crop may be expected from a park when it is first ploughed up.

It is possible to turn a little stream which way you please; but when it comes to be a great torrent, it is hard work. The chief season to write God's law in the hearts of any is when they are young; then they are white paper comparatively, and fittest for any inscription; as they grow up they are quickly blotted and blurred with folly and falsehood.

It is observable that in the Gospel, of all who were possessed of the devil, the evil spirit was most hardly cast out of him whom he had possessed from his childhood, Mat. xvii. 15. The longer a person hath had possession of an estate, the stronger will his title be, and the more difficult to eject him. Old corruptions are like old customs, not easily parted with.

4. Consider the good thou mayest do by endeavouring the conversion of thy children. As by neglecting their religious nurture

¹ Venienti occurrere morbo.

² Qu., 'suffragans'!—ED.

thou dost more harm than thou canst imagine, so by God's blessing on their pious education thou mayest do more good than thou canst conceive. It will be comfort to thyself. 'The father of the righteous rejoiceth,' Prov. xxiii. 24. It is said of Charles the Great, that he had such virtuous children that he could not be well without their company, nor find in his heart to part with them, though it were to be well married. Aristotle saith that *πολυγονία* is no blessing unless it be *εὐγενεία*; that a numerous posterity is not a mercy unless it be virtuous. Many children may be a misery; but holy children are ever a mercy indeed. Jerome writeth of Paula, that she rejoiced exceedingly in hearing her niece, of the same name, sing hallelujah in her cradle. The natural parent may say, as well as the spiritual, 'I have no greater joy than to see my children walking in the truth,' 2 John 4. Old Jacob was young again almost for joy when he heard that his son Joseph was alive. Will it not rejoice thy heart to see thy children alive to God, whom thou fearest to be dead in sin?

It will be profitable to the church and state. Good children make good magistrates and good ministers. If the several members be useful and serviceable in their places, how happy would the political body be! The Lacedemonian, therefore, did not without cause inflict a severe punishment on those parents whose children were ill-conditioned.¹ If the materials be rotten and bad, such will the house be which is made of them. When children come vicious out of their parents' hands, no wonder that they be pests and plagues to the church and state to which they belong. Some give this reason why Nero was so barbarous and bloody in his government, because his nurse made him often to suck blood in his infancy.

A wicked father in York may kill many souls in London by his vicious son that keeps house there, and poisons others with his ungodly counsels and cursed example. David at Jerusalem slew Uriah when he was many miles from him. A faithful and skilful physician may, by a receipt which he gives to some few, save many lives at a distance. A gracious father, by principling his children aright, may convert men and women that dwell far from him. Nay, when he is dead, he may be instrumental that others may live.

If the canker take the young trees in the nursery, they will never be good when transplanted. Wicked children are the original of

¹ *Juventus Reipublicæ seges est, at si grando aut alia quædam calamitas segetem corrumpat, messis nulla fuerit spes reliqua.*—*Puling. in Eph. v.*

wicked parishes, and wicked kingdoms.¹ If the blossoms be bad, the fruits can never be good. Man and wife are the first² pair in nature, and the original of all the rest; they are the stem and stock, according to whose sprouts, whether good or bad, the whole country is like to be stored.

It will be profitable to themselves. Pious education is a good antidote against the poison of heretical opinions, carnal suggestions, and Satan's temptations. It is a good fence to a field which keeps off cattle, which would injure it. Hereby thy children will be forewarned of, and fore-armed against, the erroneous principles and scandalous practices of others. It is the opinion of a worthy divine,³ that if parents did their duties as they ought, the word publicly preached would not be the ordinary means of regeneration in the church, but only without the church, among infidels; God would pour out his grace so upon the children of his people, and hear prayers for them, and bless such endeavours for their holy education, that we should see the promises made good to our seed; and that the unthankful Anabaptists, that will not confess that the children of saints are any nearer God, or more beholden to him than pagans, should by sweet experience be convinced of their error, and be taught better how to understand that our children are holy.

Natural fathers, by doing their duties, may prove spiritual fathers, and they that have been instrumental for the conveyance of sin, may prove pipes for the conveyance of grace to their seed. Now if it be such an honour and happiness to convert a stranger, what joy will it be to thee to convert thy own child, to save his soul alive! James v. 20. Their pious education may be profitable, though not presently. The good seed thou now sowest, may yield a blessed crop, though a nipping winter should come between; however, thou hast delivered thy own soul; the master hath his quarterage, whether his scholar learn or loiter, and the physician hath his fee, whether the patient recover or die.

It may be profitable to posterity. Religion this way may be transmitted from generation to generation. Sin is propagated from father to son, from one generation to another, ever since it had a being in the world; and why then should not religion? ⁴ If Satan will still have his agents, and such as will entail his malice and

¹ Conjugium principium orbis est et quasi seminarium.—*Cicer. De Offic.*, lib. i.

² Primum par et fundamentum omnium parium.—*August. De Bono Conjug.*

³ Mr Baxter's *Saint's Rest*, third part.

⁴ Simul cura et studium propagandæ veræ doctrinæ nobis injungitur, quo post mortem nostram superstes maneat.—*Calv. in Ps.* xxii. 32.

hatred against God and godliness on their children, and children's children, to the end of the world; should not the blessed God have his agents, such as shall endeavour that his cause be faithfully pleaded by their posterity? What the prophet saith of the vine, 'Destroy it not, for there is a blessing in it,' Isa. lxxv. 8, I may say of thy children, Do not, by carelessness in their education, destroy them, for there is blessing in them. One vine may yield slips and suckers for many others, and from it may vines successively be continued to many ages. One child well nurtured may help others for many generations to bring forth such fruit as shall rejoice the heart of God and man.

In reference to the souls of thy children. These several duties must be minded.

1. Thy duty is to dedicate thy children to God by baptism. As God gives them to thee by a free donation,—'These are the children which God hath graciously given thy servant'—so thou shouldst give them back to him, by a religious dedication of them to his service; sacrifice all thy Isaacs to the Lord's service. When Hannah had received Samuel from God, she presently returns him back to God. Therefore saith she, 'I have lent him to the Lord as long as he liveth,' that is, I have returned him whom I borrowed by prayer, 1 Sam. i. 28.

List thy children under the captain of their salvation betimes. It was the commendation given Goliath by Saul, that he was a soldier from his youth, 1 Sam. xvii. It is the privilege, and let it be the praise of thy children, that they are the soldiers of Christ from their infancy. It is hopeful that they will fight the Lord's battles well, who are sworn soldiers to him in their swaddling-clothes.¹

I say, dedicate thy children to God by baptism. If thou art in covenant thyself, thy children have a right to that seal of the covenant.² And saith God to Abraham, 'I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you, and thy seed after thee, Every man-child amongst you shall be circumcised,' Gen. xvii. 7, 10. Two things are clear, from these texts—

1. That the children of godly parents were in covenant with God.

¹ Filiis piorum virorum nulla ratione denegari potest sacramentum baptismi. Ratio præcipua est quia sunt in fœdere, sicut et liberi Israelitarum. Sicut igitur illis non denegabatur sacramentum veteris fœderis, circumcisio, sic neque nostris denegari potest novi fœderis sacramentum, baptismus.—*Zanch. in Eph. v.*

² Ipsi infantes in gratuito Dei fœdere comprehenduntur.—*Beza in Mat. xviii.*

Hence I would infer that the children of believers are still in covenant with God, or else there was a time when they were cast out ; but none can shew any scripture which speaks that ever the children of believers were cast out of God's family and covenant. Besides, if the children of believing Gentiles are not in covenant with God, as well as the children of believing Jews, then the charter of the church by the coming of Christ is lessened in a great measure, this great privilege of having our children in covenant being taken away ; when none will deny but Christ did enlarge, not lessen, his people's privileges.

A second thing I gather from the forecited place is this, that children being within the covenant, have a right to the seal of the covenant. He that hath a right to a house and land, hath a right to those deeds and evidences which relate to that house and land. If thou art in Christ thyself, hope well of thy children ; they are capable of the habits of grace, of being united to, and blessed by, the Lord of glory.

Indeed, if thou art not holy thyself, thou canst have little hope in thy children ; the promise is to you, first, and to your children, afterwards, Acts ii. 39. Though he who is free of the city himself may make his child free, yet he that is no freeman himself cannot make any one free ; thy children's admission into the visible church of Christ must be upon thy account. Their spiritual privileges, in this respect, as their temporal estate, must come by inheritance. Thy piety may be profitable to thy posterity. ' Oh that there were a heart within them that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might go well with them and their children for ever,' Deut. v. 29. So also thy profaneness may be thy children's prejudice ; the members smart for the aches and diseases of the head. Job, speaking of a wicked man, telleth us, ' If his children be multiplied, it is for the sword, and his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread,' Job xxvii. 14, 15. Ahab's sons witness the truth of such texts ; they inherited not their father's crown, but his curse.

Valerius¹ observeth that though Dionysius after his sacrilege escaped untouched in his person, yet he was severely punished in his posterity ; God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate him. Though in respect of the other world, the son shall not die for the iniquity of the father, Ezek. xviii. 17, that is, eternally ; yet in respect of this world, God layeth up the iniquity of parents for their children,

¹ Valer., lib. i. cap. 2.

Job xxi. 19, puts the father's debts on the child's score, and suffereth his justice and judgments to arrest him for it. Even children that have been good, have suffered for their father's sins, 1 Kings xiv. 12, 13. The branches fare the worse for the defects that are in the root; and the branches thrive the better for the sap that is in the root.¹ 'The just man walks in his integrity, and his children are blessed after him,' Prov. xx. 7.

2. Thy duty is to instruct thy children in the word and will of God. The prince of philosophers writes of the sea-eagle or sea-mew, that ἀναγκαζει τέκνα πρὸς τον ἥλιον βλέπειν, She constraineth her young ones to look upon the sun. Thy work must be to endeavour that thy young ones may by faith behold the Sun of righteousness. 'Teach a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he shall not depart from it,' Prov. xxii. 6.² Observe the precept, 'Teach a child,' &c., and the promise, 'when he is old he shall not depart from it.' The precept is, teach a child the trade, or catechise a child in the way that he should go;³ the Hebrew reads it, teach a child at his mouth, that is, as nurses feed infants with the breast or spoon, at the mouth, so teach them by putting words into their mouths, instructing them, and thereby enabling them to give an account of the principles of the oracles of God.⁴ There are many express commands for this, Deut. iv. 9, xi. 19, and vi. 7, 'And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children:' thou shalt whet them⁵ as one would set an edge upon a knife, by often going over the whetstone; or, thou shalt sharpen them, *Shanan, acuere, Hebr.*,⁶ as a man sharpeneth a stake, by cutting many slivers off when he would drive it into the ground; so the same fundamental truths of religion must be frequently repeated to, and inculcated on thy children. The water of life must be every day dropping into those narrow-mouthed glasses, line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little.

¹ Deus in solatium naturæ largiebatur primis sæculis ut nullus filius moreretur ante patrem, donec in supplicium idolatriæ, Terah Pater Abraham primus puutus est morte filii, adhuc vivens.—*Epip.*, lib. i., cont. *Hæ.*

² It is said of Aristippus, that famous philosopher, that he was μητριδιδάκτος, taught of his mother.

³ Præter publicam doctrinam etiam privata catechizatio vigere debet inter nos ex Dei mandato.—*Par. in Gen.* xviii. 19.

⁴ Vide more of this in the first part.

⁵ 'Whet them,' that is, often, earnestly, and diligently teach them, that they may pierce the hearts of thy children to understand and affect them.—*Ainsw. in Deut.* vi. 7.

⁶ *Shanan, acuere* est metaphora ducta a gladio qui dum acuitur sæpius impellitur ad cotem.—*A Lapid.*

These young plants must be often watered.¹ When physicians meet with bodies very corrupt, and yet very weak, they prescribe little and often. There were in the primitive times two sorts of catechumeni, or persons instructed in the principles of religion : 1. Some that were *adulti*, of ripe years, as heathens converted from dumb idols to the true God. These, before they were received by baptism into the fellowship of Christ, were taught and catechised in the way and will of God. So Austin, according to ecclesiastical history,² and the eunuch and Cornelius, according to divine writ. 2. Others that were infants, the children of believers, being baptized in their infancy, as they grew up were taught the meaning of baptism, of the covenant of grace, of which that was a sign and seal, &c. Of all which particulars when they could give a good account in their own persons in public before the congregation, and could make a profession of their faith, and would promise obedience to the Lord and his word, they were confirmed, by laying on of hands, saith learned Deodat. on Heb. vi. 2.³

It is thy privilege, reader, that thy young ones may be taught to know the Ancient of days. Do not, therefore, omit the duty, but follow that pious pattern of David : 'I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words : keep my commandments, and live,' Prov. iv. 3, 4. The mother also minded the instruction of her son, as well as the father, Prov. xxxi. 1-4. As both parents have a share in their children's pollution, so both must endeavour their children's conversion.

The promise is, 'And he shall not depart from it when he is old.' The cloth that is dyed in the wool will keep colour best. Disciples in youth will prove angels in age. Use and experience strengthen and confirm in any art or science. The longer thy child hath been brought up in Christ's school, the more able he will be to find out Satan's wiles and fallacies, and to avoid them. The longer he hath been at the trade, the more skill and delight will he have in wor-

¹ Quintilian's orator must, when he is two years old and after, be accustomed to the best and purest words pronounced to him by his nurse.

² Just. Martyr., Apol. ii. Jerom. ad Pamach. Socrates.

³ Some I know refer that ceremony of laying on of hands, Heb. vi. 2, to baptism, for a sign of blessing and consecration to God, but it may full as probably be admitted to confirmation after baptism, for the pastor did not only examine those whom he confirmed concerning their progress in Christianity, but also pray for them, that God would give them more grace, and continue them in the faith, in which duty he laid his hands on them. Others understand by it the ministry of the word, because on ministers there was imposition of hands.—*August. lib de fide et operibus*, cap. 11.

shipping and enjoying the blessed God. The tree when it is old stands strongly against the wind, just as it was set when it was young.

The children of Merindal so answered one another in the matters of religion, before the persecuting Bishop of Cavailon, that a stander-by said unto the bishop, I must needs confess I have often been at the disputations of the doctors in the Sorbonne, but I never learned so much as by these children. Seven children at one time suffered martyrdom with Symphorisa, a godly matron, their mother. Such a blessing doth often accompany religious breeding; therefore, Julian the apostate, to hinder the growth and increase of Christianity, would not suffer children to be taught either human or divine learning.¹

Philip was glad that Alexander was born whilst Aristotle lived, that he might be instructed by Aristotle in philosophy. It is no mean mercy that thy children are born in the days of the gospel, and in a valley of vision, a land of light, where they may be instructed in Christianity. Oh do not fail, therefore, to acquaint thy children with the nature of God, the natures and offices of Christ, their own natural sinfulness and misery, the way and means of their recovery, the end and errand for which they were sent into the world, the necessity of regeneration and a holy life, if ever they would escape eternal death! Alas! how is it possible they should ever arrive at heaven if they know not the way thither?

The inhabitants of Mytilene, sometimes the lords of the seas, if any of their neighbours revolted, did inflict this punishment. They forbade them to instruct their children, esteeming this a sufficient revenge.—(*Ælian.*) Reader, if thou art careless of this duty, I would ask thee what wrong thy children have done thee, that thou shouldst revenge thyself by denying them that which is their due—I mean pious instruction.

The Jewish rabbis² speak of a very strict custom and method for the instruction of their children, according to their age and capacity. At five years old they were *fili legi*, sons of the law, to read it. At thirteen they were *fili præcepti*, sons of the precept, to understand the law. At fifteen they were *Talmudistæ*, and went to deeper points of the law, even to Talmudic doubts. As thy

¹ Aul. Gel. Ne Christianorum pueri Græcis disciplinis imbuerentur aut scholas publicas frequentarent, lege cavit, Ne linguis eorum, inquit, acumine perpolititis, facile disputationibus nostris resistere, et sacra quidem sua edificare, et amplificare religionem, autem nostram facile refellere queant.—*Nicephor*, lib. x. cap. 25.

² Rayn. Mart. de Rep. Heb.

children grow up, so do thou go on to instruct them in God's will. They are 'born like the wild ass's colt,' Job xi. 12—that is, unruly, foolish, and ignorant. We often call a fool an ass, but here it is a 'wild ass,' which is more silly and untractable than a tame one; nay, it is a 'wild ass's colt,' which is most rude, unruly, and foolish. How then shall thy ignorant children come to know God or themselves without instruction?

3. Thy duty is to acquaint thy children with the works of God. Teach them his doings as well as his sayings, 'Take heed to thyself, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen; but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons,' Deut. iv. 9. God's wonders should be had in everlasting remembrance. 'He hath done his mighty works to be remembered,' Ps. exi. 4. Now one special way to do this is by writing them in our children's memories, hereby they are transmitted to posterity. This was the godly practice of the patriarchs, to instruct their children concerning the creation of the world, transgression of man, destruction of the old world, God's providence, the Messiah to be revealed, and the like.¹ The parents' mouths were large books in which their children did read the noble acts of the Lord, 'I will utter dark sayings of old: which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them unto their children; that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments,' Ps. lxxviii. 2-7.² This precept is here urged upon a double ground, partly for God's praise, in the perpetuity of his worthy deeds: his works are of great weight, and therefore as curious pictures or precious jewels must in memory of him be bequeathed from father to son whilst the world continueth. If they are written in paper or parchment, they may perish, (and is it not a thousand pities that such excellent records should be lost?) but if they be written by fathers successively in their children's hearts, no time

¹ Willet in Gen. xviii. 9, ex Perer.

² Hoc igitur est decretum ut patres legis doctrina imbuti, quasi ex ore Dei, filii commemorarent, se non modo semel fuisse redemptos, sed collectos in unum ecclesie corpus, ut Deum liberatorem sancte pureque omnibus seculis colerent.—*Calv. in Ps. lxxviii.* So Ps. xlv. 1, 2.

shall blot or wear them out, Exod. xii. 26, 27. Therefore, as the rabbis¹ observe, the night before the passover, the Jews (to keep God's mercies in memory to his honour) were wont to confer with their children on this wise: The child said, Why is it called the passover? The father said, Because the angel passed over us when it slew the Egyptians, and destroyed us not. The child said, Why do we eat unleavened bread? The father answered, Because we were forced to hasten out of Egypt. The child said, Why do we eat sour grapes? The father answered, To mind us of our afflictions in Egypt. Partly for their own profit, ver. 7: 'That they might set their hope in God,' &c. Acquaintance with God's favour will encourage their faith; knowledge of his power will help them to believe his promise. Reader, obedience to this precept may tend much to thy own and thy children's profit. By teaching thy children God's actions, thou wilt fix them the faster, and they will make the greater impression upon thy own spirit. A frequent mention of things is the best art of memory: what the mouth preacheth often, the mind will ponder much. Besides, it may work for thy children's weal; the more they be acquainted with the goodness, wisdom, power, and faithfulness of God, which appear in his works, the more they will fear, love, and trust him. When David had acquainted his son Solomon how kind and bountiful Barzillai had been to him in his extremity, what respect did Solomon shew to his son (the father being then incapable of his kindness) for the father's sake! If thou acquaintest thy children with national mercies, (how he bestowed the gospel on England when it was the throne of Satan, and worshipped that prince of darkness; how he restored the gospel to England when it was overspread with popery; how wonderfully he hath wrought for the good of his church in England against their enemies; how he blew up them that would have blown up the king and parliament in the gunpowder treason; and how he sunk them in 1588 as lead in the midst of the mighty waters who came against us, &c.,) and also makest known to thy children personal mercies; how at such a time when thou wast in misery, and no human hand could help thee, then thou criest to God, and he heard and helped thee; how at such a time thou wast in danger, and God was thy deliverer; thou wast in wants and he supplied thee, and delivered thy soul out of all adversity: the recital of these favours to them would be an engagement to them, (as they were sharers in thy mercies,) and an encouragement to them to hope and depend on, to worship and honour so gracious

¹ Joh. Men. de Repub. Hebr.

a God as this God is. 'Our fathers trusted in thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not ashamed,' Ps. xxii. 4, 5. This was an argument with the children to rely on the same rock, and expect shelter from the same refuge.

4. Thy duty is to pray earnestly to God for them.¹ The parents, when Christ was on earth, brought their little ones to him, that he would put his hands on them, Mat. xix. 13; that is, that he would bless them, for laying on the hands was the accustomed ceremony in blessing any; as we read, Gen. xxvii. 21, 22. And in answer to the desire of these pious mothers, he put his hands on them and blessed them, Mark x. 16. So do thou by prayer carry thy children to the blessed Jesus in the arms of faith,—he hath as tender a respect for children now as he had then,—and beseech him to bless them. Thou knowest that by nature they are cursed, liable to the curse of the law, and to the wrath of the Lord; how earnest, how fervent shouldst thou be with the holy child Jesus, that he would lay his hands upon them and bless them!² How pathetically did Abraham plead with God for Ishmael, 'Oh that Ishmael might live before thee!' Gen. xvii. 18. How affectionately shouldst thou, who knowest thy children are naturally dead, and believest that if they be not born again, they must die eternally, cry to God for them. 'Oh that my sons might live before the Lord, that my daughters might not die for ever! Thou art the prince and Lord of life; oh speak powerfully by the Spirit to their poor souls, that these sons and daughters, dead in sins and trespasses, may hear thy voice and live.'

The poet observeth of the tiger, the most cruel of all beasts, that if she be robbed of her whelps, she lieth down in her den, sadly lamenting their loss, and licking the place where they had lain.

'Sic aspera tigris,
Fætibus abreptis Scythico deserta sub Antro
Accubat, et tepidi lambit vestigia lecti.'³

Reader, wilt thou be more cruel than the savage tiger? canst thou see the devil robbing thee of thy tender babes, and dragging them before thine eyes to his dismal den, and never lament their loss, nor pour out a prayer to God for their recovery? Rachel wept for her dead children, (though their bodies were only butchered

¹ Ciceroni degenerem esse filium constat, et sapiens ille Socrates liberos habuit matri similiores quam patri.—*Seneca*.

² Impositio manuum, symbolum fuit apud judæos familiare, quoties solennis erat precatio vel benedictio.—*Beza in Mat.* xix.

³ Stat. Theb., lib. x.

by Herod;) and hast thou never a tear for thy children dead to God, and dead in law, when their souls are like to be murdered by bloody Satan?

Some parents, indeed, instead of blessing, curse their children; but let them take heed lest God hear them, and take them at their word. Manlius (*Loc. commun.* 228) gives us such patterns as may make all such parents to tremble. There was a mother who would usually say, the devil take her daughter; I saw, saith he, this woman leading about her daughter possessed by the devil, and so did Luther and others see her. There was, saith he, an old man that bid his son do something, and the son not hastening, the father wished he might never stir from that place. God said Amen to it; and whilst he lived, which was seven years, he never stirred from that place, but there he stood leaning upon a desk, whilst he slept and ate very little. The prints of his feet are to be seen in the pavement in the town of Friburg in Misnia to this day, saith my author.

O friend, thy prayers are part of thy children's best portion; be therefore more careful to lay up for them a stock of prayers in heaven than to leave them a stock of goods on earth. Job sent and sanctified his children; that is, say some, he sent to them to prepare themselves for the sacrifice. Others say, he put up prayers to God to sanctify them. It is clear, 'he offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all,' Job i. 5. He poured out prayers for the acceptance of every child in particular. Job's children were saints, for he saith, 'It may be they have sinned.' His question makes it unquestionable that they did *patrizare* (take after their father) in piety, yet his suspicion put him upon earnest supplication to God for pardon; what petitions shouldst thou then put up, when probably thy children are openly profane! It may be thy case is somewhat like his in the Gospel, 'There came to Jesus a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is lunatic and sore vexed; for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water, and I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him,' Mat. xvii. 15. Thou mayest cry to Christ, 'Lord, my son is strangely possessed with the evil spirit; he falleth sometimes into swearing, sometimes into lying, sometimes into the fire of lust, oftentimes into the water of drunkenness, and I have used all other means which thou hast prescribed. I have acquainted him with the heinous nature of sin, with the grievous danger of his soul; I have instructed him frequently, reproved him sharply; I have commanded him solemnly

to turn over a new leaf, and lead a new life. I have brought him to public and private ordinances, have got my friends to deal seriously with him about his eternal concerns, but they could not cure him. Lord, have mercy on my son; Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on him. Do thou speak the word of command, and he will come to himself, and this unclean spirit will depart from him.'

If thou art a mother, do as the woman of Canaan did. 'Have mercy on me, O Lord, my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.' If he seem not to hear, and to be silent, (as he was to her,) go nearer to him by faith, and cry, 'Lord, help me; Lord, help me.' If his answer seem to be a repulse, do not desist, but gather arguments from his denial, (as she did,) and conclude that if he open his mouth, he will open his hand; if importunity prevail with an unrighteous man, then much more with a gracious God. Never leave him, till by his own strength thou hast overcome him. At last thou mayest hear, 'O woman, be it unto thee as thou wilt; and see, thy daughter made whole from that very hour,' Mat. xv. 22-29.

5. Thy duty is to reprove and correct thy children as need shall require. It is said of the ape, that she kills her young ones with culling them. Austin, upon a dreadful accident, called his people together to a sermon, and told them this story: Our noble Cyrillus, a man mighty among us in word and deed, had, as you know, but one only son, and he loved him immeasurably, even above God, and let him, without correction, do what he would. Now this very day, this cockering hath in his drunken humour offered violence to his mother, killed his father, wounded mortally two of his sisters, and would have ravished another.¹ Some parents kill their children with kindness, with fondness, which is cruelty to purpose, I would say. Witness David in his carriage or dotage towards Absalom and Adonijah. True affection will be known by seasonable and suitable correction. 'He that spareth his rod hateth his son; he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes, Prov. xiii. 24. Some children have been killed with overlaying. Many a mother hath overlaid and pressed her child to death with fondness. True love, though it be inconsistent with hatred, yet it is not with anger. God himself, who is infinite in affection to his people, makes them often feel the effects of his indignation. 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,' Prov. iii. 12. Nay, none love their children's souls so much, as they that are most angry at their sins. As they are most loving parents that rather apply

¹ August. ad frat. Erem. Serm. 33.

sharp and painful corrosives than suffer wounds to fester and destroy their children's temporal lives; so they are the most loving parents that apply cutting reprehensions, and, if need be, corrections, rather than to suffer their spiritual diseases to continue and deprive them of eternal life.

'Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight to thy soul,' Prov. xxix. 17. Those that neglected to scourge their children, have found their children to scourge them. Such children, instead of giving rest, have been a sharp rod to their parents. As Eli's children, who were reprov'd too late, and then but very little, they pierced his heart for his not punishing them.¹ God often whips the fathers by those children that were unwhipped at first. It is said of Muleasses, king of Tunis, that he cockered his son Amida so long, till he rebelled at last against his father, and in a short space deprived him both of his sight and sovereignty.² Not to cross our children, is a speedy way to be crossed by them. But as dust is beaten out of beds or chairs with a stick, so is folly beaten out of a child's heart with a rod: 'The rod and reproof give wisdom,' Prov. xxix. 15. Parents in their qualities should resemble honey, though it be sweet to the taste, yet nothing is more sharp when it meets with an exulcerate sore.

Notwithstanding this, both reproof and the rod must be managed by reason.³ It is good when a father, in relation to his child, makes not rage, but Scripture and reason the rule of his actions. If a governor of a family lay the reins upon the necks of his unruly passions, he will endanger the overthrow of his chariot, and all the persons that ride in it.

As some men are all fondness, and err in the excess; so others are all fire, and err in the defect: thy wisdom, Christian, is to walk in the middle way between both; as not to suffer thy children in sin, lest they be destroyed; so not to provoke them to wrath, lest they be discouraged. Grace will teach thee, though not to extirpate, yet to regulate thy natural affections; for the passions of the soul are like winds to a ship, which being moderate, carry safely to its harbour, but being tempestuous drown it.⁴ If thy anger, like fire, be not kept within its bounds, it will quickly consume all thy hopes of success in correction. A furious father many times finds his anger as fire to clay, to harden his son, and make him

¹ Willet on Sam.

² Turk. Hist.

³ Metus haud diuturni magister officii.—*Cicer.*

⁴ In castigandis moribus lenitate sanandi potius liberi, quam austeritate exasperandi.—*Polan. Synt.* lib. x. cap. 37.

less pliable. Reprehensions and corrections must both be with moderation.¹

It was the speech of a heathen to one: *Cœderem te nisi irascerer*; I would beat thee if I were not angry. It is not good fighting when men are furious; for such, drunk with passion, stagger in their strokes, and cannot hit right. Oh let prudence, not passion, be thy guide in this. Hasty, sudden showers lay the corn, when mild, gentle ones do much refresh it. Consider the disposition of thy children; some will be won with stroking, then it is needless to strike; God doth not afflict willingly, neither should men, but in case of necessity. Some will be reformed with a frown, then it is to no purpose to fight. What wise man would make his whole body sweat, at that which he may do with a glance of his eye? Dull and stubborn horses want a whip, but meek sheep must be driven gently. How many, when they have overdone, have undone all! No physician, unless mad, will prescribe the same potions to all bodies. Consider also their faults; if small, the lesser; if great, the sorer must the reproof or correction be; for gentle maladies, a gentle medicine will serve; but where the disease is dangerous there must be stronger physic.² If the distemper be habituated in the body, the fault be committed frequently, then weak lenitives, ordinary chidings, will be ineffectual. In all the bitter compositions to cure soul-infirmities let love be one ingredient, and appear to be so predominant as to give a relish to the rest. When we put a little sugar into our vinegar, it makes the sauce more grateful to the appetite. But be sure, where the crime is a sin, not to omit this duty, lest God take his sword to kill, as in the case of Eli, because thou wilt not take the rod to correct.

6. The duty of parents is to set a good pattern before their children. It is the saying of Lumbard, The instruction of words is not so powerful as the exhortation of works. Do thou live exactly as thou desirest thy children should do; take heed lest thou set them an ill copy. It is ordinary for children to follow their fathers, though it be to the unquenchable fire. It is the expression of Polanus, (on Ps. viii. 2,) Woe, woe to those parents who make their children, whom God would have witnesses of his purity and perfections, to be witnesses of their impiety and abominations. Nero would say to his wife, Some monstrous birth must be expected from such monsters as we are; if the root be a crab-stock, the fruit will be sour. What is the reason there are so many

¹ In filios pater obtinet non tyrannicum imperium sed basilicum.—*Davenant in Col. iii.*

² *Iapela ἡ παιδεία.*—*Arist.*

drunkards, swearers, atheists, and scoffers at godliness? truly their parents were such before them; and as Austin observes, it is the general cry, *Nolumus esse meliores quam patres*; we will be no better than our fathers:¹ therefore be sure that thou who art a father be holy, teach thy children to pray and read, and deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts by thy example. Aristotle tells us that the old nightingale teacheth the young one to sing by singing unto her.

I have read of a child that when his vicious father checked him for some fault, telling him never parent had such a wicked child, answered, Yes, sir, my grandfather had. It is true his words savour more of wit than grace; but pare off what is rotten, and the remainder of the fruit may be profitable. Children will observe their fathers' courses and carriage, and sooner follow their poisonous patterns, than their pious precepts. It is said the most of fishes' eggs are devoured by their males, and so they perish.² Many a parent destroyeth his child by a vicious example. 'This their way is their folly, yet their posterity approveth of their sayings,' Ps. xlix. 13. Justin Martyr inquires into the reason why the prophet Elisha called for vengeance upon the children that mocked him, 2 Kings ii. 23, 24, when they hardly understood what they did, much less did design evil to him; and answers it, that the children learned that language from their parents, therefore God sent that judgment to punish both children and parents. They that are heirs to their fathers' moral evils, God makes to inherit their penal evils.³

Scandal in a parent, like leaven, will sour the whole lump of his family. Sometimes children take after their fathers in natural, but often in spiritual diseases. The children gather wood, when the fathers will kindle the fire, and the mothers knead the dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven. 'Their children remember their altars and their groves by the green trees upon the high hills,' Jer. vii. 18, and xvii. 2. Thy child may forget thy precepts, but he will be prone to remember thy profaneness. The king of Morocco, when he read Paul's epistles, did much commend them, but said, every one is bound to worship the same God which his father did. Because children are so apt to follow the example of their fathers, therefore Lyncurgus commanded the citizens to dine and sup in a

¹ Nihil in te et in patre videat quod si fecerit pœnitebit.—*Hier. ad Læt.*

² τὰ πολλὰ ὧα οἱ ἄρρενες ἀνακαπτοῦσι.—*Arist. Hist.*, 6, cap. 14.

³ Voces ipsas pueri à parentibus edocti erant, quare puerorum clade parentes flagellarit. Illud enim, Ascende Calve, proscindendi per detractionem Eliæ assumptionis gratia proferebant q. d. Abripiat te quoque spiritus, ut itidem à te liberemur.—*Just. Mar. q. 8.*

common hall, whither their children did also resort, to learn temperance and gravity, and where they heard not unseemly language, but serious and wise discourse.

Secondly, I shall speak to this duty in relation to the bodies and temporal estates of thy children.

In this respect there is one thing that concerneth the mother of the child, and other things that concern both parents, though chiefly the father.

That which concerneth the mother is to nurse her child. Sarah was a noble lady, yet she was a nurse, Gen. xxi. 7. They are monstrous mothers who nourish their children in the womb, but scorn to do it when they are come into the world. Indeed want of milk or weakness may excuse a mother—God doth not require it of any in such a case—but where he gives ability and strength, he expecteth the performance of this duty; for why should God fill the mother's breasts against the child's birth, if not for this, that the child might suck the bottles of milk when it was born? Not niceness, but necessity, can excuse from this duty.¹

Besides, it is a great wrong oftentimes to the children; for as plants follow the nature of the ground that feedeth them, and cattle of the dams that suckle them—some naturalists tell us a lamb sucking a goat changeth her fleeces—so children too often follow the naughty conditions of their nurses. If therefore thy child must be put out, endeavour to get a good one. This reason is given why Alcibiades was so stout, though an Athenian, when that people naturally are fearful, because a woman of Sparta, a valiant, warlike nation, was his nurse. But I would wish all women that are able—nay, God himself commandeth them—to bring up their own children, 1 Tim. v. 10.

It is said of the cuckoo that she doth not build her nest herself, but *τίκτει ἐν ἀλλοτρίαις νεοττίαις*, layeth her eggs in other birds' nests, which hatch it up as their own²—hence they are called cuckolds who bring up the adulterous seed of others. And Julius Scaliger reporteth of a certain bird, of the bigness of a hen, in Catigan, an island in the sea, which never sitteth on her eggs, but burieth them two feet deep in the sand, to be hatched by the sun. Mothers who vaunt out of pride, refuse to bring up their babes, are like such brutes, but worse than others; for most beasts will give the young their breasts. Women see before their eyes how willing brutes are to suckle their young, and yet our dainty dames, forsooth, for fear of disturbing their rest, and because their gaudy garments

¹ Calvin in Gen.

² Arist. Hist., ix. cap. 29.

would be often disordered, are more cruel than the sea-monsters, and deny their breasts to the children of their own bodies, Lam. iv. 3.

The duties which concern both, though chiefly the father, are these following.

1. To provide for them. Parents who take no care to feed and clothe their children, are like those heathen whom the apostle describeth to be without natural affection, Rom. i. 32. He that provideth not for his household is worse than an infidel, and hath denied the faith, 1 Tim. v. 8. Such a person is worse than a heathen; he is so far from grace, that he hath put off nature and humanity. Beasts and birds are tender of their young; they will—at least some of them—famish themselves to feed their young: how will they encounter with them that are much stronger, for the preservation of their young! The naturalist telleth us that the eagle—a fit emblem of a Christian father—abideth ἐν τόποις ὑψηλοῖς, in high places, because there her young are safest from dangers, and that though she casteth them out of her nest when they are able to fly, yet till then she doth feed and cherish them.¹ And the same author² saith of some fishes that they will by no means leave their young spawn, but carefully accompany them to keep them from hurt. The very bitch will be tender of her whelps. The very crocodile is so careful of her young, that she layeth her eggs whither Nilus cannot come.³ Men from other creatures may learn these lessons and lectures, for indeed they are plainly written in the law of nature. The bees are industrious abroad, sucking from the sweet flowers of the fields, and then carry what they get home to their young, nay, they put their food into their mouths as oft as they need it.—*Theat. of Polit., Flying Insects.*

Educate them according to, but not beyond, thy ability; let them not want necessities, but take heed of delicacies. Too high breeding is sin's brooding, and too too often hatcheth pride, contempt, and disobedience to parents. Thou mayest lift them up to cast thee down, which beware of, if thou lovest either thyself or child. The Scripture will not suffer fathers to provoke their children to wrath, much less to expose them to ruin.⁴

The Thebans made a law, that those parents should be put to

¹ Arist. Hist. de Ani., lib. ix. cap. 32.

² Lib. iv. cap. 8, a Tostat., qu. 46.

³ Cum bestię videantur habere nescio quid στρογγύς naturalis, dum se mutuo curant, qui illius est expers est bestiis deterior.—*Fajus.*

⁴ Utinam liberorum nostrorum mores non ipsi perderemus. Infantiam statim deliciis solvimus, mollis illa educatio, quam indulgentiam vocamus, nervos omnes et mentis et corporis frangit. Quid non adultus concupiscet qui in purpuris repit?—*Quintil.*, lib. i. cap. 2.

death who were so unnatural as to cast out and expose their children to ruin;¹ and yet, alas! how many spend that in an alehouse which should keep their families, and, whilst they are wasting prodigally, their children want necessaries. Such men sin abroad and at home at the same time, and drink in their cups the very blood of their babes! Oh inhuman cruelty! But, reader, there is one thing of weight which I must not omit. As thy duty is to provide for them food and raiment, so also to bring them up to learning.² Some for want of reading their neck-verse have lost their lives; but ah, how many for want of reading have lost their precious souls! The poor heathen, the Brahmins in India, (saith Alex. ab Alex.,) so soon as their children were capable of instruction, placed them forth to good schoolmasters, that by them they might be instructed in learning and good manners. If heathen were so mindful of giving their children learning for their temporal good, surely Christians should not be forgetful of it, when it relates so much to their children's eternal good. He that is but affected as he ought to be, with the gross ignorance of hundreds in the nation, by reason of which profaneness rageth in their lives, and atheism reigneth in their hearts and houses, and their souls are every hour next door to the eternal fire, and all because, as they tell us, they were never book-learned, they could never read, needs not arguments to move him to let his children learn to read.

It may be, reader, thou wilt tell me thou art poor, and canst not be at the charge. I ask thee, first, Dost thou not spend more money in a week vainly than would pay for thy child's schooling a week? Secondly, Canst thou not read thyself, nor none in thy family? if thou canst, or others in thy house, time may be found morning or evening, or on wet days, when thou canst not work, or on Lord's days, to teach them. Thirdly, Is there never a neighbour or gentleman in the country so merciful whom thou canst prevail with to give six or eight pence a-week to keep three or four of thy children at school? I tell thee, didst thou but know of what concernment reading is to the soul of thy child, thou wouldst rather beg of every person in thy parish, and the next too, rather than to let them go without it.

But, reader, if God hath given thee an estate, let me beseech thee,

¹ Ælian. Var. Hist., lib. ii. cap. 7.

² Pharaoh's daughter trained Moses in all the learning of the Egyptians. Paul was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. Constantine procured three several tutors for his three sons, the first for divinity, the second for the civil law, the third for military discipline.—*Euseb.*

for the Lord's sake, for their souls' sake, who cannot speak for themselves, to be really helpful to the poor in this particular. Alas! the people perish for want of knowledge. And how can they know God's will that cannot read it? Send abroad among thy neighbours, inquire who are poor and cannot, and who are profane and will not, bring up their children to reading; pity and supply the former, provoke the latter by shaming them or awing them, if thou hast authority. A little laid out this way, a little labour, a little money, may bring thee in great joy at the great day.

Secondly, To bring them up to some calling, that they may be serviceable to their country. Though their general calling must be chiefly regarded, yet their particular calling must not be neglected; nay, the latter will be a help to the former. They who are brought up to no trade are usually brought up to Satan's black art; idle young men are loose, and so at leisure to be taken into the devil's service. A lawful calling hinders the commission of many a sin, and prevents many a temptation. Standing pools do quickly putrify. If the sea did not purge itself by continual motion, it would corrupt the air. The air, if it were not moved to and fro by the winds, would infect the inhabitants. Idleness breeds all manner of wickedness. He that is very busy at his calling doth not hear when wicked companions would entice him to folly. The idle vagrant indeed is full of vermin, of sin, is carted from constable to constable, and, after many a whipping by the way, is at last lodged in hell, his own place. How many have been carried from the jail to the gallows, and from thence, it is to be feared, to the unquenchable fire, who have acknowledged the main cause to be the want of a calling.

Thy children ought to be serviceable to the state as well as to the church. It was a notable speech of that Roman worthy, Aulus Fulvius, to his son, after he had discovered him to be one in Cataline's conspiracy, *Ego patriæ te genui, non Catúlinæ*,¹—I begat thee for thy country, not for Cataline; I intended thee to defend, not to destroy, the commonwealth in which thou wast born. The Horatii and Curiatii, by their valour and virtue, were bulwarks to the commonwealth. Theodosius finds out Arsenius to be his sons' schoolmaster, that they might, by learning the arts and sciences, be beneficial to the empire. Nothing is created for itself, but so placed by the most wise providence that it may confer somewhat towards the public good. Look to the heavens, to the ocean, on the earth, and the several creatures in them, and see how all are some way or other helpful for the universal benefit.

¹ Valer. Max., lib. v. cap. 1.

Adam brought up Cain to be a husbandman, and Abel to be a shepherd. The ancient Jews were very careful that all their children should be trained up in some calling. It is a witty observation which one hath—Jabal, that dwelt in tents, and tended herds, had Jubal to his brother, the father of music, to shew that a lawful calling and true comfort are companions, and often meet together. The industrious bee gets much honey. Some children neglect their ancient parents, and give this as the ground, they brought them up to nothing. Though the father's sin will not justify this son, yet, without question, it is a very great crime to leave a child without a calling. Idle persons are oft like unworn garments, eaten up with the moths of vices. Pride makes some parents bring up their children to profaneness; they breed them to nothing, and thereby breed them to all things that are evil. The Spanish story is turned into English. A Spanish woman went a-begging from door to door with three children, was met and pitied by a French merchant, and he offered to take the eldest of her boys into his service, but she proudly, though poor, scorned it, saying, that for aught she knew her son might live to be king of Spain.

Some parents train up their children altogether to play. 'They send forth their little ones like a flock,' as Job describes wicked parents, 'and their children dance. They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ,' Job xxi. 11, 12. Instead of teaching their children some art or trade, they train them up to artificial dancing, as Herodias was; to trip neatly with their toes to allure others to wickedness. Though all dancing be not sinful, yet to bring up children to little else is unlawful. Music is commendable and melodious, yet for children to be brought up to nothing but dancing, singing, and music, is abominable, and will sound ill in God's ears.¹

But, reader, take heed what master thou providest for thy son, lest thou helpst him to one that may help him to hell. Let thine eye be more on a godly than on a wealthy master; even such an one as will mind not only his temporal, but also his eternal welfare. Possibly thou mayest bind thyself to be the devil's apprentice when thou little thinkest it. *Qualis herus, talis servus*,—Like master, like man. Thy child may be sooner taught to imitate his wicked ways than to sell his wares; and what an ill bargain dost thou make to give money to a master to bring up thy son for Satan! It is commonly said of Newgate, that if a man be not a rogue be-

¹ Musieam et honestam voluptatem non damnat Scriptura, sed eorum damnat sceuritatem qui his velut inebrietati Deum contemnunt.—*Mercer, in loc.*

fore he goes in, he shall be sure to be made one before he comes out. It is too true of many families, if a servant be not vicious before he lives in them, he shall be sure to be made so before he leaves them. Their houses are like the English marshes, those that carry health into them shall hardly, if they continue there any time, come away without sickness. If thy child be bad, such a master will make him worse. Young persons are very prone to imitate their masters' evil practices, and much apter to follow them to the tavern than to the temple. When the master is one that blasphemeth God, it is seldom that the servant blesseth God; it is as usual for servants to put on their masters' sins as their old clothes. But suppose thy child be religious and hopeful, shouldst thou therefore thrust him into the midst of temptations? Because thy child is probably of a good constitution, therefore thou wilt put him to dwell in a pest-house. Is this rational? The more hope thou hast that thy trees live, the more care thou hast to keep off cattle that may crop and kill them. Thou oughtest to be very tender of the first sproutings of grace, lest they be nipped in the bud. Alas! how oft hath a great light of profession been blown out (leaving a stench behind it) with the high wind of temptation! Thou art wholly a stranger in the world, if thou dost not know that evil company is a quench-coal to Christianity. It cannot be supposed that thy child, being young, is much rooted, and then how likely may every blast shake him, and by degrees overturn him! When thou hast lived seven years in Ethiopia and not changed thy countenance, nor proclaimed to thy friends by thy colour in what country thou hast been, then bind thy child to one of Satan's servants, that useth to cheat and cozen, to curse and swear, that hath banished God and Christ, prayer and Scripture, out of his family, and expect that he should be returned to thee at the seven years as spotless and blameless as he went from thee.

I think it not amiss to advertise the reader in the choice of a calling to have some respect to thy child's disposition; none are so excellent at any art or science as they that delight most in it. All creatures thrive best when they are in their own elements, because there they delight most. It is therefore commended for an ingenious policy of the Athenians, that before they placed out their children to any settled course of life, they brought them into a room furnished for that end, with all sorts of tools or instruments for callings, and narrowly observing with what there they were most delighted, bred them up accordingly.

Thy piety must help thee to choose a fit master, and thy pru-

dence to choose a fit calling; but do not by no means omit the duty, lest thou do undo thy child both here and hereafter. Let them labour here, that they may rest hereafter; as thou wouldst prevent their present riot and future ruin, employ them. When bees rob their neighbour hives, a special way to divert them, and cause them to desist, is by setting them at work at home, by running a penknife through the hive, and so, opening their combs, let out their honey, which they will seek presently to stop up again, and let their neighbours' alone.

Thirdly, To dispose of them in marriage. Parents must endeavour that their children may timely and conveniently be married: 'Take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands,' Jer. xxix. 6. When God's providence affords a fit match, they must not shew averse minds; by denying their consents without cause, some children have been destroyed. Abraham sent his servant to provide a wife for Isaac, Gen. xxiv. It is both thy dignity and duty to take a daughter to thy son, and to give thy son to a daughter. Calvin observeth that a great wrong is offered to the right of parents by the popish canons, which allow of marriages without parents' approbation.¹ Thou hast as great a propriety in thy children as in any of thy possessions; do thou therefore improve this privilege, as may be most for thy comfort and their profit.

But thy main care must be to match thy child rather with one that is good than with one that is great. If thy child be gracious, it will be a grief to live with one that is vicious; if thy child be wicked, he will get little good by one that is as bad, or worse. Health cannot be caught from one that is sound, but a disease may quickly from one that is sick. What communion hath light with darkness? A godly husband will have little help from, or comfort in, an ungodly wife. Why should thy son for a little silver be unequally yoked? I wish that Manoah could speak so loud, with Bishop Hall, that all our Israelites might hear him. 'Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or amongst all God's people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?'² Alas! how sad will it be with thy child to marry one that hath an inheritance on earth, but no estate in the cove-

¹ Calvin in Gen. xxiv.

² Cum infideli non est conjugium contrahendum. 1. Quia Deus prohibet, Deut. vii. 3. 2. Quia Deo displicet, Gen. vi. 1. 3. Ut vitentur cultus Dei impedimenta, 1 Kings xvi. 31. 4. Quia fleteret animum ad falsam religionem, 1 Kings xi. 1. 5. Ut desidia absit. 6. Ne liberi a vero Deo abducantur.—*Polan. Syntag.*, lib. x. cap. 53.

nant, to lie so near to one that is far from God! Possibly thy child is but a little warm himself, is but inclining heavenward, now to put him so close to a quench-coal may quickly make him key-cold. Remember, it is the blessing of the Lord, not such a quantity of land, that must make thy child's life happy. Now, how can that blessing be expected when his commands are void and violated? He that grafts into a crab-stock is never like to want verjuice. If thou wouldst have God to meet thy child in mercy, it must not be in a way of sin, but in a way of duty.

Before thou lookest into the world for a wife for thy son, look up to God for his direction. Do not expect God's company at the wedding except he be invited by prayer, and also have a hand in the match. Let piety, not portion, be the first particular thou inquirest after. If yellow angels make up the match, be confident the evil angels will be at the marriage. Good Jehoshaphat gave his son Jehoram to the daughter of Ahab, but how many Benonis, sons of sorrows, were the issue of such a conjunction, 2 Kings viii. 18, 27. Heathen had more sense, I mean several of them, than to suffer money to make their matches.¹ When the rich man in Athens, who had a daughter to bestow, asked counsel of Themistocles how he should dispose her, telling him that there was a very honest man sued to her, but he was very poor, and there was a rich man that desired her, but he was unrighteous. Were it in my choice, saith Themistocles, I would prefer a moneyless man before masterless money. Alas! how often doth their affection wear as their portions waste! And indeed it is impossible that that building should stand long whose foundation is so loose. If riches be the ground of their love, when that oil is consumed the lamp will be extinguished. If outward beauty cause that flame, when a disease or old age hath removed the fuel the fire will go out. But if godliness or spiritual riches be the motive of conjugal love, it will last for ever; for the beauty of grace doth never decay, though the grace of beauty doth; and spiritual riches are durable, and as immortal as any spirits. I do not deny, reader, but it is lawful in the choice of a wife to have some regard to portion and proportion, but it should be after, not before piety. It is wholly sinful to set these in the first place, for then Hagar the servant croweth over Sarah her mistress, which God cannot endure. If, therefore, thou wouldst have thy child's wedding, like that of Cana of Galilee, honoured with Christ's company, let not wealth, nor wit, nor beauty, but grace strike the match.

¹ *Vide* Chrysostomi homiliam duodecimam in Epist. ad Col., *sub finem*.

Fourthly, Thy duty is according to thy ability to portion them. It is true of natural as well as spiritual parents. The parents ought to lay up for the children, and not the children for the parents, 2 Cor. xii. 14. God's providence and thy own diligence will be helpful to thee herein. I must tell thee the fee-simple of thy estate is God's, thou hast at most but a lease for life; and therefore, as those that have estates for lives may not commit waste, so thou mayest not commit spoil, lest thy children be prejudiced. Nay, that God, whose the propriety is in all thou hast, doth himself in his word, under his own hand, give thy children portions out of it; therefore for thee to spend it carelessly, or withhold it covetously, is theft and robbery; God commanded the Jews to give the eldest a double portion. 'The father shall give him a double portion of all he hath, for he is the first of his strength,' Deut. xxi. 17.

There is a story of a father that, being deeply at play at dice, and having lost much money, his son, a little lad, standing by, and observing it, wept. Son, saith the father, why dost thou weep? Sir, said the lad, I have read how great Alexander wept when he heard that his father Philip had gained many countries and kingdoms, fearing that he would leave him nothing to win; and I weep the contrary way, fearing that you will leave me nothing to lose. If we scum off but the froth of the jest, for the son's words imply an itching hand after a shaking elbow, a good use may be made of it. Many a son hath cause to weep, to think how his father hath prodigally wasted his wealth, and left him his heir only to his beggary. The naturalists observe of the bees, that what they get by their industry they do not spend lavishly, but discreetly and orderly dispose it in their waxen cabinets, and as soon as they are full of honey close them fast with a waxen lock, both to prevent robbers, and to necessitate them to further labour as long as the season for gathering continueth. The great philosopher observeth of the eagle, that she is very provident for her young, and layeth up the meat which they leave, lest they should want another time: 1 Prov. xix. 14, 'Houses and riches are the inheritance of fathers.' God bestoweth them on the parents, and they bequeath them to their posterity. But it is the duty of parents as well to help their children whilst they live, as to leave their estates to them when they die. They are but hoggish fathers, that are good for nothing till they come to the knife. Why shouldst thou tempt thy child to dissolute courses for a livelihood, or to wish for thy death because

¹ ἀποτίθεται τὴν περιττέουσιν τροφὴν τοῖς νεοττοῖς.—*Arist. Hist.*, ix. 32.

thou, like an earthen money-box, though thou takest in much, wilt part with nothing till broken in pieces.

Surely it is no small comfort to parents to see their children live and thrive, through God's blessing, on their portions. But many parents are like the vulture, which is so cruel towards her own birds, that if she see them thrive and grow fat she envieth at it, and beateth them with her wings and claws to make them lean.¹ It is their pain to have their children prosper. They are sick if their children be well. They are afraid those young plants should grow so fast, and spread so fair by their house side as to darken or eclipse their glory. Heathen will condemn such Christians.² Other fathers turn their children to the wide world; whether they sink or swim it is all one to them. These deal with their children somewhat like to wolves, of whom it is written that they never see their sire or their young, for the herd of wolves sets upon, and kill that wolf which by the smell they perceive to have coupled with the she-wolf.³ Reader, let not covetousness make thee careless of thy children. Be sure the portion thou givest thy children be well gotten, otherwise a curse rather than a blessing will accompany it. Such bags have a hole through which all will run before thou art aware. Many parents by their injustice, instead of raising, do ruin their children.

I have somewhere read of a son, who finding after his father's death his heaps of evil-gotten treasure, cried out, O faithful drudge! and quickly wasted his hoard of wealth.⁴ Little do unrighteous men imagine, that what was forty years in gathering, comes often to be spent in forty days' revelling. Surely that proverb came from hell—Happy is that child whose father went to the devil. I cannot omit a story which I heard from an unquestionable author, whilst I was writing this chapter. There was an English knight, whom I judge not fit to name, in this present generation, whom God had blessed with a fair estate, but he was greedy by any means, whether good or bad, to increase it. A servant of his, being a bachelor, fell sick, that was worth four or five hundred pound per annum; this person being given over for dead by his physicians, made his will, and gave all his estate to his master;⁵ the knight knowing it, seemed exceeding tender of him, and took great care that nothing, either for food or physic, should be wanting to him.

¹ Tost. ex Plin.

² Hector to his son : καὶ ποτέ τις εἶπησι πατὴρ δ' ὄγε πολλὸν ἀμείνων.—*Hom.*
Iliad, vi.

³ Bodin. in 'Theatr., lib. iii.

⁴ Male parta cito dilabuntur.

⁵ De male quesitis, vix gaudet tertius hæres.

It pleased God, contrary to all expectations, to rebuke the servant's disease, and to give great hopes of his recovery; upon which the knight, fearing that if he lived he might alter his will, as was suspected, gave him poison to ensure his death. But some months after his death, God, who heareth the cry of blood, and by extraordinary ways revealeth it, caused the knight to be questioned for it; upon his trial at the assize, he refused, notwithstanding the arguments and importunity of judge and ministers, to plead, but asked diligently whether he did not by this course save his land, and being told yea, then, saith he, I will be pressed to death, and take notice that my son may ride booted and spurred, in three thousand pound a-year of his own land. With this weak cordial he died, and his son now alive is thought not worth a farthing. Such patterns of God's justice may awaken all parents to a serious consideration what portions they leave their children: they wrong their children. One coarse dish that is wholesome, is better than many dainty ones that have poison with them, but the greatest wrong is to themselves. Alas! how dear a purchase, how hard a bargain, doth he make who buyeth an estate for his son with the loss of his own soul. The greatest fool in the world cannot sell cheaper, or buy dearer.

Thus, reader, I have despatched what I promised concerning the duties of parents. Oh that thou, if called to that relation, wouldst practise them! Little dost thou think what a comfort it would be to thee, if God should so bless thine endeavours that thy children should sit like olive plants, famous for fatness, round about thy table, whilst thy wife is a fruitful vine by the sides of thy house. If thy little ones should give thee good hopes of their present holiness, and their future happiness, certainly, if thou knowest the worth of grace, such a mercy would delight thee more than if thou hadst all the world to give them. It was but a little wind which filled the wealthy Florentine's heart with joy, who, when dying, bespake his children thus: It much rejoiceth me, now I am going to die, *quod vos divities relinquam*, that I shall leave you all rich. But it will be a rich cordial indeed to thee, to be able when dying to tell thy children, I begat you vicious, but this revives me, I leave you all religious.

Plutarch speaks of a Spartan woman, that when her neighbours brought out their fine clothes and diamonds, boasting of their riches, she brought forth her children virtuous and well taught, saying, These are my jewels and my ornaments. Reader, will it not be a wonderful comfort to thee at the last day, when others stand forth

with their children, and all they can say is, We brought them up to trades, or we bred them gentlemen, or we left them great estates; if then thou canst say, Lord, here am I, and the children which thou hast given me. It is true, Lord, I conceived them in sin, and brought them forth in iniquity, but through thy grace I have travailed again with them, and Jesus Christ is formed within them. I brought them to thee many a time in the arms of faith and prayer, and thou didst bless them, and, lo, here they are to bless thee for ever.

A good wish about the duty of a parent, wherein the former heads are epitomised.

The education of my children being a business of great consequence, in reference to the honour of the blessed God, and also to their own eternal welfare, which do not a little depend upon their religious nurture, and being a work of large influence, both in relation to the people amongst whom they shall live, and to the posterity yet unborn, which may be poisoned with sin, or provoked to sanctity by their power and patterns, I wish, in general, that I may never be so great a thief as to rob and wrong so many at once; but, considering how richly these small vessels are laden, may not dare to send them to sea amidst those winds, and waves, and sands, and rocks, without their card and compass, but may be the more diligent in the discharge of my duty to steer them aright, by forewarning them of, and forearming them against, those storms and dangers and wrecks to which they are liable, that at last, by the gales of the Spirit, they may arrive with all their precious freight at a happy and glorious port. Lord, let thy blessing so accompany my endeavours in their breedings, that all my sons may be Benaiahs, the Lord's building, and then they will all be Abners, their father's light; and that all my daughters may be Bethias, the Lord's daughters, and then they will all be Abigails, their father's joy.

In particular, I wish that I may not, like Jacob, lay the right hand of my care and industry about the younger son, their bodies, and my left hand upon the elder, their souls, but that my greatest pains may be for their better part; and though I would not injure the cabinet of the outward, yet that my principal study may be for the jewel of their inward man. How unnatural are those parents

that fatten their swine and famish their sons, that toil and moil to dress dead corpses gaudily with flowers, and suffer their living children to die for want of food ! More unnatural am I in carking and caring only to enrich their dying flesh when I neglect their immortal spirits. Their bodies are more worth than meat, and their temporal lives than raiments ; but ah, how much are their inestimable souls, and their eternal lives worth ! Though I cannot be the author to generate grace, yet I may be the instrument to promote it. Religious education is the best portion I can give them living, and the best legacy I can leave them dying. Lord, whilst others are plotting to make their children rich, let my principal design be to make mine religious, that in life they may walk according to thy law, and when death shall turn their vile bodies into rotten carcases, their precious souls may be admitted into thy royal court.

I desire that their original corruption, and their proneness thereby to all actual sins, and liableness to eternal sufferings, may make so deep an impression upon my spirit, that I may be quickened the more vigorously to endeavour their conversion. My infants are not innocents ; circumcised Jews begat uncircumcised children. They are estranged from the womb, and as full of wickedness as the ocean is of waters. As Paul's viper was venomous, when being stiff with cold, it could not sting ; when my children cannot act sin, even then their natures are infected with sin. How soon may the world catch these young silly birds with its dry chaff ! How easily may Satan, like the kite, take and devour these little chickens ! Every beast may easily crop and kill these new quicksets. Oh let the sense of their danger make me more serious for their defence, and let my heart be so affected with their blindness, that I may faithfully and skilfully apply the eye-salve of the sanctuary to them, for the recovery of their spiritual sight. If I saw my neighbour's beast falling under his burden, it were my duty to afford it help. My poor children are falling under sin's weight into endless woe, and shall I stand still whilst they drop into hell ? Lord, let their matchless misery be ever pressing on me, to be importunate with thee for sanctifying and saving mercy, and let me arise and be doing whatsoever is commanded by thy word, in order to their everlasting weal.

I wish that that, the stream of my love to my little ones, may run in the right channel, I mean chiefly, though not solely, towards their inward men. Nature will teach me to love them much, but grace will teach me to love them well, and to give the precedency to that part within them which is of greatest excellency. How

poorly do I love that child, whose scratched finger I am busy to heal, but in the meantime neglect a wound near his vitals, suffering it to fester and kill him. Surely smaller affection do I shew to those near relations, if whilst I am feeding and physicking their bodies, lest sickness should kill them, I am careless of their souls, permitting, through my falseness, sin to damn them. Lord, let my love to the fruits of my body be like thy love to the travail of thy dear Son's soul. Thou feedest their flesh, but oh, what costly feasts dost thou provide for their spirits ! Thou art mindful of their external good, but oh, how solicitous art thou, causing all thy providences and ordinances to work for their spiritual and eternal gain ! Thy love to their bodies is like the sun's ordinary beams, refreshing ; but thy love to their souls is like its beams united in a glass, burning love. Let me, as a merciful man, be merciful to the beast in them, that their bodies may never famish through my fault ; but oh make me more tender of the angel within them, than of the apple of mine own eye, that their souls may never perish through my perverseness. I have read that bears which bring forth deformed whelps have so much love, as to take pains in licking them to a handsomer shape. I bring forth my children defiled with sin, like to Satan, and loathsome to God, and doth it not concern me to bring them up in the admonition of the Lord, and to bring them to him, that he may make them comely through that comeliness which his Spirit can put upon them ? If I had hurt a stranger, I should esteem it my duty to be at the cost of his cure ; have not I transmitted to my posterity the seeds both of sin and hell, and shall I be careless of their help ! Lord, since from me they derive that sin, that sickness which is unto eternal death, make me both faithful and successful in the use of those medicines which thou prescribest for their eternal life.

The time of my children's youth being the most probable to persuade them into piety, I wish that I may by no means let slip this opportunity, but that I may be both prudent and provident to improve it to the utmost, lest by losing this season I lose their souls. Sin, when it first sprouts forth from the root of bitterness, must be nipped in the bud, or blown off in the blossom ; if it once ripen into custom it is much more hard to be conquered. Oh let me therefore be sedulous to dash those brats of Babylon against the wall, to kill those poisonous vipers in the egg, and to stop those small streams of unclean water before they swell into a river, and force me to work at the labour in vain. Clay may easily be wrought upon when it comes newly out of the pit, but if once hardened into

brick, it will sooner break than bow. Why should not I take the advantage, when my children are, as metal in the furnace, soft and pliable, of casting them in a holy mould, when experience teacheth me that they soon harden, and then are sooner ruined than reformed? Clothes dyed from their native whiteness will take no colour but a sadder; children altered from their natural comparative simplicity quickly grow to be subtle in sin. Lord, help me so industriously to make use of that price which thou hast put into my hands for their profit, that I may never have cause to repent of my laziness when it is too late to remedy it.

I desire that I may frequently consider that many besides myself have a share in that stock which is committed to my care and charge, that pondering how the glory of the infinite God, the prosperity of church and state, my own peace, and the good of posterity, are all in a great degree embarked in these small bottoms, I may be the more careful to get their hearts ballasted with grace, and instruct them so to have their hands on the stern, and their eyes to the true star, that they may sail steady in the greatest storm, avoid those rocks and sands by which others are ruined, and after all their hazards and hardships, come to enjoy an everlasting calm. The fall of one house hath sometimes murdered many men; the irreligious nurture of one son hath sometimes slain a hundred souls. Ah, who can be indicted at the great assize for such and so many soul-murders without infinite horror? One vessel well set out and managed, and safe coming home, hath enriched many. Lord, make me so true to my great and weighty trust, in which so many have an interest, that my God, my conscience, my country, my children, may all bless me, yea, that the children yet unborn may arise and call me blessed. Enable me so piously and prosperously to sow this new ground with the good seed of thy word, that hereafter from it thou mayest reap a harvest of praise, I of comfort, others of profit, and they themselves of eternal peace.

I wish that I may thankfully accept of that superlative mercy, the covenant of grace, wherein God hath engaged to be a God to me and my posterity, and may testify my high esteem of that honourable privilege, and great respect of that inestimable promise, by offering my children seasonably and solemnly to be partakers of the sign and seal thereof. It is both my dignity and duty to list my children under so great a captain as Jesus Christ, and to engage them in so good a quarrel as the combat with the world, the flesh, and the wicked one. Oh let me never, as some peevish, ungrateful ones, pretend conscience for the omission of such a gra-

cious ordinance, but so sacredly devote them to thy service that they may, through thy strength, for ever be thy loyal and faithful soldiers. My children have the essence of a man, though they cannot do the actions of a man; my children are capable of the habits, though unable to perform the acts, of grace. Lord, thou canst sanctify them from the womb, and cause them to live spiritually as soon as they live naturally. Oh thou that of common clay didst make a precious salve to bestow outward sight, be pleased to make common water instrumental for their welfare. Lord, when I first bind them apprentices to thy Majesty, be thou surety for thy little servants; let thy Spirit so work within them, and thine eye of favour so watch over them, that they may serve thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their lives; and when their indentures shall expire, at death be translated into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

I desire that the thoughts of my children's ignorance of God's word, and utter inability thereby of obeying it, may make me the more diligent to acquaint them with his will. Alas! how should they cleanse their (naturally filthy) ways, but by taking heed thereto according to God's word? And how can their lives be answerable to the divine law, if they do not know it? Did ever any desire Christ, that did not know him to be the pearl of price? Did ever any forsake sin, who did not know it to be rank poison? How many millions in the night of ignorance have stumbled into hell! Is not inner darkness the beaten path to utter darkness? Oh that these weighty thoughts might so sink into my spirit, that whilst others are busy in instructing their children how to pursue their pastimes and pleasures, or how to carry themselves in great company, or how they may live a few days comfortably, I may instruct my children how they may please the blessed God, by remembering their Creator in the days of their youth; how they may be interested in the dearest Saviour, and work out their own salvation. David, though a king, would teach Solomon how he should be God's loyal subject; though much business lay on his back, he would yet find time to acquaint him with Christ's light burden. He composed the whole 72d Psalm for the instruction of his son. Bathsheba, a queen, would also as a pious mother read her son, Prov. xxx., a gracious lecture. The Jewish children, some write, could as easily answer to any part of God's law as to their own names. The very heathen Persians,¹ as soon as their children could speak, would have them taught virtue. Idolaters

¹ Xenoph.

teach their children to kiss their images, and to bow down to idols ; and shall not I teach my children how to worship the God of their fathers with perfect hearts and willing minds ? Lord, help me so to season these new vessels with frequent and plain and seasonable instructions, (strong wine may break weak glasses,) that the scent and savour thereof may remain with them all their days.

I wish that the mighty, noble acts of the glorious God, in which his curious wisdom, matchless goodness, and infinite power as the sun at noon-day do shine forth gloriously, may bear such weight in my judgment, that I may talk of them often to my children, and thereby make the memorial of them immortal. When others transmit their own filthy wickedness, let me transmit thy famous works to my posterity, that they may sing when I am in the place of silence. We have heard with our ears, our father hath told us of old, what wonders thou didst in his days. I would that national mercies may be recorded in their memories, that as they share in the fruit of them, so they may return thanks for them. In special, I wish that God's signal favours to my soul may be engraven on the tables of their hearts. The kindnesses which my God bestoweth on me are my riches ; how much should I wrong my children if I should not make them heirs of such precious treasures ! Every favour makes me a debtor to my God, the fountain of them ; how much should I wrong my God if, when I am sure to die in debt, I should not command and charge my heirs to do their utmost, by praise and thankfulness, to satisfy those millions of eternal obligations by which I am bound to the Lord ! Lord, let those vast sums which I owe to thy Majesty be ever so fresh in my mind and memory, that I may not hide them from my children, but may ' shew to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done,' Ps. lxxviii. 4.

I desire that my children's sinful and miserable conditions by nature may night and day call to me to be fervent and frequent in prayer to God for their conversion. If their bodies were dying, how should I weep and wail ! Now their souls are perishing, shall I have no pity ? If any of them be deprived of a temporal life, how do I sigh and sob ; and when by sin they have deprived themselves of eternal life, shall there be no crying, no complaining ? As the Shunammite, when her son was dead, went to the prophet of the Lord for his recovery, so, since my children are all dead in sin, let me go to the Lord of the prophets, and never leave him till he speak to them in their blood, ' Live.' Alas ! though their generation is partly from below, yet their regeneration must be wholly from above:

they must be converted or condemned; and they can as soon stop the sun in its course as convert themselves from their evil courses; the rocks will as easily yield crops of corn as they the fruits of righteousness. All my pains will be to no purpose unless God vouchsafe his assistance. Lord, let their sin and misery cry to my heart, that I may continually cry in thine ears, and give thee no rest till thou give them rest in thy Son. When I beg the blessing, let it please thee to bestow the blessing, and then I know they shall be blessed. O Father of spirits, who knowest that my poor children are polluted in the womb, and estranged from the womb, manifest thy grace and goodness, and wash them in the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. As they bear the image of the first Adam, cause them to bear the image of the second Adam. Let thy grace be their beauty, and the eternal weight of glory their portion. Do thou pity their dying souls. Alas! they cannot pity themselves: how can I see the death, the eternal death of their souls? Oh do thou cause them to hear thy voice and live. Remember thy covenant unto thy saints, that thou wilt be a God to them and to their seed. Do not forget thy promise, upon which thou hast caused me to trust. Oh thou dearest Redeemer, who hast said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven,' I bring them now to thee; do not reject them. I present them to thee in the trembling arms of my weak faith; oh do thou lay thy hands on them and bless them. Blessed Jesus, who knowest fully the pollution of their natures, the difficulty of their conversions, and that boundless wrath to which they are liable, let thy bowels yearn towards them, and thy Spirit so accompany their education, that they may become thy seed, and in them thou mayest see the travail of thy soul, and be satisfied. [And, Lord, if any of thy people shall gain any benefit by this weak piece, let this be the return they make for his pains, even to pour out their prayers to thy Majesty for the author and his children, that they may all see the felicity of thy chosen, rejoice with the gladness of thy nation, and glory with thine inheritance.]

I wish that my love to my children's souls may hinder my allowing them in any sin, knowing that such favour would make us all suffer for ever. Bitter physic is most likely to purge predominant ill humours. The whole country would say I was cruel, if, when their bodies were wounded, I should, for fear of putting them to pain, refuse to lance their wounds, and let them fester and kill them. What will my God say—and my children too in the other world—if I suffer their souls to die for want of searching their

spiritual sores. Oh let me not, as the queen bee, which hath a sting, yet never useth it; but shew my love to those patients, by hating their loathsome diseases, and applying medicines proper, be they never so painful, for their cure. Jacob is said to bless his sons, even every one, when all he said to two of them was by way of cursing their sins, Gen. xlix. 5-7. The eagle loveth her young, yet sometimes pierceth and pricketh them. My God hath told me, 'Withhold not correction from thy child; for if thou beatest him with the rod he shall not die,' Prov. xxiii. 13. That the rod on earth may keep him from the rack in hell, correction here may prevent his execution hereafter. Oh that I might be so prudent as first to try to draw them to virtue and godliness with the cords of love; but if that will not do, rather to prick them forward than to suffer them to flag behind, and to come short of heaven and happiness. When vipers are lashed they cast up their poison; Lord, be thou pleased so to strike in with every stroke, that the rod of correction may be a rod of instruction, and their weeping here may prevent their going to that place where is nothing but weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

I wish that my life may be without fault, that I may walk in the path of God's precepts for the sake of them that follow me. Should I run out of God's way, how likely are my children to tread in the same steps of wickedness! Nature would tempt them to imitate my wanderings, but grace alone can teach them to follow me in God's way; besides, how ill doth that cowardly commander encourage his soldiers to fight the Lord's battles, who shrinks back himself! In vain doth he command others to fall on, whilst he flieth off. Oh that I may be so pious in all my words and works, so gracious in all my dealings and duties, that religion may be written in so fair a character in my whole conversation, that strangers may be taken with it, and that my children may with comfort and credit write after my copy. Lord, whilst others, turning out of the highway of holiness, as an *ignis fatuus*, draw their children into those bogs and quagmires in which they sink and perish, let me, as the pillar of fire, go before mine to the land of promise, and shine as a true light to direct them in the way to everlasting life.

I wish that my care may chiefly run towards their inward man, yet that it may not rest there, but that I may in my place and to my power, be mindful of their outward man, esteeming and befriending the servant for the great heir's sake. Their bodies depend wholly upon their souls for their well-being to eternity;

but their souls depend much upon their bodies for their well-doing in time. Bad tools are a great hindrance to good work. I wish, therefore, that according to my ability I may allow my children all that breeding and learning which may in any degree be subservient to their souls, or make them in any measure more serviceable to church or state in which they live.

I wish that I may never be cruel to my own flesh, in denying them through my idleness or prodigality their necessary food. Brutes take much pains to make provision for their young. What a scraping doth the hen keep for her chickens! Some beasts will even famish themselves to feed their young; and shall I be worse than a beast? Oh let me never be in the number of them that are without natural affection; and since I profess myself to be a Christian, I may not be excelled by heathen, and deny the faith in neglecting to provide for my family.

I desire that I may not bring up my children in any degree to bring down my country; that none of mine may be plagues to the people amongst which God's providence shall call them, by living like drones upon others' hard labour, or feeding like ravenous beasts upon what they can get from others by fraud or force. Why should I leave them naked in the midst of those shot which the devil and the world will make against them? Oh give me to make conscience of thy command in breeding them to some lawful likely calling, wherein they may be serviceable to thy Majesty, their own families, and their country; yet in the choice of a master let me choose for my Maker—I mean such a one as will teach them not only how to do his work, but also how to work the work of him that sent them into the world. And oh, let thy blessing so accompany their diligence in their callings, that they may have what thy wisdom seeth fit to bear their charges till they come to their journey's end.

I wish that, when God's providence shall offer me a fit match, I may not through covetousness or peevishness be averse to their marriage. Let me not upon any pretence, through my negligence, tempt them to disobedience. Why should I refuse a mercy which my God calls me to receive, and hinder their good, which, by the bonds of nature and grace, I am engaged to further? yet let me never judge of the fitness of a person by the beauty of the outward, but of the inner man; not by her estate in the world, but by her estate in the covenant. Why should I sell the inestimable soul of my child for a little corruptible silver, or at least the comfort of his life, for that which signifieth no more in the other world than

a few brass counters? Lord, let none of mine be unequally yoked, (what communion hath light with darkness, or Christ with Belial?) but let my care be that my sons match with them that are married first to thy Son, and let me give my daughter to such Christians as are given to Christ, and shall hereafter be with him where he is, to behold his glory.

I desire that I may willingly whilst I live, if my God bless me with an estate, part with so much as prudence and piety may judge convenient for my children's portions. Why should I, like a dunghill, be good for nothing till carried forth? What I have is all my God's: I am not his treasurer to lay it up, but his steward to lay it out for his honour. Lord, keep riches out of my heart, how much soever they are in my hand, that I may cheerfully dispose of them according to thy call and command, especially to them whom nature as well as Scripture enjoins me to favour. And let thy grace so accompany what thou enablest me to give, that, as some glorious diamond to a gold ring, it may make their estate, though it be but little, of great value. Give me and mine neither poverty nor riches; feed us with food convenient for us, lest we be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest we be poor and steal, and take the name of our God in vain.

Finally, I wish that in this relation of a father I may in all these precepts carry myself as thy child, and as may be most for thy own credit. Lord, my sons are thy sons, and my daughters are thy daughters. Thine is the propriety in them; thou hast put them out to me only to nurse and bring them up for thee. Oh let thy power so prosper my labours that now in their minority they may be prepared for that noble work which thou designest them for in the other world; and when they shall come to age, that thou shalt send thy servants to fetch them home, they may be conveyed by holy angels to the Father's house, where I and the children which thou hast given me shall love, and live, and reign, and rejoice with thee for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER II.

How Christians may make religion their business, and exercise themselves to godliness in the relation of children.

Having despatched the duties of parents in relation to their children, I proceed to the duties of children in relation to their parents.

Thy duty is, reader, as well to make religion thy business in the relation of a son as of a father ; to shine brightly with holiness in an inferior as well as superior orb.

It is the glory and credit of children to drink in the dews of godliness in the morning of their lives. Oh, it is a lovely sight to behold those trees blossoming with the fruits of the Spirit in the spring of their age ; to behold one that is fourteen for the greenness of his age, to be forty in the graciousness of his carriage. ' Better is a poor and a wise child, than an old and foolish king,' Eccles. iv. 13. Observe, friend, what a garland of honour the Holy Ghost puts on the head of a holy child. He is put in the scales upon the greatest disadvantage with the noblest person (that is ungodly) in the world, and preferred before him. In the one scale is a child, in the other scale an old man ; in the one scale a poor child, in the other scale an old king. Childhood itself is contemptible, and obvious to scorn and derision. Youth, which is a degree above childhood, is liable to contempt. ' Let no man despise thy youth,' 1 Tim. iv. 12, intimating that much dirty filth is usually thrown on young faces, Isa. iii. 4 ; Eph. iv. 14. Reproach is so incident to youth, that the same word in the Hebrew signifies both, Job xxix. 4, and xxvii. 6. But poverty, added to infancy and childhood, makes it more obnoxious to reproach and contumely. The poor is hated of not only strangers, but all his neighbours. Poor men are objects of much disrespect and prejudice : where the hedge is low every one will trample over it, hence, to want and be abased are in Scripture conjoined, Phil. iv. 11. But poor children are much more slighted than poor men. A man hath some presence, and that forceth some respect ; but a child hath none. On the other side, age is honourable in itself : ' Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of old men.' The silver crown of hoary hairs calls for honour, as well as the golden crown on the sovereign's head, Lev. xix. 32. The hoary head strikes an awe into young hearts ; but age, joined with a crown, a kingdom, is more venerable. Yet this poor child that is wise—*i.e.*, that feareth God, and keepeth his commandments—doth infinitely outweigh, and is exceedingly more worth than, an old king that is wicked. Thou that art young and poor, if pious, remember this for thy comfort, that God himself hath said, Thou art a better person than the greatest worldly prince, and art worth more than he that is owner of two crowns.

Shall I, or rather God, advise thee, therefore, to ' remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth,' Eccles. xii. 1. Remembering

implieth all the mercy God bestows on thee, Jer. xxxi. 20, and all the duty which thou owest to God. Do not, as some write of the Syracusians,¹ that they abstain from church till they are sixty years old, and then, being weak and unable for wickedness, they mind godliness; but remember the Ancient of days in the time of thy youth. How gloriously do their names shine in the chronicle of Scripture who listed themselves early under Christ's banner. 'I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth,' saith Obadiah, 1 Kings xviii. 12. Timothy from a child knew the Holy Scriptures, 2 Tim. iii. 15. Josiah, in the eighth year of his age, began to seek the God of his fathers, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3. In the time of the law God commanded his people to offer up to him the young and lusty in sacrifice, typifying that he expecteth the youth and strength of thy days to his service. Sure I am, as the titmouse in the spring destroyeth the bees sitting on the willow-trees in the sun, so doth Satan devour many souls in their youth, whilst they are securely refreshing themselves with carnal comforts.

I shall offer thee three or four thoughts to quicken thee to the subsequent duties, that thy obedience to thy father on earth may proceed from conscience to thy Father in heaven, and that thou mayest exercise thyself to godliness in this relation.

First, Consider the profit of early piety. Some fruits, ripe early in the year, are worth treble the price of fruits latterly ripe. Godliness at any time brings in much gain, but he that first sets up this holy trade, and followeth it faithfully, is sure to be the richest at last. The earlier men set out in the morning, the further they will go, supposing that they do not loiter, in the day of their lives. No calling so certain as this holy, heavenly calling. If he that begins late gets thousands, he that begins early gets millions; and according to the degrees of grace, such shall the degrees of glory be. 'He that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; and he that soweth liberally, shall reap liberally.' One main end of grace is to prepare and capacitate the soul for glory. Now, as the bigger the bore is, and the wider the vessel is, the more water or wine it will hold; so the more holiness any one hath, he is capable of, and fitted for, the more happiness. I know that all in heaven shall be full and have enough, but who would have a pint pot full of diamonds, when he might have a quart or a pottle? Who would have the fulness of a spoon, when he might have a large vessel?

Methinks, reader, happiness should be so desirable that thou shouldst endeavour for the greatest degree. Who would have a

¹ Brerewood Enquir., 135.

thin crop and lean harvest by later sowing his seed? If thou art ambitious for a high degree of the exceeding and eternal weight of glory; if thou art covetous for a large portion of the treasure in heaven; if thou wouldst drink deeply of those rivers of pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore, then dedicate the morning of thy time to the Father of eternity.

Besides, thou wilt find much comfort, by a great degree of grace, in this world, which is no mean profit. Strong bodies have much comfort in their lives, which weak bodies lose, being often troubled with aches and pains. Strong Christians walk steadily and cheerfully with God, when weak ones walk as men dancing on a rope, in fear every step, being full of doubts, and much in the dark about their eternal conditions. As in a moonshiny morning, when the sun doth but peep into our parts of the world, we know not whether it be night or day; but when the sun ariseth higher, we see plainly that it is day. Those that have but a little light of holiness are full of doubts and fears; sometimes they hope it is the sunlight of grace and true godliness, and then again they fear it is but the moonlight of nature or morality; but when this light increaseth in any heart, and shineth brighter and brighter, then they see clearly it is day—it is a beam from the Sun of righteousness—and hence they walk so comfortably and cheerfully. Hereby also much sin and sorrow may be prevented. Some who have broken their bones in their youth have felt the pain of them all along, against change of weather, to their dying hour. How sadly have many saints felt and bewailed their youth sins! 'Remember not against me the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions, O Lord,' saith David, Ps. xxv. 7. 'I was ashamed and confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth,' saith Ephraim, Jer. xxxi. 19. Old wounds may cause fresh woe many years after. Oh, it will be a sad greeting when young sins and old bones meet together! 'Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to inherit the sins of my youth,' saith Job, chap. xiii. 26. The sweet wicked ways of my youth did breed such worms in my soul, saith holy Mr Baynes in his Letters, that my heavenly father continueth my bitter worm-seed. God calls men to a reckoning often for their old debts, and suffereth his judgments to arrest them when they think they are forgotten and forgiven. Tricks of youth prove troubles in old age. Good Augustine¹ doth much lament his coming in to Christ late; *Sero te cognovi lumen verum, sero te cognovi*—Alas! Lord, it was late before I knew thee to be the true light. When sin and

the soul have lived together many years as husband and wife, if ever they part, it will be as Phaltiel and Michal, with many tears.

There is a necessity of thy repentance or ruin. Now, as the longer a wound hath festered, the more torment the patient must be put to in searching it, and cutting out the corrupt flesh, if ever he be cured ; so the longer thou goest on in sin, the greater will thy sorrow be, if ever thou art saved.

Further, God will take it very kindly ; he loveth the first fruits, and they were ever pleasing to him. He remembereth the kindness of thy youth, Jer. ii. 2 ; not only his kindness to thee, but also thy kindness to him at that time. Young creatures are most pleasing to men's palates, old ones are tough and distasteful ; young Christians are exceeding acceptable to the blessed God. He takes the kindness of your youth very kindly. And as he remembereth youthful lusts to revenge them, so he remembereth youthful love and youthful loyalty to requite it. With what confidence may he who remembereth God in his youth cast himself upon, and expect that God should remember him in his old age. 'Cast me not off in the time of old age ; forsake me not when my strength faileth ; for thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth,' Ps. lxxi. 5, 9.

Besides, hereby thou wilt be a comfort to thy parents. How will it rejoice their hearts to see grace bud, when nature doth but blossom in thee ! Epaminondas was wont to say,¹ *Se longe maximum suarum laudum fructum capere, quod earum spectatores haberet parentes*—that he was glad of nothing more than that his parents were alive to rejoice in his noble actions. Cornelius was the staff of his father's age, a great credit and comfort, and therefore obtained the honourable name of *Scipio* among the Romans. 'A wise son maketh a glad father,' as Samuel did Elkanah ; 'but a foolish son,' as Esau to Rebecca, 'is an heaviness to his mother,' Prov. x. 1. Oh, who would not rather be as Obed to Naomi, a restorer of her life, and a nourisher of her old age, Ruth iv. 19. Nay, thy pious conversation may work, supposing thy parents are wicked, for their conversion ; and oh, what a comfort wouldst thou then be to thy parents in begetting them to a glorious, eternal life, who had begotten and conceived thee to a miserable, eternal death ! Then thou wouldst put the great question of the master of moral philosophy² out of question, whether a child may not confer more benefits on his father than he hath received from him ?

¹ Cornel. Nepos.

Senec. de Benef., lib. iii. cap. 35.

It is good, saith the Spirit of God, that a man should bear the yoke from his youth, Lam. iii. 27—not only the yoke of affliction and misery betimes; so yoke is sometimes taken, Jer. xxxi. 18, but also the yoke of subjection and piety, Mat. xi. 30. Aristotle observeth that those pigeons are best which are hatched in the spring; those which are hatched in autumn are not so good.¹ By early piety God is most delighted, (oh, how his heart is taken with a young disciple! his ears are ravished with the hosannahs of children;) Satan most grieved, sin and sorrow prevented, parents rejoiced, and thy own soul most advantaged. Oh, it is good that thou shouldst bear the yoke from thy youth.

2dly, Consider, delays are dangerous. The naturalist observeth that the locusts use to come in the beginning of the shooting of the latter growth, and devour *herbam serotinam*, the latter grown grass. Late repentance, like untimely fruits, doth seldom come to anything. To put off God till old age, is to go about to wind up the strings when they are breaking in pieces.

Three things will speak thy deferring to mind godliness to be very dangerous.

First, Life is uncertain. As young as thou art, thou mayest be old enough for a grave. How often doth death, like lightning, blast the green corn? Thou thinkest possibly of doing much when thou art old, but what if thou diest when thou art young? Doth not experience tell thee that few live to be old; nay, that though all die to be buried, yet few live to be married. Look into church-books and see if most that are written in the calendar of the dead were not such as had their breasts full of milk, and their bones full of marrow. Look into the churchyard, and see if there be not several graves of thy size and length. Look into thy own body, and see whether the foundation upon which thy building standeth be not rotten and liable every day to be blown down with a small wind of sickness. 'Childhood and youth are vanity,' not only in regard of their fickleness and inconstancy, but also in regard of their brittleness and frailty, Eccles. xi. 10. Childhood is but a blossom which is easily blown off; youth is but a bud which is soon nipped. What wise man would cast a work of such infinite weight and absolute necessity as thy conversion is, upon an *uncertainty*?

2. God will not always be found. I have read of one that, deferring repentance to his old age, and then going about it, he heard a voice, *Des illi furfurem cui dedisti farinam*, Give him the bran to whom thou hast given the flour. When men give the devil the

¹ Arist. de generat., lib. v. cap. 13.

cream of their lives, God often suffereth them to give him the whey. 'O seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him whilst he is near,' Isa. lv. 5. If thou refusest him now, he may refuse thee hereafter. Canst thou think that he will be put off with the bottom and dregs of thy time, when the devil hath had the spirits and quintessence? Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation; to-day if thou wilt hear his voice. If thou sayest it is too soon to-day, God may say it is too late to-morrow.

Reader, because the thief on the cross hath stole away many a precious soul, who have been encouraged from his pattern to procrastinate their conversion—lest thou shouldst defer upon that example, consider, first, There is but one such example in the whole Bible; and is not he mad, that because Paul's ship run against a rock, and all the passengers were saved, should thence be encouraged to split his vessel upon a rock? Secondly, It is a pattern without a promise, and to expect anything from God without a promise is presumption. Thirdly, Christ wrought that miracle to manifest his deity, even then when his human nature was lowest; now there will never be the like reason for such an action whilst the world continueth. Fourthly, We do not read that that thief ever heard of Christ before. When God calls men late to work in his vineyard, he will certainly accept of late service; but when he calls men early, they must then labour, or hereafter it may be too late.

3. Every day rendereth thee more indisposed. Thy youth is exceeding liable and prone to evil, and so exceeding averse and contrary to good, how averse wilt thou be then to God and godliness in thy old age? The longer sin and Satan possess the fort of thy heart, the more they will fortify and strengthen it against God and holiness.¹ The longer thou wanderest out of God's way, the more unwilling thou wilt be to come back; sin possibly now is as loathsome as physic, but when thou art used to it, thou mayest think it as pleasant as food, and then thou wilt not easily be dissuaded from it. Thy conscience, now tender, will quickly be seared; thy heart, now somewhat tractable, will quickly be hardened; temptations, now distasteful, will quickly be embraced; the faculties of thy soul will be distracted with earthly cares and cumbrances, the passions of the mind will be impetuous and impatient of any check or curb, thy understanding will be more darkened with hellish mists of ignorance, thy will more stubborn and refractory, and then how hard will it be to make thee holy! Can the

¹ *Cereus in vitiiis flecti, monitoribus asper.*—Horat. of a young man in *Arte Poeti*.

leopard change his spot, or the blackamore his skin? no more can he that is accustomed to do evil, learn to do well. When thou hast once spent the prime of thy days in Satan's drudgery, thy flesh will like thy master so well, that it will be hard to persuade thee to accept of liberty, Jer. xiii. 23.

Now what wise man that hath a great journey to go, of as much concernment to him as his life, and but one day allowed him for it, would set out wrong in the morning, a clean contrary way, supposing he may go it an hour before night, when the whole day is little enough for it?

Thirdly, Consider, God deserveth thy youth. When Alexander was dying, being asked who should enjoy his crown after his death, he answered, *Detur digniori*, Let it be given to him that is most worthy. Reader, wilt thou bestow thy youth, which is the crown of thine age, to him that is most worthy? Then it must be to God; his propriety in all thy time sheweth that he is most worthy of the first of thy time. All thy time is God's, not only manhood and old age, if thou dost arrive at them, but also thy youth; all the servant's time is his master's; all the child's time is his father's; all the creature's time is his Maker's; therefore, to abridge him of it, and deny it to him, is theft and robbery.

He is a great God, and therefore not to be put off with things of the least value. If Jacob send a present to the lord of Egypt, he will send the best of the land. Great princes must have the best presents. Surely, then, the blessed and glorious potentate should have that part of thy life which is of greatest price; I mean thy youth.

He is thy best friend, and therefore deserves the flower of thy age, the best of thy time. The life of man is cast into four distinct states, childhood, youth, manhood, and old age, which are frequently referred to the four seasons of the year; but youth is the spring, the glory, and beauty of it. Now the best of our lives must be given to the fountain of our lives; God thought of thee before thou hadst a being; he poured thee out like milk, and curdled thee like cheese; he clothed thee with skin and flesh, and fenced thee with bones and sinews; he granted thee life and favour, Job x. 10-12, and was tender of thee in the womb, when neither father nor mother could help thee. He brought thee into the world, and provided full breasts for thee against the time that thou wast born. Though when thou didst first behold the light he could have sent thee into utter darkness, yet he forbore thee. Though in thy infancy thou wast like a little boat in the ocean, liable to all sorts

of storms, and in danger every moment of death, yet his visitation hath preserved thy spirit. When thou wast a child he loved thee, and entered into covenant with thee; when thou wast in thy blood cast out naked and filthy, and no eye pitied thee, he had compassion on thee, and washed thee in the blood of his own Son, sent thee raiment out of his own wardrobe to cover thy nakedness, took the whole charge of thy nursing and nurture upon himself, provided his Spirit to be thy tutor and governor; hath spread a table in the gospel of all sorts of dainties and delicacies for thy constant diet, and hath prepared his own most glorious palace to be thy eternal inheritance when thou comest to age; and doth not this God deserve the best and flower of thy time? Doth the flesh or the world deserve the best of thy days, as the blessed God doth? Is it rational to make a feast for thine enemies, and to put off thy best friends with a few scraps which they leave? When he might justly have sent thee out of thy mother's womb into the prison of hell, he reprieved thee; and now when he calls thee presently to sue out thy pardon, that thy execution may be avoided, wilt thou deny him? A wise man will sell his best wares to them that will give the best price. Let thy conscience be judge whether God or the flesh will pay the best for the service of thy youth. Possibly God afforded thee a large portion of outward blessings; he hath cast thy lot, as Pharaoh did Jacob's, Gen. xxvii. 6, in the best of the land, and wilt thou deny him the best of thy life? Oh fear the Lord in thy youth, for he is a great king, a loving father, a bountiful master, and so worthy to be feared. What Saul did out of covetousness and disobedience, do thou out of conscience and dutifulness—spare the best to sacrifice to the Lord thy God, 1 Sam. xv. 15.

Fourthly, Consider, God will call thee to an account for thy youth. Tricks of youth will come to a public trial. In this world God punisheth many for their disobedience to parents. How many rebellious children hath God hanged on gibbets, to make others fearful of such sins? How fully did God recompense on the head of Abimelech all the evil which he did to his father! Judges ix. 24. Wicked children shorten many times their parents' lives. The heathen have thought an undutiful child an intolerable burden. Democritus, when he could not reclaim his drunken son, put out his own eyes, that he might not see his intemperance.¹ The mother of Themistocles was so vexed at his youthful vices, that she hanged herself for grief.² Sorrow hath killed many parents for the disso-

¹ Aul. Gel.² Valer. Max.

luteness of their sons ; therefore God cuts off many of those dissolute ones in the midst of their days. Witness Hophni and Phinehas, Absalom and Adonijah. They die in youth, and their life is among the unclean. Their soul perisheth among the boys, and their life among the buggers, according to Beza's reading, Job xxxvi. 14. In the Hebrew it is thus : Their soul dieth in youth.¹ The death of the body is nothing to the death of the soul ; the soul's death is damnation. God gathereth these grapes, even whilst they are green, for the wine-press of his eternal wrath.

If they live, God often punisheth them in the like. A scoffing Ham is punished with a profane Canaan. But, however, God will meet with them at death, and at the great day, for all their gracelessness and disobedience. The lamp by its light and brightness enticeth the fly to embrace it, but by that means she is either drowned in the oil or burned in the flame at last. So the world with its fair shows may entice thee to wantonness ; but, alas ! how many at last are drowned in its sweet waters ! The wise man doth seek to allay the young man's heat by this thought, ' Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth ; and let thine heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes : but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment,' Eccles. xi. 9. Here is a cooler for the high-flown youngster's courage. The words, after an ironical concession, express a most dreadful commination ; as if he had said, Make thy lust the rule of thy life ; swim down cheerfully in a full stream of carnal comforts ; deny thyself nothing that thine eye can desire, or thine heart delight in ; let thy senses give law to thy rational soul. But know that (notwithstanding all thy cursed courses to stop the mouth of conscience, and thy wicked designs to drown those innate principles of fear and restraint in ungodly pleasures) there is a terrible day approaching, the day of the perdition of ungodly men, wherein that God, whose fear thou now rejectest, whose favour thou now neglectest, who observeth and recordeth all thy ways of wickedness, will, whether thou wilt or no, bring thee to a strict reckoning for all thy follies, vanities, and excesses of thy youth. Believe it, then those morsels will be poison in thy belly, which now are so pleasant in thy mouth. Oh what confusion will cover thy face, and what indignation and grief will cut thy very heart, when before angels and men all the neglect of thy duty and thy secret deeds of darkness shall be brought to light ! But know thou that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment.

¹ *Moritur cum juvenia illa anima eorum.—Junius.*

How wilt thou answer when God shall reckon with thee for the breach of thy baptismal covenant? Hannibal's father made him take a solemn oath to maintain perpetual hostility with Rome.¹ Thy parents caused thee in baptism to take an oath of fealty and allegiance to Christ, and to maintain continual war with his enemies. Let conscience judge whether to wear Christ's livery and do Satan's drudgery, whether to expect Christ's pay and not to fight his battles, be not a derision of thy baptism at this day, and will not prove thy destruction at the last day. If young persons would but ride sometimes upon the pale horse of death, think seriously of their latter ends, they would not, as they do, ride post in the road to hell.

Reader, these motives are not jesting matters; therefore weigh them well, unless thou art resolved upon thine eternal ruin.

I proceed to the duties of children to parents.

The first duty is reverence. There is a distance between children and parents; therefore there must be reverence from children to parents. 'A son honoureth his father,' Mal. i. 6. The difference in age commands honour. The heathen saw this by the light of nature; therefore the Spartans punished such young men as did not reverence elder persons.² Hence that proverb derived its pedigree, *In sola Sparta expedit senescere*, It is only good to be old in Sparta. But where to difference in age is adjoined this relation, there the greater respect is required: 'Honour thy father and thy mother, which is the first commandment with promise,' Eph. vi. 2. Even lambs will kneel (which is the posture of the greatest reverence) to their dams.³

This reverence must be inward in heart. Children should have awful apprehensions of their parents as their superiors, as those to whom they are engaged, under God, both for their beings and breedings. 'Ye shall fear every man his mother and his father; I am the Lord,' Lev. xix. 3. Fear is due to parents, as they are God's deputies; hence some make the fifth command part of the first table. As the first four relate immediately to God, so this fifth, though to men, yet in their politic capacity, as they are gods. Our parents, say the heathen, are our household gods; and the Scripture calls children their father's glory. Surely, then, they should honour them, Hosea ix. 11. And the mother is by Moses first expressed, because she, by reason of her fondness and familiarity, is

¹ Liv., lib. xxxv.

² Plutarch.

³ Honoris autem quinque sunt partes. Reverentia; amor; obedientia, in omnibus rebus a Deo non prohibitis; gratitudo et patientia in eorum infirmitatibus et nævis ferendis.—*Polan. in Præcept v.*

apt to be most despised ; which Solomon hinteth in that prohibition, 'Despise not thy mother when she is old,' Prov. xxiii. 22. Esau had some respect for his father, so would forbear the execution of his intended murder till his death, but takes not the least thought for his mother, Gen. xxvii. 41. But where there is any fear of our Father in heaven, there will be a fear of mother as well as father upon earth. Many seem to honour their parents whilst they are young and rich, but when they grow old and diseased, then, especially if they be poor, they slight and condemn them.¹ They serve their parents as men do great candles, set them in high candlesticks whilst they are full of tallow, but when all their substance is wasted, tread them under their feet. Or as birds, when they can fly and find their meat, they regard the old ones no longer.

This reverence must be outward in life, and that both in language and carriage.

1. In language. Children must speak reverently to their parents, and respectfully of their parents. First, To them. Rachel, though her father was wicked, yet speaks reverently : 'Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise,' Gen. xxxi. 35. Secondly, Of them. It is said of parents that have their quiver full of such polished arrows, 'They shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemy in the gate,' Ps. cxxvii. 5. Their children will be tender of their father's credit, and not suffer others, much less will themselves, to cast dirt in their faces, but will, by pleading for them, wipe it off. Oh, how bad a bird is he that fouls his own nest ! Those that bespatter their parents' names, sin even against nature ; and, like Canaan, for discovering their father's nakedness, they are sure to meet with a curse. Some tell us that the Jews punished all children with death who did publicly backbite their parents.

Reader, if, like Reuben, thou defilest thy father's bed, thou wilt as certainly lose the blessing, Gen. xlix. 4, as he the birthright. There are children that exceed in this unnatural sin, and instead of commending, curse their parents. 'But every one that curseth his father or his mother shall surely be put to death,' Dent. xx. 9 ; Exod. xxi. 17. God hath severe judgment for such sinful practices.² The Hebrew doctors observe four sorts of death inflicted by the judges of Israel, whereof stoning, which was the death wherewith children that cursed their parents were to die, was the worst.

¹ Est hoc animi perversissimi judicium, quia lex naturæ jubet ut benefactoribus bona referatur gratia, inter quos primum obtinent locum parentes.—*Qualter*.

² Deus horrenda peccata horrendis pœnis immutabiliter vindicat.—*Parvus in Gen.* xlix. 4.

Ainsworth on Exod. xxi. 12. It is a discredit to parents, and uncomely for their children, to be saucy and clownish in their speeches. The younger son, as bad as he was, would give his father good words: 'I go, sir,' though he went not, Mat. xxi. 30. But how abominable is it to revile or rail at them!

2. In carriage. How respectfully did Joseph, though lord of Egypt, demean himself towards his poor father Jacob: 'He bowed himself with his face to the earth,' Gen. xlviii. 12. It is recorded of Sir Thomas Moore, that when he was Lord Chancellor, and so superior to his father, he would go up to the king's bench, before he sat in Chancery, and there ask his father, who was one of the judges there, blessing before all the people. How reverently did Solomon, though a king, carry himself to his mother: 'The king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand,' 1 Kings ii. 19. Where there is holiness in a child, he will honour his parents, and God hath ruined them that have refused to do it.

There are three things which are dear to a man—his soul, his life, and his good name. Undutiful children that invert the order of nature, condemn the authority of God in that of their parents, prove monsters of ingratitude to their greatest earthly benefactors, have been plagued and punished by God in the loss of all the three,¹ Prov. xx. 20, and xxx. 17.

It is observed of the cudweed that the younger leaves overtop the elder; so many cursed children think they are never high enough unless they trample upon their parents as their footstool. It is too usual with the sons of Belial to nod their heads, to wink with their eyes, and wriggle their mouths at their parents, and often in derision to call them the old man, and the old woman, and perhaps the old doating fool; but I would have such remember but this one verse of God's word, which hundreds of such children have experienced in this world: 'The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth his mother, the ravens of the valleys shall peck it out, and the young eagles shall eat it,' Prov. xxx. 17. The eye, which is the offending part, shall be certainly punished, but how? truly so, as they may read their sin in their suffering. They

¹ It is mentioned as an honour to one Colonel Edmunds, that when his countrymen came to him, when he was sitting amongst several persons of quality, and told him, My lord your father, and such knights and ladies, your kindred, are in health. He bade his friends there present not to believe one word the knave spake; for, saith he, my father is a poor baker, whom this knave would make a lord to curry favour with me.

disgrace and shame their parents, and God will bring them to disgraceful and shameful deaths. They shall be hanged in the air as spectacles of God's anger, and unworthy to live either in heaven or earth. Crows will quickly scent out such carcases, and peck out those eyes which were wont to leer and jeer and wink at their parents. At Milan there was a vicious youth, who, when reproved by his mother, used to make a wry mouth, and to point at her with his finger in scorn, but afterwards he was condemned for felony, and being on the gallows, was observed to make the same wry mouths which he did formerly to his mother.¹ The very heathen were so sensible of such sins that they would sow up such children in a sack, with a cat, a dog, a viper, and an ape, and so drown them; in this manner, Publicus Malleolus was put to death by the Romans.

Secondly, Obedience. The law of nature bindeth man to this. Though it is generally concluded, civil subjection of servants to masters came in by sin, yet natural subjection of sons to fathers did not.² The great philosopher tells us³ it is not fit to disobey *τῷ Θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ*, God nor our father. Cicero therefore being to read a lecture of modesty and temperance to his friend Clodia, raised up her father Appius Caius from the grave, and in his name delivered those precepts to her, as judging no counsel so prevalent with children as that which is given by parents.⁴ 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right,' Eph. vi. 1. In which sentence the apostle delivereth both the reason and the rule of children's obedience. The reason is, 'for this is right;' it is agreeable to righteousness that thou shouldst yield subjection to them, to whom thou hast so many and such great obligations. It is right by the law of God, of nature, and of nations. The rule is 'in the Lord,' that is, in lawful, not in sinful commands. Jonathan refused to obey his father, when he charged him to kill David,⁵ and Asa deposed his mother for her idolatries. 'He that hateth not father and mother for me, is not worthy of me,' Luke xxi. 14. All obedience to man must be regulated by a good conscience towards God. If a parent command his child to steal, or to profane the Lord's day by bodily labour, or the like, which God forbids, then he goeth beyond his bounds, and therefore is not to be obeyed. But in all lawful precepts children must not

¹ Theat. Hist.

² Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. xix.

³ Arist. Rhet.

⁴ Cic. ad Attic., lib. xii.

⁵ Irritantur pueri si conentur parentes impiis mandatis eos onerare. Impium fuit illud Saulis cum præcepit Jonathani ut Davidem amicum suum, et innoxium, captum ad se adduceret, ut morte mulcetur. — *Daven. in Col. iii. 21.*

dispute, but obey their parents. Jesus Christ himself gives a pattern of this: he was subject to his parents, Luke ii. 51. He was not only obedient to his Father by eternal generation, but even to his supposed father, and to his mother by a natural, or rather supernatural, conception. Though, as his human nature was hypostatically united to the divine, he might have pleaded its privilege, yet he was subject to his parents.

The Rechabites, for obeying a particular command of their father, to drink no wine, have God's commendation and benediction,¹ Jer. xxxv. 8, 14–20. God delights in a dutiful child, and blesseth him, but he hates the disobedient, and blasteth them. He hath not only whipped such with temporal punishments, but even executed them with spiritual plagues, than which no doom is more dreadful on this side the place of the damned.

It is observable, reader, that when the apostle counteth those sins and corruptions for which God delivered up the heathen to a reprobate sense and vile affections, this one is in the list, disobedience to parents, among that herd of monstrous lusts, Rom. i. 30. Voluntary disobedience to men is punished with judiciary disobedience to God. Joseph, when commanded by his father to go to his brethren, though he knew their ill-will to him, and how dangerous the journey might prove, yet durst not disobey, Gen. xxxvii. 13.

Job, it seems, was happy in a dutiful progeny: 'Oh that I were as in months past, when the Almighty was yet with me, and my children were about me,' Job xxix. 2, 5. The latter phrase, 'when my children were about me,' may speak these three particulars:—

1. Their presence with him. They were as olive branches round about his table. Parents are the centre, and children are a circumference drawn about them.

2. Their protection. They were about him to defend him to their power in any danger. As the Lord is said to be round about his people, because he is their safety and protection, Ps. cxxv. 2, so Job's children were about their father to do what lay in them for his shelter.

3. Their obedience to him. They were about him as so many servants, to know his pleasure and obey his precepts. As the father was singular in his patience, so were the children in their obedience. Few fathers in their old age have good ground for Job's wish. Some children will not afford their parents so much comfort as their company; others are about them as ravens are about a carcase—to

¹ Debeo affectum parenti, sed magis obsequium debeo salutis auctori.—*Amb. Orat. Funbr. de ob. Valent.*

devour it, not to defend it. When their parents have any flesh on their back, any wealth in their hands, then they fly to them; but when they have got all, and there is nothing left but bare bones, then they fly from them. Most are about them as weeds are about the corn—to choke and hinder, not to comfort and help their parents. Ah, how many of these branches grow up about their fathers as trees about our windows—to hinder their light and darken their lives. But, reader, if thou wouldst not have thy heavenly Father's curse, be not thy earthly father's cross. The first affirmative precept with a promise is this of obedience to parents, Eph. vi. 2, 3.

Especially in marriage be obedient to thy parents. Do not, like profane Esau, make an ungodly match to vex thy mother; believe it, thou wilt at last vex thyself most, Gen. xxviii. 8, 9. By Moses' law the daughter's vow was not valid unless the father did ratify it, Num. xxx. 6. Hagar took a wife for Ishmael, Gen. xxi. 21. Rebekah took a wife for Jacob. And, indeed, children that match without their parents' consent may expect to meet with God's curse; and such men have sometimes found that their wives, instead of being guides to rule their houses, have been griefs to cut their very hearts. Judah married a Canaanite without his father's consent, and he had two such wicked sons that God slew them with his own hands. Erasmus, speaking of Levinus, that got a wife, neglecting the counsel of his friends about it, and so proving unhappy, saith, *Res calide peracta est magis quam callide*,¹—wantonness and lust, not wit or wisdom, made up the match.

God giveth the parents as great a title to their children as to their goods; for he allowed that even children should be sold to pay their parents' debts. Children are their parents' greatest outward riches—far before lands, be they worth thousands—and therefore to dispose of themselves without their leave is the greatest outward robbery.² If men hang them that steal cattle, surely God hath severer punishments for them that steal children.

Tertullian, writing to his wife a discourse of marriage, closeth it with this: Oh, how shall I be able sufficiently to describe the happy state of that couple whom the church hath married, prayer confirmed, angels in heaven proclaimed, and parents on earth approved?

Besides, in thy calling have an eye to thy father's choice. Elkanah and Hannah were obeyed by Samuel when they devoted him to the

¹ Eras. Epist.

² Cause propinquæ matrimonii sunt tres; consensus parentum, consensus sponsi, et consensus sponsæ.—Zanch. in Eph. v.

ministry. The papists falsely tell us that children may—a boy at twelve, a maid at fourteen years old—enter into their monkish orders without their parents' consent; but how much do they forget themselves to make children at their own disposal so soon, when in their blasphemous hymns they will not allow Christ, though God-man, freedom from subjection to his mother, after he hath been many hundred years glorious in heaven, but still cry, Command thy Son!

3. Submission. Children must not only be subject to their father's precepts, but also submit to their punishments. 'We have had fathers of the flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence,' Heb. xii. 9.¹ It is unseemly for a child to be striving when his father is striking; but it is abominable for him to murmur at what he doth suffer. Parents' authority should make children endure it patiently. Some brutes will quietly bear blows from their keeper, and shall not children from their father?

Reader, if thy parents reprove or chastise thee, it is for thy profit; and wilt thou grumble at that which tendeth to thy good? Alas! they punish thee here, that thou mayest not perish for ever. Besides, they correct thee because God commands them; and canst thou be displeased at them because they dare not displease God? Canst thou be angry at them for being afraid of God's anger? Alas! who knoweth the power of his anger?

Isaac was obedient to Abraham when he bound him for a sacrifice. It is observable, saith Calvin, that Isaac, being twenty-five years old, was able to resist his old weak father, yet he yielded himself quietly both to be bound and to die.² It is probable, indeed, that Abraham had acquainted his son with God's command; and with that, saith Luther, he did rest contented. To receive correction doth distinguish a true son from a bastard, Heb. xii. 8. The heathen orator will inform the Christian that he should not only conceal, but also submit, even to injuries, if his father offer any to him.³ The Turks, though cruelly lashed, do yet, when they are well whipped, kiss his hand that commanded it, and pay the officer for his pains. The heathen saw it so equal, that going too far on a good ground, they did allow the parents' power of life and death over their children.

¹ Savitia patris in filium grave peccatum est; sed ira filii in patrem grave monstrum est.

² Calv. in Gen. xxii.

³ Filios non modo reticere parentum injurias, sed animo æquo etiam ferre oportere.
—*In Oratione pro Cluentio.*

It is reported of Ælian, that being some considerable time absent from his father, when he returned home his father asked him what he had learned. Sir, saith he, you shall know ere long.¹ A little after, his father corrected him for some fault, and he took it patiently, saying, Sir, you see I have learned somewhat; for I have learned to bear with your anger, and quietly to suffer what you please to inflict.

Some young persons scorn to be scourged; they will not, say they, be made such fools as to bear blows; but such must know that not their parents' heavy hands, but their own proud hearts, make them fools. 'Correction gives instruction and wisdom,' Prov. xiii. 1, 18. The way to be above the rod is for thee to be under rule; but thy main work, young man, must be to hear the voice of the rod, and to be the better for beating, so to let the rod in, that folly may go out. Be not like a post, nothing stirred by many strokes; much less like some beasts, to kick and be the more unruly for the spur, but as the holy child Jesus, who though he never sinned, yet 'learned obedience by the things which he suffered,' Heb. v. 8.

4. Affection. Children are bound to love their parents, and their obedience must grow upon this root. He is not a son, but a slave, that serveth his father merely out of fear; filial and servile obedience are opposite. As parents are tender of their children, so children ought to be tender of their parents. The dumb son of Cræsus, when one of the soldiers of Cyrus ran after his father to kill him, with the violence of natural affection, cried out suddenly, O man, kill not Cræsus! and continued speaking all his lifetime after.² Thy parents should be dearer to thee than thy children; what love shouldst thou return to them who were the instruments of thy life? The greatest obligations call for the greatest affection. Though Olympia, the mother of Alexander, was very morose and severe to him in his childhood, yet he was very mild and loving to her when he came to age, insomuch that when Antipater accused her to him, he would by no means hear or heed him.³ God takes great notice of children's love and duty to their parents; therefore, say some, he lengthens their lives, because by their affectionate, obsequious carriage they lengthen their parents' lives. Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and others in Scripture, eminent for their love and loyalty to their parents, had their days prolonged in the land of the living. On the other side, God hath made many unnatural children monuments of his indignation; he hath punished them dreadfully to

¹ Cæd. Rhod. lect. Var., lib. xxii. cap. 22.² Pez. Mel. Hist.³ Plutarch.

fright others from such practices. Absalom's miserable end may make all children afraid of such abominable ways. Nero, who killed his mother Agrippina; Turpeia, who betrayed her father to Tatiüs king of the Sabines; Henry the Fifth, emperor of Germany, who dispossessed his father of his empire, did all meet with such vengeance from heaven, that none would, unless mad, ever eat at their tables to pay their reckoning.

The cuckoo is worthily used by way of reproach, and may well be hooted at, for he devoureth his own dam; Orestes killed his mother Clytemnestra; Ninus killed his mother Semiramis; Alcmeon also killed his mother; but such beasts are counted by very heathens rather monsters than men.

5. Gratitude. It is thy duty to requite their care and cost upon thee; thy body, and time, and estate, should not be thought too much for them; the law of God, as well as the law of man, doth command children to relieve their necessitous parents to their power.¹ 'But if any widow have children or nephews, let them first learn to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents, for this is good and acceptable before God,' 1 Tim. v. 4. It is observable, children's kindness to their parents is termed *εὐσέβεια*, piety or godliness, because it is a part thereof, and very acceptable to God. Æneas was surnamed *Pius* for his tenderness to his father, whom he bore on his back out of the flames of Troy. Besides, it is called a requiting them, intimating that it is not an act of grace, but of justice. It is but righteous that they should return, according to their abilities, for what they have received from their parents. Dr Taylor said to his son, when himself was going to suffer, When thy mother is waxen old, forsake her not, but provide for her to thy power, and see that she lack nothing; so will God bless thee, and give thee long life and prosperity.² Joseph maintained his father Jacob and his whole household, Gen. xlvii. 13. The son of Joseph, the blessed Jesus, when he was dying, in the midst of all his tortures and torments, when he was assaulted both from heaven, earth, and hell, could even then find time to commend his beloved mother to the beloved disciple. Valerius Maximus relates a story of a man sentenced to die with famine, and how his daughter came daily and gave him suck, upon which act of her piety, saith another author, his sentence was reversed.³

¹ Deo et parentibus non possumus reddere æqualia.—*Cajetan*.

² Foxe, Acts and Monuments.

³ Liberi sunt quasi manus et brachia quibus parentum senectutem defendi; sunt pedes et crura quibus sustentari oportet.—*Davenant in Col. iii.*

The storks and mice will rise up in judgment against many children, for such is their natural affection to their dams that they nourish them when they are old. The stork, saith Pliny, doth it with such piety, that he is called by the Latins *pietati-cultrix*, and *ciconia*, of the Hebrew *sachan*, to be profitable, because he is so profitable to his parents. Some derive the name stork from the Greek *στοργή*, love, because he hath such affection for his dam.¹ Nay, hence we read of some laws called *νόμοι πελαργικοί*, which receive their denomination from the stork, providing that children should nourish and take care of their parents in their distress.² Nay, the requital of children to their parents in the Greek is called *ἀντιπελαργώσεις*, which is a metaphor drawn from the stork's kindness to her old ones, which doth not only feed them, but carrieth them on her shoulders into the meadows, and brings them back.³

Our Saviour sharply reproveth the Pharisees for allowing children, under pretence of piety, to suffer their parents to perish, Mat. xv. 4. Surely they are cursed children that can be thus cruel to their parents; even young lions, as ravenous as they are, will spare it out of their own bellies to feed their old ones;⁴ and yet many children are more savage than lions, and are so far from being men and women that they are worse than beasts.

The mother wasps and hornets, after they have wrought awhile, and procreated their kind, give over labouring, and are maintained by the industry and piety of their offspring;⁵ yet, alas! rational creatures make their parents' lives so bitter by their ingratitude, that they cause them to cry out, with Jonah, 'It is better for me to die than to live,' and with Rebekah, 'I am weary of my life.'

Luther tells a story of a good father in Germany,⁶ (but by the way I would advise all parents to be more wise than whilst they live to entrust their children with all their wealth; they that hang on the cradle have most commonly but short commons.) This man, saith he, gave away all he had to his children, upon condition that he should have his diet with them when he came. One day he came to one of his sons, then at dinner with a goose, which as soon as he heard his father was coming he set by; and going to take it when his father was gone, it was turned into a toad, and,

¹ *Πελαργικός νόμος*. Lex qua liberi parentes alere jubentur.

² Plut. de Soler. Animal.

³ 1 Sam. xxii. 3. *ἀντιπελαργώσεις* beneficii accepti remuneratio, a *πελαργός* Ciconia. Metaphora a Ciconiis quæ parentes senio jam consecutos nutrire, et fessos tergo recipere dicuntur.—*Aristot.*

⁴ *Ælian*, lib. ii. cap. 22.

⁵ Theat. of Polit. Flying Insects, p. 375.

⁶ Loc. Com., 61. De Amore erga Parentes.

leaping upon his face, could not be removed by all his striving till it had stifled him. Our own countrymen tell us of a yeoman in Leicestershire, that made over his house and land to his son upon marriage, conditionally that his son should keep him during life; but afterwards, there falling out some difference between them, the son bade his father get him out of his house, calling him bursten-belly slave, (indeed the old man had a rupture.) The next day, as the young man was walking in his grounds, Mr Goodman, the minister of the parish, riding by, asked him how he did? He answered, very well; but before the minister was out of sight, the young man's bowels gushed out, which he carrying in his hands went home, sent for the minister, acknowledged God's justice on him for his undutifulness to his father, made his will, gave his father a considerable legacy to make him amends, and died that night.

I shall conclude this head with the wise heathen's speech to his son, upon his anger at his peevish mother:—*Socrates sentiens suum filium Lamprocleum, qui major natu fuit, matri sue iratum; Dic mihi, O fili (ait) cognovistine unquam homines quosdam qui appellantur ingrati? Ita prorsus inquit. Considerasti igitur quos homines, et cum quid agunt, hoc nomine appellantur? Consideravi, ait, illos qui beneficiis acceptis, non reddunt gratias cum possunt, ingratos appellari. Hos vero ingratos, cum injuriosis enumerandos esse putas? Vehementer ait consideravi, et mihi videtur, a quocunque quispiam beneficiis affectus, sive amico sive inimico, non conatur reddere gratias, injustus esse. Si igitur hac tibi vera videntur, ingratitudo manifesta injuria profecto est. Concessit. Quanto ergo majoribus quisque beneficiis acceptis non reddit gratias, tanto injustior est. Et hoc etiam concessit. Quos igitur aut a quibus (inquit) putas majoribus beneficiis affici quam liberos a parentibus, quibus primo ut sint et vivant, deinde ut bona videant, illorumque participes fiant, quæcunque dii hominibus præbent, parentes causa fuerunt? . . . Mulier vero concipiens tolerat hoc onus cum gravamine et periculis vitæ, alimento suo nutriens puerum, magno multoque labore usque ad partum proveniens;¹ Postea etiam nutrit, atque pro eo curam gerit, a quo tamen nunquam antea beneficii quicquam acceperat, quique non modo ignorat qui ei benefacit, sed neque declarare potest, quibus indigeat. Mater vero per conjecturam quæ conducunt, quæque grata sunt, ei conatur adimplere; multoque tempore nutrit, die nocteque laboribus affecta, ignorans quam istorum omnium mercedem habebit. Et non solum sufficit nutrire, sed cum videntur filii posse discere quicquam, quæ-*

¹ Xenophon de dietis et factis, Socratis, lib. ii.

cunque ipsimet parentes ad vitam utilia habent, docent. . . . Ad hæc adoloscensculus ait, Etsi hæc omnia, ceteraque his multo fecerit plura, nullus tamen posset profecto duritiem matris mee sufferre. Tum Socrates, Utrum, ait, feræ immanitatem putas difficiliorem sufferendam esse, an matris? Ego quidem, inquit, matris puto quæ talis sit. Num igitur, unquam momordit aut calcibus te percussit quem ad modum multi a feris affecti sunt? Non ista, sed ea dicit, inquit, mehercle quæ nullus unquam audire velit. Tu autem quot, Socrates ait, ei molestias tuo dicto a prima ætate die nocteque exhibuisti? . . . Tu itaque fili, si compos es mentis, deos ut tibi ignoscant exorabis, si quid matrem neglexisti, ne ingratum te esse existiment nec benefacere velint; ab hominibus quoque cavebis, ne sentientes quod contemnas parentes, pro nihilo te habeant, et omnibus amicis te privaveris. Si enim te arbitrabuntur erga parentes ingratum esse, nullus putabit te pro susceptis beneficiis fore in referenda gratia memorem. So far Xenophon concerning Socrates and his son, which I have been the larger in reciting, because thou mayest hereby understand, reader, how loathsome and abominable children's ungratefulness and undutifulness to parents, though they were peevish, was counted by the very heathen.

A good wish to the duties of a son or daughter in relation to their father and mother.

The relation of a child, speaking my great and manifold obligations to my parents, under God, for my conception, birth, and breeding, besides those many cares and fears which are incident for my sake to their tender yearning bowels; for which I am engaged by the law of God, of nature, and of nations, to be grateful and dutiful; I wish in general that I may never be so far possessed of the devil, like him in the Gospel whom no cords could hold, as to break all these bonds in sunder, but may behave myself towards my parents on earth as an obedient child of my Father in heaven. Lord, whilst others pretend much religion abroad, but manifest little piety at home, make me so conscientious of all thy commands that I may not be unmindful of my debts to others, but be sure to pay my duty, my specialties, to them.

I wish that the first of my time may be devoted to my dearest Redeemer, the Father of eternity, that the fear of my God may take such early possession of my soul that when Satan, the world,

and youthful lusts shall hereafter sue for my service, they may be wholly prevented in their projects, and disappointed of my heart, that presence-chamber being taken up beforehand. Why should I spend my young days in laying by a store of guilt, and treasuring up a heap of wrath for me to live upon in my old age? Lord, let me so emulate those worthies of thine, whose names sparkle in Scripture as the morning star in the firmament, for their early shining with the light of holiness, that I may be ambitious to have my name recorded in heaven's court-rolls for a young disciple, and remembering my Creator in the days of my youth.

I wish that the loadstone of true self-love may draw me to the Lord, and that I may be so caught with that holy bait as betimes to become a true Christian. My God will be much delighted by my early devotion. If young beasts were so pleasing to him under the law, surely young saints will be more acceptable to him under the gospel. Oh, how kindly will he take the kindness of my youth! My parents will be rejoiced to see me blossom in the spring of my age with the fruits of righteousness. They have no greater joy than to see their children walking in the truth. Why should not I, who have been the occasion of bitter pangs and sharp throes to my mother, and the cause of many cares and much cost to my father, do my utmost for both their comforts? What a sword shall I prove to pierce their souls, if, when they call me Cain, a possession, and boast that they have gotten a man from the Lord, I shall testify by my ways, as he did, that I am of the wicked one! And oh, how will their hearts revive to hear that their Joseph, whom they thought to be dead, is alive to God! Surely they will say, It is enough; and whilst they continue here, live the more contentedly, and when they depart hence, die the more cheerfully. But my early piety will bring to myself the greatest profit. How may I prevent that dishonour to my Saviour, those sins and sorrows to my own soul, which youthful lusts procure? The spiritual diseases which I contract through intemperance and inordinate affections in my youth will lie heavy at my heart, and pain me to purpose in my old age. What a proficient may I be in grace, how far may I go before others in godliness, if I set out betimes in my journey to heaven, whilst others who set out late are frightened with fears lest they should never reach that celestial palace! I may go merrily on, making God's statutes my songs in this house of my pilgrimage. Lord, let these motives be so fastened in my mind that I may give myself to thee this very moment, that thou mayest be my first love; and in this flower of my age, before I am

ravished by Satan, or defiled with any known sin, I may be thine Hephzi-bah and Beulah, thy delight, and married to thee.

I desire that the danger of delay may make me more speedy in the practice of my duty. The work of conversion must be done, or I am undone for ever. Without the second birth, my God himself hath told me that I shall not escape the second death. My life is but a vapour, which may suddenly vanish: I am not master of another hour. Why may not I, as well as others, be hurried away in haste, and in the prime of my days, before I am aware, to enter into the other world? The longer I defer, the less I am disposed; the longer the house of my heart is out of repairs, the more trouble and pains it will cost, if ever it be done. Besides, my God will not always wait upon such a silly worm. If I reject him to-day, it is just with him to refuse me to-morrow. O my soul, be not so foolish as to leave a work of such indispensable necessity to such uncertainties! Lord, give me such wisdom to consider of my latter end, that I may never hang such heavy weights, as my inestimable soul and salvation, upon such weak and uncertain wires, but may be both speedy and serious about my eternal weal.

I wish I may be so rational as to give my chiefest time and strength to him that can claim it by the strongest reasons. The Ancient of days hath the only interest in my youth. It was his mere mercy that I was not sent out of the womb into endless misery. The first tears I shed might have been in that place where there is nothing but weeping. The first swaddling band I was wrapped with might have been the chains of everlasting darkness. I was a rebel against his sacred majesty, and had traitors' blood running in my veins before I was born. As soon as I breathed in the world, I infected the air, and defiled the earth: never toad was so full of poison as my nature of pollution, yet my God spared me when he might have sunk me in the pit of perdition. Nay, he hath not only borne with me, and forborne me, but also laden me with benefits. He hath defended me from many an unknown danger. He hath delivered me out of many a distress. All his paths towards me have dropped fatness. I never was one moment out of his mind. He entered into covenant with me before ever I knew what a covenant was. My subsistence is continually by him; my dependence is every minute upon him. I cannot stir a foot, or lift a hand, or speak a word, or think a thought without him. All my happiness for this and the other world consisteth wholly in him. My life or death hangs upon his favour or fury. If I seek him early, I shall find him; but if I forsake him, I am

lost for ever. Oh, of what concernment is it to me, to please him in dedicating the prime of my days to him, which will be most pleasing ! Lord, let thy great love constrain me to a gracious life, and let thine early beneficence lead to speedy and hearty repentance.

I wish that the thought of my reckoning at the last day may be so prevalent with me as to prevent my rioting at this day. My sins in youth, though they easily slip out of my memory, are registered by God. Not a thought of my heart, not a word of my tongue, not a work of my hand, but all are written in his book, and sealed up in his bag ; and oh, how shall I dare to appear in his presence before millions of saints and holy angels, if I should now give myself to profaneness ? With what face shall a black sinner stand before his white throne ? How ugly will my deeds of darkness look in his eye, who is light, and in whom there is no darkness at all ? The judge is the holy Jesus ; his attendants are holy angels, the justices on the bench are holy persons, the law by which I must be judged for my everlasting life and death is the holy commandment given to me ; and oh, how can I stand at the bar without infinite shame, grief, and horror in my unholiness ! Why should not the strictness of my examination provoke me to holiness in all manner of conversation ? Lord, let me so constantly, whithersoever I go, and whatsoever I do, hear the sound of the last trump in mine ears, ‘ Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment,’ that I may so think, so speak, and so act, as one that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

I wish that I may have awful apprehensions of them that are my elders, especially in this relation. If nature taught heathen to set a high price upon their parents, what honour should I give mine, who am taught this lesson, both by nature and the clear light of Scripture ? My body from them, under God, had its being, and therefore ought to be employed, in subordination to God, in their service. How should that tongue speak for them, which but for them had never spoke ! How should that knee bow to them, which but for them had never been ! Lord, let my tongue sooner rot than revile them ; let my hands rather fall off than fall upon them ; yea, it were better that my whole body should be buried alive, than it should rise up, like Absalom, to take away his life who gave me mine. It is sinful either in name or body to injure a stranger, but how sordid is it then to wrong my father or mother ! I am bound to cover another's infirmity with the mantle of charity, and shall I publish their weaknesses to the world ? If I take Ham's

course, I must expect his curse. Oh let me never, like Simeon and Levi, give my parents cause to speak, as Jacob, 'Thou hast made me to stink (by revealing my infirmities) among the inhabitants of the land.' Lord, let the severity of thy threatening against such sinners make me fearful of such sins; and let thy dread so fall down upon my soul, that I may both in my carriage and language reverence them for thy sake.

I wish that obedience may be the garment by which I may be known to be my father's child, as David's daughters were known by their parti-coloured clothes; that whilst others by ungodliness cut their parents' hearts with grief, and bring them with sorrow to the grave, I may, by my dutifulness in all commands which are lawful, lengthen out my own and their lives. My God hath told me of Eli's sons, that 'they hearkened not to the voice of their father, because the Lord would destroy them,' 1 Sam. ii. 25. To be a child of disobedience is a ready way for me to be marked for vengeance. If I be a son of rebellion, it is a sad sign that I am a son of perdition. Oh let me be fearful of disobeying my parents, lest I provoke my God to ruin me. Yet I wish that my dutifulness to the father of my flesh may be always regulated by my duty to the Father of spirits, that I may be sure to save God's stake before I pay my obedience to my parents. My parents are to be obeyed in the Lord, not against the Lord. It is treason to obey my immediate superior against my sovereign. Lord, let me never pretend conscience for the neglect of their righteous commands; that they may never have cause to complain of me, as thou didst once of the Jews, 'I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me;' yet if I be ever enjoined what is a sin, let me obey God rather than man. Let me in this sense call no man father on earth, for doubtless thou art only to be universally obeyed, who art my Father in heaven.

I wish that I may with patience submit both to the rods and rebukes of my parents, as believing that they are, though not pleasant, yet profitable for me. My God hath commanded them not to bear with me in sin; their allowance of me in my disobedience would be but an ill symptom of their love to my soul. How certainly should I travel to hell, if permitted to walk in the ways of my own heart! Surely, when I am in a wicked course they are my best friends that stop and hinder me from proceeding farther; their sharpest words are curing, and their severest strokes are healing. Oh let me be so sensible of my own good, as without opposition to take down this bitter physic, which, notwithstanding

its distastefulness to my body, is yet so wholesome for my precious soul. And, Lord, let thy grace be so mingled with all these means of thine appointment, that my suffering here may prevent my eternal sufferings hereafter.

I wish that affection to their persons may sweeten my subjection to their precepts; that as Jacob's seven years' hard service for Rachel seemed to him but a few days for the love he had to her, so that love may be the soft lining which may make the yoke of my active and passive obedience easy and acceptable. The wall heated by the beams of the sun reflecteth some warmth back again. Grace will teach me to love mine enemies, but it is against nature not to love a friend. Beasts have much affection for their keepers, but more for the dams and sires. How fervent and fiery is my parents' love to me! how solicitous to express itself in acts of favour! How many a time have their hearts trembled for me, and their bowels yearned towards me! Oh that I might never be so far from humanity as to live below a beast, nay, to degenerate into a devil, by rendering hatred for love, and evil for good! Lord, let my obligations to my parents make such an impression on my spirit, that I may answer their ocean of love to me with such pure streams as may refresh and rejoice their hearts.

I wish that my love to my parents may not be like Rachel, beautiful and barren, but like the tree planted by the rivers of water, may bring forth fruit in due season; I mean, that it may shew itself to be sincere, by my devoting both estate and body, according to Scripture, to their service. My reason tells me what I received from them ought, under God, to be improved for them. Oh that this fire may upon all occasions so flame out as to cheer and comfort their chill and cold aged bodies with its light and heat! How tender was David of his aged parents! 1 Sam. xxii. 3. How kind was Joseph to all his kindred! The brutish eagles, though they are greedy enough of their prey, will yet spare it from themselves to feed their parents. Boughs bend towards their root. The ears of corn bow to the earth, their parent. And shall I suffer them to famish, who so many years gave me all my food, and, like the cruel kite, starve them who bred and fed me? Lord, help me to shew piety at home, by requiting my parents; and rather let my hands wear out with work, than that they through my negligence should want.

In a word, I wish that I may so imitate their gracious patterns, so submit to their wholesome rebukes, so obey their pious precepts, yield them such hearty reverence, and in all things demean myself

so dutifully, that God may be my father, and own me for his son or daughter; that my God may spare me as a man spareth his son that serveth him; that I may have a name within the house of my God better than of sons and daughters; and that when all these relations (which are calculated only for the meridian of this imperfect state) shall cease, my days may be long in the land of promise which the Lord my God hath given me for possession, and I may enjoy the glorious liberty and endless blessed life of the sons of God amongst the congregation of the first-born. Amen.

CHAPTER III.

How Christians may exercise themselves to godliness in the relation of husbands and wives; and, first, Of the duties which concern them both in common. And a good wish from a pious pair.

Marriage is the lawful conjunction of one man and one woman for the term of their natural lives, for the generation of children, the avoiding of sin, or the comfort of mutual society.¹

First, The author of it, or efficient, is God. He published the first banns, and married the first couple that ever were in the world. Their maker was their minister to join them together, Gen. ii. 22.

Secondly, The form of it is the conjunction or mutual covenant² (not *carnalis copulatio*, as papists hold) between one man and one woman, Prov. ii. 18. That which is compatible to whoredom cannot be the specifical form of marriage, Mat. xix. 5.

The duration of it is for term of life; death only untieth the knot, Rom. vii. 1-3.

Thirdly, The ends of it are three:

1. The procreation of children, Gen. i. 26.

2. The benefit of a good companion, Gen. ii. 18.³

3. And since the fall a third hath stepped in—viz., the avoiding of fornication, 1 Cor. vii. 2. Some add a fourth, that it might be a resemblance of the mystical union between Christ and his church.

¹ *Conjugium est legitima unius maris et unius feminæ conjunctio ad sobolem procreandam, vel fornicationem vitandam, vel mutuam adjumentum.*—*Polan. Syntag.*, lib. x. cap. 53.

² *Sponsalia a spondendo*, because each did promise other to live as man and wife.—*Antiq. Rom.*

³ *Aliter Christi mors non esset fructuosa.*—*Carthus. in Gen.* ii. 18.

Fourthly, The material cause, one man and one woman.

Some observe that in the creation of the world God was pleased to do it by pairs—a heaven and earth, a sun and moon, a sea and land, a night and day, a man and a woman. Marriage must be between one man and one woman, Mat. xix. 5. Bigamy and polygamy are both unlawful; but death gives a lawful bill of divorce.¹ Hence the apostle saith, ‘If her husband be dead, she is free for another.’ The Greek churches, because that the Scripture saith of a pastor that he must be *μίας γυναίκος ἀνὴρ*, the husband of one wife, deny their ministers all second marriages, do much mistake the place, 1 Tim. iii. 2.

Reader, if God hath called thee to this relation, walk worthy of it, behave thyself in it, as one married to Christ. God did not institute marriage to be a hindrance, but to be a help to religion. Good company should make us walk the more cheerfully in the way of God's commandments. It is Chrysostom's observation on Gen. v. 22,² that in the same verse the Spirit of God said of Enoch, ‘That he walked with God, and begat sons and daughters,’ to teach us that matrimony and sanctity are not inconsistent. Enoch walked with God, even then when he walked with a wife. The Jewish Rabbis observe that in the names of *Ish* and *Ishah* is included *Jah*, the name of God, and that if you take out *iod* and *he*, of which that name consisteth, there remaineth nothing but *Esch*, *esch*, Fire, fire.³ It is certain that this relation, without God's fear, is little else but fire; *conjugium* is *conjurgium*. Marriage is the sowing of dissension oftentimes, being separated from religion. The houses of such persons are, as one wittily observeth, but as fencing schools, wherein the two sexes seem to have met together for nothing but to play the prizes and to try masteries. The fire of passion reigneth in the man, and the fire of pride rageth in the woman; and the fire of contention between both. It is the want of godliness in this relation which maketh many married persons look on their matrimonial covenant just as a dog doth on his chain, and a prisoner on his fetters, snarling and striving to break it in sunder, and set themselves at liberty.

The heathen Romans brought the wife home to her husband's

¹ Conjugium a conjungendo, i.e., a jugo communi quo vir et uxor simul in unam carnem, et veluti in unum hominem jungantur. Digamia est quum quis uxori legitimæ adhuc viventi aliam illi repudiatae (extra causam in verbo Dei comprehensam) superinduxerit. Polygamia est quum quis eodem tempore plures uxores habet. — *Polanus*.

² Ἀκουέτωσαν οἱ ἄνδρες καὶ γυναῖκες, καὶ μὴ νομιζέτωσαν τον γάμον κώλυμα εἶναι πρὸς τὴν εὐχαρίστησιν εἰς τον Θεόν, &c.—*Chrysost. Gen.*, Hom. 21.

³ Buxtorfius.

house on the marriage night with five torches, signifying the need which married persons have of five gods or goddesses, Jupiter, Juno, Venus, Suadela, and Diana. The Jews at their marriages were not unmindful of God; but from their constant custom of their wedding devotion, their very wedding house was called *Beth hillula*, the house of praise. What is the meaning of the apostle's expression concerning marrying in the Lord, if godliness were not to be exercised in this estate? 1 Cor. vii. 29, 'Only in the Lord,' that is, say some, in the church among God's kindred. They who marry out of that line marry out of the Lord; or in the Lord, that is, in his fear and faith. They who marry without godliness marry without God. The Spanish proverb hath a truth in it, that there is more required to marriage than two pair of legs in one pair of sheets.

First, I shall give thee some motives to quicken thee to mind religion in this relation.

Secondly, I shall speak both to the common and special duties which concern this condition.

1. For arguments to conscientiousness in this state,

(1.) Consider the dignity of marriage. Marriage is honourable, and therefore thy carriage in it must be answerable. An honourable relation calls for a holy conversation. 'Marriage is honourable in all,' Heb. xiii. 4; not only *νομίμος*, but *τιμιος*, not only lawful and unblameable, but also noble and honourable. Some among the papists condemn it as an impure, and so ignoble state; though others of them, in the other extreme, say it is a sacrament, nay, go farther, and tell us it confers grace;¹ but that marriage is not dishonest nor dishonourable, will appear if we consider,

[1.] This relation is of divine institution. God did institute marriage, and himself immediately made the first match. We say, all marriages are made in heaven; it is true in this, as well as other respects, that marriage itself came down from heaven. God hath as well appointed that persons should meet in this estate, as fore-appointed what persons should meet. As God married the human nature to the divine, so he marrieth human persons to each other. Now, how abominable is it to call that impure which God hath cleansed; or to make the holy God the author of a sinful ordinance, which they do that hold marriage to be unholy? ²

¹ Cum matrimonium per sensibilia signa sanctitatis, remedium contra peccatum homini exhibeat, sacramentum est.—*Aquin.*, Sup. 3, Q. 2, Art. 1.

² Matrimonium quod in fide Christi contrahitur, habet quod gratiam conferat ad ea operanda quæ in matrimonio requiruntur.—*Idem*, Sup. 3, Quest. 42, Art. 3.

[2.] This relation was instituted in man's estate of innocency. The season speaketh much to the dignity of the action. Man struck a covenant with a woman before he broke his covenant with his God. He was married to a wife before he was marred by the wicked one. Surely those popish doctors who term it filthiness and pollution, do not consider that it was ordained before man's fall and corruption. The Saturnalian heretics held that marriage was of the devil; Jerome, whom Pope Syricius followed, in his passionate love of virginity, did make a blot in his exposition of Rom. viii. 8. They that are in the flesh, *i.e.*, *qui inserviunt officio conjugali*, that is, saith he, those that are married, cannot please God, when man pleased God by taking a wife, before ever he displeased God by hearkening to his wife. God would never have said, 'It is not good for man to be alone,' if it had been evil for him to have had such a companion.

But, reader, this dignity to which thou art advanced, requireth suitable duty. They that are more honoured than others, should be more holy than others. If thy relation be a resemblance of that near and dear affection betwixt Christ and his church, surely a husband and wife should have some resemblance in it of their subjection to the Father. 'Walk worthy of the calling whereunto thou art called.' Adorn thy calling by thy gracious carriage, and do not proclaim thyself to be of his mind who said that a wife was a name of honour and no more;¹ that marriage is a name of honour, and a work of pleasure, and nothing else.

(2.) Consider the frailty of the married. If a married life would always last, thou mightst have some colour for minding nothing but thy carnal liberty in it; but consider that death will untie this fast knot, and this relation will die with thee. That hand which dissolveth the union betwixt thy body and thy soul, will dissolve the union betwixt husband and wife; and oh, what a sad parting will that couple have at death, when thou thinkest that thou hast lived so long, merely to eat, and drink, and bed, and bring up children together, and have never minded, at least in earnest, the fear and favour of the blessed God, whereby they might have lived together for ever! 'The time is short,' saith the apostle; 'it remaineth that they that have wives, be as though they had none,' 1 Cor. vii. 29. 'The season of married persons' abode together is short; it is rolled up, a metaphor from cloth rolled up, only a little left at the end, therefore they should be more indifferent about earth, and more diligent about heaven, more moderate about natu-

¹ Eli. Verv.

ral and civil, and more serious about spiritual and eternal concerns. Wise persons, when they are called to places which they must enjoy for a short time, will make the most of them; he that hath an excellent book lent him for a small time, will, if wise, improve it whilst he hath it. This relation is of short duration; after a few more meals' meat, and a few more nights' sleep together, death will disjoin you, and will ye not get the most benefit ye can by it? The Jews at this day have a custom, when a couple are married, to break the glass wherein the bridegroom and bride have drunk, to admonish them of mortality.¹

Reader, art thou a husband? Consider that within a few days God will take away from thee the delight of thine eyes with a stroke; thy voice ere long will not be, Where is my wife? or, Call your mother, or mistress, to a child or servant; but, alas! she is dead! and like Abraham's, Where shall I have a place to bury my dead out of my sight? 'And Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.' And then if thou reflectest upon thy carriage towards her, and conversation with her, how thou didst live with her without God, often wrangling, but seldom or never praying together; often contriving how to increase your temporal goods, but never conspiring together how to further your everlasting good, then surely thou wilt have cause to cry out, Alas! my poor wife, where art thou housed in the other world? and to mourn and to weep for her indeed, and for thyself too. Will she not, thinkest thou, say to thee, when she meets thee at the great day, as Ziporah to Moses, A bloody husband hast thou been to me?

Reader, if thou art a wife, the next time thou lookest on thy loving husband, consider with thyself: This dearly beloved husband of mine, in whose company I have had such content and comfort, must ere long be separated from me; those ruddy lips, which have so often kissed me, will be pale; that countenance, which hath so often smiled on me, will be wan and ghastly; those arms, which have so often embraced, will hang down; that whole body will ere long be food for worms, and crumble into dust; and shall I make it my business only to please his palate, and feed his flesh, and to live with him as brutes do together, minding nothing but carnal pleasure? or shall I not rather provoke him to love and to good works, meekly persuade him to mind piety, to pray with me, to provide for death and judgment, that we may live together as fellow-heirs, and at last meet together in the blessed inheritance?

¹ Sphynx Philos.

It was the speech of Augustus to his wife, when he was leaving the world, *Livia, nostri conjugii memor vive, et vale*, Livia, live mindful of our love, and farewell. Oh, it is happy when a dying husband can say to his yoke-fellow, Wife, live, remember our holy conversation and sweet communion with the blessed God, and farewell, till I shall meet thee in heaven.

(3.) Consider your covenant and engagement each to other, for which God will bring you to judgment. Marriage promises must be performed. The Jews in their dowry bill,¹ which they gave their wives, had these words: Upon the sixth day of the week, &c., Be unto me a wife according to the law of Moses and Israel, and I, according to the word of God, will honour, maintain, and govern thee according to the manner of the husbands amongst the Jews, which do honour, maintain, and govern their wives faithfully. Husbands and wives have engaged themselves each to other, of which covenants God is a witness, and he keeps the bonds, and therefore it behoves them not to break them. The marriage covenant is called the covenant of God, Prov. ii. 17; Mal. ii. 14: first, Because he is the author of it, as he is the ordainer of that state; secondly, Because he is a witness to it:² 'The Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously; yet she is thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant,' Mal. ii. 14; thirdly, Because he will avenge the breach of it. How severely doth God avenge the quarrel of his covenant! When men are the only parties in the covenant, God will be the avenger of the breach of covenant. How sorely did Zedekiah smart for his breaking his covenant with the king of Babylon, a heathen king! 'As I live, saith the Lord, in the place where the king dwelleth, that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, even in the midst of Babylon he shall die. As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant which he hath broken, will I recompense upon his own head,' Ezek. xvii. 16, 19; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13. The papists say that no faith is to be kept with the heathen or heretics. The Turks say that no covenant is to be kept with dogs, that is, with Christians; but God made Zedekiah pay dearly for his breach of promise to a heathen. Some husbands and wives, like the old Thracians, esteem their oaths as nothing; they can as easily slip their conjugal covenants, as children do their ripe nuts. But such must know, that if they, like harlots, forget the

¹ In Babylon. Talmud.

² Non tam respiciendum cui, quam per quem juramus.—Lum. 3. sent. Distin. 39.

covenant of their God, he will remember their forgetfulness, and recompense their perjury upon their own heads, Mal. iii. 5, as he tells them, 'I will come near to you to judgment, and will be a swift witness against false swearers.'¹ Such think God far off, but his fury is near them. One hearing perjury condemned by a preacher, and how it never escaped unpunished, boasted, I have foresworn myself, and yet my right hand is no shorter than my left;² but he had no sooner uttered his words but an inflammation arose in that hand, and he was forced to cut it off, lest it should have killed him. God quickly made his right hand shorter than his left. They that like men transgress their covenant, or (as Junius and Tremel. read it, *tanquam hominis transgressi sunt fœdus*, make no more of breaking it than if it had been the covenant of a man), will find that it is the covenant of a God, and that God will have a controversy with them for it, Hosea vi. 7, and iv. 1.

(4.) Consider the crosses that attend a married condition.³ Sin at first turned the fruitful earth into briers, and it turneth every estate into brambles. A married condition is comfortable, but yet, like the bee, it hath its sting as well as its honey; as the rose, it hath many prickles as well as some sweetness. 'Such,' saith the apostle, speaking of married persons, 'shall have trouble in the flesh,' 1 Cor. vii. 28. Crosses will come: sometimes the wife is passionate, sometimes the husband is peevish, the children they are froward and undutiful, servants, they are untoward and unfaithful; sometimes their names are aspersed, sometimes their estates are diminished; now sickness attacketh some in the family, by and by death arresteth them; and how is it possible that these burdens should be borne with any comfort or patience, if married persons do not make religion their business in this relation?

Men promise themselves nothing but sweet and sugar in this condition—and, indeed, where there is love and godliness, it is a lovely, delightful conjunction—but they meet with much sourness and bitterness in it; for this cause, say some, the happy estate of the saints in heaven is set out by that, wherein they neither marry nor are given in marriage. Marriage is both honourable and onerable; as it hath its blessings, so it is not without its bur-

¹ De impio fœderis contemptu eos accusat, *q.d.*, non majore religione observant fœdus initum cum Deo vivente quam quod homo iniit cum homine.—*Paræus in Hosea vi. 7.*

² Sword against Swearers.

³ Consequentia matrimonii sunt variæ cruces et molestiæ, et sæpe paupertas, morbi, exilia, curæ, injuriæ, tum a domesticis tum a peregrinis illatæ, et alia id genus quæ in matrimonio ferenda sunt.—*Zanch., ibid.*

dens. It is not good for man to be alone, yet it is good for man not to touch a woman. Moses calls marriage good, as it was an ordinance of God, and instituted for excellent ends; but Paul calls it, in effect, evil, not in opposition to piety, for it is not a sinful evil, but in opposition to tranquillity, for it hath in it many penal and civil evils; it is *γλυκύπικρον*, a sweet bitter thing. Moses speaks of marriage in general, or intentionally, so it is good; Paul speaks of marriage in particular seasons of persecution, and accidentally. 'Woe be to them that are with child, or give suck in those days,' Gen. ii. 18; 1 Cor. vii. 1.

How many trials and troubles did Jacob meet with in his marriage, from his father-in-law, from his wives, from his children! All brought and added some gall and wormwood to his cup, which surely he could never have drunk up so pleasantly, if godliness had not sweetened it.

Reader, as a prisoner may make his fetters more easy by lining them with soft wool, so mayest thou make the cares and crosses incident to this condition much more easy and tolerable by godliness. Some married persons have had many afflictions, yet have undergone them with much cheerfulness; but truly piety was the bladder which preserved them from sinking, and kept their heads above water. Grace alone, like the wood which Moses cast into the waters of Marah, can make these bitter waters sweet and pleasant.

Protagoras, by his natural dexterity, ordered the burden he was to bear with more ease and advantage.¹ The Christian, by his spiritual alacrity, may lighten his heaviest loads; and through piety, which is his spiritual strength, walk cheerfully under the greatest pressures. I must tell thee it is godliness alone which can teach thee, as a bird in a hedge, to sing and be cheerful in the midst of those thorns and briers, those troubles which in this estate surround thee.

2. I shall now speak to the duties incumbent on this relation, both common to both, or special to either.

The common duties are,

First, Amity. This is the nearest relation, and therefore requir-eth the dearest affection. They are one in many bonds: they have one name, and therefore should have one nature; they are one in the fruit of their loins, and hence should be one in love, Job xix. 17. They are one body, one flesh, and so should have but one soul, one spirit; they have one bed, one board, one house, and therefore should be one in heart. The love betwixt Christ and his spouse,

¹ Aul. Gel., lib. v. cap. 3.

which is so fervent that she is sick of love to him, and he died for love to her, Cant. ii. 4; John xv. 13, is set out by the love betwixt husband and wife, to shew how great this love is, or at least ought to be.¹ Without the union of hearts, the union of bodies will be no benefit. Where the obligation is greatest, there the affection must be strongest. The husband ought to love his wife, and she him, above father, mother, children, and all others in the world. Some write of the asp, that he never wanders abroad with his companion; and of the vipers, that they cast up their poison before they couple. Nature herein reads married persons a lecture of love. What some say of Castor and Pollux, is true of husband and wife, If they be divided, it is ominous.

The very heathen were so sensible of this duty, that in their wedding sacrifices to Juno,² the maker of marriage, in their esteem, they took all the gall out of the beast and threw it away, to signify that all wrath and bitterness must be laid aside in this relation. That emblem which some give of the Netherlands, two bottles tied together floating on the waters, with this motto, *Si collidimur frangimur*, If we clash we are broken, will suit well to husband and wife. God was so tender of this, that therefore he forbade husbands newly married to go to war the first year, and commanded that they should not be charged with any business, Deut. xxiv. 5. Not only, as some think, because such men's hearts would be at home with their wives, and so they would have little mind to fight, whereas God would have all his servants cheerful at his work, and all his soldiers volunteers in his wars; but partly that they might enjoy the great comfort of each other's company, God having appointed marriage for that end. They both leave their father's family and their nearest friends, and therefore have the more need of tendering and cherishing one another, especially at first; but chiefly that by their cohabitation the first year, and the solace they had in each other's society, their affections might be so close knit together as to continue for ever after. It is happy where all the strife is, which shall please the other most; when the husband's care is how to please his wife, and the wife's care is how to please her husband; when their minds are divided into divers thoughts, casting this way and that way, and every way, how to

¹ Nihil est felicius vita conjugali, si adsint illa, quæ deus vult esse in illo conjugio unio præsertim animorum, ita ut anima una sit in duobus corporibus, coque si sunt vere una caro.

² Junoni nuptiali rem divinam cum facerent, e victima fel exemptum post aram abjicere, moris fuit receptissimi; innuente (opinor) autore bilem prorsus iramve a conjugali sequestrandam jucunditate.—*Cæ. Rhodiy. Ant. Lec.*, lib. xxviii. cap. 21.

give best content to each other, according to the signification of the apostle's word, 1 Cor. vii. 33, 35.¹ The saints are doves. A dove is so called *περίστερα παρὰ τὸ περισσῶς ἐρᾶν*, of the excessive love of the one to the other.² They are so much one, that Christ calls his church *unica columba*, my only dove, Cant. v. 8.

Whatsoever afflictions should come, yet their love should continue. If it be fading, it was but feigned. It must not be like fire on our hearths, which a little water of adversity may extinguish; but like the fire on the altar, which never goeth out. The conjunction between husband and wife is set out by the same word by which God's joining himself to his people is set forth, Jer. l. 5, compared with Gen. xxix. 34, which is translated by some a gluing themselves together.³ So the word *προσκολληθῆναι* in the Greek also signifieth, shall cleave to his wife, Mat. xix. 51, be glued to his wife, importing a conjunction so near as nothing can come between, and so firm that nothing can dissolve it. A table will often cleave in the whole wood before it will part asunder where it is glued. God's love is everlasting. Neither earth nor hell can abate, much less extinguish, his love to his people. Though differences should arise, yet husband and wife must not be like earthen vessels, which can never be joined together when once broken in pieces, but the falling out of lovers should be the renewing of love; and like bones when broken and well set, their love should be the stronger whilst they live together. If any discontent had happened betwixt the Roman husbands and wives, they went to a certain chapel built in the honour of a goddess called *dea viviplaca*, *a vivis placandis*, whence, after they had been a while there, they returned friends.—*Roman Antiq.*

Their love must last whilst they live. No affliction must quench it, no flood drown it; nay, like the ark of Noah, it must rise the higher for these waters. When the Roman bridegroom⁴ had taken his bride, he did divide the hair of her head with the top of a spear, called *hasta calibaris*, wherewith some fencer had been killed, to signify that nothing should disjoin them but suchlike spears or violence. True love will be insuperable, inseparable. The longer it continueth in a good soul, the greater will it grow. A prudent observation of each others' nature, and forbearance will prevent many fallings out.

¹ *μέριμνα*. Anxie et cum summa animi sollicitudine atque ærumna cogitat.—Zanch.

² Arist. de Gen. Ani., lib. ii. cap. 8.

³ *προσκολλάσθαι*, agglutinator.—Eras., Beza. To glue, a *κόλλα*, glue. The LXX use it in Gen. ii. 24: *Sic verbum Hebræum dabak*, They shall be joined and glued as close as if they were but one piece.

⁴ Salmuth Lib. Rerum perdidit. cap. de nuptiis.

A reverend man seeing a very choleric couple that were married live very comfortably, asked the man how they could so sweetly consort together? He answered, When my wife's fit is upon her, I yield to her; when my fit is upon me, she yields to me, and so we never strive together, but asunder. When there is no fuel to feed it, the fire will go out. Oh, it is a loving sight to see grace thus combating with and conquering nature! But marriage is a bitter sweet, as one saith of a wife, when the married couple are ever contending and wrangling, as fire and water never meet but they fight and strive for the mastery; when their words to each other, which should be softer than oil and healing, are sharper than a two-edged sword and wounding. The ancients, in their marriage hieroglyphics, used to paint Mercury standing by Venus, to signify that smooth and fair expressions should be the concomitants of such a condition. And indeed, if their affections to each other be not feigned, their expressions will be fair; for the tongue is but the heart's expositor to explain its mind and meaning. Surely if any in the world should, as Paul writes to his Corinthians, 1 Cor. i. 10, speak the same thing, avoid divisions, be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment, husbands and wives should. They are one, 1. *Jure originis*, for Eve was made of Adam's body. 2. They are one, *suppositione legis*; the law of man makes them one; no action is brought against the wife, for she goeth under covert-barn. 3. They are one, *jure conjunctionis*, by God's institution; they are one in begetting a seed to God; as the plant of one tree set into another they do grow up, not as-two, but one, bringing forth fruit.

Only one thing under this head must not be omitted.

Married persons must take heed of mistaking in the ground of their affections. If wit, or wealth, or beauty be the cause, when these be taken away, which some providence or other may quickly do, the effect will cease. If these be the loadstones, when they are removed, their love will remove too; but if the foundation be eternal, their affection will be immortal—the land-flood of youthful affections will quickly be dried up, but the fountain of spiritual love will send forth such pleasant streams as will refresh them whilst they live. When conscience of God's ordinance and piety in the person are the motives, their love will be lasting. That love which is grounded on lust is like the smith's bar of iron, which now is red hot, and by and by, being put into water, is colder than ever; nay, that this love caused by lust may be turned into hatred. Amnon, though dead, speaketh to us. I wish it were not true in

most of both sexes what Marcia, the daughter of Cato, said of one sex, That she could not find a man that would love her more than hers, and therefore she would not marry. Most love with the eyes, (beauty,) or with the hands, (money,) hence they love not with the heart. When the root of love is wrong, the fruit will quickly be rotten; they who love not one another out of conscience, may in time be brought to hate one another.

Secondly, Fidelity. Husbands and wives must be faithful to each other. They are partners in the nearest degree imaginable; and therefore, if unfaithful, the most foolish thieves that are possible.

This faithfulness must shew itself in reference to their estates, names, and bodies.

1. They ought to be faithful each to other in regard of their estates. The husband ought to work, and the wife must see that she do not waste. The man's business is to get, and the woman's to keep and save. If he playeth away his estate abroad, he wrongeth his wife. If she be prodigal of her estate at home, she robs her husband. Both must endeavour, in their several places, by all lawful means, to increase their portions. Some, indeed, are united together, as the beams of the sun in a burning-glass, to consume and waste that which their parents have gathered for them with much labour and weariness. They pull down that house in a day which was some years in building; but God often makes such lie without doors, by bringing them to want. Many a house, like a hive of bees being prodigal of their honey, at least loiterers, in the summer, have been brought to beggary and a starving condition in the winter. Husbands and wives should not be worse than ants, but endeavour in their callings to increase their heaps, like two watermen in oars, that row and labour together on their several sides to get, through God's blessing, an honest and comfortable living. They are a pitiful pair that, like a pair of cards, are much together; but it is at play, not at work. A Christian couple, like the two hands, should both work to maintain the head and body, and not, like broken bones, be lazing on the bed of idleness.

This faithfulness is requisite as to their names. They ought to conceal each other's infirmities; it is wonderful folly for wives to publish their husbands' faults, and for husbands to proclaim their wives' weaknesses. Hereby they disparage and injure themselves; they disparage themselves both in blazing abroad their want of wit in making such an ill choice, and as they are sharers in each other's honour and disgrace. Joseph, a just man, would not make

Mary a public example, though he thought her guilty of a great crime, Mat. i.

They injure themselves; for such offences, proceeding from lack of love, if not from hatred, are hardliest forgiven. When breaches fall out and are concealed, they are half reconciled; but if one of the parties blab them abroad, like rankled sores, they are hard to cure. Alphonsus, king of Arragon, was wont to say, that to procure a quiet life, the husband must be deaf, and the wife blind. Sure it is, the man must not hear to declare it abroad, nor the wife see it to say it among her gossips whatever is amiss at home, if they would live in peace.

The faithfulness enjoined as to their bodies; this consisteth in giving to each the seasonable, moderate use of the other's body, and denying it to all others.¹ None hath power of the man's body but his wife, and none hath power of the woman's body but the husband. Christians are called doves; now they are noted by naturalists to be very chaste creatures—they keep themselves to one mate, and will admit of no other.² It is abominable and brutish for them that are called Christians to embrace the beds, the bosom of strangers, Prov. v. 19; it ought not to be named, much less to be acted, amongst them that would be called saints, Eph. v. 3. The very motions or temptations to it should be rejected with the greatest dislike and detestation.³ Other failings disturb their comfort, but this unfaithfulness dissolveth their covenant.

The very storks are famous for their faithfulness to their mates. It is credibly reported by some that have seen it, that whole flocks of storks, meeting in a meadow, they have set in the midst of them two of their company that have been found disloyal, and running upon them with main force, have killed them with their beaks; so that the company breaking up, the rest flying away, the two offenders only have been found dead.⁴ This fowl, saith Tostatus,⁵ is so chaste that, as long as the female liveth, he coupleth not with any others. Certainly the fowls of the air will rise up and condemn those beasts of the earth that, like goats, are unsatiable in their lust, and still long after strange flesh. Flee fornication, saith the apostle. The bodies of saints are the temples of God, and surely ought not to be the stews of Satan. Pompey never prospered after he had defiled the temple, 1 Cor. vi. 19. The houses

¹ Arist. de Gener. Animal., lib. iv. cap. 6.

² Adulterium quasi ad alterius torum.

³ Castitas a καὶ ὦ orno, quia præcipuum est hominis ornamentum.—*Rivet.*

⁴ Sphynx et Phil., p. 131.

⁵ Tostat., Qu. 35.

of our bodies are not built to be styes of filthiness, but to be vessels of holiness,¹ ver. 13. Our bodies shall be beautiful at the last day, like unto the glorious body of Christ; and shall they be deformed and defiled at this day? ver. 14. Our bodies are members of the holy Jesus, and therefore ought not to be the members of harlots,² ver. 15. Other sins are committed by external objects without, but uncleanness within and against the body, ver. 16. Our bodies are purchased by Christ, and therefore the owner, not a traitor, should dwell in it. He that bought the house of our bodies deserves the service of them, ver. 20. Oh, what excellent arguments are here to dissuade from such unnatural defilements, which Solomon saith are worse than theft, and Chrysostom, than idolatry!³ Prov. vi. 30. He is surely an inexcusable and unpardonable thief that, having money enough in his own chest, will yet steal from his neighbour.

Men must have the highest thoughts of their own wives, and women of their own husbands, and then they will not look so as to lust after others. The Persian lady, at Cyrus's wedding, being afterwards asked how she liked the bridegroom, answered, I know not, for I saw none there but my own husband. 'Let not thine heart incline to the ways of a whorish woman; go not astray after her: her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death,'⁴ Prov. vii. 25, 27. Some nations have punished adultery with death; by the laws of Julia it was death among the Romans, and by the laws of Solon amongst the Athenians,⁵ and amongst them they were torn with wild horses. Aurelianus the emperor, caused such to be tied to the tops of trees, bowed together, and so to be torn in sunder. Zaleneus made a law that the adulterer should lose both his eyes; so much these heathen saw by the light of nature. The Egyptians did cut off the nose of the adulteress, and gave the man a thousand jerks. By God's law it is death—nay, death eternal. 'Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge,' Heb. xiii. 4. He hath unheard of pains for such unnatural pleasures. Before Moses's time it was punished with burning, Gen. xxxviii. 24; and both before and after Moses that fire of lust is punished with the eternal fire of hell.

¹ *Negat scortationem ulla necessitate licitam seu argumentis.*—*Dickson in 1 Cor. vi.*

² Strumpets are called harlots from one Arlet, an impudent whore, the mother of William the Conqueror.

³ Chrysost., Hom. 62 in Johan.

⁴ *Principium dulce est, sed finis amoris amarus.*

Brevis est voluptas adulterii, æterna pœna.

3. To help one another both in civil and sacred things. Husbands and wives must help to make the weight of the family more tolerable; they must share in each other's joys and sorrows, like those twins which still laughed and wept together. When the husband and wife, like stones in a foundation, are close united, and join together to bear up the building of domestical affairs, there will be the less fear of the house falling on their heads. They must help one another in civil and natural things, comforting each other both in health and sickness, cheering one another both in a prosperous and adverse condition. Marriage is called *conjugium*, from *jugum*, a yoke, because married persons should draw evenly and equally, and thereby the load would be carried the more lightly. The philosopher tells us that turtle-doves sit upon their eggs by course.¹ Christians in a married condition should join in putting their shoulders to domestical burdens. Husbands and wives should live together as soul and body. Though the soul be more noble than the body, yet it hath the chiefest care of the compound. Soul and body sympathise with each other; they mourn and rejoice together; they conspire for the good of one another. The soul helpeth the body with its faculties; the body helps the soul with its members. The soul is the guide of the body; the body is the instrument of the soul. If the soul be sad, the body feels it. How soon doth the face speak the soul's complexion! If the body be sick, the soul is sensible, and little else than sorrow. Thus the husband and wife must be mutually assisting about their personal and their domestical concernments. As the husband is the chief, so he must take the chiefest care of things. As the wife is helped by her husband, so she must be a help to her husband. If the wife be weak, the husband must be more watchful for her, and tender of her, that she receive no wrongs; for therefore, as Lot said of the angels, is she come under the shadow of his roof. If the husband be sick or sad, the wife must endeavour to be both his physician and physick, his comforter and cordial. Some that speak of the pre-existency of souls, say, that in the beginning souls were created by pairs; and hence it came to pass that marriages were happy or unhappy. He that matcheth with the soul created with him was happy; he that missed it was miserable; though I leave this to their fancy, which is the only stock upon which they graft this opinion. Yet this is true, that couple is happy which is not only one in condition, but also one in disposition.

The swan, say naturalists, is called in Greek *κυκνὸς*, of *κεῖν*, to

¹ Aristot. de Generat. Animal., lib. iv. cap. 6.

embrace, (hence the Latin *cygnus*,) because the male doth embrace, as it were, the female with his long neck; and they do one defend, saith he, the other, and sit upon their nest by turns, and equally have care of their young ones when hatched. This is a fit resemblance of a religious pair, who, for their family's provision, join in their places, and in the bringing up their children piously are united in their pains. The Switzers made a law, that if a man were condemned to die, his parents, if alive, should execute him; because children's woe comes usually from their parents' neglect and wickedness. Poor children must be plants for paradise, or fuel for hell-fire. Oh, how should parents unite in their care and endeavour to make them pious, that they may never go to the place of torment! Our Saviour bid the disciples to suffer little children to come to him; and as he commanded them not to hinder, so he commandeth parents to do more, to help them to come to him. Christ loves to have little customers come to buy raiment and eye-salve, to have little patients that are sick come to him for cure; and surely if parents do not, who will send those dying children to the physician of souls? Alas! they are no more sensible of their misery than the silly sheep is of what the butcher is doing when he is whetting his knife to cut her throat.

Their helpfulness must principally appear in their care for each other's better part. If they love each other in obedience to God's command, they will love another according to God's command, that is, so as chiefly to endeavour each other's eternal welfare. Spiritual communion together with God will be the best preservative of their affection to each other. They ought to be, like Paul and Aristarchus, 'fellow-helpers unto the kingdom of God,' Col. iv. 10. Oh, what a lovely sight is it to behold husband and wife, like Zachariah and Elizabeth, walking in all the statutes and commandments of the Lord blameless, and as heirs together of the grace of life. Surely when their voices join in singing divine praises, the sound cannot but be pleasing to God himself. When their sweet breath is poured out in prayer, the perfume will be acceptable and scented in heaven.

When God intendeth Adam a wife, he saith, 'I will make an help meet for man,' Gen. ii. 18. They that restrain the words to generation, saith Calvin,¹ do not understand what this conjunction is. Nay, saith Paræus,² this was the chiefest cause of a wife in paradise, that she might join with Adam in piety. The Jesuits indeed

¹ Calvin, *in loc.*

² Hæc erat in paradiso potissima causa fæminæ.—Paræus, *in loc.*

forbid women to speak of God and his ways, and to meddle only with their distaff. Most women take their counsel, but, as they will find one day to their cost, they live as though they believed what some falsely affirm, that women have no souls.¹ Priscilla is mentioned before her husband, some think, as the forwarder of the two in holiness, Rom. xvi. 3; Acts xviii. 18; 1 Tim. iv. 12. They must be willing to hear each other's counsel, and to bear admonitions from one another;² though the wife be somewhat inferior, and must not usurp authority over the man, yet, as the case often falls out, it may be a call from God: 'Hearken to the voice of thy wife,' Gen. xxi. 12, when she meekly and submissively seeks to amend somewhat that is amiss in her husband. How many queens, saith Chrysostom, are buried in silence; whereas Priscilla, a tent-maker's wife, being a fellow-labourer in Christ, is in every one's mouth, and that not ten or twenty years, but until the coming of Christ. Where is now the vainglory of women in tricking up their faces? Learn from this woman what are the true ornaments not sought for on earth, but laid up in heaven. *Hic est ecclesie ornatus, ille theatrorum; hic cælis dignus, ille equis et mulis*, This the ornament of the church, the other, glorious apparel, is for stages; this besemeth heaven, the other horses and mules.

It is sad when the wife, like Jezebel, 1 Kings xxi. 21, stirreth up her husband (forward enough of himself) to wickedness. Some women are the choicest arrows the devil hath in his quiver to wound the precious souls of men. Witness Eve. How many daughters hath Job's wife still alive, that provoke their husbands, not to pray and bless, but to curse and blaspheme God! If their husbands, like Moses, obey the precepts of God, they, like Zipporah, will ring a peal in their ears to make them impious or impatient. Certainly they who have met with such wives have cause enough to consent to that of Aristotle, that they have lost half the happiness of their lives. Amongst fish the males are better than the females, except the fish silurus, but it is not always so amongst us; for even many men also, when their wives look heaven-ward, do their utmost to hinder them, and, like the pharisees, are neither willing to go to heaven themselves, nor to suffer others that would. When the wife sometimes, as Pilate's, entreats her husband, who is fiery and furious in persecuting a poor saint, to have nothing to do with that

¹ Lyran., Gorrhan.

² Quoniam natura ita tradidit ut nec eum illis (uxoribus) satis commode, nec sine illis ullo modo vivi possit, salutis perpetuæ potius quam brevi voluptati consulendum. — *Agel.*, lib. i. cap. 6.

just man, yet he, against the counsel of his wife, command of his God, and conviction of his own conscience, goeth on to his own destruction.

If the husband sometimes calls to prayer, the wife calls, it may be, to work, or to some foolish pleasure. If the wife, as the Shunammite to the man of God, for the enlivening of her dead son, would go to hear the word of the Lord, for the recovery of her dying soul, and asketh her husband leave, he is as backward as the father of that child, though upon a far worse ground, possibly ; Wherefore wilt thou go? to what purpose is so much preaching? I warrant you, you may be saved without so much ado, 2 Kings iv. 23. Thus many that are unequally yoked, like horses in a team that draw contrary ways, are miserably hindered in their journey to heaven. But happy is that couple that, like Elkanah and Hannah, join in giving up their children to God's service, and in going themselves together to sacrifice, 1 Sam. ii. 19 ; that pair is the blessed pair, that, as a pair of wings to a bird, help one another to fly up to God. These, if any in the world, may say, as those new married in Athens were wont to sing, *Ἐφύγον κακόν, εὔρον ἄμεινον*, I have left a bad condition, and found a better. Oh, how may such bless the day that ever they met, and at God's call be willing to part, knowing that ere long they shall meet again in honour, never to part more ! This husband and wife, like Saul and Jonathan, are lovely in their lives, and after their deaths shall not be divided.

A good wish of a Christian couple, wherein are epitomised the mutual duties of husband and wife.

Marriage being a condition which requireth much circumspection, as it is a relation of the sweetest and nearest communion in this world, ordained by our God, both for the increase of his church, and our mutual comfort, and as it is the first relation in nature, and the original of all the rest, upon the wrong management of which the ruin of the other doth frequently follow ; we wish in general that our behaviour in it may never be so void of conscience as to turn it into a cross to ourselves or a curse to others, but that our fellowship together may be such that we may both in it have fellowship with the Father, and with Jesus Christ his Son. Lord, who art the guide of all relations, and the God of all grace, be pleased to grant us affections suitable to our condition, that our

whole carriage therein may be as becometh Christians, and such as are married to the Lord Christ; that as Abraham and Sarah, we may be famous for faith, as Isaac and Rebecca, we may live together in the dearest love; and that, as that pious pair, Zacharias and Elizabeth, we may walk in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord blameless, and we, walking in company, may walk the more cheerfully in the way which leadeth to everlasting life.

We wish, considering how marriage, though a human conjunction, is of divine institution; how the Father appointed it, and that in paradise, and the Son hath approved it by his own glorious presence, that the Spirit with its gracious beams may so overshadow our souls, that many Barnabases, many sons of consolation, may be the issue and effect of our conjugal relation. Oh that we might both reverence this golden relation for his sake whose image and superscription it beareth, and never by our unworthy and unholy conversations deface and defile it! Those that are honoured by a prince will seek to honour him in their places, if they be ingenuous persons. How different is men's carriage, answerable to the difference in their conditions! Lord, since thou hast exalted us, let us never debase thee; though others whom thou hast lifted up make it their business to cast thee down, and the more helps thou affordest them to sweeten their pilgrimage, the more they abound in profaneness; yet let thy goodness to us be improved by us for thy glory, and let us be holy as thou, who hast called us to this relation, art holy, in all manner of conversation.

We wish that the meditation of each other's frailty may quicken us to greater fidelity, especially in the immediate concernment of eternity. The next arrow which death shoots may light upon one of us, and our relation will die with us; though now it shineth pleasantly and refresheth us with its warm rays, yet it will shortly set and never arise more; and then, oh then, we shall never have the least season to advantage each other's souls, or to further one another's salvation. Oh that this weighty thought might sink so deep into our hearts, that we may pray the more frequently and the more fervently for and with one another, because within a few days we shall never pray more; that we may persuade and admonish one another the more seriously and the more affectionately, because within a few days we shall never do it more; that we may in our several places work the work of him that sent us into the world whilst it is day, because the night cometh wherein neither of us can work. Lord, make us so mindful of our deaths, that we may be the more faithful in our duties; and whatsoever our hands find to

do, in reference to thy praise, and our eternal peace, let us do it with all our might, because there is no knowledge, nor wisdom, nor device, in the grave, whither we are both going.

We wish that the covenant which we have solemnly entered into each with other, before God, angels, and men, may be like that which the Jews entered into with the Lord, Jer. l. 5, 'an everlasting covenant never to be forgotten.' If we forget our God, and deal falsely in his covenant, he will search it out, for he knoweth the secrets of the heart. Why should we, as young gallants, enter into bonds, never minding them more till the day of payment be past, and the serjeant of death be ready to arrest us, and haul us to the prison of hell ! Should we, as the harlot, forget the covenant of our God, he would remember it to our loss and ruin ; if it be dangerous to break the covenant of a man, that vengeance from heaven hath often fallen on their heads ; how dreadful is it to break the covenant of a God ! His curse hath broken in upon many a couple for breaking his covenant. Oh that all our action in this relation might be so answerable to the gospel, that our God may never have cause to complain of us, as once of Israel, 'What hast thou to do to take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee ?' Lord, help us, as persons in debt that are honest, to be so mindful of our bonds, that we may be careful to discharge them in the performance of the conditions, and let the consideration thereof be an impregnable bulwark, to defend us against all the assaults which the flesh or world shall make to draw us from our duties.

We wish, since by a married condition we are more remote from our parents' care, which formerly was our haven, and are launched into the ocean of this world, in which we must expect to be tossed up and down with storms and tempests, that we may be diligent to make God our guide, and Scripture our compass, to prevent our perishing. They who have trouble in the flesh, had need to live after the Spirit. If it be foul under foot, it will be but ill travelling if it be not fair over-head. How sad will it be to have storms on our heads, and no cover ! to have qualms come over our hearts, and no cordial ! to have afflictions, sickness, nay death, in our house, and to have the God of all consolations, and the Lord of life, far from our house ! Oh that, whatever stony or dirty ways providence may call us to walk in on earth, yet we may so walk by rule, as to enjoy a comfortable sunshine from heaven ! Lord, let us so own thee in prosperity, that thou mayest own us in adversity ; let us be so careful to keep good consciences, that in all estates thou mayest be our

comfort, going before us as our cloud by day, and pillar of fire by night, to direct and cheer us in our passage through this wilderness, till we come to Canaan.

We wish that our affections may be as close as our relation ; and since our God hath tied this knot with his own blessed hands betwixt us, we may never so much as in angry thoughts, much less in wrangling deeds, do anything which may tend to loosen it. We are one flesh, why should we not have one spirit ? What a dreadful, doleful spectacle is a house in a flame ! What a blessed, blissful sight is a family of love ! When bells clash and jangle, how harsh and displeasing is their noise ! when they keep tune and time, how harmonious and grateful is their sound ! Oh that our house may be a church, and its name Philadelphia, or brotherly love, and that we especially, who are the chief in it, may be like Jerusalem — compact together, and at unity within ourselves ; that all our thoughts of each other may be sweetened with love, and all our words to each other seasoned with love ; and that in our actions towards each other, love, as a simple of a predominant quality, may give a relish and savour to them all ! Our Redeemer, who hath given us this precept, and set himself for our pattern, is love ; his name is love, his nature is love, his sacraments are seals of love, his Spirit is the earnest of love, his Scripture is his letter of love, his providences are all written in the characters of love ; his ordinances are love's banqueting-house, wherein his banner over us is love. He hath commanded us, as we are Christians, Eph. v. 1, 2, to be ' followers of him as dear children, and to walk in love, as he hath loved us.' Oh then, what love should we have each to other ! how close should we cleave in our affections, who are bound together by God himself, both with the bond of religion and relation, and are provoked to it by such loving precepts, and such a lively pattern ! Surely such cords should not be easily broken. Love is the bond of perfection, and the perfection of all bonds ; it is the perfect bond which will tie all our duties and graces together, without which they will fall asunder. ' Behold, how good and how pleasant is it for husband and wife to dwell together in unity ! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garment ; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore,' Ps. cxxxiii. Oh that love may be our strength, where-with we may bear one another's burdens ; that love may be our mantle, wherewith we may cover one another's infirmities ; and that

love, like the fire in Elijah's trench, may lick up all the water of opposition which may ever arise between us ! Lord, who art the God of love, let thy Spirit so kindle and increase this heavenly flame in our hearts, that we may be always ascending up unto thee in love of desire, and for thy sake be carried out towards each other, with unfeigned and constant love of delight. Though others, who live always quarrelling, curse their wedding-day more than Job did his birthday, and desire a divorce as earnestly as he did death, let our lives be so sweetened with love, that, from the comfort of it, we long the more for our meeting together in heaven with thyself, and amongst all thy saints.

We wish that faithfulness may be the girdle about both our loins, which may keep us close each to other, and to our duties, notwithstanding all attempts by the flesh and devil to part us asunder. Our interests are the same—we are equal sharers both in gains and losses ; neither can rise by the other's ruin, but we stand and fall together. Oh that what wealth our God hath given us through his providence may never be wasted through our prodigality ; but as those that trade in a joint stock, we may be equally solicitous, and, in the use of lawful means, industrious for its preservation and increase. Why should we be so foolish as to steal from ourselves either goods or good name, when the treasure and honour of both are embarked in the same bottom ? Surely it behoves us to join in our diligence ; ordinary thieves are unrighteous in wronging others, but we, if unfaithful, are unnatural in robbing ourselves. Lord, make us so faithful about the unrighteous mammon, that thou mayest trust us with the true riches ; but let us be more tender of each other's reputation than of the apple of our own eyes, and to imitate thy Majesty in covering and forgiving one another's infirmities. Let neither of our bodies be sinks of uncleanness, but temples of holiness ; learn us so to possess our vessels in sanctification and honour, that the very thoughts of dishonesty may be more dreadful to us than death itself. Why should we make thy house Satan's harlot ? Can we imagine that our Saviour, because his bodily presence was once in an unclean stable, will vouchsafe his spiritual presence in an impure body ? Do not we expect that our bodies should outshine the sun in glory and purity at the last day ? And shall they resemble ditches for dirt and defilement at this day ! Oh that we might never, like an adulterer and an adulteress, either in soul or body go a-whoring from thee, but that all the members of our bodies may be instruments of righteousness, and all the faculties of our souls set apart for thy service, that

hereafter both soul and body may be satisfied fully with thy salvation.

We wish that, as head and body, we may conspire for each other's welfare ; and as we are one flesh, so we might have one spirit in seeking its real comfort, and endeavouring its lawful contentment. Domestic burdens will be more tolerable if we put under both our shoulders ; personal hardships will be more acceptable whilst we conjoin in our help ; the potion which is most bitter will go down the better if each drink a part. Oh that, as fellow-commoners, we might always eat of the same dish, whether sour or sweet ; and since we are fellow-travellers, cheer up one another, to make our journey the more pleasant, till we come to rest in the true paradise ! The head and body do not stand out against each other in terms of defiance. Christ and his church do not rise up in arms against each other in a warlike fashion. Lord, help us in our family affairs to live as those that draw in the same yoke, and in all our civil and natural concerns to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

We wish, above all things, that we may, with the greatest faithfulness, be serviceable to each other's souls ; and whilst others conspire together to indulge their flesh, and like Ananias and Sapphira, to tempt God, we may conspire together to live after the Spirit, and with the greatest advantage to exercise ourselves to godliness, that we may both, like the two cherubims, look one to another, and both towards thy mercy-seat. And oh do thou, who sittest between the cherubims, meet us, and commune with us now, that at last we may meet at thy seat of mercy. Yet a little while and the light is with us ; yet a little while and we may pray together, and we may fast together, and we may read together ; within a few days the shadows of the evening will stretch themselves upon us, and it will be no longer day with us. Oh that we might be so far from living like those beasts, who mind little save bedding and boarding together, that we may, like angels, always stand in God's presence, and join in admiring his boundless perfections ! Lord, let us not, like Herod and Herodias, join together against thy saints ; nor, as Herod and Pilate, agree together against our Saviour, lest at last we burn together in the unquenchable fire. But let us take sweet counsel together, and go often to the house of God, and to the throne of grace in company ; and do thou so assist us, that our house now may be a Bethel, none other than the house of God ; and when this fast knot betwixt us shall be untied by the king of terrors, we may be more closely united to the King of saints, in that

place where there is neither marriage nor giving in marriage, but all are as angels, bathing their souls in the rivers of thy pleasures, and warming their hearts in thy bosom and embraces. Oh, if there be such a help in a fit spouse, what a heaven is there in marriage to thy dear Son! If converse with flesh and blood yield such comfort, what infinite delight, and unconceivable consolation will flow from immediate, uninterrupted, and eternal communion with thy blessed self! Oh, blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the lamb!

Lord, enable us (husband and wife) to shine as the sun and moon, and our children and servants as stars, so gloriously and powerfully with the light of holiness, that our house may be thy lesser heaven, and that when we have finished our courses, by declaring thy glory in our several relations, and shewing forth thy spiritual handiworks in our whole conversations, we may be elevated to those higher orbs, and heavenly mansions, where we shall never set, be eclipsed, or clouded; where the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun as the light of seven days; where the crosses and encumbrances of all relations shall be removed, and the true comfort only of them all remain, yea, where the light of all relations shall be swallowed up, as the lesser celestial lights in the sun, in our great relation to God through Christ. For there 'the sun shall no more be our light by day, nor the moon our light by night, but the Lord our God, our everlasting light, and our God our glory.' Amen.

CHAPTER IV.

How Christians may exercise themselves to godliness in the relation of husbands, with a good wish about the husband's duty.

I proceed from the mutual to the special duties, and I shall begin with the husband.

Reader, if God hath called thee to this relation, mind holiness in it. Thou art above thy wife in place, oh be above her in piety! The higher the air is, the purer it is; the higher thou art, the holier thou shouldst be. The highest spheres carry about with them the inferior orbs by their celerity. Thou shouldst draw thy wife and children along with thee to Christ by thy exemplary sanctity. Do not say that thy marriage hindereth thy holiness, for by it thou hast more advantage to promote religion in thy family.

Indeed, thy marriage to the flesh and body of death, not to a wife, is that, if anything, which will make thee wicked.

As thou art a husband, thou art intrusted with a weighty talent; thou hast the government and guidance of thy wife committed to thee. Oh be faithful in the management of so great a trust. Let thy dominion be exercised with discretion, lest by thy foolish fondness it be liable to contempt, or by thy rigorous severity it degenerate into cruelty. Wisdom must sit at the stern of thy authority, and so guide it in an even course, that it may neither dash upon the rock of scorn, nor sink in the quicksand of slavish fear. There are two principal affections which God requireth in thy wife in relation to thee,—reverence and love. Now, thy prudence must so manage thy authority, that these two may be preserved in their due place, and not interfere and cut each other; that her fear of thee may not, through thy severity, be turned into hatred, nor her love to thee, through thy familiarity, be turned into slighting thee. On the one hand, take heed that through thy folly thou dost not cause her to condemn thee; let not thy carriage be childish, lest she think thee fitter for a rod than to rule over her. A ridiculous husband will never command an awful fear in his wife. He that goeth in a fool's coat, or playeth antic tricks, will sooner make the spectators laugh at and deride him, than honour and reverence him. A giddy head will force the body to stumble and fall. On the other hand, beware of rigidity, lest she hate thee; do not, as a fly, seek for a sore place, some weakness in thy wife, to fasten on. It is the part of an enemy to look up and down to spy where the wall is lowest, that he may enter thereat and conquer the city. Some husbands are full of those cutting expressions, I'll make you know that I am master: Do such a thing, or you shall repent it dearly: I'll bring your proud heart down with a vengeance,—language usual to a Turkish galley-slave; but surely, if masters should forbear threatening to a servant, much more husbands to a wife, Col. iv. 1, 2. It is far better to reign in her heart by clemency, than to rule over her body by tyranny. A wise soldier will choose to bring a rebellious city into subjection by terms of peace, if it may be, rather than by batteries of war. And wilt thou, as the Egyptians did over the Israelites, rule with rigour over thy wife, and make her groan to heaven by reason of her bondage? Truly such a churl, as the cramp, racks his own sinews, and makes his own body full of torment. He that screweth the string of his power too high, will

break it before he is aware. To overtax subjects is the way to make a poor king. So much in general.

The special duties enjoined the husband are three.

First, Affection. Among the three worthies, this is the first and the chief of the three. It is observable that the Holy Ghost mentioneth this duty frequently and urgently, and that as it were the only duty enjoined the husband: 'Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved his church, and gave himself for it. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them,' Eph. v. 25, 28, 33; Col. iii. 19. Partly because husbands are most defective in this duty.¹ Generally men are diligent in the exercise of their dominion, but negligent in regard of affection; hence their authority degenerateth into tyranny. Partly because this duty will exceedingly help to the performance of all the rest. The husband must bear his wife's burdens, cover her infirmities;² but it is love only which hath the strong back that can do this. The husband must defend her from dangers—spread his skirt, his wing over her, Ruth iii. 9, as birds do over their young to preserve them from harm; but it is love only is the shield to bear off those blows. The husband must comfort her under crosses, sympathising with her in her sufferings, and cheering her with his courteous carriage; but without the ingredient of love, no cordial can be made.³ The husband must provide for her body and external good, and take care of her soul and eternal good; but without the weights of love, he will not move regularly either way. Love is the key that opens the door into every duty; love is the fulfilling of the whole law.

The formation of the woman out of man, sheweth how great his affection should be to her, nay, to himself. She was not made of his head, to be his sovereign, nor of his feet, to be his slave; but of a rib in his side, to shew how near she should lie to his heart. God is so urgent for fervent love to a wife that he slights the husband's love to her when it is but little, and counts it no

¹ In ea sæpe deficiamus, licet dominii satis studiosi.—*Aret. in Eph. v.*

² Caritas amat quos tolerat, tolerat quos amat.—*Greg. Mag. in Ezek.*

³ Rationes cur diligendæ sunt uxores. 1. Quia sunt feminae; natura impellit mærem ad fœminam diligendam. 2. Quia uxores; hæc ratio fortior est, quia est Dei ordinatio, et restringit amorem ad certam aliquam. 3. Quia Christus suo exemplo amandas esse docuit. 4. Quia uxor est corpus viri.—*Zanch. in Eph. v.*

better than hatred.¹ ‘And when God saw that Leah was hated,’ Gen. xxix. 31. It is not enough, saith Calvin on the text, that a man do not hate his wife, but God expecteth that he should heartily love her. Because Jacob’s love was not so hot as it ought, God calls it hatred. It is sad when the husband is so cross and crabbed, that his house is a prison to his wife, himself her jailer, and his commands little else than fetters to gall and gore her flesh. It is said of the turtle dove that he loves his mate exceedingly; when she dieth, he continually pines and moans, and will never after sit upon a green bough. It is certain the love of a husband to his wife should be above his love to all his relations. Next God and Christ, and his own salvation, his wife calls for the hottest and strongest affection. ‘For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife,’ Gen. ii. 18. A man ought to have a greater respect for his father and mother than any persons in the world; yet even these must be left, out of love to his wife. The words are not to be understood so much that he must leave them in regard of habitation, according to Mercer and the Chaldee reading,² he shall leave his father and mother’s bed, (it being a Jewish custom for unmarried children to lie in their parents’ chambers,) but in regard of affection; yet not that he ceaseth to be a son when he once becometh a husband, for his reverence, obedience, and recompense are still due to his father—but, 1. Comparatively; he is rather to leave them than his wife, for his love to his wife must be so great that in comparison of it he may be said to leave his parents. 2. Conditionally; if his parents shall seek to draw him from his wife. So Musculus.

Therefore the Holy Ghost calleth a wife ‘the wife of thy bosom,’ Deut. xiii. 6, because of the extraordinary love which thou oughtest to have to her. Those things which we put in our bosoms are fervently affected. The disciple whom Jesus loved leaned usually on his bosom, John xiii. 23, with xx. 2. Christ, the beloved of the Father, is said to be ‘in the bosom of the Father.’ The husband must ‘love his wife as himself,’ Eph. v. 33; not as the phrase is used when it is said, ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,’ *i.e.*, that he must love her with the same quality and sincerity of love; but it is meant with the same quantity and fervency of love. His love to his wife must not only be of the same nature, but also

¹ Non debet autem viro dominari uxor; ideo non est sumpta ex capite; nec etiam pedibus conculcari; ideo pedibus non est creata; sed debet amari ex corde ideo de costa cordi vicina sumpta est.—*Zanch. in Eph. v.*

² Relinquet cubile patris et matris.—*Chaldee.*

in the same measure with his love to himself. Oh, how dear is a man to himself! how tenderly, how constantly, how fervently doth he love himself! none can persuade him to be out of love with himself; if he be deformed or diseased, yet he loves himself: truly thus should his love be to his wife. 'None ever yet hated his own flesh,' saith the apostle, Eph. v. 29. We hear of some men that are cruel to themselves, that cut and tear their own flesh; but they are Baalites, 1 Kings xviii. 21, or Bedlamites.

Reader, if thou art one of those that abusest thy wife this way, remember that, like the man in the Gospel possessed with a devil, thou woundest thyself. Surely if Scripture will not allow thee to be bitter to thy wife, it will not allow thee to beat her. He that is bitter to his wife puts off the human nature, (to be human is to be courteous. Hence I 'will draw thee with the bands of love, with the cords of a man,' *i.e.*, of gentleness and mildness,) and if he that is bitter unmans himself, what doth he do that beats his wife? ¹ Surely he is a monk or a madman in beating himself. Socrates could say, For a man to beat his wife was as great a sacrilege as to profane the most holy things in the world. It is said of Dr Cowper, that when his wife had burnt all his notes, which he had been eight years in gathering, for fear he should kill himself with study—for she could scarce get him to his meals—he shewed no passion, but duly uttered this expression, Indeed, wife, it was not well done.

Thy love should make thee moderate in all thy commands; nothing should be enjoined but what is both needful to be done, and fit for her to do. Thy wife is the weaker vessel, and therefore not to be put to servile labours.² If a knife, saith Luther, hath a tender edge, men will not cut hard stones with it. Oh, what will not that man do or suffer for his wife that loves her as he ought! Shechem denied not to be circumcised, because he loved Dinah. Jacob served seven years out of love to Rachel. Love beareth much, and forbeareth also. Where it is otherwise, that the husband is crabbed and churlish, there the virgin may complain, in the words of Ambrose,³ My money hath sold me to misery, and is the dear price of my slavery. The dominion of a man over his wife is not that of a master over his slave, but such as the soul hath over the body; not for its hurt, but for its help, to further

¹ Uxor admonenda persæpe, reprehendenda raro, verberanda nunquam.—*Aurelii dictum.*

² Uxoris vitium aut tollendum aut tolerandum.—*Varro. in Gel.*

³ Amb., Exhort. ad Virg.

its welfare; or like that of the apostle over the churches committed to him by the Lord, for edification, and not for destruction, 2 Cor. x. 8.

'Let all things be done in charity,' saith the apostle. If all thy actions towards others, then much more all things that concern thy wife, should be done in love. Thy thoughts should be thoughts of love, thy looks should be looks of love; thy lips, like the honey-comb, should drop nothing but sweetness and love; thy instructions should be edged with love; thy reprehensions should be sweetened with love; thy carriage and whole conversation towards her should be but the fruit and demonstration of thy love. Oh how did Christ, who is thy pattern, love his spouse! His birth, life, and death were but, as it were, a stage whereon the hottest love imaginable, from first to last, acted its part to the life. It was a known, unknown love. Tiberius Gracchus the Roman, finding two snakes in his bed, and consulting with the soothsayers, was told that one of them must be killed; yet, if he killed the male, he himself would die shortly; if the female, his wife would die. His love to his wife Cornelia was so great that he killed the male, saith Plut. in Vit., and died quickly.

The wise man tells us, 'Let her be to thee as the loving hind or roe'—the males of which, according to naturalists, are most enamoured with their mates—'and be thou ravished with her love,' Prov. v. 19. Do thou, as Christ in his spouse, Zeph. iii. 17, rest in her love;¹ desire no more; for it is not the having a wife, but the loving a wife, will make a chaste husband. Therefore the wise man presently subjoineth, 'For why shouldst thou delight, my son, in a strange woman?' Prov. v. 20; but the Hebrew readeth it, Do thou err in thy love, so as to wink at many weaknesses in thy wife; for love, we say, is blind; and so affectionately to desire her, and to delight in her, that others may think thee to doat on her. Therefore the husband among the Romans, saith Aul. Gel., gave a ring unto his wife, which she was to wear on the next finger to the little of the left hand, because unto that finger alone a certain artery from the heart proceedeth.

2. Instruction and admonition. Love to the wife's soul is the very soul of the husband's love; without this all his love is dead and unsavoury. Reader, if thy care be only for thy wife's body, what dost thou more than heathen? if thou mindest nothing but her outward comfort, dost thou not as much for thy cattle? If thy love, as it ought, be grounded on spiritual respects, it will shew itself in spiritual effects. Be sure thou dost not engage her

¹ Ἀγαπᾶσθαι, quasi ἀγαν πᾶνεσθαι, quia amans quiescit in re amata.

in sin. Abraham, though a good man, did yet seduce his wife to dissemble for his sake, Gen. xx. 13. What a grief would it be to thee for thy wife to die of that disease which thou broughtest home to her! Be also diligent to teach her the duty she oweth to God. Possibly she understandeth not the word of God, and may say to thee, as the eunuch to Philip, 'How can I, except some man guide me?'

Surely it is not for nothing that the apostle commandeth wives to 'learn of their husbands at home,' 1 Cor. xiv. 35; but, alas! how should they learn, when their husbands, through their wilful ignorance, cannot, or, through their cursed wickedness, will not, instruct them? God enjoins them to dwell with their wives as men of knowledge, 1 Pet. iii. 7; but many dwell with them as men of ignorance, or rather as brutes, as if they were met merely to graze and couple together, to bed and board together. God calleth the husband the 'guide of his wife,' Prov. ii. 17, because he should instruct and direct her in the way of life; but sad it is most husbands are 'blind guides,' that lead their wives in those 'ways that go down to death, and those steps which take hold of hell.' It may be the body of thy wife is so dear to thee, that thou canst not endure to think of her disgrace, or poverty, or sickness, or death; but all this while thou never thinkest, it may be, of her soul, whether that be in bondage to Satan, or a servant to Christ—in a state of damnation or salvation. Alas! this love is merely carnal.

The husband is called the 'head of the wife,' not only in regard of his dominion, (the head is above the body,) but also in regard of direction. The head directs the body; the head directs both the feet to walk and the hands to work; it seeth and understandeth for the whole body. Possibly thy wife is ignorant or atheistical: 'What knowest thou, O man, but thou mayest save thy wife!' 1 Cor. vii. 16. Thy duty is to resemble Christ; his church came out of his side, as Eve out of Adam's; but the chief care of Christ was to sanctify and cleanse his church; he came by blood to take away the guilt, and he comes by water to take away the filth of her sins. Oh, how industrious shouldst thou be, both in prayer to God, and instructions to thy wife, that her sins may be pardoned, and her soul purified, and that at last she may be presented to Christ in his own righteousness, 'a glorious spouse, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing!' How is it possible thou canst let thy beloved wife, the wife of thy bosom, to destroy her soul by wickedness, and neglect her Saviour and salvation, and not so much as tell her of it? O friend, where is thy love to thy wife? There are husbands

that will give their wives a sermon willingly when they are dead, who never cared that they should hear any sermons, or gave them the least heavenly and serious instruction, whilst they were living; but, alas! it is a sign they never had any true love to them. Such men's wives have more cause than Samson's to weep on the very day of their wedding.

If thy wife sin against God, thy duty is to admonish her, though mildly. Consider what the fault is. We do not go to surgeons for every sore; some will heal of themselves; but sin must not be suffered in any, much less in one that is so near thee. The nearer the fire is to thy own house, the sin is to thy own soul, the more dangerous. Job, that was one of heaven's worthies for the fear of God, surely was not wanting in love to his wife; yet, when she acted by the devil, twits him in the teeth with his integrity, and bids him spit his venom in the face of God for requiting him so hardly for all his holiness; mark how a holy impatience triumphs in this pattern of patience! I am persuaded her words did more pierce his soul, and make deeper wounds, than all the great artillery which Satan had discharged against him: 'Thou speakest like one of the foolish women; shall we receive good at the hands of God, and not evil? Thy speech is unsavoury, and infinitely below a saint: shall we who have received so many comforts be unwilling to bear some crosses from God? when we have had so many clear days, shall we presently curse him for sending a few cloudy days?' Thus he rebukes her, not as some passionate men do their wives, with rage, but with reason.

Two things are considerable in all admonitions to thy wife.

(1.) That they be given privately. To do it publicly before children and servants is likelier to provoke than to profit. Besides, it will make her contemptible to her family, and thereby they will be emboldened to reject her authority.

(2.) That they be delivered patiently, not with passions. Thy admonitions may, as one saith, be warm;—such physic will work the better,—but not scalding hot. If once thou despisest her person, expect that she should despise thy reprehensions. Remember always that she is thy companion and yoke-fellow, drawing with thee, though on the left hand, and sometimes unevenly. Be sure thou do it not publicly. We dress wounds in secret, not in the market. He is but a fool that, like a fowl and full stomach, emptieth himself against his wife whoever standeth by. Nor passionately, with taunting, bitter language. If she taste thy reproof bitter, she will spit it out, not take it down.

3. Provision. The Jewish wives might challenge three things from their husbands as due debts: 1. Food; 2. Apparel; 3. Co-habitation, or the right of the bed, which they draw from Exod. xxi. 10, where it is said, 'If he take him another wife, her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish.' It is most wicked for a husband that hath it to let his wife, which is himself, want. 'No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as the Lord his church,' Eph. v. 29. It is well observed by Zanchy,¹ under these two words, *ἐκτρέφει καὶ θάλπει*, nourisheth and cherisheth, are properly understood food by the first, and raiment by the second; and improperly, by a synecdoche, are all things included that belong to this life. The latter word expresseth, saith Aretius,² the solicitousness and tenderness of a husband in providing for his wife, it being a metaphor from a bird, that sitteth on her eggs, or hovereth with her wings over her young, to keep them warm.

Reader, thy duty is to provide such conveniences for her as are suitable to her relation, and thy quality and condition. Thy wife hath left her father and mother, and all her friends, who were tender of her, for thee, and what a loss will she be at, if she do not find these all in thee? The heathen poet,³ describing a husband, tells us *πατὴρ μὲν γὰρ ἐστὶν αὐτῇ καὶ πότνια μητὴρ, ἥδὲ κασίγνητος*, that he should be both father and mother to his wife.

Naturalists observe of the pie, that he beats away his mate about autumn, lest he should be forced to keep her all the winter, and is fitly made the hieroglyphic of an unkind husband. 'The Lord grant,' saith Naomi, 'that each of you may find rest in the house of her husband,' Ruth i. 9. Rest, not rigour; courtesy, not cruelty; a competent maintenance, not a niggardly allowance, is expected in the house of a husband. Whilst thou livest, let her maintenance be according to thy wealth. Thou wilt not, possibly, under-keep thy cattle, and why shouldst thou under-keep thy wife? When thou diest, let her be left so that she may live like thy wife; and do not, as one saith, beat her when thou art dead, by causing her, through thy churlishness, to want, or to hang upon the cradle. Jesus Christ gave his church his own flesh, rather than she should want food, and his own robes, rather than she should want raiment.

¹ Omnia vitæ necessaria ad duo referuntur, ad alimenta et ad vestimenta. Primum exprimit verbo *ἐκτρέφειν*, alterum verbo *θάλλειν*. Sic idem apostolus omnia necessaria ad hanc vitam, duobus nominibus complexus est, 1 Tim. vi. 8. Est tamen synecdoche, quia iis continentur alia quoque quæ ad idem pertinent.—Zanch., *in loc.*

² In illo verbo cura exprimitur; significat enim more gallinæ incubare, et calore factum partui idoneum reddere.—Aret. *in* Eph. v.

³ Homer.

Surely that head, husband, wants wit, that suffereth the body, his wife, to go hungry or naked. Christ took great care of his spouse when he was dying; then his love shewed itself in all his colours. Friends at parting shew most kindness. The love of a husband to his wife must outlast this life. He must not, when dying, so much remember that he is a father, as to forget that he is a husband, but mind the root before the branches.

In all her troubles thy duty is to be tender of her. When Hannah was perplexed for her want of children, how affectionately doth Peninnah persuade her: 'Why weepest thou? Why is thine heart troubled? Am not I better to thee than ten sons?' 1 Sam. i. 8. So be thou her comfort, not as many are, her corrosive.

He that considereth how uneasy the wife's yoke is—she conceiveth with much sorrow; carrieth her burden up and down in her womb, many times with great trouble; brings it forth into the world with so much pain that a mother once said, I had rather die in battle ten times over than bring forth but once only,¹ (hence the hieron pella,² that bringeth forth with such pain that the blood trickleth out of her eyes, is the emblem of a woman in travail); and brings up her child with no small care and grief, losing many hours' sleep in the night, and much comfort in the day, to suckle and tend it; besides, how she meets with many unkindnesses and provocations from children and servants more than the man, being constantly amongst them—he, I say, that considereth these things wisely and seriously, cannot but be convinced that he ought not to rule over her with rigour, but to make her condition as comfortable as he can, both by nourishing and cherishing her whilst he is with her, and providing for her sufficiently, to the utmost of his power, when God shall take him from her. But, alas! where are the husbands that bear that affection to their wives, that pray and discourse piously with their wives, and that make that provision for their wives which God and conscience command them? Surely, if Diogenes were alive, he might take his candle and lantern again at noonday, and go into our market-places to find out a man a good husband.

Thus, reader, I have finished what I intended to offer thee in reference to this relation. Shall I persuade thee to love thy wife cordially, to instruct her constantly, and to provide for her competently, and all out of conscience to God's command? Oh, it is thy privilege that thou mayest be honouring and serving thy Maker, which is thy husband! Whilst thou art honouring and serving

¹ Decies in bello mori malle quam parere vel semel adhuc.—*Medea in Eurip.*

² Qu., 'heron (pelargos)'?—*Ed.*

thy wife, do not, as many, who, because they are married to a wife, give a bill of divorce to godliness; like him in the Scripture, who, being invited with others to a costly supper, Luke xiv. 20, returned of them all the worst answer, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' The other guests were mannerly: 'I pray thee have me excused,' saith the purchaser, ver. 18; 'I pray thee have me excused,' saith the other, ver. 19; but this is peremptory, 'I cannot come.' The others plead an inconveniency—they could not well attend the feast because of their farms; but this pleads an utter impossibility, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' There was in the carnal judgment of the two former some discommodity in going; but in the cursed opinion of this latter, an absolute necessity of staying away. Oh, monstrous ingratitude, to abuse that to a curse, and to turn it into poison, which God bestowed as a great comfort and choice blessing!

Reader, remember that God hath not given thee thy wife, as Saul did Michal to David, to be a snare to thee, that at last he might slay thee, but to be Milehah, a woman of counsel to thee in the best things, that he might save thee; therefore 'dwell with thy wife as a man of knowledge, giving honour to her as the weaker vessel, as heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered,' 1 Pet. iii. 7.

A good wish about a husband's duty, wherein the former particulars are epitomised.

The relation of a husband, speaking both my dignity, that I am the head of my wife, and my duty, to study and design, as the head doth for the body, her comfort and welfare, I wish in general that I may never be so mindful of my dominion as to forget those duties which my God hath annexed to this relation; but that, as I am higher in honour, so I may also be above her in holiness, able and faithful to guide and instruct her in the path to happiness. Lord, let me never be of their number who will be figures to stand before their wives in the concernments of this world, but are cyphers alone, standing for nothing in the affairs of the other world; but enable me to carry myself as one espoused to Christ in this relation of a husband, helping her in my place and to my power in the things that relate to this life, but especially affording her my utmost assistance, that she may attain the inheritance of the saints in light.

I wish that, as my God is ever faithful in his covenant to me, so I may be always mindful of my covenants to him. All his ways to me are mercy and truth ; his faithfulness never faileth. Though heaven and earth pass away, yet not a tittle of his word shall be unfulfilled. All his words are oaths for their certainty, and all his promises are the sure mercies of David. Shall I be false to him who is so fast to me ? If it be unlawful to deceive a man who deludes me, how sinful is it to be unfaithful to my God, who is thus faithful to me ? If he who telleth lies shall in nowise enter into heaven, how certainly shall I, if I foreswear myself, be cast into hell ? Lord, cause me so to consider that my wedding bond to my wife hath thee for a witness, and to this day is in thine hand, that I may never give thee cause to put it in suit in thy court of justice, and to take its forfeiture by my dealing treacherously with my companion, and the wife of my covenant.

I wish that the thought of my dissolution may make me the more holy in this relation, that because I must shortly die and leave her, I may therefore do the more good to her, and receive the more good from her, whilst I live and enjoy her. My life, alas ! is but a small spot of time ; now a flood, by and by an ebb, and then I launch into the ocean of eternity. Now I live, anon I die, and then I must answer for my carriage in this condition. Oh that the consideration of my particular reckoning may cause me to be the more religious, that I may be the more heavenly in all my converses with my wife, because I must shortly lie down in the earth ! Lord, since I must within a few days put off the garment of this relation, which is now my comfort and ornament, let thy Spirit so embroider it with grace, and enable me so to perfume it with myrrh, aloes, and cassia, that when I shall be unclothed I may not be found naked, but clothed with my house that is from heaven.

I wish that love may act its part lively in every passage of this relation, and that my heart may be seen in my hand—I mean, my affection be visible in all my actions towards her, that though I might be much bold in Christ, as Paul wrote to Philemon, ver. 8, to enjoin her that which is convenient, yet for love's sake I may rather entreat her. How sad is her condition, by reason of sin ! Surely she may say, in the words of Hannah, ' I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit.' She conceiveth with sorrow, bringeth forth with much pain, and in bringing up her children often misseth of desired pleasure. Her fears disquiet her in the night, and her cares disturb her in the day. Her sons are possibly Benonis, sons of her sorrows, and her servants Barabbases, sons of confusion. Through

her whole life the yoke of subjection is on her neck, and shall I rule over her with rigour, Mal. ii. 13, adding affliction to the afflicted, and wounding one whom God hath wounded? Should I cause her to sigh, by reason of her bondage, and to compass the Lord's altar about with tears and weeping, her cry would go up to heaven, for God hath a tender respect for oppressed wives, as well as afflicted widows, and he would bring some judgment on me to avenge the quarrel of his covenant. Oh let me never, like a Nabal, tyrannise and trample on my wife, as if she were my footstool, when God hath made her my fellow, and making her life, like the Israelites sojourning in Marah, full of mourning and murmuring, crying and complaining; but let her be to me, as Ezekiel's wife to him, the delight of mine eyes, and as the church to Christ, Cant. iv. 9, the ravisher of my heart, that I may always cheer her affectionately, and cherish her tenderly, as the Lord the church.

The comfort of my life doth not a little depend upon my love to my wife. If I, like Lamech, carry myself fiercely and furiously as a lion, if she be as meek as a lamb, my house may degenerate from a society of civil men into a den of savage and ravenous beasts. Oh what a sad resemblance of hell is a brawling, cursing house! Though my wife be as cold as a flint, for me to be always, as steel, grating on her, will at last bring forth fire, and, behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! If the chief strings in the viol jar, the music is all marred. Why should I, by my passion, turn my house, which should be a Bethel, into a Babel of confusion? 1 Kings xix. 11, My God delights not to manifest himself in blustering winds, or in frightful earthquakes, but in a still, low voice. If my house be in a flame, I undo myself by forcing away my best friend; but if I live in love and peace, the God of love and peace will live with me. Lord, who hast appointed this holy ordinance, the first that ever was under heaven, to be some poor resemblance of that sweet communion which thine shall have in heaven one with another, and all, with thy dear self and Son; give me some knowledge of that love thou bearest to me, and of that delight I shall one day have in thee, by that love I bear to, and that delight I have in, her whom thou hast given into my bosom. Thou hast commanded me to love my wife as Christ loveth his spouse. My Saviour's love is chaste; there is not the least shadow of impurity in any of his commands. His love is constant. Having loved his own, he loves them to the end. Death itself could not burst asunder the cords of his love. His love is fervent; he was nothing else but a lump of love. His desire is to her, and his

whole delight is in her. He passeth by all others as nettles and thorns, but she is in his eye the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys. Oh that my soul might in these things follow my dearest Saviour! My God hath told me that I must love my wife as myself. My love to myself is hot, above that to any other in the world. How tender am I of myself under any malady! how pitiful towards myself in any misery! how patient towards myself when I discover many infirmities! My love to myself is hearty. None ever was false in his love to himself, though many be feigned in their love to others. Lord, help me, that my love to her whom I call *My love* may be perfect, like Jonathan's to David; that my heart may be knit to her, and I may love her as my own soul; and since she hath left father, mother, brother, and sister for me, she may find the affection of all those relations, and far more, in me. And let my love be perpetual; let not its complexion be like aguish bodies, sometimes burning hot, and at other times shivering cold, but, as the sun, let it always be going forth in its full strength; and oh that to this end it might be pure love, not for lust or lucre, but whereas others love the wealth, I may love the wife; whereas others love portions and comeliness only, I may love her person and her godliness chiefly, and that because thou, O fairest of ten thousands, whose lovely image is beautiful in her, hast commanded and commended it.

I wish that my love to my wife may be like Christ's to his church, as well in its goodness as in its greatness; I mean, that my chiefest endeavour may be that she may be sanctified and cleansed, and at last be presented to the blessed and beautiful bridegroom, a gracious and glorious spouse, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. Oh how industriously did my Redeemer endeavour his church's renovation and sanctity! how affectionately doth he beseech her to be holy! how fervently doth he beg of his Father to make her holy! how willingly did he broach his heart, and pour out his blood to wash her from her unholiness! how plentifully doth he pour down his Spirit to work her to holiness! His birth was that she might be born again, and born holy; his life was to set her a copy of holiness; his death was to purchase for her a new stock of holiness. He 'gave himself for her, that he might redeem her from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' His precepts, his prayers, his tears, his blood, his birth, his life, his death, his resurrection, his intercession, are all for her holiness and purity. His name is called Jesus, because he saves his people, not in, but from, their sins and unholiness. He doth not think himself perfect till his body be in heaven. O my soul, when

wilt thou imitate this lovely, lively pattern, and work hard in thy petitions to God, and woo hard in thy persuasions to thy wife, that she may be pure ! Doth not thine heart ache to think that the object of thy dearest love and favour should be the object of God's greatest hatred and fury ! that the companion of thy youth, who hath lain in thy bosom, whom thou hast so often embraced, should be a companion of frightful devils, and lie in the lake of fire and brimstone for ever and ever ! Canst thou see thy wife posting in the way of perdition, hastening to hell, and never warn her of her danger, or ask her why she doth so ! Is this thy kindness to thy friend ? Ah, where are thy bowels ? Lord, since thou hast called me to be the head, help me to guide and direct, to see and speak, both to thy Majesty in humble supplications, and to her in hearty and serious expostulations, that I may be ministerially, what thy Son is meritoriously, the saviour of my body. I have found a costly feast in my Father's family ; the house is not so full but still there is room ; there is nothing wanting but comers and company, and shall I suffer one so near me to starve for want of knowledge where it is to be had ? Oh, let thy goodness to me cause me to persuade, and let thy goodness to her enable me to prevail, that she may taste and see that thou art gracious !

I wish that I may naturally give the honey of sweetness and love, yet when provoked by sin against God, the sting of reproof, that I may bear with my wife in all things save wickedness. If I nourish her natural diseases, I kill her body ; if I cherish her spiritual distempers, I damn her soul. And shall I, through cursed fondness, flatter her into the unquenchable fire ? Lord, cause me not only to wink at her weaknesses, and to hide them from the world's eye, but also to observe any wickedness she shall be guilty of, and to set it so in order before her eyes that thou mayest cast it behind thy back ; yea, Lord, help me to hearken to all her holy counsels, and to hear thee speaking by her, as well as to desire her to hearken to me ; but let me never submit to any wicked advice, lest thou judge me at last, as thou didst Adam at first, for hearkening to the voice of my wife.

I wish that I may not, as some husbands, who dwell with their wives as brutes, understanding nothing in marriage but the meaning of carnal desires and the language of lust, yet deal worse with the wives of their bosoms than with their beasts, and deny them what is convenient for their outward well-being ; but that both my person and portion may be for her comfort in health, and for her cordial in sickness, and employed upon all occasions, though no

for the pampering of her pride, or nourishment of any sin, yet in a moderate way for her service. When my God gave himself to my soul, he gave me all he had also, and thought nothing too much for me, and shall I, who have not spared myself from her, think everything too good for her? If she brought a portion, what is become of it? Was it laid out to purchase her misery and poverty? If she did not, yet she is my wife, and both nature and Scripture command me to allow her answerable to my wealth and her wants. Oh that I might be as Elkanah to Hannah, better to her than ten sons, than all relations. Lord, whilst I live make me so loving and industrious, that rather myself than my wife may lack. Let her body never want food and raiment, nor her soul the gospel feast, or the robes of thy Son's righteousness; and when I die, whomsoever I neglect, if by thy providence I am able, let me make for her a comfortable provision, that when I am happy in heaven, my other half may not, through my unworthiness, be miserable on earth. If it be thy pleasure that I shall die poor—for my portion, through infinite grace, is not in this life—then let it please thy Majesty to grant me this mercy, that I may leave my fatherless children with thee, and bid my widow trust in thee. Let not my Lord be angry, and I will speak further on her behalf. In what want soever I shall leave this world, let me leave my wife the poor, or rather the rich, Levite's portion, that though she hath no part or inheritance here below, Num. xviii. 20, yet thou thyself mayest be the portion of her cup, and the lot of her inheritance. Oh, then the lines will fall to her in pleasant places, and she will have a goodly heritage.

Behold, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but dust and ashes. Let not my Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Do thou so adorn me with grace, suitable to this relation, as a bridegroom is decked with ornaments, that when I cease to be a husband, I may know what it is to be the bride, the Lamb's wife, Hosea ii. 19, not as I do in this imperfect condition, where thou hast only betrothed me unto thyself in righteousness and judgment, and in loving-kindness and in mercy, and so whilst I am present in the body I am absent from the Lord; but in the highest degree, in that place where thou wilt marry me to thyself for ever. Kiss me with the sweetest kisses of thy lips, lodge me all night between thy breasts, where is the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the true bridegroom and the voice of the true bride; where is the voice of them that say and sing, Praise the Lord of hosts, for the Lord is good, for his mercy endureth for ever. Amen.

CHAPTER V.

How a Christian may exercise herself to godliness in the relation of a wife, with a good wish about the duty of a wife.

I come, in the next place, to the duty of the wife, and to shew wherein the power of religion doth manifest itself in that relation.

It is observable that the Holy Ghost, wherever he mentioneth the duties of husbands and wives, doth, in the first place, always set down the duty of the wife, as Eph. v. 22; Col. iii. 18; 1 Peter iii. 1-3; of which a double reason is given by learned Davenant:¹ first, Because the duty of a wife is most difficult. Affection or love, which is the husband's chief duty, is pleasant; but subjection or obedience, which is the wife's main duty, is painful. Subjection is so much against the hair, that many, like untamed heifers, kick and fling if the yoke come but near their necks; though the harder their task is, the greater is their credit if they perform it conscientiously. Secondly, Because the love of a husband doth very much depend upon the subjection of a wife. Women cannot rationally expect that their husbands should affect them, unless they obey their husbands. An obedient wife is the likeliest woman in the world to command her husband.

Reader, if God hath called thee to this relation, make his word thy rule, and godliness thy business in it: 'Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised,' Prov. xxxi. 30. Inward beauty is indeed praiseworthy: 'She shall be praised.' A gracious wife is a credit to herself, and her sex a crown; a choice ornament to her second self, Prov. xii. 4. Both her holiness and her husband will praise her.

1. Her holiness: 'Her works praise her in the gate,' Prov. xxxi. 31. When others have nothing but the black beauty-spots of sin to set them forth, pride compasseth them about as a chain, and atheism covereth them as a garment; grace is her glory, and godliness is her comeliness. Religion buildeth her such an honourable monument, that neither age nor hell can ever pull it down. How famous are many women in Scripture for their faith! 'Some of

¹ 1. Quia difficilior est subjectionis quam dilectionis officium præstare. Amare enim est jucundum, sed subicere et parere alteri plerumque molestum. 2. Quia dilectio viri ut plurimum pendet ex debita subjectione feminae.—*Daven.* in Col. iii. 18.

them believed, and of the chief women not a few,' Acts xvii. 4. When the apostles proved cowards, many women followed Christ to his shameful cross; and the Holy Spirit records it to their eternal credit: Mat. xxvii. 55, 'And many women were there.' The feminine gender hath sometimes done more worthily than the masculine. The weaker vessels have held out in the hottest fires. In the Marian days some women proved eminent martyrs. Though the philosopher tell us that woman is only *σφάλμα φύσεως*, the aberration of nature, and many vilify them as persons of no worth, yet Scripture, the word of truth, dignifieth them as consisting of the same essential parts, and capable of the same celestial perfections, with men. How highly doth God commend them when they are holy! and for aught any man can tell, a woman, next the human nature of Christ, hath the greatest place of any creature in heaven.

2. Her husband will praise her. A gracious wife satisfieth a good husband, and silenceth a bad one: 'Her children arise and call her blessed: her husband also, and he praiseth her,' Prov. xxxi. 28. Budæus and Paræus do both speak their wives to be of extraordinary worth. Mr Whately of Banbury doth publish to the world the relative piety of his wife, how she performed her duty every day as exactly as was possible.

The wife's special duty consisteth principally in these particulars:—

First, In honouring her husband's person. The Persian ladies have the resemblance of a foot worn in the top of their coronets, in token that the top of their glory doth stoop to their husband's feet. The moon, in the sun's absence, takes upon her the government of the heavens; but in his presence she veils herself. The wife, next to her husband, shines in her house, far above all those stars which are fixed there; but God hath appointed that she give place to her husband, and be willing to prefer him. Rebecca, when she approached Isaac, 'took a veil and covered her head,' Gen. xxiv. 56, in token of subjection to her husband; and 'for this cause,' namely, in sign of subjection, 'ought the women to have power,' that is, a veil, 'over their heads,' 1 Cor. xi. 10, saith the apostle. That this veiling the face is a token of great reverence, we find in Elijah, who, when God appeared and talked to him in Mount Horeb, he covered his face. Sulpitius Gallus is said to have divorced his wife because she appeared abroad with her face uncovered. And it was an old custom among the Romans, that the woman on her marriage-day was brought to her husband with a

yellow veil, called *flammeum*, cast over her face.¹ Every woman, as a woman, is inferior to man, much more as a wife; and therefore it is but natural and rational that she reverence her superior. 'Nevertheless,' saith the apostle, 'let the woman see that she reverence her husband,' Eph. v. 33. This subjection to the husband is indeed the relation grace of the wife, and therefore always minded where her duties are mentioned, Eph. v.

This reverence must be inwardly, in her affections; she must love him as a member, and fear him as a head. Her fear indeed must not be like that of a servant to his master, nor that of a child to his father. From the former it differs specifically; for the slave fears the rod, not the person; the wife feareth the person, not the rod. From the latter it differeth gradually; according to the degree of the distance, such is the degree of reverence; the child's distance being much greater, his reverence is, or should be, greater also; but her fear must be like that of the church to Christ, an acknowledgment of his superiority over her, and an unwillingness to displease him in anything, and a dread lest she should offend him. When the judgment consents to the husband's authority, the will resolves to own it in all her actions, and the heart hath a dread upon it, lest she should disown it; then she is said to fear him, and not before. The apostle Peter, writing to wives, wishing them so to live that their unbelieving husbands may be won; 'Whilst they behold,' saith he, 'your chaste conversation, coupled with fear,' 1 Peter iii. 24. A reverent wife may possibly make a religious husband. The head may fare much the better for the good temperature of the body. Fear in her may be instrumental to work faith in him.² There was one woman famous, or rather infamous, in the world for the want of this fear; but, reader, observe the sad fruit of it. Michal, David's wife, despised him in her heart, 1 Chron. xv. 29. Here was her fault: instead of fearing him as her head, she despised him, and that for his holiness, in her heart. But mark also the fruit: 'Therefore Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no child until the day of her death.' God hath barren wombs for such bold, impudent women. If she slight her head, God will

¹ Nuptiæ vocantur et connubium Latine, a nubendo; quod virgines, cum ducerentur ad matrimonium, se nubent, i.e., obvelarent pudoris ergo; et ut darent testimonium suæ ad virum subjectionis. Γάμον vocant Græci, quidam δάμον, quasi dictum volunt a δομάζειν domare, quod domentur virgines et viris subjiciantur. Alii volunt, παρὰ τὸ δεδμᾶσθαι ἀλλήλοις τοὺς συζύγους, quod conjuges simul vinciantur.—A. Val. Mazim., lib. vi. cap. 3.

² Cordis dimissio fons externæ subjectionis est; sine hac aut coacta aut simulata omnis subjectio.—Davenant in Col. iii. 18.

scourge her body. Barrenness in those days made women contemptible. Then when Elizabeth, Luke i. 25, had a child, she triumpheth: 'God hath taken away my reproach.' Now because David was contemptible in her eye, God made her contemptible in every eye. And it is further remarkable, that Michal, having no natural children, would needs have some adopted children of her sister Merab's; but God punished her in them also. He disgraced her in hanging and bringing them to disgraceful ends. Barren Michal hath many daughters, who despise their husbands; but let such consider that they shall one way or other feel God's anger. Though they will not fear their dying husbands, yet they shall find that 'it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,' 2 Sam. vi. 23, and xxi. 8, 9.

This reverence must be outward, in their expressions and actions; Sarah called Abraham lord, 1 Pet. iii. 6, not out of flattery, but to acknowledge his authority; not as desirous to humour his pride, but as willing to know her own place. Jezebel and Zipporah are both stigmatised in holy writ, for their saucy, sinful language to their husbands, Exod. iv. 25; 1 Kings xxi. 7. If a woman answer her husband, it must be with modesty; if she would advise him, it must be with lenity; and if she admonish him, with much humility. If she speak of him, it must be respectfully; if she speak to him, it must be reverently. The humble posture of her body upon all occasions, should speak the reverent temper of her mind. The fault of some wives is very foul, who, out of disrespect, refuse to call their husbands by their names, but have some passionate periphrasis to decipher them by—this man, or this fellow, or, it may be, this fool; as Saul in derision called David the son of Jesse, and the Jews in contempt called Christ the carpenter's son.

The woman is called the glory of the man, 1 Cor. xi. 7, because it is a high honour to him that so excellent a creature as a woman should be his inferior. Surely, then, wives which refuse this reverence are their husbands' shame and disgrace. When once a woman harbours contemptible thoughts of her husband, this one evil weed will so overrun and spread in her words and actions, that no good thing will grow by it. Oh it is a most doleful living, where the wife, instead of reverencing, is always railing at, and wrangling with, her husband. There are wives that are worse than their dogs; their dogs, though they bark at strangers, will not bark at their master; but they spare not the husband, the master of the house, in their cursed peevishness and passions. Nay, the very devils amongst them have order; they will acknowledge a prince, a

superior among them; but these wives will acknowledge none above them, but must rule all themselves, or else the house must quickly be made too hot for their husbands. A serpent is as good a companion as such a wife; for a serpent, if it kill, doth it suddenly; but such a wife makes her husband die lingeringly, for his whole life is a civil death. I thank my God, I never so much as tasted those sour herbs; but truly I have from my heart pitied some husbands, whose outward beings have by such wives been made as miserable as is almost possible on this side hell. It is a thousand pities that the tongues of such shrews have not as many blisters as their jaws have teeth. It is never better with their husbands than when they are hoarse; and it were well if such blemishes of their sex, such monsters in nature, and such plagues to a family, were gagged till they had learned better language.

Some of the Rabbis give us this reason why she was made of a rib, taken from under the arms of Adam, that she might acknowledge her subjection to him, as well as that he be minded of giving protection to her. And indeed the titles given to the husband in Scripture, speak both his superiority and her subjection. He is called her lord, her master, her guide, her head, 1 Pet. iii. 6; Esther i. 17; Prov. ii. 17; 1 Cor. xi. 3. How many reasons are laid down for this reverence?

1. Because the woman was made after the man, therefore she should not go before the man. That which was first in this sense, must not be last; and that which is last, first. 1 Tim. ii. 13. 'For Adam was first formed, then Eve.'

2. Because the woman was made of man. 1 Cor. xi. 8, 'For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man.' She is a branch springing from him as her root, and did receive her original and being, under God, from him. Now the effect is ever less noble and inferior to the cause.

3. Because the woman was made for man. 1 Cor. xi. 9, 'Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man.' In reason, that which serveth to any end, is less than the end to which it serveth.

4. Because the woman was first in sin, Gen. iii. 16; 1 Tim. ii. 14. Sin brings shame; therefore she that was first in sin, must not expect to be first in honour. Since he sinned in being ruled by her, it is fit that she should be ruled by him.

5. Because the man is the head of the woman, Eph. v. 23. The members are subject to the head, without rebelling or reasoning. This duty of reverence is natural as well as necessary.

6. Because the man is the image and glory of God, 1 Cor. xi. 7. In man there is a resemblance of God's dominion and authority, being lord of the world. The woman is the image and glory of God, according to her original creation, for she was made as holy and happy as the man; but not according to her personal relation to her husband; for dominion, which is the man's privilege, is God's glory and prerogative, and not subjection, which is the woman's duty.

7. Because God hath given the man dominion over his wife: 'Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee,' Gen. iii. 15. 'The cities,' saith Israel to the king of Ammon, 'which thy god Chemosh hath given thee to possess, wilt thou not possess them?' Judges xi. 25; so say I. The superiority which our God hath given men to enjoy, shall they not enjoy it?

Reader, if thou hast any fear of God, I know thou wilt fear thy husband, and then thy language to him, and of him, will be, not rude but reverent, and thy carriage will be, not pouting and lowering, frowning and fuming, but such as is clothed with the garment of meekness. 2. In obeying his lawful precepts; thy work is not to complain of, but to comply with, thy husband's commands; obedience will arise naturally from reverence, and is the best testimony of it. Many women are noted for questioning and quarrelling at their husbands' power, but few for obeying their husbands' lawful pleasure. Sarah was chronicled and crowned in Scripture for obeying Abraham; but it is clear she had never a natural daughter. The Rabbis tell us that ten eabs or measures of speech descended into the world, and the woman took away nine of them. Many are indeed,—I speak not of all,—full of words, but barren of works; apter to dispute their husband's authority than to obey it. But holy women will be like Dorcas, full of good works, and know the place in which God hath set them. How infamous is that family where the wife, like Jezebel, rules the roast, and the husband, like Ahab, lets her do what she listeth! If the moon get the upper hand of the sun, the wife of the husband, the next thing to be expected is an eclipse of the honour of that house. That house, saith one, is a hutch-backed house, where the man makes himself an underling to his wife. 'Wives,' saith the apostle, 'submit yourselves to your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let wives be to their own husbands in everything,' Eph. v. 22-24. In which words the Spirit of God gives women,

First, A precept to subjection: 'Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands.' The word *ὑποτάσσεσθε*, submit, signifieth a subordination, or orderly subjection of the wife to the authority of her husband. A commanding wife inverts the order of nature, as well as the ordinance of the Creator. A wife is made to be a help to a man, not to be the head of a man. Ahasuerus' law was written in the tables of those heathen hearts, that every man should bear rule in his house, Esther i. 22.

Secondly, The spring of this subjection, as unto the Lord. Her obedience to her husband must proceed from conscience to God.¹ It will not be a sufficient excuse for her to say, He doth not love me, therefore I will not obey him; for not the husband's affection to her, but her affection to God, must be the great motive to subjection. If my husband fail in his duty, I suffer; but if I fail in my duty, I sin. The former is a cross, but the latter is a curse. If the husband do not mind his duty, but is wicked, the wife hath the more need to do her duty, that she may win him, 1 Pet. iii. 1, 2. Besides, it is God that commandeth this obedience, and he will requite it.

Thirdly, The ground or reason for this subjection; for the husband is the head of the wife: his superiority commandeth subjection from her. It is natural for the body to obey the head. What an uncomely sight is it to see the shoulders above the head; the wife to lord it over her husband.

Fourthly, The pattern. 'Therefore, as the church is subject to Christ, let the wife be subject to her husband.'² The obedience of the church is cordial; sincerity is her glory—she doth the will of God from the heart. The obedience of the church is constant; it runneth parallel with her life. 'I have inclined my heart to keep thy precepts always, to the end:' thus should wives obey their husbands. Their hearts should accompany their hands, and their obedience should last whilst they live. As a fair, gilded glass is of little worth unless it represent the image of him that looks into it, so a beautiful wealthy wife is worth little, unless she resemble her husband's disposition in her carriage and conditions; I mean, so far as she may with a good conscience.

Fifthly, The extent: 'So ought the wife to be subject to her

¹ Subjectio creaturæ unius ad alteram nihil aliud est ex parte Dei, quam divina dispositio qua imperfectiora perfectioribus subordinata sunt, ut ab his perficiantur, regantur et conserventur.—*Dav. in Col.*

² Πειθαρχία ἐστὶ τῆς εὐπραξίας μήτηρ, obedientia mater felicitatis. Verum et vetus adagium.

husband in everything'—*i.e.*, in everything that is lawful. If the husband enjoin what is inconvenient, she may meekly desire it may be waived, and humbly offer her reasons; but if he persist, she must obey, though it be painful. If it be possible, she must set about it. And truly, though thy husband be never so peevish, endeavour to thine utmost to please him; for though he take all thy actions ill, yet thy God will take them well, and so doing thou shalt be sure to please God, who, the harder thy task is, by reason of thy husband's untowardliness, will take it the kinder at thy hands. Only, if he command what is sinful, she may, nay, she must, refuse to obey him, for then he commandeth beyond his power. It is said, therefore, Col. iii. 19, 'Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.' Mark, *in the Lord*, not *against the Lord*. As God must be loved above a husband, so God must be pleased before a husband. As thy husband is to be loved next to God, so he must be pleased next to God, but not before God. If a justice of peace command his neighbour to take up arms against the king, he is not to be obeyed. If his neighbour obey him, they are both traitors. But what a justice commands an inferior officer, in the defence of his prince, or in obedience to him, must be obeyed.

Indeed, sad are the consequences of unruly wives; as when the order of nature is disturbed, there ensue great inconveniences, as earthquakes, thunders, and deluges; so when this order of the wife's subjection to her husband is denied, there follow sad inconveniences. Their hearts tremble like an earthquake with jealousy of each other; their house is full of the thunder of brawling and scolding, and their whole lives with an inundation of weeping and bitterness.

The obedience of the wife must be performed willingly.¹ If she do the thing commanded for the matter, and do it not in a cheerful manner, her obedience loseth its lustre, it is little worth. When a man payeth his just debts, but grumblingly, and, as we say, with much ado, because the law would otherwise seize him, it is a sign of a dishonest mind.

Truly, many that make a great profession are exceeding faulty in this particular of subjection. The geographer tells us of the Italian women, that they are angels in the street, saints in the church, and devils in their houses. I wish it might not be said so of many English women. Sure I am, the gospel suffers by the unquiet carriage of some professors.

¹ Sic placeat uxor voluntati conjugis, ut non displiceat voluntati conditoris.—*Greg.*

Some Hebrews¹ observe that woman was made of a bone, to shew her hard and intolerable nature ; and others tell us, that in the controversy of free-will, it seems without controversy, that when man lost free-will, the woman found it, and still keeps it ; but they are commanded, saith the apostle, to be under obedience, 1 Cor. xiv. 34, as also, saith the law, even that law which God himself preached to the woman, Gen. iii. 15. It is no less than a breach of God's law for a man to make himself lower than God hath set him. A king will never thank the mayor of a town for surrendering his place to his inferior, and suffering his inferior to trample his authority under his feet. God will never thank those fond or foolish husbands that deliver up that dominion which he hath given them, and suffer their wives to triumph over it, and trample on it. In permitting themselves thus to be trampled on, they suffer the image and glory of God to be trampled on. It is not kindness, but baseness, not humility, but iniquity, to be ruled by one whom he should rule. Such a person, like a cowardly captain, leaves his place and station without order to a lower officer, and must expect to be accountable for it to the Lord of hosts. But still the husband must rule, not with rigour, but with such mildness and moderation as is answerable to so near a relation.

The wife also, by taking upon her this power, falleth into a damnable error ; besides, the effects of a disobedient wife are sad to the whole family. When the head commandeth the feet to walk, the hands to work, and the other members to do their peculiar parts and office, and they disobey, what will follow but the destruction of the whole body ? Oh, what a Bedlam house is that, where the wife, instead of obeying, is often scolding at her husband ! When she should be as David's harp, to allay Saul's fury, to abate her husband's anger, she is the evil spirit to kindle and increase it. Some women, like the harlot, are loud and stubborn, Prov. vii. 11. Though their feet are fettered when their husbands bid them go, yet their tongues are not tied, but run fast enough in reviling and reproaching their heads that own them. The disloyal wife is usually loudest, and nettles her husband out of his power ; she is loud and stubborn.

Thirdly, In furthering the good of her family and husband.

1. Of the family. Therefore she is fitly termed a housewife ; and the apostle chargeth women to be keepers at home, Tit. ii. 5. And to the credit of Sarah, it is recorded, when the angel asked Abraham where she was, he said, ' Behold, in the tent,' Gen. xviii.

¹ Ex. Merceer.

9. Not, as Dinah, gadding in the fields, nor like Tamar, gazing in the streets, but at her dwelling, in her tent.¹ Phidias, when he was to draw a woman, painted her sitting under a snail's shell, signifying that she should imitate the snail, which goeth not abroad without her house on her back. Whilst her husband is careful abroad, she must not be careless at home. The Roman husbands, when they brought their wives first home, delivered the keys of their houses to them, intimating that they must take the care of domestical affairs.

The Egyptians gave no shoes to their wives, but suffered them to go barefoot, that they might stay always within-doors.² The man after God's own heart compares a wife to a vine, which groweth by the house side, which doth both nourish and delight the inhabitants therein with its curious clusters of grapes, Ps. cxxviii. ; and the son tells us of a harlot, that 'her feet abide not in her house,' Prov. vii. 11. Nay, the apostle joineth 'chaste women' and 'keepers at home' together, Tit. ii. 5. She that keepeth her house most, keepeth her chastity best ; she that goeth often without cause or calling out of her own doors, may be easily drawn to step into another's house and bed.

Women ought to take care of their husbands' affairs within-doors, to see that her servants be employed, her children and servants supplied with necessaries, and that nothing be either wanted or wasted. Some women are like a gouty leg, they love to lie soft, to be wrapped warm, to have much tendance, but in the meantime they sit still and do nothing. Some tell us the merchant must ask his factor whether he shall thrive or no. Most men may ask their wives whether they shall thrive or no. If she be lavish, though he be laborious, a great estate may quickly come to little.

The last chapter of Proverbs is an excellent looking-glass for women to dress themselves by every morning, where Solomon, or rather Bathsheba, inspired by the Holy Ghost, sets her forth in all her ornaments, in which we may observe, first her value, and then her virtues.

First, Her value, ver. 10. She is more worth than her weight in gold : 'Who can find a virtuous woman ? for her price is far above rubies.' She is, like a precious jewel, rare and seldom seen,

¹ Uxor quasi unxor ; domum enim viri deducta, oleo postes inungebat.

² Hanc ob causam jubet apostolus uxores esse φιλάνδρους και οικόφους ; et refert Plutarchus Egyptias mulieres calecis omnino usas non fuisse, ut domi suæ discerent residere, et domestica munia obire.

hard to come by, but being once got off, to be esteemed at a high rate. A good wife is inestimable wealth; he that hath thousands in his trunks hath no treasure comparable to her.

Secondly, Her virtues.

1. Her prudence. She knoweth when and what to speak: 'She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and the law of grace is under her lips,' ver. 26. Her words have their weight, for her tongue is like choice silver.

2. Her charity. She is no churl, but as she getteth much, so she giveth somewhat out of her earnings to others: ver. 20, 'She stretcheth her hands to the poor; yea, she stretcheth her hands to the needy.' As Placilla, the wife of Theodosius, she may be called the poor man's friend.

3. Her piety. She is not of their number who are well habited but ill hearted, but 'strength and honour are her clothing, and she shall rejoice in time to come,' ver. 25. Her great care is for gracious clothing, such as will render her glorious in the eyes of God, and angels, and all the saints.

4. Her fidelity. This is generally propounded, ver. 11, 'The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her.' He may commit his estate and household affairs into her hands with confidence; he may trust her to provide food, and work for her children and servants, and to prevent waste in both. Whether he be present or absent, it is all one; for she is both prudent and provident to take care that they neither lack nor lavish, so that he shall have no need of spoil. He shall not be compelled to supply his wants by force or fraud, or any way of wickedness. The word *spoil* is an allusion to soldiers, who, having subdued their enemy's country, and seized the treasures and choicest things of their cities, send them home as spoils to their own families. Now he shall have no necessity of getting riches by robbery, or such indirect courses, for she will take care, and through God's blessing on her industry provide for him and his plentifully; or as some expound the phrase, his family shall be as full of goods as a camp after the sacking of a city. Her faithfulness is amplified by her care of her household.

Two things she is especially mindful of.

First, That all in it mind their work.

Secondly, That none in it have any want. Laziness and lacking she seeks to prevent; diligence and diet she counteth her duty to take care of. It is not in her house, as in many amongst us, where the inhabitants live the life of dogs, in idleness and hunger; for she will see,

1. That all in it work. The rust of idleness shall not eat them up for want of employment; for, 1. She will provide them materials to work with; the mill shall not stand still for lack of corn. Ver. 13, 'She seeketh wool and flax;' such work as is most proper for her maids, and most profitable for her house. If she see it not at home she will seek it abroad, and take pains to fetch in a stock to employ herself and servants.

When she hath provided work, 2. She herself will set them a pattern; she 'worketh willingly with her hands.' She goeth before them in diligence as well as in dignity. She is no such dainty dame as to loiter herself whilst others labour, but 'she layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands handle the distaff,' ver. 19. She counts it no blot or blemish to be seen at her sewing or spinning. Bathsheba thought it would become even the wife of Solomon; and some tell us that the wife of Augustus Cæsar did not play at cards, but work in carding and spinning. Nay, she is early and late at work; she riseth whilst it is night, before day, especially in winter, ver. 15; and 'her candle goeth not out by night,' ver. 18. She sits up as long as is convenient; and whilst she is at it, she doth not play at work. 'She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms,' ver. 17. It was anciently the manner of the Jews to wear long and loose garments, which were no small impediments to them in their walking or working; therefore when they would do anything with diligence, they did gird their clothes about their bodies close. To describe her nimbleness and activeness, how she is not slow and slothful at it, she is set forth to gird her loins with strength, so 1 Kings xviii. 46. And because the strength of one lieth much in their arms, (God's arm is put often for his strength, Deut. v. 15,) therefore, to shew that she worketh her work, as the Hebrew phrase is, it is said she strengtheneth her arm; nay, as she provideth work and giveth them a pattern, so she, 3. Seeth that all in their places be employed. Early in the morning she giveth a task to her maidens, ver. 15. They shall not be tattlers, and tale-bearers, and busy-bodies in other matters for want of work, for she will tell them what their task is.

Further, as she appoints them their part, so she will take care that they perform it: 'She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness,' ver. 27. Though her hands are working, yet her eyes are watching to observe what is done or left undone in the family. The word used of the good wife's looking, is a metaphor from a watchman in a watch-tower,

who, seating himself in that place of advantage for that purpose, looketh carefully on every side, observing who cometh, who goeth, and giving notice to the city of all approaching enemies, that none may surprise them suddenly; so must the wife have her eye upon the behaviour of all in her house.

2. That none in it want, two things are ordinarily needful; she will take care that both be provided. Food, vers. 14, 15, 'She is like the merchants' ships, she bringeth her food from afar;'—*i.e.*, she is as careful to provide meat as work for them. And as she will see that they do their duties, so she will foresee that they shall not want diet; therefore she is compared to a merchant's ship, because she sendeth out one commodity, and fetcheth in another; she exchangeth flax for food, and she and her servants eat of their own earnings; and also because what she hath not about her she will fetch from abroad. 'She riseth whilst it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household,' ver. 15. When she hath laid in provision, she doth not lay it up to moulder, but in the morning alloweth meat, as well as appointeth work, to her maidens. She doth neither pine nor pamper her children and servants, but afford them what is sufficient and convenient for them.

So for raiment; she gives them not only warm diet for their bellies, but also warm clothes for their backs. 'She is not afraid of the snow, for all her house are clothed with scarlet,' or double garments, ver. 21. If a hard winter come she is not much troubled, for herself and her family are clad for all weathers beforehand.

Secondly, Her faithfulness is amplified by her carriage towards her husband, ver. 12. She hath a care of all the rest in her house, that they want nothing fit for them, but she hath a special regard of her husband. The body will not wrong or hurt by its good-will either legs or feet, but it is exceeding tender of the head; 'she will do him good, and not evil, all the days of his life.' The Holy Spirit observeth—1. Her tenderness; and, 2. The term of it; her Christian carriage towards him, and her godly constancy in it. Her carriage: she will do him good, by performing the several duties of her place, by honouring his person, submitting to his lawful pleasure, by furthering his outward wealth and his bodily welfare. And not evil: she will neither impoverish his purse nor blemish his credit, nor any way willingly grieve his spirit. 2. Her continuance in it. Her goodness to him is not like a sunshiny morning, which is soon overcast with a cloud, and so continueth lowering till night; but she doeth him good, and not evil, all the

days of his life. In youth, in age, in prosperity, in adversity, she is constant in her love to him, and officious carriage towards him; in all changes and chances she cleaves to him, and clings about him as ivy to a wall, and will sooner cease to live than leave him.

In the Bohemian persecution, the mayor of Litomeritia condemned twenty-four godly citizens to death, amongst which number one was his son-in-law, for whose life his own daughter fell at his feet and begged hard; but he, harder than a rock, bade her be content, telling her she should have a better husband when he was dead. She replied, You shall never more espouse me to any; and so, beating her breast and tearing her hair, she followed her husband to the river, and when he was cast into the midst of the river, bound, she leaped in and caught him about the middle, but being unable to draw him forth, were both drowned together, and the next day were found embracing one another.

Reader, if thou art a wife, read often the prudence, charity, piety, and fidelity of this virtuous woman: look often into this glass which Bathsheba hath given thee, and labour to resemble this pattern set before thee; be a meet help both to thy household and to thy husband.

It is the observation of Ferus on Gen. ii. 18, where it is said, 'I will make an help meet for him,' *Potuit simpliciter dicere, Faciam ei feminam*, &c. God might have said barely, I will make him a woman, and no more; but God chooseth rather a periphrasis to describe the woman's duty, 'I will make an help meet for him.' Further it is observable,

It is not said, I will make a help for him—for so beasts are helps to men, therefore called *Jumenta a juvando*—but 'I will make a fit or meet help;' in the original it is as before him,¹ that is, answering to him, Gen. ii. 18. The wife to the husband, must be as the lock to the key, answerable and suitable, or else of no use. Rebecca provided such meat as Isaac loved: a wife should observe her husband's disposition, and carry herself accordingly. If he be sad and troubled, she must endeavour to satisfy and comfort him. When Manoah was grieved, saying, 'We shall die, because we have seen God;' his wife cheered him, saying, 'God would never have told us such good news if he had intended any evil to us,' Judges xvii. 22, 23.

In sickness she ought to be specially careful of him, and kind to him. She that is a help at all times will be most helpful at such a time when he cannot help himself. Job's wife was as notorious

¹ Hebrew, *C'negdo*, as one before him.

for her unkindness, as infamous for her counsel to her husband: 'My breath is strange to my wife, though I entreated her, (by a motive that would have melted one as hard as a marble,) for the children's sake of my own body,' Job xix. 17. The lady Eleanor, wife to Prince Edward, when her husband was stabbed with a poisoned knife by a treacherous assassin, and other means proved ineffectual, sucked out the poison when he slept, and without hurt to herself saved his life.¹ The Christian wife of Valdaura, advised to forbear her husband's company, because of his noisome and infectious diseases, did not only refuse to leave him, but delighted in him, notwithstanding his loathsome body, and was to him friend, physician, father, mother, wife, nurse, anything, everything, to do him good.² Nay, the dogs had so much pity as to lick the sores of Lazarus; but many wives now-a-days are so far from sucking their husbands' wounds, or licking their sores, that they, like Job's wife, cannot endure their breath. Nay, when they should be pouring oil into their wounds, like her, Job ii. 9, they are piercing them deeper with their poisonous words. Other women, by their proud, ambitious spirits, instead of lengthening their husbands' lives, bring them to unnatural deaths. The wives of the two Seymours,³ one protector, and the other high-admiral of England, caused such a deadly difference between them, that it ended in the ruin of them both, which made the English historian passionately to cry out, Oh wives, the most sweet poison, the most desired evil in the world! . . . Woman was given to man for a comfort, not for a counsellor, much less a controller. The orator⁴ said of Sicily, A man may seek Sicily in Sicily, it was so much impoverished by the government of Verres. It is as true of wives; a man may seek a wife in a wife, many of them are so much degenerated from their duties; their husbands have the care, but not the comfort of a wife. Nazianzen saith of his mother, that she was a doctress to his father, and a great help to him in matters of piety; but many wives, if they handle their husbands' sores, whether bodily or spiritual, do, as some unfaithful chirurgeon to get more money, make them sorer, or put them to more pain. As Job's friends to him, they pretend to comfort their husbands, and to allay their heaviness; but, alas! they afflict them miserably, and increase their mourning. Surely their husbands may say to them what Job did to his friends, 'Miserable comforters

¹ Camden in Middlesex, Speed Chronicle, p. 630.

² Ludov. Vives, lib. ii. De Christian. Fœmina.

³ Speed Chron. in Life Edw. the Sixth, p. 1117. Spenceer, 433. Sir John Heywood in the Life of Edw. the Sixth, p. 84.

⁴ Cicero, in Ver.

are ye all;' physicians of no value! Wicked Jezebel would comfort her husband in sickness; scoffing Michal would hazard herself to save her husband's life; yet some that pretend to more affection and holiness, are less helpful to their husbands' persons.

4. In loving him above all others. Every wife must esteem highly of her husband, and then her affections will follow her judgment; let him be to thee the most precious of all persons. Some indeed tell us, if their husbands had as good qualities, and as great abilities, as such and such men, then they could love them; but I must tell such women that not the good natures or features of men, but the good pleasure of God, is to be the ground of their love. Besides, these women can love their own crooked, lame, dull, undutiful children, before the straight, quick-witted, and obedient children of others, and why not their husbands!¹ Oh, it is excellent when the wife loves her husband as herself, and looks always upon his person and actions through the spectacles of love! It is observable, that though nature will teach a woman to love her husband, yet God doth also enjoin it, Tit. ii. 4, 'that they love their husbands;' partly because some women have put off nature, and are become wild, without natural affection. Partly because God would have the wife's love to her husband to proceed not so much from an instinct of nature as from obedience to Scripture. How exceedingly doth the church, which is the woman's example, love Christ! her expressions, her actions, do abundantly speak her affection; she calls him her love: 'I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, that ye awake not my love till he please.' Her beloved: 'Behold thou art fair, my beloved, yea pleasant.' Sometimes her voice to him is, 'O thou whom my soul loveth, tell me where thou feedest,' &c. Sometimes her voice to others, 'I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, tell ye him that I am sick of love.' Her desires are like a lover: 'Kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.' And so are her delights: 'I sat under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet unto my taste.' Friend, go thou and do likewise. Let thy love to him be a superlative love; forget thy own people, and thy Father's house, out of affection to thy husband. Say of him, 'He is altogether lovely,' Cant. v. 16; Ps. xlv. 10. Whatsoever pair of lips would be Satan's pair of bellows to blow up coals betwixt thee and thy husband, by stretching any of his words upon the tenters, or making a false comment upon the text of any

¹ Tene amorem, nam, ex eo pendent omnia officia quæ didicisti, et quæ non didicisti.—*Augustine*.

of his works, let them be odious to thee ; oh loathe such a stinking breath !

If the wife do but love her husband, her yoke will not be so grievous to her. As love to God doth exceedingly sweeten his service, and makes it not only more acceptable to him, but also more delightful to us,—hence that of the apostle : ‘ This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments : and his commandments are not grievous,’ 1 John v. 3—so love to a husband will abundantly sweeten her subjection to him, though the load seem to be heavy, when a wife meets with a cross piece especially, yet love will draw it lightly away. A country gentleman, in the late troubles, complained much of quartering a soldier for two or three nights ; the same person quartered twenty revelling gallants a whole month, and thought it no burden ; love to those latter made all trouble and cost little. Some wives murmur much at their yoke of subjection, but truly they have more cause to complain of their want of affection, for love would make their yoke easy ; women that love their gardens will be early in them—work hard all day to make things handsome. Women that love their children count it a play, a pleasure, to tend them, which others would judge no small punishment ; so women that love their husbands would count their moderate commands, and whatsoever they did for them, both easy and delightful.

Some tell us of the palm that, separated from her male, she withers and languisheth, insomuch that one would take it for a dry tree ; but as soon as she can embrace with her boughs him whom she seems to love, her branches take a vigour which visibly makes them grow young again. The comfort of a woman’s life is much bound up in her love to her husband.

One special help whereby a woman may get her heart united to her husband in love is, when she is first married to avoid carefully all occasions of difference. It is very great wisdom at first, especially for a woman to use all means to endear her husband to herself, and herself to her husband. When two boards are first glued together a small matter will loosen them, but if then looked carefully to, when they are once well fastened, the glue being hardened, it will be hard to part them.

5. In endeavouring his spiritual welfare. A woman hath a treble advantage upon her husband, to draw him either to good or evil.

(1.) In regard of opportunities ; she is much with him, night and day, at bed and board.

(2.) In regard of liberty; she hath freedom of speaking to him, and improving these opportunities. Servants and children may be with him sometimes, but their distance denieth them that privilege which her nearness and relation giveth her.

(3.) In regard of prevalency. The desires and petitions of a wife are very taking, because of a husband's affection to her. As we see in Esther, who obtained such favour in the sight of her husband Ahasuerus, though a heathen, that he promiseth to grant her desire, though it were to the half of his provinces. Despina, the wife of Bajazet, the fourth king of the Turks,¹ could persuade her husband to drink wine, though it were prohibited by Mohammed their great prophet. One of the vilest Arian emperors caught the infection from her that lay in his bosom. The devil knew this, and therefore at first made use of Eve to undo Adam and all his posterity, and afterwards made a ladder of Job's wife, whereby he hoped to scale the tower of Job's soul, though without success.

Friend, be careful that Satan do not with thy hand give many a wound to thy head, thy husband. I must tell thee he will endeavour not a little to persuade thee to present that apple of temptation to thy husband, which hath death at its core, hoping that it, coming out of thy fair hands, will be the more desirable and acceptable to him. The voice of this uncircumcised Philistine is like theirs to Delilah concerning Samson, 'Entice him, that I may prevail against him, to bind him and afflict him,' Judges xvi. 5. Oh how sad will it be to thy soul another day, if thy husband, by lying so near thee, should catch that sickness of thee at this day which kills him eternally! Surely thou art an ungrateful wife, if thou improvest the cords of his love to draw him to sin, and thereby to haul him to hell.

Reader, if thou art a wife, improve this privilege for the furtherance of thy husband in piety. It may be he refuseth to pray with thee, or to instruct thee; truly thou hast the more need to pray for him, and to instruct him. When the wife of Manoah had heard good news from heaven, she presently acquainted her husband with it, Judges xiii. 6. Possibly thou hast heard and embraced the glad tidings of salvation, and hast a carnal husband lying in thy bed and bosom, who neither knoweth nor heedeth them; oh, make it thy first task to tell him of them! Think, as the lepers, This day is a day of good tidings, and I hold my peace; if I be silent any longer evil will befall me: I will therefore now go and tell my husband. Whilst I am feasting and supping with Christ,

¹ Turk. Hist., fol. 207.

shall I suffer one whom I love so dearly, through my carelessness, to famish? Alas! he is 'entangled in the world, as Israel in the wilderness,—the world hath shut him in; he mindeth nothing but his shop, or his sports, his stock, and his pleasure; he little considereth what will become of his precious soul for ever. I will arise and go to him, (first begging God's blessing,) and meekly and mildly tell him of Christ's grievous passion for sin, of his glorious purchase for penitent sinners, and what pity it is that such dunghill vanities should be so eagerly pursued, whilst such matchless mercies are ungratefully slighted. I will entreat him humbly, persuade him affectionately, beseech him earnestly; I will woo as for my life; and oh that I might win him to the Lord of life! Friend, do not defer this; thou canst not foretell the event of it. 'For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband?' 1 Cor. vii. 16. The marriage of some hath been their making for ever. Oh, what a rich portion dost thou bring to thy husband, if thou helpest him to the Lord of heaven and earth for his inheritance! A prudent woman preserved the city of Abel from destruction, 2 Sam. xx. 6; and truly a pious wife may prevent her husband's eternal perdition. The head may derive life from the heart; the husband life eternal from his heart, his wife. As the woman of Tekoah was instrumental to bring back Absalom from his banishment, so mayest thou by thy earnest prayers to God, and serious submissive persuasions to thy husband, be instrumental to bring him from his spiritual captivity, and to bring him into favour at the celestial court. Surely such a kindness would give thy husband just cause in all companies, as Alphonsus king of Arragon did, to commend thee.

Some women, as the Quakers, think, if their husbands do not fear God, they may forsake them; but the apostle is clear, that though thy husband were an idolater, and was willing to live with his wife, she must not leave him. When St John had baptized Chrysippa,¹ the governor's wife of Patmos, she would presently thereupon forsake her husband, whereupon the apostle told her that he had a commission to join her to Christ, but no warrant to part her from her husband. The more wicked a husband is, the more he needeth a pious, prudent wife.

It may be thy husband hath his face towards Zion; but by reason of his weak eyes, his ignorance, doth not walk thitherward steadily, but stumblingly. Now, if God hath indued thee with more knowledge, thy work must be, as Priscilla did Apollos, to instruct him more fully in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, Acts

¹ Prochorus in Vit. St John, cap. 21.

xii. 24. For though women may not teach authoritatively, as persons that do it by office and power—1 Tim. ii. 11, 12, 'Let the woman learn in silence, with all subjection. For I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man,' (the Pepuzian heresy of women's teaching, and the popish heresy of midwives baptising in case of necessity, will not prove it lawful,)¹—yet women may teach privately in their places; they may instruct their ignorant husbands; they must teach their children and servants; therefore the same apostle commandeth women to be 'teachers of good things,' Titus ii. 3. They must 'keep silence in the churches,' 1 Cor. xiv. 34, and they must speak religiously in their families, and amongst their neighbours. Women should be seen and not heard publicly, but seen by their pious works, and heard by their gracious words privately. Their lips should talk of God's law, and their lives should be shining lamps. Paul speaks of women which laboured with him in the gospel, Phil. iv. 3. If thou canst, now the foundation is laid, labour with thy husband in the gospel, and help to build him up, it will add much both to thy comfort here and account hereafter.

A good wish about the duties of a wife, wherein the former particulars are epitomised.

The eternal and living God, who in the making of the world was pleased, out of his curious and manifold wisdom, to delight in order, (appointing all his creatures their several places, some to be inferior, others superior, and therein to continue and obey his pleasure,) having created me of the weakest sex, a woman, and called me to the relation of a wife, in both which respects I am bound to subjection by his word, I wish that I may never, by endeavouring to start from that station in which he hath set me, question his prudence, or quarrel at his providence, and pervert his end and honour in the creation; but may adorn his gospel by adorning myself, not with brodered hair, or jewels, or gold, or costly apparel, but as becometh a woman professing godliness, with shame-facedness and sobriety, in the hidden man of the heart, with that which is incorruptible, even the ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price, 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10; 1 Pet. iii. 4, 5. Lord, let my heart, like the heart of Lydia, be so opened to thy word, my hands, like the hands of Dorcas, be so

¹ Fœminæ sumant de simplicitate candorem, de pudicitia ruborem, inserant in aures margaritas verbi.—*Tertul. de Cult. Fœm.*

full of good works, and my whole behaviour in this relation be so conformable to Scripture, that at last I may be presented a chaste virgin to my Lord Jesus Christ.

I wish that the crosses incident to this condition may make me the more careful to please him in my carriage, who is the God of all consolation. Godliness only is the salt that can heal these bitter waters, which all in this estate must drink. I can never walk cheerfully in this thorny, stony way, unless my feet be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. How many are the miseries which I must undergo! I conceive sorrow, when I conceive a son, carry my woe up and down in my womb. How am I terrified to think of my approaching travail! The very thoughts of those sharp throes, threaten beforehand to overthrow me. If I continue to my appointed hour, in what danger am I of unloading my babe and my life together! When I have passed these pikes, and through many pangs and much pain have brought my child forth, what frights and fears shall I suffer in bringing him up! Possibly children prove undutiful, servants unfaithful; nay, and my very husband, which should be my greatest comfort, becomes my greatest cross. What personal, domestical, civil, natural maladies must I meet with! And how can I encounter them unless godliness be my strength and cordial? In these and the like cases, whither shall I go, if not to my God? And will he know me if I be a stranger, a worker of iniquity? I had need to know, and to be known, to that house well, in which alone I can expect harbour in stormy weather. Lord, enable me to walk so purely, that though in the world I meet with trouble, yet in thee I may have peace, and even rejoice in tribulation, whilst I may ease my heart by emptying it into thine ears, and support it in all hardships with the lively hope of heaven; for I know assuredly that I can never sink so low in these waters, as to be past the help of thy gracious and almighty hand.

I wish that I may not, like a whorish woman, forsake the guide of my youth, and forget the covenant of my God, Ps. lxxviii. 57; should my heart, like a deceitful bow, turn aside as the Israelites, and cause the arrows of my sacred promises to fly at random and miss the mark I seem to engage at, how certainly would they fall down on my head to my ruin! Oh, it is ill jesting with such edged tools. I have read that the Jews, when they took a solemn covenant, Jer. xxxiv. 18, did cut a beast in twain, and passed between the parts thereof, signifying by that ceremony that they wished, and were worthy to be so served and severed if they brake their covenant. They entered into an oath, Neh. x. 29, and a

curse at the same time ; and can I think to loose the bands of my oath, and not find and feel the blow of the curse ! Hath not my God told me that if I break my covenant, he will not spare me, Deut. xxix. 20, 21, but have his full stroke at me with his almighty arm ; and the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy, infinitely worse than the hottest fire, shall smoke against me, and all the curses, heavier than mountains of lead, written in his book, shall lie upon me, and the Lord shall blot out my name from under heaven, cause my very remembrance to rot as an unsavoury carcase. And the Lord will separate me unto evil, (as a beast is separated for the slaughter, and a malefactor set apart for a gibbet,) according to all the curses of the covenant (not a blessing shall fall on me, not a judgment shall fall beside me) that are written in the book of the law. O my soul ! what fearful fire and fury, what dreadful death and damnation, is here threatened by the God of truth against thee, if thou break his oath ! Lord, unite my heart to fear thy name, and let the dread of thy majesty be as a bridle to prevent my wanderings from thy covenant, and to preserve me in the way of thy commandments.

I wish that this fear of my God may be evidenced to myself and others by my fear of my husband ; and that as the moon, though in the sun's absence she ruleth in the heavens, outshines all those glistening stars, yet puts on her veil when once the sun appeareth, and is contented to let her glory stoop to his, that whatsoever power I have in my family over children and servants, yet I may ever acknowledge and veil to my husband's authority and place. What destruction and confusion would it breed in the body politic, if all subordinate officers should strive to be supreme ? What an unseemly and uncomely sight would it be in the body natural, if the shoulders should stand as high as the head ? My God hath order in his upper heavens, and shall he, when he pleaseth to come and give me a visit, find none in his lower house ? Oh let me so count this relation-grace of subjection my chiefest relation-glory, that whilst others are pleasing and priding themselves that they can master their masters, trample their heads under their feet, and are climbed so high above their places, that they endanger the breaking their necks, the loss of their souls, I may reverence my husband, be clothed with humility, and be contented with that condition to which my God hath called me. Lord, enable me so to behold thy power in my husband's person, that I may submit to it in such a gracious manner, that he may be either confirmed in thy truth, or converted to thy faith, whilst he beholdeth my chaste conversation, coupled with fear, 1 Pet. iii. 2.

I wish that I may not only awe him as my head, but also love him as my heart, that my fear of his authority may not in the least abate my affection to his person ; but that my heart, though closed to others, may be enlarged to embrace him, and I may never give him cause to complain of me to me, as Delilah to Samson, 'How canst thou say thou lovest me, when thy heart is not with me?' If I love not mine enemy, I cannot be saved ; what then will be my portion if I love not mine husband ? When publicans and sinners love their friends, though nothing related, shall not I, by profession a Christian, love my greatest earthly friend and nearest relations ? Oh let me never be remiss in my love, much less, like a distracted person, hate my own flesh !

My God commandeth me to love him by his precept. Shall not his word be a sufficient warrant ? Dare I disobey that order, which hath the King of kings' hand and seal to it ? If I resist his law, I proclaim myself a rebel. My God calleth me to it by his providence. I am one with him by divine ordination, and shall I not be one with him in affection ? I have chosen my love, and shall I not love my choice ? I am joined with him in all estates, whether of prosperity or adversity, and shall I, that am partner with him in every condition, be parted from him in affection ? If I deny my love, I quarrel with the Lord. My God commendeth it to me by a lively pattern. How dearly doth the church love Jesus Christ ! He is her well-beloved, the fairest of ten thousands, yea, altogether lovely in her eye. She hateth all relations, and trampleth on all possessions, in comparison of him. What a glorious dunghill, and gilded, glistening nothing is this whole world to her in competition with him ! And shall I be sick of my husband, when she was so sick of love to hers ? Lord, let me never be so unlike the church, my mother ; let me not so far degenerate from a Christian, yea, from a heathen, as to deny my hottest love to my husband, but give me to forget my own people, my father's house, and my own self, out of love to my second self.

I wish that I may manifest my love by my cheerful obedience, that as the church is subject to Christ, so I may be subject to my own husband in all things. I disobey the Lord, if I obey not my husband in all things that are lawful. The law of nature teacheth me this lesson ; the body is ruled by the head. The law of nations also ; those that receive protection from others, yield subjection to them. Oh that no pretence whatsoever which Satan or my stubborn heart may suggest, may ever be my cloak for disobedience. How clearly will my nakedness appear under all the fig-leaves

which I can sew together to cover it! If he hath not wisdom enough to govern well, why did I voluntarily take him for my guide? If he hath, why do I refuse his government? However it be, now I am bound, with a knot tied by my own hands, I must obey in the Lord; whilst I murmur, I do but quarrel at my Maker. If he fail in his love and duty to me, it is my suffering; if I fail in my obedience and duty to him, it is my sin. The former is a bitter potion, but the latter mingled with it, turneth it into rank poison.

Oh, let me never, as some wives, who, by rendering evil for evil, and reviling for reviling, turn their houses into a bedlam, or a *bochim*, a place of weeping. I could wish that he would enjoin me nothing but what is becoming so near a relation, that according to God's precept he would always be more ready to shew the goodness of his nature than the greatness of his power, and encourage my obedience to him by his tenderness of me; but whatsoever his person or his conversation be to me-ward, Lord, next to the pleasing thyself, let me make it my business to please him, and employ that time which others do in grumbling at thee for their painful servitude, in groaning for the cause thereof, my great-grandmother's sin.

I wish that I may approve myself, what my God did appoint me for, a meet help to him in everything, and a hindrance to him in nothing; that I may, in reference to my family, not be as the wife of Lamech, Zillah, the shadow of a wife, as if he married me only for his pleasure, and with no regard to his profit; but that I may write every day, in my diligence and watchfulness about my domestical concerns, after that excellent copy which a queen thought becoming one that did wear a crown, Prov. xxxi. I desire to this end that I may observe the command of my God, to be a keeper at home, that whilst others, like Dinah, are gadders abroad, till they defile themselves, and are frequenters of *pl* or taverns, I may, like Sarah, keep close to my tent, and therein look so well to the ways of my household, that nothing be wanted through my penuriousness, or wasted through my prodigality. Lord, since thy care is to preserve me, let my care be to please thee; and suffer me not to be distrustful of thy providence, or neglectful of those persons whom thou hast committed to my charge.

I wish that of all in my house, I may ever have an affectionate and tender respect for my head; that whilst others are Zipporahs, mourning, and Marah, bitter to their husbands, I may be Naomi, pleasant and delightful to him. My God intended me for a cordial, and if I ever, by my fierce language or frowning carriage, prove a corrosive, how directly do I thwart the end of my Maker and

making! If it be my duty as a Christian, in relation to all the members of Christ, to put away all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, Eph. iv. 31, 32, and to be kind and tender-hearted, surely it is much more my duty as a wife, in relation to my head.

Lord, help me, like Lydia, to be courteous to thy disciples, and, as Phœbe, to be a servant to all thy servants; but in a special manner to be serviceable to him in sickness and health, in all conditions and occasions, whom thou hast appointed to be my master.

I wish that I may be a Mary for piety, as well as a Martha for industry; that I may not be so carking and caring about many things as to neglect the one thing necessary; but in all my dealings about this world, I may demean myself, not as a servant to it, but as a mistress and commander of it, and as one that hath her hope and happiness in a better world. Let me never be as Michal, to mock at my husband for holiness, nor as Jezebel or Job's wife, to stir up my husband to wickedness; but seek with the cords of love to draw him to the Lord of glory. Oh that holiness might ever have such precedency in my heart and life, that my carriage towards my children and servants may savour of Christianity, and my love especially towards my husband may be abundantly operative night and day in persuading and encouraging him to mind heaven! Oh God, with what heaviness do I think at this day of my carnal, unbelieving husband! and oh, with what horror do I forethink of that day when I am like to be half in heaven and half in hell! Oh, be thou pleased, who hast promised to pour out thy Spirit upon all flesh, even upon thine handmaids and servants, that thy sons and thy daughters shall prophesy, to pardon all my failings in this relation; pour the oil of grace into thy weaker vessel, that I may, like Elizabeth, be full of the Holy Ghost; like Mary Magdalene, love thee fervently; like Eunice, instruct my children in thy fear; and as Priscilla, be able to commend to my husband the sweetness of thy favour, that whilst men prophesy, converting and confirming others by public ordination, I may preach effectually to the consciences of others, and of my husband especially, by my pious conversation. Lord, as a woman was, through Satan's subtlety, first in the transgression, so was a woman, through thy rich mercy, first in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Suffer me, I beseech thee, in no case, like the first woman, to be a messenger of damnation to my husband, but make me, like that famous penitent, a messenger of salvation.

Lord, I have heard that the true Moses is pleased to marry with a blackamore; the blessed Messias, with sinful mortals. I confess

I cannot but stand amazed at the low stoop of thy sacred Majesty, in matching with so mean, and so base, and stained a family. Hadst thou married with those spotless virgins, angels, the ancientest and honourablest house of thy creatures, thou hadst matched much more like, yet infinitely below thyself. But what admiration and astonishment can answer thy boundless condescension, that thou shouldst take polluted dust and ashes into thy bed and bosom? that thou shouldst strike a conjugal covenant with one whose person is ugliness and deformity, whose parentage is base and beggarly, and whose portion is nothing but diseases and misery? But since it is so, holy Father, because it seems good in thy sight, suffer thine handmaid, though it be not proper to her sex, rather to woo thy dear Son, than to miss so rich, and noble, and gainful a match. Yet, alas! why do I talk thus? He hath prevented me with his kindness many years ago. How importunately hath he courted me! What large costly tokens hath he often presented me with, to persuade my unbelieving heart that his offer of marriage is in earnest! Oh, help me rather to accept him heartily for my Lord and husband, and, bidding adieu to all other lovers, to cleave to him only; that all my wants and weaknesses, sins and sorrows, may be his, and all his robes, and riches, and mercies, and merits, and life, and death may be mine. Oh, do thou so adorn me with grace, as a bride is tired with her jewels, that I may be fitly arrayed for so beautiful a bridegroom. Let me love, honour, please, and obey him above all, before all, and more than all; and my husband here below, next to him, for his sake. Cause me, as a pure virgin, to keep my garments clean, whilst I walk in a dirty defiling world, and as a wise virgin, to insure oil in my vessel against the coming of my Lord, that when death shall give me a bill of divorce from my dearest husband below, I may approach nearer, and enjoy fuller, my dearer husband above, when I shall be above all frights and fears; lest those, my Saviour and my soul, whom my God hath joined together, a deceitful heart, or ensnaring world, or tempting devil, should part asunder; where my rags of misery shall be changed into robes of glory, my nakedness covered with perfect righteousness, that my beloved may bespeak me, in the fullest sense, 'Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; behold, thou art fair my love: behold, thou art all fair; there is no spot in thee.' And whereas a bridegroom rejoiceth over a bride, so shall my God rejoice over me, and I in him, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE CHRISTIAN MAN'S CALLING.

PART II.

CHAPTER VI.

How Christians may exercise themselves to godliness, in the relation of masters, with a good wish about the duty of a master.

THE third and last relation in a family, is that of master and servants; the other two relations had a being in man's estate of innocency, this was brought in by man's apostasy.¹ Civil subjection to man came in by our sinful defection from God. We lost our liberty by casting off God's service.² The word servant is thought to be a derived *à servando*, because those who were taken in battle, and might have been slain, were saved, 2 Kings v. 2. As servitude came in with a curse, (the first time the word servant sounded in the world, was when Noah cursed his son Ham, Gen. ix. 25,) so sovereignty is promised as a blessing, Gen. xxvii. 29, and xxv. 23.

There are usually reckoned three causes, or rather occasions, of service.³

1. Victory; when men are conquered in war: the victor often spared their lives, but took away their liberty.

2. Necessity; when men are sold for debt. It was usual for the debtor to become servant to the creditor amongst the Romans,⁴ by the law of the twelve tables. The French were wont also to sell themselves to noblemen for debt.⁵ And the Jews were not ignorant of this practice, Lev. xxv. 39; Exod. xxi. 7; 2 Kings iv. 1, though

¹ Chrysost., Hom. 29 in Gen.

² *Servum hominem homini aut iniquitas aut adversitas erit.*—*Aug. Quest. Sup. Gen.*, lib. i. 15.

³ Basil. De Spirit., cap. 20.

⁴ Gel., lib. xx. cap. 1.

⁵ Caesar, vi. De Bell. Gal.

their usage by their brethren was much differing from the usage of strangers.

3. Utility ; when one committeth himself, or is committed to the government of another for his education.

Among the Jews there were two sorts of servants. Some that were of other nations ; their servitude was perpetual and hereditary, both of themselves and their children.

Others that were of their own nation, which were to serve but six years, and in the seventh to go out free, Exod. xxi. 2. Some reckon among them four sorts of servants.

First, The highest in that degree, as Abraham's steward ; such were said to stand before their masters, 1 Kings x. 8.

Secondly, Such as waited on their master's person immediately ; these are said to pour out water upon their master's hands, 2 Kings iii. 11.

Thirdly, Such as were employed in inferior offices, as in dressing of meat, or reaping harvest, 1 Sam. viii. 13. These were called labourers.

Fourthly, Such as did their lowest and basest work ; and these were said to sit behind the mill, because they thrust the mill before them as they wrought, and this was one of the basest works about which such were occupied, Exod. xi. 2 ; Isa. xlvii. 2.

Amongst the Romans there were two sorts of servants.

1. Such as were taken in war ; over these the master had an absolute power to dispose of them as he pleased, these were slaves for life ; all they got was their masters' ; they might sell them, or kill them, and were never questioned for it.¹ Titus Sempronius would sell his aged and weak servants as cattle, and so Cato Pollio commanded one of his servants to be thrown into his fish-ponds for breaking a glass, which he valued highly, though he had store of them ; which in humanity, when Augustus Cæsar understood, he entered the place where the glasses were, and broke them all, to prevent the like cruelty for the future.

2. Such as were servants by compact ; over these the master had only a conditional power. He had right, not to the persons, but only to the actions of these, to their work.

Reader, if God hath called thee to the relation of a master, remember that thou art his servant, and carry thyself accordingly ; give to thy servant that which is τὸ δίκαιον καὶ τὴν ἰσότητα, just and equal, Col. iv. 1. Do not use him as a slave, but as thy fellow-servant of the same Lord. God teacheth us, both by his pattern

¹ Macroh., lib. i. cap. 6.

and precept, to mix our authority with clemency, for he hates tyranny. Though he hath sovereign, and illimited, and absolute dominion over all the world, and might pluck up and pull down, slay and destroy without pity, and none could say to him, what doest thou? yet his mercy is over all his works, judgment is his strange work, Isa. xxviii. 21. And as he hath committed to some persons dominion over others, so hath he commanded them to exercise it with moderation. A king is his deputy on earth; but if a prince would fix upon a sure foundation, he tells him his laws must not be written, as Draco's were, in blood: 'Mercy and truth preserve the king; his throne is established by mercy,' Prov. xx. 28. A father hath authority over his child, but mark what a caution God gives him not to abuse it: 'Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath.' The husband is the head of the wife, but observe what care he takes lest any should be so unnatural and cruel to their own bodies: 'Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.' So also, because the master hath much power over his servant, God limits his commission, and appoints that it be tempered with mercy: 'Masters, do the same things to your servants, and forbear threatening.' Still God manifesteth this to be his pleasure, that the sword of power be furbished with the oil of pity; yet herein there must be care that a master's carriage do not expose him to contempt from his servants. As masters must not be fierce, so neither familiar with their servants. Cato was in both the extremes; one while he would eat and drink, and work naked with them, and when he had worn them out with work, sell them like horses in a market.¹ So the Romans in general, at their feast called Saturnalia, did wait on their servants; the servants sat at the table, and the masters served them; yet possibly, before the year was expired, would kill them as dogs.²

But servants are most apt to be slighted; it is too usual an expression, by way of reproach, He is but a servant, or, She is but a waiting-maid. (It is free grace that thou art not a servant. I pray thee, who made thee to differ?) The Son of God himself, when he took upon him the form of a servant, was of no reputation; he was despised and rejected of men, Phil. ii. 7; Isa. liii. 3.

I shall lay down two or three motives to quicken thee to thy duty in this relation, and then shew thee wherein it consisteth.

First, Consider they are made of the same earth with thee; when thy proud heart esteems them vile and base, think with thyself that they have the same pedigree and parentage with thyself. 'The poor

¹ Plut. in Vit'

² Athen., lib. xiv. cap. 17.

and the rich meet together, and the Lord is the maker of them both,' Prov. xxii. 2. There is no such vast difference betwixt thyself and thy servant, as thy haughty spirit would suggest.¹ Thou and he meet together in the same common mother, the earth, and in the same common Father, in heaven. Master and servant are made of the same mould, and have the same maker. Nay, a poor servant is so little thy inferior, that he is called thy own flesh, Isa. lviii. 7. Though there be a civil difference, there is no natural difference, for he is the same flesh, thy own flesh.

Therefore it is said, 'He that despiseth the poor, reproacheth his maker,' Prov. xvii. 5. He despiseth the maker of his person, and the maker of his portion. He reproacheth God for his work of creation, for making such a man or such a maid; and he reproacheth God for his work of providence, for making such a one poor, and such a one a servant and an inferior.² For our civil conditions, as much as our natural constitutions, are from God. As he maketh cedars and shrubs, mountains and valleys, so also masters and servants, bond and free. This argument kept Job within the bounds of his duty; he durst not, though a master, nay, though a magistrate, (and so in no fear of punishment from man,) abuse his servant upon this account: 'Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?' Job xxxi. 14, 15—*i.e.*, Should I in passion flee in his face, or through pride trample him under my feet, who is a child of the same father with myself?

Secondly, Consider, as they are made of the same earth, so they are heirs of the same heaven with thee. If there be a civil distinction, yet there is no spiritual distinction. In Christ there is neither bond nor free, Col. iii. 11; he paid the same price, and bought the same purchase for both. We read under the law that all the Israelites, both poor and rich, gave the same ransom for their souls, Exod. xiii. 15; signifying that the same precious blood of the Son of God was to be shed for the redemption of all sorts of persons. And it is recorded in the Gospel, that 'God hath chosen the poor of the world, rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom,' James ii. 5. I may say the same of masters and servants, as the apostle speaks of Jews and Gentiles, 'God hath given them (servants) the Holy Ghost as well as us, (masters;) and hath put no difference betwixt us and them, purifying their hearts by faith,' Acts xv. 8, 9. Thy servant,

¹ Fortuna distinxit dominos a servis, natura utrisque communis et eadem.—*Philo. De Spec. Leg.*

² Vis tu cogitare istum quem servum tuum vocas, ex iisdem seminibus ortum, eodem frui celo, æque spirare, æque vivere, æque mori.—*Senec., Epist. 47.*

if born again, is God's son; and if a son, then an heir, an heir of God, a joint-heir with Christ. Take heed therefore that thou dost not abuse God's child; great heirs are tenderly used. It called for great lamentation, when the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, were esteemed as earthen pitchers, Lam. iv. 2. And will it not be sad for thee to trample one of God's jewels as dirt under thy feet? Oh, how wilt thou be ashamed of it at the last day!

At present thy servants may be before thee in grace; how clearly doth thy experience teach thee that the poor receive, when the rich reject, the gospel, Mat. xi. 5, &c. The Lamb is offered in sacrifice, and acceptable to God, when the lion as an unclean creature is cast by. How many a master, like Potiphar, is an enemy, a foe, when the servant, like Joseph, is a great friend and favourite in the heavenly court!¹ God's church are called the congregation of his poor, Ps. lxxiv. 19; and to despise the poor is counted by God, and called a despising the church, 1 Cor. xi. 20. Thy servant may be poor in spirit, when thou art poor in spirituals. He may be rich in grace, in good works, which is infinitely the better, when thou art possibly only rich in gold and outward goods. Thou esteemest him at a poor rate, and not worth a penny; but be it known to thee, O man! that he is, if holy, worth thousands, and millions. Thy servant, like Levi, though he hath no part in the earthly Canaan, may have the boundless God for his portion. What wise man would esteem a horse by the gaudiness of its trappings and furniture, or a knife by its gilt haft. So truly no wise man will esteem another by his fine clothes, or great estate, or any outward ornaments, but by his spiritual endowments.

Hereafter thy servants may be above thee in glory. It is taken notice of, that a contemptible grasshopper, the silliest almost of all creatures, is advanced into the chief city of England, (London,) and a principal part of that city, the Royal Exchange, when far more noble creatures are less regarded. He that took upon him the form of a servant, and was vilified and scorned as a worm on earth, is certainly the highest in heaven. A poor servant, like Lazarus, may be comforted and highly exalted, when a rich master, as Dives, may be disgraced and tormented. He that hath not a foot of land, may have a title to the inheritance of the saints in light.

Thy servant may be the Lord's freeman, 1 Cor. vii. 22, and therefore must not be used as a slave. Though he be of low degree, yet he is a brother, and must accordingly be treated, James i. 9;

¹ Dominus fidelem habens servum, diligat ut filium, vel ut fratrem, propter fidei societatem.—*Clemens Constit. Apost.*, lib. iv. cap. 12.

Lev. xxv. 39. Though his spiritual relation do not privilege him from dutifulness and subjection to thee, yet it should prevent thy oppression of him. Do not dare to put those vessels to sordid sinful uses, which are now vessels of honour, and must shortly, according to the martyr's phrase, be scour'd bright, and set on the high shelf of heaven.

Thirdly, Consider that thou hast a master in heaven. As servants are, if gracious, God's sons, and thereby may be comforted, so masters are God's servants, and thereby may be cautioned. Is thine eye upon thy servants, to see whether they do their duties faithfully? I must tell thee, God's eye watcheth thee much more, to observe whether thou carriest thyself in thy relation conscientiously. Thy servants may cheat thee, and thou never the wiser; but thou canst not cozen God, for all things are naked and open in his sight. The awe of this master kept holy Job from abusing his power to the prejudice of his servants. 'If I despised the cause of my man-servant or maid-servant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?' The fear of God, not any human affection, made him faithful to the meanest in his family. Fellow-servants will not abuse and smite one another whilst their master is in presence.¹ 'What then shall I do when God riseth up?' Oppressing and unjust masters will fall, when God riseth to judge servants' causes, and to revenge their quarrels. 'Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but fear thy God,' Lev. xxv. 43.

God delights to appear in the behalf of the afflicted poor, and such as have none to take their part. How severely hath he punished many masters for their want of pity to their servants. When the Jews were false and unfaithful to their servants, he turned their own liberty into bondage and slavery, and made them experience by the cruelty of the Chaldeans what it was to be served as slaves. When the hard yoke was upon their own necks, to the grating and goring their flesh, then they felt their servants' misery, Jer. xxxiv. 8-21. As divine, so human writ confirmeth this. The Chians, a people of Grecia, who were infamous for their inhumanity in this particular, being conquered by Mithridates, were made by him slaves to their own servants.² The Lacedæmonians also were cruel to their servants, the Tenarenses, but their city on a sudden was so shaken, that all those houses wherein their cruelty had been exercised, except four, were destroyed.³ God makes such men

¹ Posse et non velle nocere argumentum est hominis deum timentis.—*Athen.*

² *Athen.*, lib. vi. cap. 6.

³ *Ælian.*, vi. 76.

know many times here that wherein they deal passionately and proudly he is above them, but always hereafter ; ' they shall have judgment without mercy that shew no mercy.'

Reader, think often in all thy dealings with thy servant, that thou hast a master in heaven, who may suddenly, but will shortly, reckon with thee ; and if thou now afflictest him, when God visiteth, what wilt thou answer him ? As he will not favour thy servant barely for being an inferior, so he will not fear thee in the least for being a superior. ' Forbear threatening, and do to thy servant that which is just and equal, knowing that thy master also is in heaven ; and with him there is no respect of persons,' Eph. vi. 9 ; Col. iv. 1. Oh do but consider ! Thy master in heaven is omniscient, and knoweth all thy unjust dealings with thy servant. He is holy, and hates all thy oppression ; nay, he is omnipotent, and his hand will reach thee, and punish thee for it.

Fourthly, Consider he is God's servant. God hath the original, illimited right to thy servants ; thou hast only a derivative, bounded power over them. God commands the Israelites to treat their servants mildly upon this motive, ' For they are my servants,' Lev. xxv. 42. Hence some tell us that the Jews, in the infancy of their commonwealth, were very meek and moderate towards their servants. They did not put them to do either any vile office or any hard work ; they allowed them the same meat, drink, and lodging with themselves, say the Rabbins ; and thence arose that proverb, He that buyeth a Hebrew servant buyeth himself a master. Therefore several of them loved their service so well, that they would rather have their ears bored through, and continue in that condition, than enjoy their freedom. Sure I am, God's servants must not be used as Satan's slaves. If men should not have hard, uncharitable thoughts of others, because they are another's servants, much less may they be uncharitable and cruel in their actions towards such. ' Who art thou,' saith the apostle, ' that judgest another man's servant ?' Rom. xiv. 4. So may I speak to thee, reader, if an unjust master, who art thou ? and what art thou that abusest and oppressest another's servants ? Do what thou wilt with thy own servants, if ever thou canst get an absolute dominion over any, but darest thou to wrong another's servants, and the Lord's servants too ?

If a friend should, when he is necessitated to go abroad, commit his servant to thee for some time, wouldst thou not use him kindly and courteously for thy friend's sake ? And when thy God hath committed his servants to thy care and keeping for some time, to

be instructed in his word, and acquainted with his worship, wilt thou abuse his servants as dogs, and bring them up as brutes? To be the servant of God was a title that the greatest masters in Israel gloried in, and well they might. Now, wilt thou abuse and abase those whom God himself doth thus honour? The heathen moralist, to dissuade a master from cruelty and rigour, can tell him that though they are servants yet they are men, and fellow-servants with us of the same supreme deity.¹

One thing, reader, I would in a word warn thee of, before I speak to thy duty in this relation, that thou consider whom thou takest into thy service. It is dangerous to admit diseased persons into thy house: let none wait on thee who will not worship God. It was said of Hannibal's army, that it consisted *ex colluvie omnium gentium*, of the scum of all nations; but let it not be said so of thy family. He that knowingly harbours a traitor is himself a rebel. Some servants will hinder thee from discharging thy trust in reference to their souls; but having spoke formerly to the well-choosing,² I shall speak now to the well-using of servants.

Thy duty in relation to thy servant will be discovered in these particulars.

Thy duty is to endeavour the welfare of thy servants' souls. Turks mind nothing about their slaves but that they do their own work; but Christians must mind that their servants do God's work also. Some read that Gen. xiv. 14, 'And Abraham armed his catechised servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen.' It is clear that he commanded his household, the greatest part of which were servants, to keep the way of the Lord, Gen. xviii. 19. Joshua was for his whole house to serve God, Joshua xxiv. 15. And the fourth commandment is full for it: 'Thou, thy son, thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant,' Exod. xx. 10.

He is esteemed a cruel master that will not allow his servant bodily food; but God counts him infinitely more savage who gives not his servant spiritual food. Shimei looked so much after his servants that he lost his life by it; but many masters look so little after their servants that it will cost them their souls for it.

Instruct thy servants in the word and worship of God. I told thee before, they are God's servants; and wilt thou not take care that they serve him? Holy Esther would not only fast and pray herself, but 'I and my maidens will fast also.' It was happy for those servants that they had such a mistress; it is likely their ser-

¹ Senec. de Clem.

² Vide the First Part, cap. ult.

vice, which was corporal, was instrumental to their spiritual liberty, Esther iv. 16.

Take time in the evenings, and on the Lord's-days, to teach them the principles of the oracles of God. Be often speaking to them of the threefold state of man, and the three offices of Christ; with gentleness and mildness draw them towards God. Do thou frequently in their hearing commend the sweetness of God's love in Christ to sinners, the richness of that inheritance which he hath laid up for his servants, and the monstrous unthankfulness of men in rejecting that love and neglecting this life. Give others cause, that frequent thy family, to speak to thee, as the queen of Sheba to Solomon, 'Happy are thy men; happy are those thy servants, which stand continually before thee,' 1 Kings x. 8. As he is the best servant that looks most to the main of his master's estate, that, though he forget some smaller matters, will be sure to remember the principal; so he is the best master that looks most to the main, the precious soul, and eternal salvation of his servant.

Pray with and for thy servants. Possibly they have good natures, but no grace. They mind thy work carefully, but neglect God's worship carelessly; and canst thou think, without bowels and pity, of their eternal perdition? When Elisha's servant was sore distressed by reason of the Syrians, Elisha prayed for him: 'Lord, open, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw,' 2 Kings vi. 17. Reader, are none of thy servants blind, not knowing, in a saving degree, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent? Canst thou let them alone in this condition, and not cry to God to open the eyes of the blind, and to turn them from darkness to light? Oh pray hard; thou knowest not but God may hear and cause them to see in their day the things of their peace.

When the body of the good centurion's servant was sick, his master went to the Lord Jesus for his cure, saying, 'Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.' So go thou to Christ: Lord, my man-servant, my maid-servant is sick; full of spiritual diseases, sick of the stone in the heart, of the tympany of pride, of the fever of lust, of the dropsy of drunkenness, of the consumption of atheism; Lord, help him, help her; for he, for she is grievously tormented. For thy comfort, consider what answer Christ gave the centurion, 'I will come and heal him.' Jesus Christ, upon thy fervent prayer, may send thee in such an answer as may rejoice thy soul, and the heart of thy poor servant for ever.

Be careful that thy servants frequent the public ordinances of

God. Elkanah would go up to offer sacrifice with his whole house, 1 Sam. i. 21. When thou appearest before God, let not thy servant be left behind. It is not so safe to go alone as with company. Do not, as the Egyptian masters did, when thy God calleth thy servant to sacrifice, tell him he is idle, and wanteth more work. When they have attended on the word, examine them what they remember. Scholars never learn their lessons well when they beforehand know they shall not be questioned about them. If thou sendest thy servant on an errand about thy temporal estate, thou wilt call him to an account how well he hath done it. Let thy conscience be judge whether thou hast not much more cause, when he is sent about his own eternal estate, to question him how he hath performed it.

Thy benefit doth not a little depend upon thy servant's piety, which may encourage thee to promote it to the utmost of thy power. The more thy servant is conscientious to please God, the more careful he will be to please thee. A wicked servant will make nothing of blemishing thy name and impoverishing thy estate; as Gehazi, he will make thee a cloak for his own covetousness; as the unjust steward, he will lessen thy stock to enlarge his own; when a godly servant, as Joseph and Jacob, will rather wrong himself than rob thee. It is observable of Onesimus, that though, before his conversion, he was as a rotten post in his master's house, threatening to pull it down, yet afterwards, as a sound pillar, he assisted to bear it up. 'I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds; who was in time past to thee unprofitable, but now is profitable to thee and me,' Philem. 10, 11. When once he became a new creature, instead of robbing and running away, he would enrich his master. There are no such faithful servants to men, as those that are faithful subjects to God. Grace will turn him who is a moth to waste, into a merchant to increase their outward stock; when a graceless servant, like Ziba to Mephibosheth, will make no bones of deluding the magistrate, so he may defraud his master.

Famous is that story of Pyrrhias,¹ a merchant of Ithaca, who seeing an aged man captive in a pirate ship, had compassion on him, and bought him and all his commodities, which were certain barrels of pitch. The old man considering that merely out of charity, and not out of covetousness, Pyrrhias had done this, presently discovered to him a considerable treasure hid in the bottom of the barrels, whereby he became exceeding rich.

¹ Willet, Hexapla in Lev.

Reader, if the redemption of one out of bondage to man through the divine providence had so large a recompense, surely thy work of redeeming thy poor servant out of slavery and bondage to sin and Satan shall receive a far greater reward. Besides thy temporal, thou mayest expect to reap an eternal reward. The redemption of a soul, as it is far more precious, so it is infinitely more profitable, James v. 20; Dan. xii. 3.

2. Provide what is just and convenient for thy servants' bodies. Prefer their souls, but provide for their bodies. 'Masters, do to your servants that which is just and equal,' Col. iv. 1. Some covetous wretches will overwork their servants, but underkeep them, either of which is unjust. That dealing is just towards a servant which a master from his heart would desire might be used towards himself, if he were in the condition of a servant.

Convenient food must be allowed thy servants. Thou canst not rationally expect that they should be diligent about their work, if thou deniest them convenient diet.¹ Thou knowest thy horse must have his provender, or he cannot well perform his journey. 'The hired servants in my father's house have bread enough,' Luke xv. 17. They have not what is toothsome, but sufficient of what is wholesome; bread enough; nature, not lust, must be nourished. God commandeth thee to satisfy their hunger, but not to pamper their carnal appetites. 'He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, shall have him become his son at last,' Prov. xxix. 21. He that affordeth his servant raiment too costly, or nourishment too dainty, or carrieth himself towards him too familiarly, will find him at last a young master in his house, so malapert as to equalise himself with the children, and to tyrannise over his fellow-servants. Solomon's son, Rehoboam, did, by sad experience, find the truth of this. The wise man himself saw it in Jeroboam, whom for his parts, not for his piety, he had received into his service, and preferred before worthier persons, till at last he took state upon him, and did not only endeavour to be as his son, but even aspire to be his sovereign.

But though servants' sloth and sin may not, yet their bodies must be cherished. He cheats himself who will not allow his servants, nay, and cattle too, sufficient food. The good housewife alloweth meat, as well as appointeth work to her maidens: 'She riseth

¹ 'Domini, quod justum est, servis exhibete,' Col. iv. 1. In opere servis injungendo justitiam colit, qui nec premit laboribus immodicis, nec sinit otio et desidia torpescere. Sic in cibo præbendo, qui nec detrahit illis victum necessarium ac convenientem, neque patitur illos gulæ et ebrietati indulgere.—*Dave., in loc.*

whilst it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a task to her maidens,' Prov. xxxi. 15. Work without meat would quickly famish the natural body; meat without work would feed the body of sin; therefore she mindeth both. The labourer is as worthy of his meat as his lord of his work.

The Hebrew Rabbis tell us that the first wise men among them gave their servants and beasts meat before they did eat themselves. Masters must also allow physic to their diseased servants. He was an Amalekite, an enemy to God, that left his servant, when sick, to the wide world: 'And my master left me, because three days ago I fell sick,' 1 Sam. xxx. 13, which act of cruelty God punished severely. He took care, by his providence, that the poor servant should be recovered, and the oppressing master destroyed. The good Samaritan will bind up the wounds of a distressed stranger, much more of a servant. Xenocrates, though a heathen, was pitiful to a poor sparrow, that, being pursued by a hawk, fled to him for succour. He sheltered her while the enemy was fled, and afterwards letting her go, said, *Se supplicem non prodidisse*, That he had not betrayed his poor suppliant.¹ A Christian should have more pity for a distressed Christian than a heathen hath for a bird. A master should be a physician to his servants; as careful to preserve their healths and prevent their death, as to provide them work. Ischomachus told his wife that it was part of her office, and the most grateful part of it, in case a servant fall sick, to take care of his recovery.² The centurion, though a soldier, (and their hearts usually are more obdurate and less compassionate than others,) was earnest and diligent for the help of his sick servant, Mat. viii.

Clothes or wages must also be afforded servants. Apprentices have raiment from their masters, others have money to find themselves; now in both, or either of these, thy duty is to be faithful. The good housewife minds raiment for them to whom it is due, and that neither too neat nor nasty, but such as is suitable to the season, Prov. xxxi. 21.

Be careful to pay them their wages. It is high injustice to detain their dues. God will pay those masters who will not pay their servants. He hath wrath for them who have no wages for others. Such covetousness brings a dreadful curse: 'Woe be to him that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work,' Jer. xxii. 13. The mean and low servant hath the great and high God for his avenger. His eyes see such cruelty, and his ears hear the poor servant's cry. This is one of those cry-

¹ Elian. Var. Hist., lib. xiii.

² Xenophon.

ing sins which will give God no rest till he revenge it. Murder or blood hath a loud voice ; it crieth, Gen. iv. 10. As the blood of the Mediator cried for pardon, so the blood of men, unjustly shed, crieth for punishment. The souls of the good, and the blood of the bad, if their bodies be murdered, will cry for vengeance. God hath washed his hands in their blood (and thereby kept his honour unstained) who have stained their hands in the blood of others. Sodomy is another crying sin ; man with man, doing that which is unseemly. Human bestiality calleth for divine severity, Gen. xviii. 22. Hell shall be rained out of heaven, but that such an unnatural sin shall be revenged. This hellish fire in men shall be punished with fire from God. Oppression is a third crying sin, Exod. iii. 7, and xxii. 23. To keep back the servant's wages is to dare the master in heaven to a duel, James v. 4. Though the poor servant be silent, yet the sin itself hath a large throat, and will cry aloud. It is cursed covetousness not to be charitable ; but it is inhuman cruelty to suck out poor men's sweat and spirits, and to deny them what is their due for its reparation. This sin hath a louder voice than the sinner. The very land will cry and the furrows complain when the poor man, armed with patience, doth not, or, awed with power, dareth not, Job xxxi. 39.

This scarlet crying sin is of a double dye. When masters pay servants less than their work, or late for their work, they are in some measure guilty of it. There ought to be a proportion between the work and the wages. Laban, by his shuffling and cutting with Jacob, was met with himself at last. It is unworthy and wicked for any master to work upon the necessities and wants of others. We have a saying, There is nothing cheap but poor men's labour. But I am confident, how cheap soever their work is here, many a griping master will find it dear enough in the other world. To delay the payment of servants is also sinful. To defer, by the law of man, is all one as to deny. When they slip the time appointed, the bond is forfeited. God would not permit the Jews to sleep with such money in their purses. 'Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land : at his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it ; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it : lest he cry against thee,' Deut. xxiv. 14, 15.

3. Command thy servant nothing but what is fit and lawful. Two things I include under this head : that thou shouldst enjoin thy servant nothing but,

1. What is agreeable to God's law ; that his soul be not injured.
2. What is suitable to his natural strength ; that his body be not prejudiced.

First, Nothing but what is agreeable to God's word. Thou art but a steward, and therefore to appoint those that are thy inferiors that only which thy lord directeth. They and thou also are God's servants, wherefore his pleasure must always be preferred.¹ The Holy Ghost in thy description giveth thee a good caution. He calleth thee a master *κατὰ σάρκα*, according to the flesh, or a bodily master, Eph. vi. 5 ; Col. iii. 22. Thou hast power to give laws to his body, but no power at all to make laws for his soul. His flesh may be at thy beck, but his spirit must only be at God's bidding. If in any command thou transgressest God's laws, thou exceedest thy limits. And I must tell thee that thy servant is not bound to obey thee, nay, he is expressly forbidden it. I shall by and by charge him in God's name not to do it, and be it at his own peril if he dare. Some masters indeed, as Absalom, enjoin their servants what God forbids, to steal, or cozen in their callings, to lie, or bear false witness, when it is for their profit and credit, and to profane the Lord's-day by working ; and think, as that proud prince, that their word must be an unquestionable and sufficient warrant, ' Fear not, have not I commanded you ? ' But such men must know that they themselves are guilty of high treason, by commanding others to become traitors. Oh be not thou called master in this sense, for one is thy master, even Christ ! Mat. xxiii. 9. It was the saying of Anastasius the emperor, that he would venture upon no design, though never so gallant and glorious, that might cost a drop of the blood of his subjects.² And wilt thou venture upon those commands which may cost the soul-blood both of thyself and servant ? Abraham was careful not to trouble his steward's conscience, Gen. xxix. 8.

Secondly, Nothing is to be enjoined thy servant but what is suitable to his strength. Neither his inward man must be wronged by sinful, nor his outward man by cruel commands. Thou mayest use him, but thou mayest not abuse him. It is one thing to work, and another thing to rack and wear out a servant. It is thy duty to keep him from sloth, but thy sin to suck out his spirits. A tyrant and a master differ specifically ;³ ' Ye shall not rule over one another

¹ Omnis autoritas et superioritas, a Deo derivatur, et ideo debet divinæ auctoritati subordinari. Præceptum ergo inferioris potestatis non obligat ad obedientiam quando contrariatur præcepto superioris.—*Durandus*, lib. ii. ist. 39, qu. 5.

² Evagrii, lib. iii.

³ Masters must consider, Et quid ferre valent humeri, et quid ferre recusant.—*Hor. in Art. Poet.*

with rigour,' Lev. xxv. 46. It is for wicked Egyptians to command bricks and deny straw, to make their servants' lives bitter, and their service an iron furnace; yet I fear that some families in England may be called, as Egypt, a house of bondage, wherein governors, according to the prophet's phrases, 'eat the flesh, and flay the skin, and break the bones of poor servants,' Micah iii. 3.

The master should be, as the servant of Naaman called him, a father to his servants; esteem his servant, according to Seneca's appellation, as a lower or lesser friend.¹ Satyrus in Athenæus was called *Εὐδοῦλος καὶ Εὐοικος*, because he was kind to his servants. If a merciful man be merciful to his beasts, much more to his servant. God contemneth the service of those masters, when they worship him, who are cruel to their servants, Isa. lviii. 5, 6. He that overstraineth his horse at work wrongs his own purse; but he that overworketh his servant wrongs his conscience.² Oh, it is a barbarous act for any man to command what may likely hazard his servant's life! He that takes such earnings drinketh his servant's blood, which holy David would not do, 2 Sam. xxiii. 17. And some think it troubled his conscience that he had by a wish, though he never gave any word of command, occasioned the dangers of his three worthies' lives. It was said of the Massilians, it is better to be their sheep than children. It may be said of some masters, it is better to be their swine than servants, they are so unmerciful to them.

4. Masters must be faithful in teaching their servants that trade and calling to which they are bound. As the servant is bound to be faithful to his master in obeying his lawful commands, so the master is bound to be faithful to his servant in instructing him in his calling. It is a gross and grievous fault in many masters, in taking their servants' work, and their parents' wealth, and concealing from them the mystery of their trade. This is robbery and unrighteousness. Their covetousness will persuade them to teach inferiors so much as will make them profitable servants, but their envy and avarice together hinder them from teaching them so much as may make them honourable masters. Hence it comes to pass that apprentices, when their time is expired, are still in bondage; for being ignorant how to buy and sell, or in some essential particular of their trades, they dare not take a shop, lest, through their unskilfulness, occasioned by their masters' unfaithfulness, it should

¹ Humilis amicus.—*Senec.*, Epist. 97.

² Μετρία μὲν ἡ θεῶ δουλεία, ἀμετρος δὲ ἡ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. Moderata servitus est quæ Deo placet, immoderata quæ ad humanam libidinem exigitur.—*Plat.*, Epist. 9.

in a few months fall on their heads. Ainsworth tells us that God would not have servants sent away empty, lest they should be necessitated to return to service, from which second servitude he would free his people.¹ But these masters purposely (I mean many of them) keep close their art and mystery to continue their servants to them in a little nobler slavery, that, when their indentures are ended, their apprentice may step into a journeyman, which is but bondage in a second edition, and somewhat a fairer print. Others fear, if their servants should be made skilful in their calling, they would some way or other get away their custom; and therefore conceal their trade, hereby turning a possibility of their future suffering into a certainty of present sinning, just like one that, because it is possible somebody hereafter may give him a cup of wormwood, is resolved to prevent it by taking a present cup of poison. But whatsoever be the root, the reason of it, sure I am the fruit is bitter and distasteful to God, and all sober men. A common robber on the road is not in so deep a degree guilty of theft as an unfaithful master. This man robs the father of his money now, and the comfort he might expect from his son hereafter; he robs the servant of his present labour and his future livelihood; he robs his country of that service which the apprentice might have done it if the master had been conscientious in teaching him his calling; and he robbeth God and his own soul most in wronging all these, and in being so false and unfaithful to his covenants, which, under his own hand and seal, will be brought out against him at the day of Christ.

I know some servants are dull and backward, and cannot easily learn; and others are untoward, and will not be easily taught; but let masters do their endeavour and discharge their duties, and then the sin will not another day lie at their doors.

But, reader, I would be rightly understood; I do not intend by teaching thy servant the mystery of his art and trade, thy instructing thy servant in the mystery of iniquity, those sly, subtle tricks which some masters have (by false weights, or rotten wares handsomely glazed or glossed, or any other sinful way) to cozen their customers. No. If thou art skilled in this hellish black art, keep it to thyself and the devil, whence it came, but let not thy servant be abused by doing thy work so many years, and then turned off like thy horse, after such hard labour, without any reward.

By that small acquaintance I have in the city, I find the urging this duty exceeding necessary, many masters being faulty herein, to the great prejudice and wrong of their apprentices; and I do some-

¹ Ainsworth in Deut. xv. 14.

what marvel that those who write of relation duties, do generally omit it—not one that I ever read of so much as mentioning it.

5. Masters ought to exercise discipline towards their servants. Reproof is due to a servant sinning, as much as his diet; nay, a servant that will not be corrected with words, must with blows, Prov. xxix. 19. The philosopher tells us, a servant may challenge three things, *ἐργον, τροφήν, καὶ κόλασιν*, work, meat, and correction; and it is clear, as the case may be in the last, that the master in giving them all, doth no more than what is just and equal. Some servants, like the Phrygians, will do nothing any longer than they are beaten to it. But that servant who knoweth his master's will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes, Luke xii. 47. The Scythians, when their servants, upon their long absence in Asia, had married their wives, and at their return withstood them, conquered their servants with whips, though they could not conquer them with swords.¹

The master ought to be wise, especially in this part of his duty. Correction is like physic, not to be given without good advice and caution; if it be too frequent, it works no more than our meat with us; some faults that are lesser, may be pardoned without danger, Eccles. vii. 21, 22.

Every house must not be turned into a house of correction. The servants' disposition must be observed. We use a difference when we go about to hew a rugged piece of timber, and to smooth a little stick, which you can bend as you please.

A fit season must be observed. Cut your trees at some time of the year, and you kill them; prune them at other times, and they thrive much the better.

The fault must be plain. Arraignment and conviction in all our courts precede judgment and execution. Some masters in their heat and haste fly on their servants upon a supposition which is false; like those who hang men for a fact, and then examine whether they are guilty or no, and if they be found innocent, take their bodies down from the gibbet, and allow them a burial. No man was to be beaten among the Jews, say their writers,² but by witnesses and evidence, and they were to examine the witnesses by inquiry and diligent search, even as they did in judgments of life and death. Joseph's master sinned in putting him into prison upon his wife's bare assertion, Gen. xxxix. 20.

The correction must be moderate. Servants must not be wrought

¹ Pez. Mel. Hist.

² Ainsworth in Deut. xxv. Ex Maimon. in Sanhedrin., chap. xvi. sec. 4.

like horses, nor beaten like dogs. When Hagar fled from the too hard dealing of her mistress, and groaned to God, he heard her cry. Dent. xxiii. 15, he cannot endure that our brother or sister should be vile in our eyes. Adrianus the emperor banished one Umbra, a matron, for five years, for handling her maids cruelly, Dent. xxv. 3, 4. Whosoever did beat his servant amongst the Hebrews immoderately, was to be beaten himself, unless there were a fine by their judicial laws, as in some cases, imposed on him.¹ It is evident, that if the master had wronged his servant, though but in a tooth, he was to make him satisfaction, Exod. xxi. 26, 27. The Romans punished their faulty servants, by forcing them to carry a piece of wood called *furca*, in way of disgrace, up and down among all their neighbours, and the offender was called *furcifer*.²

6. Masters ought to encourage good servants. Sometimes by seasons for lawful recreations. The naturalist, who speaketh much that servants should not want work, saith also that they must have rest and recreation, ἀργίαν, as well as ἐργον, refreshment as employment. Their hard meat will go down the better with a little sauce.

Horses too strait reined in, are apt to rise up with their forefeet; when they are allowed convenient liberty with their heads they go the better.

Sometimes by preferring him, if it be in thy power: 'A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren,' Prov. xvii. 2. God would have those that are low and lowly exalted to higher places. Potiphar, though he had no fear of God, yet having found Joseph faithful, he preferred him, a poor slave, to be over all his house. The centurion's honest servant was dear to him, ἐντίμος, of great price; a good servant is a jewel of great price, and therefore he should not always be put to mean, servile use. It is pity a gracious person should ever, much less always, stand in a low place. Oh, suffer not live coals to go out for want of blowing; let thy words and thy works shew that grace in a mean man is glorious.

Paul writes to Philemon on the behalf of his godly servant, 'Receive him not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, especially to me, but how much more to thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?' Philem. 16. It is sordid in many masters that dismiss their servants, when they have dwelt with them many years, and served them faithfully, rather as prisoners out of a jail,

¹ Ainsworth in Dent. xxv. Ex Maimon. in Sanhedrin., chap. xvi. sec. 4.

² Plutarch.

ragged and tattered, than as brethren out of a Christian society. God commandeth the Jews, when their servant's apprenticeship was out, 'In the seventh year thou shalt let him go free. And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: but shalt liberally furnish him out of thy flock, and out of thy floor: of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give him,' Deut. xv. 13, 14. Heb., In furnishing thou shalt furnish him, that is, certainly do it. Some read it, Adorn him as with a chain, release him with honour, and not turn him out as a vagabond. For the quantity, the law appointeth not how much the master should give his servant.

The Hebrews gather out of Exod. xxi. 32, that he might not give less than thirty shekels, whether it were of one kind (of the things forementioned) or of many.¹ Now these judicial laws, as to their equity, are still in force. But how far from conformity to the equity of this precept are those crabbed, covetous persons, who instead of good works deny their honest servant a good word at parting; nay, and when they are gone, and set up for themselves, envy them their custom, and do their utmost to hinder them in their callings; such masters degenerate into savage beasts, scrambling to have all themselves, and fighting, at least in thoughts and words, that no others may share with them.

7. Masters should set a good pattern before their servants. Masters are the looking-glass by which servants usually dress themselves. If they be false glasses, their servants will be attired but in ill-favoured fashions. Servants are as members, masters as the head; now the members accompany the head, whether through a dirty ditch, or through a cleanly path—whether to a tavern or to the temple. It is the unhappy privilege of a master to have, like Korah, a company following him in his wicked courses and worst practices. 'The eyes of a servant are to the hands of his master, and the eyes of a maiden to the hands of her mistress,' Ps. cxxiii. 2. Reader, observe it, to the hand of master and mistress; the hand is the organ of action, the instrument of working, servants' eyes are as much, often more, to their masters' and mistresses' works, as their ears to their words. Their voice to their superiors is like that of Tiberius to Justinus, If you please I agree, if you refuse I deny also; or as the king of Judah to the king of Israel, I am as thou art; or as that scribe to Christ, 'Master, I will follow thee wherever thou goest,' Mat. viii. 19; what care therefore should masters take that their race be by rule, lest poor servants should wait on, and follow

¹ Maimon. Treat. of Servants, chap. iii. sec. 14.

after them to hell ! If a governor be bad, all his servants are wicked, Prov. xxix. 12. Pharaoh's servants took after their master, and so did Saul's. Servants are as sunflowers, they follow the motion of (the sun) their masters, whether to good or evil. If the high priests, and the heads of the Jews, prove corrupt, they shall not want company in their evil courses, though it be to buffet and persecute, and deride the Lord Jesus Christ. Inferiors are like a flock of cranes, which way their superior, the foremost, flieth, all the rest follow. The servants of Absalom will join with him in his sin, sooner than the servant of Elisha will join with him in his sanctity. If the first sheet in the press, upon its last review, go off ill, full of errors, the whole fifteen hundred, or two thousand that come after, have all the same faults ; but if that go off well, the rest will resemble it ; truly what the first sheet is to them that remain, that is a master to his men-servants, and a mistress to her maidens. If the master make conscience of his words, of his deeds, if he be serious in, and diligent at, holy duties, servants, at least in pretence, will imitate him ; but if he be a curser, a cheater, a liar, a Sabbath-breaker, how ordinary is it for servants to take after him ! The works of commanders and masters, are usually the commanders and masters of servants' works. Consider therefore, reader, how thou carriest thyself, lest those that thank thee in this world for thy pains and faithfulness in teaching them their trades, curse thee in the other world for leading them by thy wicked pattern to the place of torments.

A good wish about the master's duties, wherein the former heads are epitomised.

The sovereign Lord of the whole world, who hath manifested his manifold wisdom in appointing such a subordination amongst his several creatures, as might be most conducive to the ends of their creation, and his boundless goodness in bestowing dominion on some for the welfare and happiness, not for the injury and hurt, of others, that the poor and weaker, as they yield subjection to, might receive protection and provision from, the rich and stronger, having out of his mere mercy, not for any merit, called me to be a master, I wish that I may never behave myself in this relation as a slave to Satan, or a servant of unrighteousness, by making my house to my servants, as Egypt to Israel, an iron furnace and a house of bondage,

either to their souls or bodies ; that I may not abuse my power to the prejudice of the poorest, but that I may give unto all my servants that which is just and equal, knowing that I myself have a Master in heaven.

I wish that, whenever my heart is ready to insult over them, or my hand ready to fall heavy upon them, I may consider that though there be some difference betwixt us in regard of civil condition, yet there is none in regard of natural constitution. Did not he that made me in the womb make them ? and did not he form us all in the womb ? Should the children of the same father with me be used like beasts by me ? Our births, our beings, our lives and deaths, are the same ; I am made of the same essential parts, live by the same providence, breathe in the same common air, and must shortly be buried in the same earth with them ; and is here any ground for arrogancy in me, or cruelty towards them ? When they are my fellow-travellers, that came out of the same inn of the womb, are willing to wait upon me as I journey, and walk with me to the same grave, shall I rob or wrong them by the way ? Lord, since nature made no difference betwixt me and the meanest servant in the world, but whatsoever difference there is comes from thy free grace, enable me to carry myself towards them righteously and mercifully, as towards my fellow-creatures, those that are of the same make and mould with myself, lest by despising the poor I reproach both their and my maker.

I wish that I may behave myself towards my servants as towards those that are God's sons. As they differ not from me in natural principles, so neither do they differ in spiritual privileges ; they have right to the same God, to the same gospel, to the same Saviour, and to the same salvation. Though they are poor, yet they have an equal title here to the exceeding rich and precious promises, and hereafter to the purchased possession. What though they want those external fading accomplishments of birth, breeding, honour, estate, which others boast of, when they may have the real internal endowments of the love of God, and the blood of Christ, and the embroidery of the Spirit, which are the only things of worth and price ! Good kings will not suffer their subjects to be wronged, much less their children. He that toucheth God's chosen, toucheth the apple of his eye. How sure am I to suffer, if I offend one of Christ's little ones. Oh let me never, according to the world's judgment, esteem persons by their outward ornaments ; but as David shewed kindness to lame Mephibosheth for Jonathan's sake, so let me shew kindness to low servants for Jesus' sake. Lord,

since thou makest not the least difference betwixt me and them in spirituals, let me make the less difference in civils; let me never be so foolish, and so much my own foe, as to oppress and abuse thy favourites, but let me use them in all respects as those that are or may be thy heirs, and partakers with me of the same holiness, and the same heaven.

I wish that the fear of my Master above may make me faithful to my servants here below. His eyes behold all my ways, his heart doth perfectly hate all my wickedness, and his hand can punish me when he pleaseth; he will not spare me for my place, nor fear me for my power; with him there is no respect of persons. Shall not his dread fall upon me, and his terror make me afraid? If the presence and awe of a king make a judge righteous to his subjects, shall not the omnipresence and dread of a God make me just to my servants? Oh that I might never be so far possessed with unbelief as to think my Lord delayeth his coming, and thence to take liberty to beat the men-servants and maidens, (to neglect their souls, to wrong their bodies, by oppressing them with work, or not paying them their wages,) and to eat, and drink, and to be drunken, lest my Lord come in a day when I look not for him, and in an hour when I am not aware, and cut me asunder, and give me my portion with unbelievers, Luke xii. 45, 46. Ah, should I be a hard master to them, how heavy would the hand of my God be on me! If an oppressed Israelite groan by reason of his bondage, God will hear his cry, and maintain his cause; and what plagues will then fall down on such Egyptian masters! Lord, though I could abuse my servant without any fear of men, let me not dare to rule with rigour, out of the fear of thee. For if I despise the cause of my man-servant, or my maid-servant, when they plead with me, what then shall I do when thou risest up? and when thou visitest, what shall I answer thee? Job xxi. 14, 15.

I wish that I could consider that I am but a deputy-master, that God only hath an absolute dominion, and therefore my servants must be always used answerable to their relation to him. Who am I, that I should offer to abuse the servants of another man? And do I dare to abuse the servants of the great God? If it were ground enough for Pharaoh, a heathen, to let Israel enjoy their liberty because they were God's people,—‘Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness,’—surely it should be reason enough with me, a Christian, to rule over my servants with meekness and mildness, because they are God's servants; reason and civility would forbid me to oppress the servants of a stranger,

and shall not religion and sanctity withhold me from abusing the servants of my Father and Saviour? Lord, my flesh is apt to suggest that I am a sovereign, and therefore may deal with them according to my passion; but thy word hath told me that I am but thy substitute; oh, let me therefore govern them according to thy precepts!

I wish that, because they are God's servants, I may be the more careful to teach them his statutes, and the more conscientious to acquaint them with his word, and command them his worship; I hinder God of his honour, and them also, to my power, of heaven, if I mind nothing about them, but my own work. Would I be willing that poor servants should, out of my house, stumble into hell? Their souls are as precious as of the greatest earthly princes. My God in the making of them took as great pains; my Saviour in the purchasing them laid down the same price; the Holy Spirit will dwell in them, if they be pure, sooner than in the soul of the highest ungodly potentate; and shall I trample those jewels, which my God esteems at so dear a rate, as dung and dirt under my feet? Oh that I might not, as covetous wretches, ever increase my temporal goods, by being cruel to my servants' souls, and neglecting their eternal good. Within a few days they shall enter into their unchangeable estates: heaven or hell must hold their precious souls for ever; and shall I be no more mindful of my man or my maid than I am of my beasts, that when they die have a period both of their pain and pleasure? Lord, I beg it of thy sacred Majesty, that my servants may, through me, as an instrument, receive from thee saving mercy. Oh that my faithfulness might be so real, and thy favour so effectual, that none might go out of my family into the unquenchable fire.

Dearest Redeemer, who wast pleased to take upon thee, for our sakes, the form of a servant, and didst not disdain in the days of thy flesh, here on earth, to give a visit to a poor sick servant, let it please thee to visit my sick men, my sick maids, with thy gracious and powerful presence; shew thyself a charitable, skilful, and compassionate physician in healing such poor, dangerous patients, for God's sake. They are not able to requite thee, but thou lovest freely; oh heal their backslidings, and receive them graciously, and they will render thee (what they are able) the calves of their lips, the thanks of their hearts, and the praise of their lives to all eternity.

I wish that I may be true to their bodies, though I be most tender of their souls; I ought to prefer the inward, but yet to pro-

vide for their outward man. Why should I be so unrighteous as to withhold their due, whilst I accept their duty? and so unreasonable as to expect their labour, and yet to grudge them that which maintaineth their lives? I would neither pine nor pamper them, but feed them with food convenient and sufficient. Charity bindeth me to feed and clothe others in necessity, according to my estate and ability; but justice requireth me to requite these. They earn their bread in the sweat of their brows, and should they be turned off with a knock and a bit? The ox must not be muzzled that treadeth out the corn; and is not the Christian labourer worthy of his hire? If my serviceable beast were ill, I would willingly be at the cost of his cure; and doth not my Christian servant, when sick, deserve much more care? What though he should, when recovered, prove ungrateful, or die, and thereby be disenabled to acknowledge my kindness; yet my God, who is a sure and liberal paymaster, would not fail largely to recompense my labour of love. Lord, let me never be of the number of those gallants who through their pride bring up their servants (pampering them in wantonness and wickedness) to bring down their families; nor of those muckworms who, out of penuriousness, deny them their due; but let me regard them as thy servants, both in health and sickness, and afford them, with respect to my wealth and their wants, as those that are or may be thy adopted sons.

I wish that I may never abuse my power to the wrong of my Saviour or servant, by commanding anything which my God forbiddeth. My authority is derivative from him, and therefore must be exercised in obedience to him. It is his free grace that I am a master, not a servant, and shall I not improve his favour to his glory? How unworthy should I be if, like Jchu, I fight against my Master with his own soldiers, and use the power which he hath given me to dethrone and dishonour him? I am greatly ungrateful if I do not acknowledge his kindness by improving it to his credit; but what a monster of ingratitude am I, if I abuse the gracious commission of my king, to the robbing him of his crown! Lord, preserve me from following Sennacherib's heathenish and hellish pattern, who commanded and sent his servants to revile and reproach the living God; but let all the work I shall ever appoint them, be agreeable to thy word. Since my person is by millions of engagements bound to subjection, and my dominion is received wholly from thee, let my person and power ever be improved in subordination to thee.

. I wish that I may never wrong their bodies by immoderate work,

as well as not injure their souls by anything that is wicked. They are come to be my servants, not to be my slaves. I am called to be their master, not to be their tyrant. Oh, let me never be so barbarous, as, by working them like beasts, to drink their blood ! If a merciful man be merciful to his beasts, what a man of blood is he that is cruel to Christians ! Lord, keep me from imitating those pharisees, who bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, on the shoulders of inferiors, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

I wish that I may be faithful in teaching them fully that trade to which they are bound. How cursedly do I cozen both parents and children if I deal deceitfully with them in my calling ! With what conscience can I use them as servants, whilst I resolve they shall never be masters ? And doth it not pity me to see how hard they work, and what pains they take to buy their future beggary ? Do I deal with others as I would be dealt with myself ? Can I imagine that such covetousness, or whatsoever be the cause of this injustice, shall escape a curse ? I hinder, by my unrighteousness, their temporal weal, but I further my own eternal woe. Lord, suffer me not to raise myself by robbery, nor, as many rich persons, to build my house upon others' ruin ; but let justice in all my actions run down like water, and righteousness in this relation like a mighty stream.

I wish that my servants' souls may be always dearer to me than their sins ; I mean, that I may never allow them in anything that is unlawful. The human nature will help me to discourage them in that which may poison their bodies, and shall not the divine nature hinder me from encouraging them in that which will pollute their immortal souls ? My frowns, through God's blessing, may famish, but my favour will too probably fatten, their body of sin. Will sin deal so tenderly with their souls if they go to the place of torment, that I should be so meek and so mild in reproving it ? How perfectly doth my God hate sin, when he inflicteth such dreadful judgments on sinners for sin's sake ! What ignominy and agony, what sorrows and torture, did my Saviour undergo to make satisfaction for sin ! What pains doth the Spirit take to cast sin down, even when he doth not cast it out, in any soul ! and shall I allow any in sin ?

Besides, I am guilty of that profaneness which I may, and do not, prevent. Their debts, contracted through my connivance, will be laid to my charge at the dreadful day of Christ. And are my own sins so light a load that I must cry for others' burdens, and,

as a man pressing to death, call for more weight? Oh that I might never wink at either wife's, or children's, or servants' wickedness; but though I love their persons, may yet loathe their vices, and so reprove them, as one that would not have his poor house removed, when they leave this world, into hell. Lord, did I never feel sin, and that I am still apt to have such favourable thoughts of it, both in myself and others. Hath not the law's curse, because of it, gone over my soul, and thy wrath pressed me very sore? and shall no learning teach me? Oh, whatsoever affliction it be thy pleasure to chastise me with, preserve me from thy curse, the permission of sin in my own or any others' soul.

I wish that I may be fit to reprove others, by living without rebuke, and being irreprovable myself. Eyes filled with dust cannot see spots in others' faces. Hands that are filthy are not fit to wash out the defilement of the other members. Besides, if I commit, and am guilty of that swearing or drunkenness, or any sin which I condemn in others, I do but, like David in condemning them, pass a sentence of eternal death upon my own soul. I wish, therefore, for my own sake, and the sake of my followers, that I may be a follower of Christ, and walk in all things as I have him for an example. How soon will my servants tread in my steps, whether right or wrong! As the body in a beast, so do servants in a house, follow the head, the master. And am I willing to make them wicked with me, and to be for ever woeful with them? Will not hell-fire be the hotter for so much fuel? Oh that, since servants are the soft wax, and my life is the seal, I might live so righteously, soberly, and godlily, as to be a pattern of piety, and a credit to the gospel, and instrumental to stamp God's image on their souls. Lord, the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man to direct his own steps. I beseech thee, therefore, to lead me in thy truth, and so to order all my steps by thy word, that the iniquity of my heels—I mean of them that follow me at the heels—may never compass me about.

I wish that I may not only be a terror to evil-doers, but also an encouragement to those servants that do well; that I may, as a wise gardener, be as diligent to cherish the good plants, as to pluck up the evil weeds. It is infinite pity that virtue should famish for want of favour, that grace should languish for lack of countenance. Oh, how carefully doth my God encourage piety in never so mean a person! He looks on their enemies as his enemies. It were better that a millstone were hung about the neck of the greatest emperor, and he thrown into the sea, than that he should offend

one of these little ones. They are holiness to the Lord, the first fruits of his increase ; all that devour them shall offend, evil shall befall them. He makes it the character of a true Christian to honour them, poor or rich, bond or free, that fear the Lord. They are precious in his sight, and honourable, though the world judge them base and contemptible ; though he be the high and lofty One, yet he humbleth himself to make these poor in spirit the habitation where his holiness dwelleth. Lord, help me, who profess myself to be thy son, to resemble thee in my carriage towards my servants, that wheresoever I behold any sproutings of grace, or buddings of godliness, I may afford those tender buds such warm beams as may cause them, through thy blessing, to ripen into fruits of holiness, and to end at last in everlasting life.

Finally, I wish that I may, in every particular of this relation of a master, carry myself as a faithful servant to Christ. Lord, if I expect such reverence, obedience, and diligence from my servants, because I give them, through thy bounty to me, a little food and wages, what reverence, obedience, and diligence mayest thou expect from me, when I owe my life and all my comforts to thy free grace, and am bound by millions of engagements to thy blessed Majesty ! Oh that as mountains overflowing with water do thereby help to fatten the valleys, my heart might be so filled with living water, that I may be instrumental to make my servants and inferiors fruitful in godliness ! Blessed God, remit all my miscarriages in this relation, and be pleased so to renew my soul after the image of thy dear Son, that I may carry myself towards my servant as a vessel of honour, fitted and prepared for my master's use ; and when the day of my death shall come, that servants shall be free from their subjection to me, I may be free both from sin and suffering, under which I am now sold, and enter into my master's joy. Amen.

CHAPTER VII.

How Christians may exercise themselves to godliness in the relation of servants.

The lowest relation in a family is this of servants, in which, as well as in the rest, religion must be minded. Therefore the Spirit of God giveth directions in his word how these should carry them-

selves; and the minister, as he is a steward, is bound to give the meanest in his master's family their portion.

Some servants in the days of the apostles thought that their spiritual freedom by Christ had exempted them from bodily and civil subjection to men. The first author of this opinion is thought to be Judas of Galilee, mentioned by Gamaliel, Acts v. 37, and he is there said to have stood up in the days of the taxing. Eusebius ascribeth this heresy to the Essenes. And Josephus¹ saith that after them rose up the Galileans, who taught that none was to be called Dominus, lord or master, but God only; and they would suffer the most exquisite torments rather than give this title to any man. In succeeding ages rose up the Manichees,² A.D. 273, who denied all civil authority, whether public or private. After these followed, A.D. 1296, the Pseudo-apostoli, whose ringleader was Gerardus Sagarellus de Parma, whose doctrine was *neminem subjici nisi soli Christo*, that none should be subject to any save to Christ alone. Of latter times some licentious Anabaptists did drink in the same poisonous liquor.

But the doctrine of the gospel doth not free men from their service, but fasten them to it.³ It freeth servants from sinful subjection to their masters, I mean in anything which God forbiddeth, but not from civil subjection in those things which are lawful. Religion doth not consume but confirm the master's authority. Hence the gospel layeth down such precepts for the carriage and usage of servants. If all service to men had been sinful, the Holy Ghost would not have laid down rules, both for servants' duties to, and dues from, their masters. Christ's kingdom is not of this world, neither is the liberty which he purchaseth for his people of this world. All are one in Christ in regard of internal and eternal salvation, not in regard of external condition. For they remain after conversion, master and servant, high and low still. Surely Paul, after Onesimus was born again, would never have turned him to his master if service had been unlawful.

Reader, if thou art called to be the servant of man, carry thyself therein as the servant of God. It is thy privilege that in thy low place thou mayest honour the blessed and glorious potentate. As 'in every nation,' so in every calling and condition, 'he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him,' Acts x. 35. Thy subjection to thy master on earth should be performed so

¹ Joseph. Antiq., lib. xviii. cap. 2.

² Prateol. Har., lib. xi. cap. 6.

³ Servi cum crediderint, plus dominis carnalibus servire debent.—*Cypri. Testim.*, lib. ii. cap. 72.

religiously that it may be service to thy Master in heaven. Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters, not with eye-service, but with the service of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.

I shall first lay down some motives, and then speak to the servant's duty.

First, Consider, godliness will much sweeten your present subjection and servile condition. Possibly thy life is full of black lines, thy yoke is very hard, by reason of a hard master. Now, how wilt thou make it easy but by godliness? Thy corporal servitude should make thee the more desirous of spiritual liberty. Thy present disgrace should whet thy endeavours after the eternal weight of glory. Will it not be sad for thee to be slighted and despised of men for thy mean condition, because thou art a servant, and to be hated and plagued of God for thy reigning corruptions, because thou art a servant of sin? Doth not thy heart ache to think of two hells—a hell on earth, and a hell in hell? Believe it, without godliness thy present slavery is but a pledge of thy future misery. Now, it may be thy master is a Nabal, such a man of Belial that thou canst not speak to him; his looks are ever lowering, his lips are always railing at thee, and his hand is often heavy on thee. Ay, but thou wilt find Satan an infinitely more cruel tyrant. This severity is but a shadow of thy sufferings hereafter. Now thou workest hard all day, wearying out thy spirits and wasting thy strength, and art turned off with a bit and a knock, and possibly at night thy master thinks thy pains are never great enough, and thy reward is never little enough; but these things are but the beginning of thy sorrows. The devil, after all thy painful ploughing in his field, and hard grinding in his mill, in the day of thy life, will turn thee into the stable of hell, with thy galled back, at the night of death.

Do not delude thyself, that because thou art afflicted here thou shalt be spared hereafter; for thy jail in which thou now livest may be to thee, as to many others, the way to execution. Thou mayest go, as prisoners do, from this jail on earth to the gallows in hell. Believe it, God will never pity thee for thy poverty, if thou art one of the devil's ragged regiment. It is the poor in spirit, not in purse; the lowly in disposition, not the low in condition, that are blessed.

David tells us the objects gathered themselves together against him, Ps. xxxv. 15. Some servants are saucy dust, that fly in the face of God and his people: but such must know that the breath

of divine vengeance will blow away such dust. Oh how sad is the state of that servant who now dwelleth in an iron furnace, and must dwell hereafter in the unquenchable fire. Wicked men in a hard service are like naked hands exercised in hedging; they are sure to be pricked and pained much; but they who make religion their business in such places, are like hands armed with strong gloves, they are fenced against those thorns and briers. A godly servant, by looking to God, alters the nature of his hard service: for that bitter potion which is loathsome to him, when given him by the hand of a man, is lovely when presented to him by a loving and gracious God. Though we hate poison when it is mingled with our meat by a malicious enemy, as knowing that it may kill us, yet we take it willingly when it is sent us well tempered by a faithful and skilful physician, as hoping it may cure us.

Secondly, Consider, the holy life of a servant is a great ornament to the gospel. A poor servant may credit religion as well as a rich master. Poor servants carry lanterns and torches, whereby they direct others how to walk without stumbling. A pious servant may shine so with the light of purity as to guide others' feet in the ways of peace.

In the days of Christ the poor received the gospel, and by walking suitably thereunto they adorned the gospel. 'Let servants,' saith the apostle, 'be subject to their masters, and shew all good fidelity.' But what forcible motive doth he use to persuade to this faithfulness? 'That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things,' Titus ii. 9, 10;—*i.e.*, though possibly they shall have no thanks from their masters for all their diligence, yet this they shall do, which will bring them thanks from God, they shall adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour.

The gospel is adorned when it is rendered beautiful and amiable in the eyes of others. Poor servants, if pious, may bring their unbelieving masters to be in love with religion. As Naaman's servant, they may be helpful to cure, and to convert their masters. That dish, which before they could scarce endure the sight of, may be so neatly dressed by a cleanly servant, as may cause them both to look on it and to like it. At least, a faithful servant will take away occasions from a profane master of blaspheming God and the gospel. Sanctity will help to put him to silence, and nothing will command so much reverence as religion. Fire in a wilderness is a good shelter against the fury of wild beasts. When holiness sparkleth in a servant's life, and he is very faithful in the discharge of his trust, it preserveth religion from the rage and rancour of evil men.

On the other side, an unfaithful servant is a disgrace to the blessed Saviour. They who profess godliness, though never so low, if they fall, will have many that are high looking and laughing at them. If a saint step awry, the world will quickly spy it, and then they cry out, This is a gallant and goodly profession indeed ! They will conclude the profession is not of God, if the professors walk like men.

Reader, if thou art a servant, consider the credit of the gospel is engaged in thy carriage. The gospel is thy best friend, and canst thou find in thy heart, by an unholy life, to trample it under thy feet ? It is the greatest love-token which thy God hath sent thee, and doth it not behove thee to be tender of it, and to walk answerable to it ? ' Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed,' 1 Tim. vi. 1. Oh, how much doth the child's unruliness reflect on his father, and the servant's unfaithfulness reflect on his master, in heaven !

Thirdly, Consider, God will reward you for all your faithful service. It may be thou mayest labour hard, and serve thy master with much diligence and conscience, and for all thy work scarce receive a good word from him ; but know this, thy God will give thee a rich and sure reward : he that with good-will doth service to God shall never miss of his pay. A good servant serveth God more than his master, and he serveth God in serving his master ; and therefore may expect that God should give him his reward. ' Servants, be obedient to your masters, with fear and trembling. With good-will serving the Lord, and not man ; and know ye, that whatsoever good thing a man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free,' Eph. vi. 5-8. A good servant soweth good seed by his faithful service to his master, and God will take care that he reaps a good crop.

God sometimes gives a good 'servant a reward in this world. Jacob served Laban faithfully many years, and though his master dealt churlishly with him, yet God paid him bountifully in the end. He had full wages for all his work. ' A faithful man shall abound with blessings,' Prov. xxviii. 20. Joseph was conscientious in his mean place under Potiphar, for which he was advanced to be his steward and chief servant, and afterwards he came to be lord of Egypt. ' A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame,' Prov. xvii. 2. Mordecai was faithful when he sat as porter at the king's gate, and God honours him and sets him above all the princes in the court of Ahasuerus.

But if God do not reward thee here, he will not fail to do it hereafter. Though the gratuities or gifts are uncertain, yet the salary is certain. And truly the longer men forbear the interest, the greater will the principal be. 'Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters, according to the flesh, in all things; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ,' Col. iii. 22-24. Faithful servants shall have the reward of sons, nay, of heirs. 'Ye shall receive the reward of inheritance.' Heaven is an undefiled and incorruptible inheritance, which God hath prepared for all them that serve him with a pure conscience. When the children of the kingdom shall be cast out, pious servants shall be called in, Mat. viii. 11.

I come now to shew wherein the duty of a servant consisteth.

1. Thy duty is to reverence thy master. The distance in this relation is the greatest, and therefore commandeth the greatest reverence. 'If I be a master, where is my fear?' Mal. i. 6. A saucy servant is a sinful servant. He hath no fear of his Maker, who doth not fear his master. 'Servants, be subject to your own masters with all fear,' 1 Pet. ii. 18. 'Servants, be obedient with fear and trembling,' Eph. vi. 5. Because servants enjoyed spiritual freedom, they were apt to think themselves exempted from corporal subjection; therefore the apostles of Christ are diligent to acquaint them with their duties. Their privilege by Christ, as it should make them the more cheerful in their service, so also the more awful of their superiors.

Some thought that, if their masters were believers and brethren, all were equal, and there needed not any respect or reverence to be shewed to them. Therefore, saith the Scripture, 'Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their masters worthy of all honour; and they which have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do service, because they are faithful and beloved,' 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2. It seemeth some servants, under the pretence of Christian liberty, would have cast off the yoke of obedience. They objected, that as their masters were in Christ, so were they, and in Christ there is neither bond nor free; but the Holy Ghost answereth, that though there be no spiritual, yet there is an external and civil difference. Servants' relation to their masters is not dissolved by their relation to, and union with Jesus Christ. They are servants still, and ought to give their Christian masters double honour. They should honour them for their relation as masters, and more for their religion, as they are Christian masters.

Others could reverence their masters, they say, if they were religious and courteous; but the apostle Peter bids servants to fear and honour such masters as are froward. 'Servants, be subject to your masters, not only to the good and courteous, but also to the froward,' 1 Pet. ii. 18. If the master be good or bad, courteous or crabbed, it is all one in this particular; for the honour is due, not to the man's nature, but to God's order.

2. Thy duty is to yield obedience to him in the Lord. In the civil law a servant is said to be *ἀπρόσωπος*, one that sustaineth no person, but is a dependent and an adjunct to his master, as one that ought to form himself to his master's mind. 'Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things,' Tit. ii. 9. *Servus non est persona, sed res*, saith the civilian. He is an instrument to be acted at his master's pleasure. The centurion describeth a servant: 'I say to one, Go, and he goeth; to another, Come, and he cometh; to a third, Do this, and he doeth it,' Mat. viii. 9. The apostle also gives his true character: 'His servant ye are whom ye obey,' Rom. vi. 16. He is not a servant, but a master, that must have his own way and will. Such a one putteth off the formal nature of a servant. Servants are bound to be at the disposal of their master and mistress, both for the matter and the manner of their work; though some, like forward lapwings, run when the shell is scarce off their heads; though they be, comparatively, but boys or girls, yet their work must be done at their own time and in their own way. Job's servant was highly faulty, who was so far from acting that he refused to answer his master. 'I called my servant, and he gave me no answer,' Job xix. 16. Sullenness in a servant is a great sin. Silence is sometimes a sign of consent; but when it proceeds from sullenness, it is ever a sign of contempt. Not to answer a stranger is incivility, and against the law of courtesy; but not to answer a master is a great iniquity, and against the law of justice, for the servant's tongue, as well as his hands, is his master's. Servants are too ready to answer when they ought to be silent, and too ready to be silent when they ought to answer. Therefore elsewhere the Holy Ghost forbiddeth servants to answer again: 'Not answering again,' Tit. ii. 9. They may answer, but they must not answer again. They must answer when asked, but may not answer again when reproofed. There is a two-fold answering again.

1. By way of opposition; when servants say somewhat to their masters, but it is by way of gainsaying their minds. Some servants can give their master or mistress word for word, nay, two for one;

this the apostle dissuadeth from. Those that are slow of their feet are swift of their tongues. *Lazy and loud* may be their motto. Others are nimble at their hands, and thence take liberty to be nimbler at their tongues. Few do their work well, who do not by their cutting words spoil all.

2. By way of submission. Coming, and going, and doing are the best answer to a master. Servants may answer in language of reverence, and with the carriage of obedience. A nod of the head or beckoning with the hand should be a sufficient word of command to them, Ps. cxxv. 2. Reader, consider how urgently thou art enjoined by thy Maker to be obedient to thy master: 'Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ,' Eph. vi. 5. In which words we have,

First, The servant's subjection expressed: 'Servants, be obedient.' A disobedient servant denieth his name, his relation. Obedience should be the garment, the livery wherewith all in such places should be clothed, or otherwise they contradict their title.

Secondly, The restriction of that obedience implied: 'To them that are your masters according to the flesh.' Intimating that the master's dominion is bounded, it is over the flesh, (he hath no liberty to make laws for the servant's spirit,) and so is the servant's subjection limited. Servants are not only to suffer when they have sinned, but rather to suffer than to sin. Conscience bindeth to obedience, but not to obedience against conscience. 'Be not,' saith the same apostle, 'the servants of men; ye are bought with a price,' 1 Cor. vii. 23. Christ hath redeemed servants from sinful slavery, though not from civil servitude. Joseph did obey the sinless laws of his master, but he refused to obey the sinful lust of his mistress.¹ They are masters over the flesh or body, not over the soul; therefore so long as the soul is not wronged, the rule of the servant's obedience must be his master's will, be it irksome or wearisome, not his own. But still, if the master, as Absalom and the chief priests in their commands, oppose God's commands, servants must submit to their punishments, not obey their precepts. It is much better to suffer for forbearance than to sin in obedience. Masters may tell their servants, as that unnatural son did his, that he would excuse them, 2 Sam. xiii. 28. But that proud prince's word was no warrant for his servants' wickedness. Though the master be doubly guilty in commanding, the servant is not guiltless in obeying. Whosoever be the authors, God will punish the actors of sin.

¹ Subjectio potest esse ubi non est obedientia.

3. Diligence is thy duty. Some servants are like gentlemen, humble servants, but it is only in a compliment. They are all for words and show, nothing for works and substance. Their care is to fare well and go fine, but as gaudy pictures, rather than active persons, they are nothing for action. How many hire others to do their work, and pay them with their master's money ! being hereby guilty of double theft, for they rob their masters of their time first, and then of their goods. Eliezer, Abraham's steward, preferred his employment before his natural refreshment, and refused to eat before he had done his errand. But how many servants are all for their belly, their diet, and nothing at their hands, at their duty.

There is a kind of heron called *ὄκνός*, slothful, whereupon there was raised a fable that an idle servant was turned into this bird, which is *ἀργότατος*, most idle. It is frequent with maid-servants to have the green-sickness, and men-servants the scurvy, both diseases which make them lazy. Jacob served Laban with all his might ; though the master was churlish, yet the servant was conscientious. In the heat of the day and the cold of the night, he was careful of his duty, and his faithful pains brought him in much peace.

A slothful servant is his own torment. Laziness, like envy, eateth him up. He walketh through a hedge of thorns, because he will not take the pains to go about, and so pierceth himself with anguish. He is a grief to his master, whilst he hinders him in his estate, and disappointeth him in his hopes. 'As vinegar to the teeth, and smoke to the eyes ; so is the sluggard to them that send him,' Prov. x. 26. Some servants will labour in their master's presence, but loiter in his absence, which is a clear sign they do not serve him out of conscience. 'Servants, obey in all things your masters ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers ; but in singleness of heart, fearing God,' Col. iv. 22. Servants who look no further than their master's eye are men-pleasers ; those only who set God ever before them, and thence are always diligent in their work, are God-pleasers.

4. Thy duty is to be faithful to thy master. Every servant hath some trust committed to him, to which he ought to be faithful and true : fidelity is the servant's glory, and the master's gain. 'As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him ; for he refresheth the soul of his master,' Prov. xxv. 13.

An unfaithful servant is a rotten pillar, which breaketh under the weight laid on him, the trust committed to him. As an unsound

tooth, he doth frustrate his master of his hopes; and if put to any stress, wounds him to the very heart with torment.

1. Thy duty is to be true in thy words, not lying. Take heed of Gehazi's lie—'Thy servant went no whither,' 2 Kings v. 25—lest thou meetest with his leprosy. Some servants' words are like the writings of Appius, which, saith Josephus,¹ are ψεύσματα συγχύτικα—a dunghill of shameless untruths. But such servants are the devil's sons, for he is the father of lies. A liar is Satan's picture. 'Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie?' Acts v. The devil hath a hand in most, if not all, sins; but the liar hath the devil in his heart: he is full of Satan who liveth in lying. This practice speaketh the wicked one to have full possession. Why hath Satan filled thine heart? A lying servant hath a great disadvantage whilst he liveth, that when he speaketh truth he is not believed; though the dreadfulest when he dieth, that he is one in the list for the unquenchable lake, Rev. xxi. 8.

2. Be faithful in thy works, not purloining. Servants must beware of making any waste of their master's estate. It is their duty to endeavour the preservation and increase of it, Gen. xxxix. 8, as of their own. Servants are apt to cut large thongs out of others' hides; hence the apostle warns them, 'Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity,' Tit. ii. 9. Those that give away to others, or take to themselves any of their master's goods, without his leave, are guilty of purloining.

Servants endeavour to excuse their thefts to their consciences, but cannot, by all their pretences, excuse them to God. They think sometimes, It is but a small matter that I make bold with, for myself or friend. But let such consider—

(1.) The taking of a little, though but a piece of bread for a friend, or a peek of corn, or anything, without leave, is theft and sin, as truly as the taking of much more: a little pot of water is of the same nature with a river.

(2.) God is the less beholden to that servant that will break with him, and incur his anger for so small a matter.

(3.) He that is unfaithful in a little, will, if opportunity be offered, be unfaithful in more. A little wedge makes way for a greater; he that begins to put his finger in the money-box, will come at last to put his hands in the money-bags. They who will serve the devil for a penny, will do him much more service for a pound.

Again, some servants satisfy themselves with this: Their masters, say they, are hard men, and work them much, but do not reward

¹ Joseph., lib. i.

them according to their deserts, therefore they may help themselves. I answer, Servants ought neither to be their own judges, nor their own paymasters. They ought not to be their own judges: servants are more fit for a bar than a bench; they are parties, and so unfit to determine such a question. Their masters may give them above their labour, when their covetous hearts think all to be under; but if their masters be failing herein, they must not therefore be their own carvers. Because, reader, thy master is a churl, is there a necessity that thou shouldst therefore be a cheat? If he deny thee thy due, the law is thy refuge; if some overplus for thy extraordinary service, patience must be thy remedy: for both, if thou art conscientious, God will be thy reward.

Some, for their knavery in wronging their masters, plead Jacob's policy, Gen. xxx. 37, about Laban's sheep. But Jacob's righteousness will, according to his own expression, answer for him in time to come. For—

[1.] The counsel which Jacob had was supernatural. God revealed it to him in a dream. He referred his cause to God, (which is every servant's best course,) and God directed him such a way as requited him well for all his work, Gen. xxxi. 9, 10.

[2.] The means he used were natural: 'He set the rods which he had pilled in the gutters in the watering troughs when the flocks came to drink, that they should conceive when they came to drink. And the cattle conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ring-straked, speckled, and spotted,' Gen. xxx. 38, 39. It is natural for vision to cause assimilation.

[3.] The contract was plain betwixt him and his master: 'And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word,' ver. 34. Here is a clear bargain, therefore no wrong done. Laban did what he could to cozen his faithful servant, though God had, by his own confession, prospered his flocks for his sake; but God appeared on his side. Now, let servants first see that their cases be parallel with Jacob's; I mean, that they serve their masters as he did, conscientiously, with all their might, and then, when their masters, as Laban did, deny them their dues, do nothing to right themselves but what God shall direct in his word, (for now God doth not reveal himself by dreams,) and in pursuance of a plain agreement betwixt their masters and them, and no good man will blame them. It is thy duty not only to forbear stealing, but also to further thy master's estate. Those apprentices are thieves that endeavour to rob their masters of his customers. Some, when nigh their freedom, have fine devices to call another man's pigeons to

their looters. They will tell their master's best customers that he might afford such commodities cheaper, but he is grown rich, and cares not much for dealing, and therefore is so excessive in his gains. Many other ways they have, like Absalom, to steal away the hearts of such men. But if he that hides his master's talent, and doth not increase it, will be counted at last a wicked and slothful servant, and condemned to eternal sufferings, what will become of him that is so far from endeavouring to enrich, that he makes it his business to impoverish his master? Mat. xxv. 29.

The truth is, servants have degenerated so much from their duty, and there have been so few of them faithful, that the word anciently used for a servant is now used for a thief, as appears by the poet—

‘Quid domini faciant, audent cum talia fures!’¹

3. Be faithful to the name of thy master. Do not reveal his nakedness who giveth thee clothing. It is ordinary for servants to be tattling to others of their master's or mistress's infirmities. Oh how glad are they when they have got a tale to carry to their fellows! But such messages, like Uriah's letters, will light most heavy at last upon the messenger; they are spies in a house to discover its weakness, and may expect the punishment of a spy from God for their wickedness. Soldiers received into a garrison for its defence, if they reveal its wants to the enemy, can look for nothing but the reward of traitors. God hath martial-law for those servants who are taken into a family for its protection, and, by discovering the governor's secrets, conspire its destruction. He or she is unfit to be a servant, that cannot conceal the frailties of their master. Such backbiters shew little love to their superiors on earth, and less to their Sovereign in heaven. They are worse thieves that rob them of their good name, than those that wrong them of their goods. Servants, whenever they speak of their master or mistress, should represent them, as some looking-glasses do our faces, to the best advantage. He who is guilty of Ziba's act, of slandering his master, may expect Zimri's end.

4. Be faithful to the person of thy master and mistress. It was a usual speech formerly, *Quot servi, tot hostes*; how many servants, so many enemies. Some still find it true that their enemies are those of their own household. The servant of Elah slew him; that sword which he took to defend him destroyed him. The Duke of Buckingham, who had been a chief instrument of advancing Richard the Third to the crown, falling into displea-

¹ *Vide* Serv. in Virg.

sure at court, fled to one of his servants named Bannister, who betrayed him, and conveyed him to Salisbury, where, without any arraignment, he lost his head.¹

Some of the heathen have been famous for their faithfulness to their masters. Urbinius Panopian being proscribed fled, and being pursued, one of his bondmen changed clothes with him, let his master out at a back-door, lay down in his master's bed, and chose death by the hands of the soldiers to save his master's life.²

The Mohammedans in the Great Mogul's country are commended for their faithful service to their Christian masters that hire them. They follow their masters on foot, carrying bucklers, or bows and arrows, for their defence.³ One work of servants is to defend the whole body of the families in which they are; how faulty, therefore, are they that seek to destroy the head of it! The two chamberlains of Ahasuerus, in seeking their master's death, found their own graves, Esther ii. 21, 23.

Servants also in their places must endeavour their superior's eternal peace. It may be, reader, thou hast a wicked master, one that scorneth and scoffeth at godliness; it behoveth thee to walk the more watchfully, that by thy fidelity and humility thou mayest move him to like and love it. We say of some servants that they can do what they will with their masters, they have so large an interest in them. Thou dost not know how prevalent thy conscientious carriage may be to draw thy master to Christ.

Austin reports of his mother, that she was cured of her drunkenness by her maid's calling her *meribulam*, a wine-bibber.⁴ I cannot justify the maid's sauciness, though it proved happy for her mistress; but sure I am, a submissive, prudent advice from a servant to a superior may, through God's blessing, tend to his eternal good. It is, without question, lawful for a servant to admonish his master or mistress, so it be done with reverence, and out of conscience. David was brought to repentance by Nathan's parabolical reprehension.

A poor contemptible child that hath his sight, may lead a man that is blind to a costly feast. As mean as thou art, if thou art holy and humble in the discharge of thy duty, thou may help thy master, though he be at present so backward to feed on the gospel dainties. Possibly thy master or mistress hath a respect for thee, and thou dost really love and reverence them. Oh, shew thy love

¹ Speed Chron.

² Diod. Sic.

³ Purch. Pilgrim., p. 1476.

⁴ Austin Confess., lib. ix. cap. 8.

by helping them to lay hold on eternal life ! Study and contrive how thou mayest most probably interest them in durable riches, who give thee temporal rewards. Be more solicitous to preserve their souls from ruin, than to keep their estates from rapine. Those herbs which lie on the ground, and are liable to be trampled upon by every one, have been instrumental for great cures. Blessed is that servant who is diligent to bring others into his Lord's service ; it is no hurt though he be a footstool, so he can lift others nearer to heaven.

A good wish about the duty of a servant, wherein the former heads are epitomised.

The wise and omnipotent Jehovah, who worketh according to his own pleasure, and disposeth of all creatures for his own praise, having by his providence called me to the lowest place, I wish that I may abide in the calling to which my God hath called me with cheerfulness and patience, lest, looking enviously on those persons that are above me, or eying unworthily those things which are below me, I lose the crown which is set before me. Lord, since it is thy will that I should be mean and contemptible amongst men, help me in this relation of a servant to be so faithful that I may be honourable in thy sight. Enable me to be subject to my master according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ, not with eye-service, as a man-pleaser, but as the servant of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart : with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men. Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free, Eph. vi. 5-9.

I wish that, as Manasseh's iron fetters were far more worth to him than his golden chain, being instrumental to his spiritual freedom, so the daily labour of my body may make me more mindful of liberty for my soul ; and the present pains I take, and shame I undergo, may quicken me to be more eager and earnest after the glory to be revealed, and the pleasures at God's right hand for evermore. Oh, how sad is my life if I be a servant of men, and a servant of sin ! if my outward man be in subjection to an oppressing lord, and my inward man in slavery to damning lusts ! And ah ! how dreadful will my death be, to exchange whips for scorpions, and to remove from a jail to a gibbet ; from Egypt, an

iron furnace, to suffer the vengeance of the eternal fire ! Surely the curse of Ham to be a servant of servants, was a comfort, a blessing to my condition. Lord, help me so to serve thy divine Majesty with a pure conscience and faith unfeigned, (in serving my master,) that I may enjoy the liberty and privileges which Christ hath purchased ; and give me thy grace so to labour here that I may rest hereafter.

I wish that the credit of the gospel may make me more holy and circumspect in my carriage, lest, by my carelessness in my conversation I should give others cause to blaspheme that worthy name by which I am called. By my profession I proclaim to the world that I live to adorn religion. If I, through unfaithfulness, sin, the gospel is sure to suffer, James ii. 8. The disorders of a servant reflect on the master whose livery he weareth. If I walk like a Christian, I gain it esteem and credit. Lord, let me so shine with the light of holiness in my place, that others seeing my good works may glorify thee, my heavenly Father, and that none may ever have cause, through my miscarriages, to speak evil of the way of truth.

I wish that I may have such an eye to the recompense of reward, as to be the more encouraged to fidelity and industry in my work. Though I serve a froward master, that, after all my hard labour, will hardly afford me a good look, yet, if in serving my master, I serve my Maker, my labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. In orchards, some trees stand higher, some lower, but the husbandman esteemeth them not according to their height, but according to their fruit. My God valueth none according to the excellency of their parts, or eminency of their places, but according to the integrity of their hearts, and sanctity of their lives. With him there is no respect of persons ; but in every nation, and in every relation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him. Lord, assist me so to serve the Lord Christ in serving my master, that howsoever I shall be defrauded, or whatsoever unrighteousness I shall meet with at this day, yet I may obtain mercy at that day, even the mercy of my Lord Jesus Christ unto life eternal.

I wish that I may honour my master, as one whom my God hath made my superior. If his portion on earth be small, and his person seem never so contemptible ; nay, though he be a servant of Satan, yet my reverence is due to him by virtue of God's ordinance. As I ought to honour him in the Lord, so also I ought to honour him for the Lord ; for in reverencing my master, I reverence God's order. It is enough to satisfy my conscience, whatever he be in his carriage, that my God hath set him over me, and made me, not

his fellow or familiar, but his servant and inferior. Lord, whilst others make themselves merry at the deformity, impiety, or meanness of their masters, let me, in my affections, words, and actions, carry myself towards him as a humble servant and holy Christian, because thou hast so commanded. Though some contemn his person, let me reverence his power, because of thy precept.

I wish that I may obey my master after the flesh, yet that I may never obey him in any fleshly command. I receive my food and wages to do his work, and observe his will in the Lord. By putting my neck under the yoke, I profess myself to be at his disposal. If I make my own will my rule of obedience, I am both unrighteous to him, and injurious to my own soul. Though his precepts be painful, if not sinful, I am bound to subjection to my power. My God commandeth me to be subject, not only to the good and courteous, but also to the froward. Lord, let me prefer thy will above all the commands of men, and be sure to please thee, whomsoever I displease ; but let the will of my master, when not opposite to thine, be the rule of my work, that I may obey him under thee, and for thy sake. If I am reviled, keep me from reviling again, that I may imitate my Saviour, who, being abused when he abused himself to the form of a servant, committed all to him that judgeth righteously.

I wish that I may not be slothful in business, but diligent in every duty that concerneth me in this relation. My time and strength are not my own, but, under God, my master's. If I, to gratify any lust, or indulge laziness, deny them to him, I am a thief, and rob him of his right. Whether he be present or absent, the eye of my God is ever on me, to record my ways, and reward me after my works. Lord, cause me so to set thee before me, that I may be fervent in spirit about my general, and industriously diligent in my particular, calling. Thou hast said, 'If a man be diligent in his business, he shall stand before kings, and not before mean men,' Prov. xxii. Oh let me be so laborious in my place, that at last I may come to stand in thy presence, where is fulness of joy and pleasure !

I wish that I may be faithful in the improvement of every talent committed to my trust. He that is faithful in the unrighteous mammon shall be trusted with the true riches. If I be faithful in a little, my God will make me ruler over much. Oh that conscience to God's precepts may provoke me, and the consideration of my own profit encourage me, to shew all good fidelity in my place ! I would be faithful to his estate, relations, and body, but especially in

the service of his precious soul. If he be bad, by my humble counsel and holy example, I may be helpful to reform and convert him; if he be good, to rejoice and confirm him. My Saviour taught his disciples by a little child. They that could not bring gold towards the tabernacle, brought goats' hair. Lord, help me, either as Naaman's servant, to be instrumental to cure my master of his spiritual leprosy; or make me, if he be a believer, some way or other to further his spiritual welfare. Let him be the better for such a servant, and me be the better for such a master; and both of us the better for thy righteous servant, who, by his knowledge, justifieth many.

Lord, if the service of some men be so desirable, because their natures are so kind and courteous, their work so easy and comfortable, and their pay so sure and bountiful, what a favour, what an honour is it to serve thy blessed Majesty! whose being and essence is love, whose ways are ways of pleasantness, and whose reward is above what eye hath seen, or ear hath heard, or the heart of man can conceive. Princes and sovereigns have gloried in being thy servants. Oh be pleased to put me in some place under thee, though never so low and mean! be it but to be a door-keeper in thy house, or to sit upon the threshold there. I shall esteem it above sitting on the highest earthly throne. I confess I have played the prodigal, and wasted the stock thou hast put into my hands. I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; yet, oh make me as one of thy hired servants, then I shall not disdain to do all the offices of thy commands to my fellow-servants, whom thou settest over me. Lord, enable me to serve them faithfully, for thy sake, and to serve thee truly in serving them, that I may hereafter enjoy the privileges of thy servants, in sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in thy kingdom, when the children of the kingdom shall be shut out; where the servant is free from his master, and the weary are at rest; where I shall receive a blessed welcome from thy hands, and hear that happy voice, 'Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'

CHAPTER VIII.

How a Christian may exercise himself to godliness in prosperity.

Thirdly, Thy duty is to make religion thy business in all conditions; gracious persons must have a carriage suitable to every providence.

As the year hath summer and winter; the natural day, light and darkness; the sea its ebbing and flowing; and as the sun sometimes shineth forth clearly, sometimes is under a cloud, sometimes is in an eclipse; so the condition of man is liable to many alterations. His life is a mixture of mercies and miseries, and often a transition from prosperity to adversity, and from adversity to prosperity. What then ought a Christian to do, but to take care that his spiritual disposition be answerable to his temporal condition?

Some men, besides their ordinary wearing apparel, have garments ready by them, both for a wedding and a funeral. If they be called to either, they can habit themselves handsomely in a meet and fit livery. The saint must not only have his everyday's gracious attire, but also, if he be called to fasting or feasting, to adversity or prosperity, put on raiment suitable to those seasons.

Some flying insects dress themselves according to the months in which they live. The forester goeth usually in green, in the same colour with the leaves of the trees, and the grass of the field, amongst which his ordinary walk is. Believers must know both how to want, and how to abound, Phil. iv. 7, 8, and clothe themselves in the same colour with the house to which they are called, whether it be the house of mourning or of mirth.

Saints are compared to doves in scripture, Isa. lx. 8; Cant. ii. 14. The turtles, according to the naturalists, can live and thrive both in cold and hot places; nay, in summer, they delight in a cold, in winter, in a hot climate.¹ Christians must ever, whether the world smile or frown, be going forward in their holy course, and learn in prosperity not to be exalted, and in adversity not to be dejected.

It argueth an excellent constitution of body to be able to bear heats and colds without complaint and injury to the outward man. And truly it will speak a special frame of soul to be able to undergo the weight of mercies and miseries without wrong to the inward man. Extremes are very dangerous, whether of the one or the other;

¹ Arist. de Gener. Animal., lib. iv. cap. 6.

the medium between both is least perilous. Drought burieth the seed in the earth, moderate showers refresh the earth, immoderate drown it. Upon which good ground it was that Agur prayed against both: 'Give me neither poverty nor riches, but feed me with food convenient, lest I be full and deny thee, or lest I be poor and steal, and so take the name of my God in vain,' Prov. xxx. 9, 10. Extreme want, or extreme wealth, are both extreme temptations to wickedness. A garment that is fit, is much better than one too big, or too little for the body. If it be too big, it is cumbersome; if too little, it is uneasy and troublesome. When Giges, the most puissant king in his days, sent to the Oracle of Delphos a second time, to know who was the happiest man next to Phedrus, (whom the Oracle had declared to be happy before, for dying in the service of his country,) answer was made that Aglaus was happier than he.¹ Now this Aglaus was a plain, honest man, dwelling in a corner of Arcadia, who had a little house and land of his own, in which he employed himself, and with which he maintained his family. A middling staff may help a man in his journey; one very little will do small service, one too big will hinder him.

Because both these conditions have their snares and temptations, they call for the greater care and circumspection. I shall therefore lay down some directions for each, and begin with prosperity.

Prosperity is a condition which consisteth in the fruition of outward good things, as health, strength, friends, riches, honours, and the like. As a constellation is a collection of many stars, so a prosperous condition is a confluence of many temporal comforts. God in his wise providence is pleased to give some persons large draughts of these sugared pleasures, their cup runneth over. They are in themselves mercies for which we may pray with humble submission, and for which we must praise God with holy affections; but through the corruption of our hearts, they often prove prejudicial to holiness. Those fires which were made to warm us, do often black and burn us. Small vessels carrying a great sail are apt to be overturned with every tempest.

A prosperous condition is called a slippery place, Ps. lxxiii. 18: 'Thou hast set them in slippery places.' Those that walk on ice had need to be wary how they set their feet, lest they slip and fall. It is observable that Elisha begged a double portion of Elijah's spirit, 2 Kings ii. 9. Which petition may seem at first sight to savour of presumption, but if we weigh things well, there will

¹ Plin. Nat. Hist., lib. vii. cap. 46.

appear great reason for it. Elisha saw that his master Elijah had been exercised with trials and troubles all his time; that Ahab and Jezebel had been continually beating up his quarters, and thereby forced him to keep a constant watch, and to stand night and day upon his guard; but he foresaw that himself should be a favourite at court, have the prince's eye and ear, and therefore needed a double degree of grace to be preserved upright and vigilant in such a prosperous estate.

Of all winds, the northern, though it be cold and sharp, is most healthful. The south wind, though it be warm, is hurtful, for with its moisture and warmth it raiseth vapours which cause diseases; when the north wind with its cold drieth those vapours and purgeth the blood. Elisha knew that under this warm south wind of prosperity, his soul would go near to contract some distemper, if it were not fenced by an extraordinary degree of spiritual health beforehand. 'If thou faintest in the day of adversity, thy strength is small,' Prov. xxiv. 10. But if thou fallest not in the day of prosperity, thy strength is great. He that is very rich, and yet religious, is richly religious.

Because it is so rare for a person not to decrease in his inward estate, when he doth increase in his outward, God giveth these bodily mercies, with many mementoes, a comfort and a caveat; a comfort and a caveat. 'Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently: when the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he sware to thy fathers, and shall give thee houses full of all good things, and wells, and vineyards, and olive-yards, then beware lest thou forget the Lord. When thou hast eaten and art full, beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God,' Deut. iv. 9, 23, vi. 10-12, and viii. 10, 11. These favours are delivered, as it were, under lock and key, to bind the possessor to his good behaviour. Epaminondas stood sentinel, when his citizens were at their feasts. It concerneth thee highly to use much spiritual caution when thou enjoyest many temporal comforts.

I must tell thee that God expecteth a crop answerable to his cost, that thou shouldst be the more holy because of his bounty. There is an island, called Lounda, in the kingdom of Congo, where the water, when the ocean ebbeth, groweth brackish, but when the sea floweth, it is most sweet;¹ if in the low water of adversity thou hast been incorrigible, it is thy sin, and to be bewailed. My work now is to persuade thee in the tide of prosperity to be profitable to thy own soul, and serviceable to the blessed God.

¹ Pur. Pil., vol. ii. p. 919.

First for thine help herein, I shall only lay down three particulars to quicken thee to circumspection in the use of creature-comforts, and then shew thee wherein the power of godliness, or the making religion thy business in this condition, consisteth.

1. Consider what a grievous sin it is not to serve God in the enjoyment of mercies. Some indeed are the more vicious, because God is so gracious. The devil would have stones turned into bread, and they turn bread into stones, and throw them at God himself. As tenants maintain a suit at law against their landlords with their own rent; so they fight against the highest Majesty with his own mercies. The goodness of God, instead of leading them to repentance, occasioneth their riot and impenitency, Hosea ii.; like unruly horses they break those gears, and snap asunder those traces, which should hold them together; no cords of love will hold them. The moorish grounds, the more showers they have from heaven, the more toads and venomous creatures they breed; so many rich men, the more merciful God is to them, the more sinful they are against him; but the horridness of this sin should make us hate it. It is sad to sin under afflictions, (Ahaz is branded for it; 'this is that King Ahaz,' 2 Chron. xxviii. 22,) but most sordid to sin against mercies; this will stop a man's mouth, and leave him without excuse for ever, Ezra ix. 6-9, 13. It is lamentable to offend the justice of God; he who hath that for his enemy, is sufficiently miserable, Heb. xii. 28; but it is abominable to provoke the love and goodness of God. If mercy be thy foe, thou hast no friend in this or the other world.

Michael Balbus is chronicled for a monster of mankind, for murdering his prince the same night in which he had received his pardon from him. Popilius Lenas is registered to be a most unregenerate wretch, because he struck off Cicero's head, who had before saved his life. O! what monstrous unthankful persons are they, who, like rebellious, unnatural Absalom, proclaim war, and fight against their own father, conspire and endeavour to rob and ruin that God who doth maintain and enrich them!

To abuse a friend upon whom thou hast a continual dependence, and by whom thou hast thy daily subsistence, is far worse than to abuse a stranger. The more our obligations are to any person, the more of baseness and unworthiness there is in our unsuitable practices. The unkindness of a neighbour is not so bad as of a servant; the disobedience of a servant is not so evil as of a son. It was the holy Israelites' greatest grief, that they had not served God in his great goodness, Neh. ix. 35. Heathens will give that love to

others which they receive from others, and do good to men who do good to them; and wilt thou be worse than heathens? Truly, if thou sinnest against the favours of God, thou sinnest against the very light of nature, Mat. v. 46. Though nature love some, yet she loathes this sin. Lycurgus, the Lacedæmonian, made no law against ingratitude, because he thought no man could act so irrationally as to be unthankful for courtesies.

Beasts manifest some respect to them that feed and tend them. The Holy Ghost saith, 'Be not like the horse and mule,' Ps. xxxii. 9. He is too bad who resembleth a beast; how bad is he then who is worse than a brute! 'The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider,' Isa. i. 3. Shall the ox and the ass, the dullest of irrational creatures, acknowledge their master, and will not thou thy benefactor? 'Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, (saith God :) for I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner,' Isa. i. 2. They live at God's charge, and yet not to obey his command, is such a grievous, astonishing sin, that even heaven and earth, those senseless creatures, seemed to abhor it, and to be amazed at it.

None sin at so dear a rate as they who sin against the riches of mercy. God is never more incensed than when his goodness is abused. When Haman wronged David's ambassadors, which he sent to him out of good-will, there ensued a deadly and a bloody war. Truly, reader, if thou abuse thy honour by making it fuel to thy pride, and thy riches by making them instruments of revenge, which God giveth thee out of good-will, expect that God should both take them from thee, (for what prince will suffer weapons in the hands of rebels? and what parent will not take away food from children that spoil it?) and also be highly provoked to destroy thee, Amos. ii. 13. He that is higher than others in mercy, if he abuse it, must expect to be lower than others in misery. The greatness of thy burden (be it of never such precious commodities) will sink thee the deeper into hell; the largeness of thy estate will but enlarge thy condemnation; though both be bad, yet it is much better to go to hell out of a cottage, than out of a court. It is infinitely more eligible to have Job's botches and boils, with his poverty, than, like Judas, to carry the bag, and betray the Saviour. Ah, how pitiful is that plenty which makes way for eternal poverty!

2. Consider that prosperity will try thee to purpose. The warm summer discovereth those poisonous roots which were in winter hid in the earth. As strong liquors try men's brains, and very hot

climates try men's bodies ; so prosperity will search and try men's souls. Afflictions are called bands, Ps. lxxiii. 4, and cords ; now when men's hands are tied down, it cannot be known what they are ; the fierce, cruel nature of beasts doth not appear when they are in chains.

Cornelius à Lapide observeth, on Prov. i. 32, that the Hebrew word for prosperity is translated by the Arabic *investigatio*, searching, because prosperity will search men to the quick. Walking on the top of high pinnacles will try whether men's heads are apt to be giddy or no. When the weather groweth very hot, then diseases appear.

It is a remarkable expression which Elisha useth to Hazael, when the prophet had told him that his present weeping was caused by a foresight of the courtier's future wickedness : ' Because I know the evil which thou wilt do unto the children of Israel. Their strongholds wilt thou set on fire, their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child.' And Hazael said, ' But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing ? ' And Elisha answered, (observe it reader,) ' The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be king of Syria.' No more. Power in thy hands will quickly discover the pravity of thy heart. Thy heart is now a vessel full of corruption ; thy prosperity and preferment will broach it, and then that poisonous matter will be discovered to thyself and others. It had never been known how evil some men were, if they had not enjoyed much outward good. When such liquors boil over a good fire, then their froth is seen at the top.

3. Consider, Prosperity most commonly is abused to profaneness. We say, It is pity fair weather should do any harm ; yet it often doth, causing a famine and scarcity of food ; sure I am it is a thousand pities that the mercies of God (as friends, riches, and honours) should do any hurt, yet they often do, causing neglect of God, and a famine of godliness. It was the saying of Frederick the emperor, concerning Sigimbird Flisk, afterward Innocent the Fourth, advanced by him to the popedom, I have lost a cardinal, a friend, and got a pope, a foe. God, I am sure, may say of many whom he hath exalted, I have lost seeming friends, and got real enemies. ' Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked,' Deut. xxxii. 15. Men, like beasts, the better feeding they have, and the fatter they grow, are the more wanton and unruly. Those that eat much food often surfeit, and are always the more unfit for use and for service. Foolish flies burn their wings about these candles of outward comforts. The camel's bunch on men's backs hindereth them from entering in

at the strait gate. The Sodomites were infamous for impiety, and as one occasion of it, they were famous for prosperity. Their wickedness was grievous.¹ 'The men of Sodom were wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly,' Gen. xiii. 13. This phrase, 'before the Lord,' speaketh the high degree of their sin, it being common with the Hebrews to add the name of great² when they would increase and heighten the sense. Their wealth was great. Sodom was a pleasant place, by reason of the overflowing of the sweet streams of Jordan; it is called Eden, the garden of the Lord, for its fruitfulness. Carnal hearts are ever like highways, the more dirty for the showers of heaven. Lunatics are worst when the moon is at the full. When the kidneys of beasts are overgrown with fat, they quickly die.³ Cyrus therefore would not suffer his Persians to change a barren habitation for a fruitful, saying that dainty habitations make dainty inhabitants.

None throw such ticklish casts as those that bowl from some high ascent. Saints themselves have by these long garments been brought to stumble and fall, and much hindered in their journey to heaven. How few were ever the more pious for prosperity! David was tender, when hunted as a partridge; but when he prospered, he declined in piety. Ah, how much did this man after God's own heart disgrace religion, after his caves were turned into a crown, and the dens, in which he had lurked, into a diadem. We read of David's first ways; it is recorded to the honour of Jehoshaphat, 'That he walked in the first ways of his father David,' 2 Chron. xvii. 3, which expression intimates that his first ways, when Saul persecuted him, were his best ways: David by rest contracted rust. The Israelites were religious in Egypt, but rebellious in Canaan. Children, when strangers abuse them, run to their parents, but mind not home when they fare well abroad. The sweet fruit-trees of Canaan bred strange worms; the Jews, in that place of dainties and delight, committed strange wickedness. The ranker the ground was, the ranker the weeds grew. The tenderest and finest flesh soonest corrupts and putrifieth. As men abound in prosperity, too too often they abound in profaneness. Severus⁴ the emperor was wont to say, That the poorest soldiers were the best; for as they grew rich, they grew riotous. Coldest airs are most wholesome; the hottest are many times unhealthy. The papist, who when he was a monk seemed very pious, and spread his fishing-net for his table-cloth, to shew his original, did, when he came to be

¹ Pererius.² Qu., "God"?—Ed.³ Arist. De Animal., lib. iii. cap. 17.⁴ Liv. in Vit.

abbot, grow very proud, and cast it by, giving this for his reason, that he had been all this while fishing for the abbot's place, which now he had caught, and therefore had no further need of his net ! When men have served their ends on God, their serving of God hath an end ; while the corn is growing, the field is well fenced, but when it is carried in, the field is thrown open. When men are in expectation of mercies, religion is regarded ; but when they enjoy them, it is neglected.

I shall now lay down some directions for thy carriage in prosperity, and shew thee wherein the power of godliness, or the making religion thy business in that condition, consisteth.

1. Be especially watchful against those sins which a prosperous estate is most liable to. As there are sins proper to every calling, and to every constitution, so also to every condition. Anglers have their summer as well as their winter baits ; they have their distinct coloured gaudy flies for several months, with which the silly fish are caught. Satan hath his baits for prosperity, as well as for adversity ; he can put himself into the livery of the season to take souls, and cast them into the eternal fire. Thy duty is to watch that door, at which he standeth to enter, and there especially to keep a strong guard. Believe it, in these worldly thickets he layeth most dangerous ambushments to surprise thee at unawares.

In general, take heed of atheism ; let not earthly prosperity lessen either thy love to, or labour for, heavenly things. When there is much wool on a sheep's back, it is sometimes caught in the thorns and famished. Much wealth, much bodily mercy, hath many times so hampered and entangled a man, that his soul is starved. Ah, how hath Satan (as Delilah Samson) tied many a soul with the green withes of carnal comforts ! which they being not able, as he was, to break in sunder, their spiritual strength departeth from them. It is not seldom that that proves an occasion of forgetting God, which should be a means of remembering him. How wretchedly do some thrust him out of their minds, whilst he thrusts fat morsels into their mouths ; Hosea xiii. 6, ' According to their pasture, so were they filled ; they were filled, therefore have they forgotten me.' The sun of prosperity shining powerfully on the hearth of their hearts, did put out that fire of piety which seemed to glow there.

When the moon is at the full, then it darkens the sun most, to whom it is beholding for its fulness. When men are at the full of outward favours, they frequently obscure most the author of them. Themistocles told the Athenians, his ungrateful countrymen, that he was their oak ; in a storm they would call for him, and cry to

him. Who but Themistocles then ! But when the storm was over, they despised him ; then they could banish him, then they could cut down their oak and burn it. Truly, thus too many serve the blessed God ; if poverty, or disgrace, or sickness surprise them, then none but God. He is, say they, the best, the only friend ; then they complain to him, and lament after him ; but when their afflictions are removed, and estates, or honour, or health restored, then they can do well enough without him, and banish him their hearts and souls.

Job acquainteth us with the parts and fruits of some men's prosperity, Job xxi. 6-16. God's bounty to them is described in life and death ; 1. In life, in reference to their persons : ' They live, become old, yea, are mighty in power,' ver. 7. Life is a mercy ; it is the Lord's mercy that we live, saith the church, in a low estate ; but they do not only live, but are lusty, so the word signifieth. Sickness doth much embitter life, but they have health, nay, live long ; their life is a summer day, long, as well as clear and shining. They become old, yea, are mighty in power ; they sit in the chiefest seats, and are placed upon the highest pinnacle.

In reference to their relations : ' Their children are established in their sight, and their offspring before their eyes,' ver. 8. ' They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance,' ver. 11. Children are great blessings and comforts : ' The children which God hath graciously given thy servant,' saith Jacob. Many are a greater mercy : ' Blessed is he that hath his quiver full of them.' For parents, whilst they live, to see these young plants removed into another soil, and there to thrive and prosper, is an extraordinary increase of the favour ; but they enjoyed all this.

In reference to their habitations : ' Their houses are far from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them,' ver. 9. Their houses are full of outward happiness, know not what misery meaneth ; their dwellings are full of outward blessings—peace and joy, not strife and grief. In regard of men, there is no force nor violence offered to them. In regard of God, he doth not execute any vengeance on them ; they are free from the divine rod, as well as human robberies.

In reference to their possessions : ' Their bull gendereth, and faileth not ; their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf,' ver. 10. Their flocks are fruitful as well as their wives ; both the male and the female help to increase his herds. Where there is such a constant conception, there must needs be an extraordinary multiplication.

Thus whilst they live, they spend their days in wealth. They are

not pinched with want. Their whole time is spent in a serene clime, and they enjoy a perpetual calm.

When they die, 'in a moment, they go down to the grave,' ver. 13. They die quickly and quietly; as they live in much pleasure, so they die without much pain.

Here are persons who enjoy a prosperous condition in its various and largest dimensions. But what is the fruit of these favours? One would think, if there be any men in the world who will please and praise the blessed God, these are the men. It seemeth impossible but such pleasant streams should lead them to the ocean and fountain of all their happiness. Who would not expect a holy conclusion from such happy premises? Can any be so far possessed with a devil as to break these cords of love, and burst these bands of kindness in pieces? Alas! alas! bitter fruit groweth on this sweet root. 'Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what profit shall we have if we pray unto him?' ver. 14, 15. Who would not wonder at such monstrous wickedness, that such horrid blasphemy should be the child of such heavenly bounty! That illative particle 'therefore' may call and cause heaven and earth to be astonished, 'Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us.' It had been rational, angelical arguing; therefore they say unto God, Draw near to us. If the streams are so sweet, how sweet is the fountain! If God be so good in his creatures, how good is he in his own nature! If these candles give such light, oh, what light is there in the Sun of righteousness! Surely it is good to be near him. But it is the logic of hell to conclude as they did, Because his hand is open to us, therefore our hearts shall be shut against him. Oh what mad, what Bedlam reasoning is it! Because he is so bountiful a benefactor, wherever he cometh, therefore we will expel him out of our borders.

Reader, doth not thy heart rise against this abominable ingratitude? Take heed it be not thine own case, that thou dost not fight against God with his own mercies. Naturalists observe, and experience teacheth us, that in summer, when the sun shineth hottest, then the deep springs are coldest. Be not more remiss in thy duty, because God is so intense in his mercy. Evagrius notes of Mauritius, that notwithstanding his prosperity he retained his ancient piety. This was rare, for usually the rankest corn is soonest laid. As the days lengthen, the cold strengthens. Beware, lest as the sunshine of thy prosperity increaseth, thy love to God should cool.

In particular, take heed of pride, carnal confidence, and sense-

lessness of others' sufferings, which three sins prosperous men are prone to.

(1.) *Pride.* Prosperous men are apt to be proud. Poor men beg, and rich men boast, Ps. lii. Their blood and their goods rise together. Bladders filled only with wind do swell; so do men with wealth and outward mercy. 'There are no bonds in their death; their strength is firm. They have more than heart can wish; they are not in trouble like other men, neither are they plagued like other men.' But did this heap of goodness make them humble? No: their hearts grew big with their herds. Like the peacock, they were proud of their gay feathers; 'Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain,' Ps. lxxiii. 4-6. As they were high in condition, so were they also in disposition. Men in high places grow giddy and often fall, when those that walk in low valleys are safe. Satan serveth many, as the high wind doth the trees, first lifts them up, and then throws them down; first he lifteth up with pride, and then throweth them down into perdition.

The fire shrinks and shrivels up things to nothing, when the water swelleth them. The fire of adversity makes men little, yea, nothing in their own eyes, when waters of a full cup wrung out to men (the periphrasis of prosperity) occasioneth their height and haughtiness of heart, Job xxxiii. 17; Hosea xiii. 6.

Those that were truly gracious and habitually humble have, in a confluence of outward comforts, manifested too much pride; as the waters of Nilus, though all the year else they kept within their channel, yet in times of wheat harvest will overflow the banks. David, who at other times was as sweet and lowly as the violet, yet when God prospered him grew proud. His inward corruption broke out in this scabby expression, 'Go, number the people from Dan to Beersheba,' 2 Sam. xxiv. 2. If the sun fall backward ten degrees for Hezekiah, his spirit riseth higher, and goeth ten degrees forward.

Oh, it is hard to keep a low sail in a high condition, and for a child of God not to applaud his own deservings as the cause of his Father's gracious dealings. This rich wine flieth into men's brains that they know not where they are; they think themselves better men than others, because they have better means. A little of the earth makes them great (and others small) in their own eyes.

Reader, in the highest tide of earthly comforts, keep thy heart within the channel. The more mercies thou enjoyest, consider, the more thou art indebted to God; and surely it may humble thee that thou art in bonds for greater sums than millions of others.

Should stage-players be proud of their borrowed robes? and why art thou of thy borrowed riches? Be thou like a vessel, the fuller thou art, make the less sound; and like the stars, the higher they are, the lesser they seem to be; and like trees, ever least at the top of all.

(2.) Carnal confidence. Man by nature relieth upon the creature; his earthly inheritance is the foundation of his confidence. The world saith to man, as the bramble to the trees in Jotham's parable, 'Come and put your trust in my shadow,' Judges ix. 15. I will refresh you in scorching seasons; and men generally trust in these lying vanities. 'The rich man's wealth is a strong city, and an high tower in his conceit,' Prov. x. 15. 'A strong city.' As soldiers look upon a strong city as a good place which they may retire to for safety in times of flight, so worldly men in their distress and danger esteem their wealth the only means of relief and succour; or as a marching army expects supply, if need be, from a well-manned and victualled city, so men in their fainting fits, and under dreadful crosses, expect to be revived by their earthly cordials. 'And an high tower in his conceit.' A tower fortified by nature and art, and raised very high, is trusted to as an impregnable place. Rich men have as high conceits of their outward comforts as soldiers have of their strongest castles. Hence it is that riches are called 'strength,' Job xviii. 12; not only because strength is requisite to get and keep riches, Prov. xi. 16, but because of the world's corrupt opinion of them. They esteem them their strength, and hence give them their hope and trust.¹ But the world was never true to them that trusted it. 'Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God,' 1 Tim. vi. 17. That which is uncertain is no fit foundation for trust. The whole world is called a sea of glass, Rev. iv. 6, because of the slipperiness of it; glass yields no good footing, nor the world to them that stay themselves on it. Trust must have a sure bottom; it must be the quiet repose of the soul, in the hands of an almighty God and an immutable good. No creature hath strength sufficient to bear the weight and stress of its fellow-creature. Men, by leaning on these thorns, as Christ calleth them, cause them to run into their sides, and thereby pierce themselves through with many sorrows.

The huntsman catcheth the elephant by sawing a tree almost quite through, which the beast leaning on falleth down, and not being able to rise is taken. Thus Satan catcheth souls by men's

¹ Arist. *divitias appellat vires*, lib. i. *Polit.* cap. 8.

leaning on, and trusting to, the comforts of their bodies. Such men deny God, and therefore God will deny them. 'If I said to gold, Thou art my hope, and to fine gold, Thou art my confidence, I should have denied the God that is above,' Job xxxi. 24, 28. Trust is the fairest respect of the creature to his Creator; it is one of the most sparkling diamonds in his crown of glory. Now to give this to any other is idolatry. As the heathen, so many nominal Christians, pay their devotion, their trust, to this goddess wealth. Reader, thy work is to keep the world at a due distance, and not to give thy greatest heap the least of thy hope. Alas! these things are called water, and are as weak as water. Water may be strong enough to drown thee, but is too weak to revive thee in thy distress, though thou drinkest it down. Thou canst never rest too little on these reeds, nor too much on the Rock of ages. To trust God in adversity is honourable, but to trust him in prosperity is heroical.

(3.) Senselessness of others' miseries. It is hard for him who feeds high to have his bowels pinching with others' hunger. When men eat the fat and drink the sweet, they are apt to forget them who feed on ashes, and mingle their drink with weeping. They that drink wine in bowls, and eat calves out of the stalls, too too often forget the afflictions of Joseph, Amos vi. 4. Those that lie on down-beds can scarce feel their brethren's cords; their robes and golden chains make them unmindful of others' rags and iron fetters. 'He that is ready to slip with his feet is a lamp despised in the eyes of him that is at ease,' Job xii. 5. There is a twofold slipping of the feet: 1. A slipping into sin or corruption. 'My steps were almost gone; my feet had well-nigh slipped,' said the psalmist, Ps. lxxiii. 2; he meaneth into that grievous crime of abandoning piety upon occasion of wicked men's prosperity. Every sin is a slip, a fall, as well as the first sin, Rom. xiv. 21; 1 Cor. x. 12. 2. A slipping into suffering or affliction. When a man descendeth from glory to ignominy, or slideth from wealth to want, or declineth in outward favours, he slippeth with his feet. The settlement of a person in safety is set out by this, 'He will not suffer thy feet to be moved,' Ps. cxxi. 3; and the change of a man's condition by this, 'Their feet shall slide in due time,' Deut. xxxii. 35. The firmness of a man's feet notes the firmness of his estate, and the slipping of his feet foreshews his fall. But as we have in the verse Job describing this man's condition, 'He that is ready to slip with his feet,' so we have others' carriage towards him, 'He is a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.' Those that are at ease condemn such as are in pain. They who enjoy a day of light and

comfort scorn and laugh at a lamp, especially when its oil is spent to the last drop. Distressed David was the song of the drunkard. The same Hebrew word signifieth both to be rich and to be at ease; we translate that Job xvi. 12, 'I was at ease;' the vulgar Lat., 'I was rich,'¹ to note that rich men usually mind their own ease and pleasures, not others' sorrows and sufferings.

Some observe that the Egyptian priests gave their god Apis (a deity which they worshipped in the form of an ox) water out of a pit or well, not the water of Nilus, and that, not because they thought those waters profaned by the crocodile, but because the waters of Nilus were fattening waters, therefore Apis must not drink them, lest they should make him senseless of the sufferings of his servants, and careless of their safety. It is certain fattening waters make men secure, and unmindful of others' woe.

But, reader, consider, God's command is that, in thy greatest plenty, thou shouldst sympathise with others' poverty: 'Weep with them that weep,' Rom. xiv. As it is with the strings of a viol, if one be touched, though the rest be not meddled with, yet they all quiver and tremble. So when the hand of God toucheth others in their names, or estates, or liberties, though it passeth by thee, thou oughtest to quiver, to tremble at it, and to be sensible of it. Surely Nehemiah was a nonsuch, who, though he enjoyed much prosperity, being in great favour and high honour with his prince, yet even then suffered in the church's sufferings, and was troubled with the church's troubles. Oh, how holy was that heart, which could willingly leave a rich, pleasant court for a ragged and tottered² city! and forsake the company of illustrious lords for twelve years to toil and moil like a day-labourer! Blessed soul! when he delivered wine to his sovereign, (for he was the king's cup-bearer,) he thought of the water which the poor subjects of Christ drank; and though his own particular condition called him to be merry, yet the sepulchres of his fathers caused him to put on mourning, Neh. i. and ii.

2. Value thyself, not by thy estate in this, but by thy inheritance in the other, world. Grace will teach a saint in poverty to have nothing, and yet to possess all things; in plenty to have all things, and yet to possess nothing, 1 Cor. vii. 31. It is a sure sign of saintship when a Christian, in the greatest confluence of creatures, can rate himself only by his estate in the covenant; and a special part of godliness for a person who hath large possessions to overlook all, and esteem himself wholly by his eternal portion. Grace is the

¹ Fui opulentus.—*Vulg.*

² Qu., "tattered"—ED.

freight, spiritual riches the lading of the vessel, outward good things are but the ballast. The mariner doth not value himself by his ballast, but by his freight. As Job's friends erred, on the one hand, in judging him wicked because afflicted, so many err, on the other hand, in presuming themselves to be pious because they are prosperous, and rating themselves for heaven according to their riches on earth. Ephraim argued, because he was rich, therefore he was righteous, Hosea xii. 8. He had gotten him substance, therefore he was guilty of no sin. Dionysius, because he found after his sacrilege a favourable wind, fancied that the gods favoured his wickedness. Some are as foolish as children; they value themselves by their gay coats and gaudy clothes. A man may have a shop full of earthenware, and yet be worth little. The tenth part of that room in silks and satins will speak a man to be worth more. A great deal of earth will not prove thee to have any real worth. A little grace, one drachm of God's special love in Christ, is worth millions. 'My fruit is better than silver, and my revenues than choice gold,' Prov. viii. 19. As a painted countenance is no sign of a good complexion, so neither is a fair estate of a gracious or happy condition. They may be high, and have large possessions on earth, whose portion shall be in the lowest hell. A monkey is but a brute, notwithstanding its golden collar and silver bells. God may, as men, give larger entertainment to strangers than to his children. The worst in the world have often most of the world, Job xxi. 7-16. Some live in a serene clime, and enjoy a constant calm here, who must dwell hereafter amongst terrible tempests, and in an eternal storm. The unclean beasts, as the bear and vulture, may be spared, when the clean, as the lamb and dove, may be sacrificed. Vessels which are empty swim at the top, when those that are full of gold sink to the bottom. Hearts empty of grace may prosper, when they which are full may perish, Eccles. vii. 15. Some indeed have their estates, as children their provision, from a loving father, but others, as prisoners, their allowance till the day of their execution.

There is a great difference between a glistening tumour in the face and true beauty, and as wide a distance between outward plenty and inward prosperity. Many say, 'Who will shew us any good?' Ps. iv. 6. God may shew them much good, to whom he sheweth no good-will. 'I am sore displeased,' saith God, 'with the heathen that are at ease,' Zech. i. 15. These heathens were at ease when they had no true rest; for at the same time they were under God's wrath, Heb. xii. 6.

God punisheth some in mercy, and prospereth others in fury.

Jerusalem's case was never worse than when God said, 'My fury shall depart from thee; I will be quiet, and no more angry,' Ezek. xvi. 42. The fire of God's anger is never more hot than when it is thus kept in, and not suffered to break out. When he intendeth to use the axe or sword he spareth the rod. Prisoners escape whipping who are to be hanged or to be executed. We do not lop or prune those trees which we intend within a short time to cut down for the fire. Alas! reader, it is ill valuing thyself by the sunshine of common providence, when thousands have it who shall miss the undefiled inheritance. Many enjoy fair weather as they pass on to endless woe. The dolphin sports most before a tempest. When the air is most clear, then cometh the greatest thunder. Thou mayest be like stubble laid out a-drying to burn in hell. Marullus telleth a story how Ambrose came to a great man's house, who boasted to him that he had never suffered any affliction, whereupon the father hastened away, lest, saith he, I should perish with the man that ever prospered; but he was no sooner out of doors but the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up man and house too.¹ God may defer thee when he doth not discharge thee; nay, as an arrow, the more drawn back by a strong hand the deeper it pierceth; so the longer it is before God reckoneth, the greater will be the sum of wrath when he cometh to pay thee. Esteem thyself therefore so much worth, as thou art for the other world. Rate thyself by thy treasure in heaven, by the pardon of thy sins, by thine interest in Christ, and by the durable riches and righteousness. These only are the mercies which are worth thousand millions; others are but painted cards and brass counters to these. Outward mercies serve the flesh, and last for a brittle life; but these mercies concern the soul and relate to eternity.

3. Let God alone have the glory of outward mercies; do not crown thine own head with laurel, but pay thy rent of laud and praise to God alone, who is the true landlord. The merchant, for non-payment of custom, forfeits his commodities.

It is God's bounty which filleth thy heaps, and therefore his glory must fill thy heart. Art thou rich? 'The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich,' 1 Sam. ii. 7. He maketh their persons; the needy and wealthy are both his workmanship. He is the maker of their portions; it is from him that some have plenty and others poverty, Prov. xxii. 2. He is the maker of the partition. Civil differences as well as spiritual are from God; earth drops out of heaven. The crumbs of this life are God's gift, as well as the

¹ Mar., lib. v. cap. 3.

crown of a better life. This is the blessing of his throne, that of his footstool. It is the son of Joseph who causeth the cup of gold to be put into Benjamin's sack. No man cuts out his own fortune, or contrives his own condition.

Hast thou honour? God is the author of it. 'Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south; but God is the judge; he putteth down one and setteth up another,' Ps. lxxv. 6, 7. Not any wind from any quarters of the earth can blow one man above another. High mountains are of God's making, as well as the low valleys and mole-hills. None ever mounted into the saddle of preferment but God's providence held the stirrup for him. It is reported of one of the kings of France, that he should say, 'Thousands were born the same day (in my dominions) that I was, yet none of them born to such dignity as I am; how much therefore am I bound to God! God may speak truly what Satan did falsely, of the riches, honours, and pleasures of this world: 'All these are mine, and to whomsoever I will I give them,' Luke iv. 6. Now as all these comforts are from God, so the credit of them all must be to God. As golden vessels do not retain the beams of the sun which they receive, but turn them back, and double them by reflection, so men who receive from the Sun of righteousness many warm, refreshing mercies, must reflect them back in glory and praise to the author of them. Reader, if thy lot be fallen in a fruitful land, be not unthankful, do not bury God's blessings in the grave of ingratitude. Many a man is like a bucket, which being empty, and let down into the well, doth, as it were, open its mouth to receive water, but being once full, sheweth its back only to the well that gave it. Their mouths are open for mercies; as the chapped earth gapes for rain, but when satisfied, shutteth again. When they enjoy their desired blessings their hearts are shut, and they turn their backs upon God. Beware of this sin. As the beams of the stars return (as far back as they can) to glorify the face of the sun, which giveth them their beauty, so thy soul should be enlarged, as far as is possible, to praise God for his bounty. The bird, when got on a high tree, singeth more sweetly than on the ground; the more highly God advanceth thee, the more sweetly thou shouldest sing his praise and advance him.

It was a fault observed and condemned in the Carthaginians,¹ that whereas they were sprung from Tyrus, and used yearly, when they were mean and poor, to send tithe of their incomes to Hercules, the peculiar god of the Tyrians, when they grew rich and

¹ Diod. Sic., lib. xx.

wealthy they neglected to send. How many serve the true God as these heathen their false god—owning him when they have little, but set light by him when they are laden with benefits! Holy David was of another carriage. When God blessed him in bestowing real mercies, he blessed God in acknowledging them to his glory. ‘Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,’ Ps. ciii. 2. The holy Jews, by giving fit names to persons, seasons, and things, which were monuments of God’s mercies, kept his favours always in memory, Esther ix. 21, 22; Gen. xlii. 51, 52; xxii. 21, 22, and xxxiii. 20; Exod. xvii. 15. The benefit hereby will be to thyself, not to God. As an orator by his speech addeth no real worth to the person whom he commendeth, but only declareth what is in him, so by giving glory to God thou only acknowledgest what is in God, addest nothing to God; but as the vapours which are sent from the earth, thick and foggy, are returned to it in silver showers, so thy praises of him, though imperfect, will be returned back, and much to thy profit.

It may be, reader, thou art one whom God hath exalted from a poor and low to a plentiful and high condition. Remember thy former poverty to his praise. Do as David did; he took special notice that God took him from following sheep to feed his people Israel. If God remember thee in thy low estate, thou mayest well remember him in thy high estate. God gave special command to the Israelites, that when they came into the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey, they should bring a basket of the first-fruits, and set it down before the altar of the Lord, and say, ‘A Syrian ready to perish was our father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became a nation, great, mighty, and populous: and the Egyptians evil entreated us, and the Lord brought us forth with a mighty hand into this land. And now behold, we have brought the first-fruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given us,’ Deut. xvi. 1–12. The reason of this command was, because the acknowledgment of their former penury did enhance the price of their present plenty, and thereby tended much to God’s glory.

It is storied of Agathocles, king of Sicily, that having been before a potter’s son, he would always be served in earthen vessels, to put him in mind of his former meanness. But as our proverb is, The priest forgets that ever he was clerk; men usually are forgetful of what they were, and so the less thankful for what they are.

4. Love God the more for the mercies he bestoweth on thee. We ought indeed to love God principally for himself. His own perfec-

tions, not our possessions, must be the original of our affection. That servant is mercenary who worketh only for wages; and that love of a wife is spurious which is placed on the husband's portion. True love is fixed on his person; yet as fire which hath fuel enough to burn of itself, flameth out the more by having oil poured upon it, so the mercies which flow from God must increase that fire of a Christian's love, which is founded in, and abundantly fed by, those excellencies that are in God. The love of the man after God's own heart was much helped by the bounty of God's hand. 'A psalm of David, in the day wherein God delivered him out of the hands of all his enemies, and from the hands of Saul. I will love thee, O Lord, my strength,' Ps. xviii., title, and ver. 1. The heat of his love was great. 'I will love thee dearly and entirely,' saith the original; 'from the very bottom of my bowels.' David's affection to God was not only without dissimulation, but also above his expressions. His heart was too hot for his tongue; it was little else but a live coal, or lump of love. But, reader, if thou wouldst know what was the bellows which blew it up into such a heat, truly God's blessings. His deliverance from his foes made him such a debtor to the fountain of it, and his heart was so exceedingly taken with it, that having little else to give, he bestoweth his highest, his hottest love. As the ear of corn, the more it is laden, bendeth the more to the earth, the original of its fulness; so a gracious soul, the fuller it is of favours, the more it bendeth and inclineth towards God, the author of them.

Some, indeed, who have abundance of outward favours, fall in love, like children, with fine clothes, and affect them above their fathers. But as Augustine saith, That love is adulterous, and the love of a harlot, which is greater to the gift than the giver. Temporal comforts may be in our houses, but the God of consolations must be in our hearts. Bodily blessings are compared to thorns, Mat. xiii. Thorny hedges are about our fields, not in them. Our estates may be about us, but not within us. Thorns may do well enough in a man's hand, but if they once pierce his heart he is in danger of death. It is observable, that all these things here below are said to be 'put under our feet,' Ps. viii. 6. Why under our feet? but because they, as a stirrup, or footstool, should raise our hearts higher, and mount our minds nearer to our God. A trunk of silver, if above us, will press us down, if under us, will lift us up.

Engagements to a bountiful benefactor work much upon an ingenuous spirit. 'Every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts,' Prov. xix. 7. But how should our infinite obligations to the blessed

Creator work upon us ! The ice, we know, which hanged on the eaves of the house, though it endure the blasts of the wind, yet it is dissolved by the shining of the sun. Though under the cold of adversity thou hast been frozen, yet let the sunshine of prosperity thaw and melt thy spirit into the love of God. As men by presents woo, and endeavour to gain the affections of maidens, so God by mercies seeketh to get the love of men and women. ' I beseech you, by the mercies of God, give up your souls and bodies a living sacrifice to God,' Rom. xii. 1. The flint, though it be not broken upon the hard pebbles, yet it is upon the soft pillow. The goodness of God should lead thee to repentance.

It is sad for thee, like the Dead Sea, to drink in the pleasant streams of Jordan, and to be never the sweeter, to receive many kindnesses from God, and not to be the more in love with God. Reader, do thou rather say, as the psalmist, ' I will love the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplication,' Ps. cxxvi. 1. That God may say of thee, as once of Israel, ' With loving-kindness I have drawn him,' Jer. xxxi. 3. Blessings are binders. We read of cords of a man, and bands of love ; let them draw and bind thy heart close to God. A pewter dish set against a good fire will reflect much heat back towards the fire again. Surely the great fire of God's love may well make thee reflect some love back to him again.

5. Do God the more abundant service. The more liberally God soweth, the more liberally he should reap. The more wages men give, the more work they expect. Where the sun shineth hottest, there are the biggest and the best fruits. Some observe, that Solomon's altar was four times as large as that which Moses made, Exod. xxvii. 1, to teach us, that as our peace and plenty increase, so must our piety in a due proportion. ' Charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good, and be rich in good works,' 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18. Those that are rich in goods and wealth, must be rich in good works. To do a little good will not be sufficient for them who have received much good. As men increase in their estates, so they advance in their attire and behaviour. The rents which men pay are answerable to the land which they enjoy. Hezekiah returned somewhat to God, but he returned not to the Lord according to his benefits ; therefore there was wrath upon him from the Lord, 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. The greater thy receivings are in this world, the greater will thy reckonings be in the other world. He that receiveth five talents, by trading gaineth five more. If he had got but two more, as he did who received but two, his lord

would not have counted, and called him a 'good and faithful servant,' Mat. xxv. We look that our beasts should serve us according to their keepings; the better they are kept, the more service they should do us. Surely God may expect the same of us. Fat pastures and lean souls do not agree. Those good trees, whose roots spread farthest, and derive most of the earth's fatness, do bring forth the more fruit for it. Shall plants and beasts thrive answerable to what they receive, and man only in his work be unsuitable to his master's charge? The ship, the fairer the wind is, moveth the more swiftly; the bird, the larger her wings are, flieth the more speedily. And shall man be shamed by these?

Those who enjoy many mercies, as the father saith of rich men, have more tools to work with than others; they have more opportunities for closet duties and public ordinances; they have more influence upon inferiors, who have many times some dependence on them; they have many advantages to do good, and receive good, which others have not; when others are working hard to earn bread for their families, or they must starve, these men may go to their chambers and beg hard for the bread of life; they have more time and more talents to trade with, and must do much more work, or they will hear at last, 'Cast the unprofitable servant into utter darkness.' The man did not waste his talent, but because he did not improve it [therefore he was condemned.]

Most come short of trading suitable to their talents. As bells when raising strike thick, but when raised are set and still, so many, when in hope of outward good things, do somewhat for God, who, when they are largely blest with them, will do little or nothing. Plutarch observeth that the ass hath the fattest heart, and is the dullest of all beasts. They who have the fattest possessions are generally the dullest in the matters of religion. Like the sun, they move most slowly when highest in the zodiac. Oh, it is far better to be a low tree and fruitful, than a tall one and barren. In this, it were well if great men would resemble the sun. Though other planets are above him, for he is seated in the middle, yet he is most serviceable. Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars are before him in place, but he is before them in use.

God, in the fore-quoted place, commandeth persons who prosper, to be ready to distribute, and willing to communicate, 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18. God, therefore, makes some poor, and some rich, that the one might be able to give, and the other to receive. The fuller the clouds are, the more they refresh others with their showers. The more mercy thou receivest, the more thou art to shew. Seneca

calleth uncharitable rich men *arcas'* chests, made only to hold and take in: they are all for keeping, for laying up. 'Thou hast goods laid up,' not a word of laying out. The superficies of the earth is most barren, not capable, say the naturalists, of the least improvement, where the richest mines are in its bowels. But saints have not so learned Christ. They know it is one thing to be rich in this world, another thing to be rich for a better world, and that an opportunity to give is a favour and grace, 2 Cor. viii. 1, and accordingly they improve it. David's heart was much affected with this favour, that he had ability to give anything to God. 'Our God, we thank and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee,' 1 Chron. xxix. 13, 14. What a mercy did he esteem it, that God should give him both means, and a mind to give them back to him.

The great luminary of the world draweth up vapours into the air, not to keep them there, but to return them to the earth for its relief, and the advantage of many.

Bernard reporteth of Pope Eugenius, that meeting an honest, poor bishop, he gave him certain jewels to present him with. Sure I am, that all that wealth which we give to God, either by poor persons, or other pious uses, is given us first by God.

We blame that gentleman, who, being nobly entertained at his friend's house, doth not remember the servants. Surely he is more sordid and base, whom God feedeth, nay, and feasteth daily, if he doth not remember the servants of God. This kindness God takes as done to himself, and puts it down in his own debt book, resolving to pay it. 'He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and he will repay him,' Prov. xix. 17. God paid Jonathan, in Mephibosheth, for all his kindness to David, and seemeth to say to every rich, charitable person, as Paul wrote to Philemon concerning Onesimus, If that poor man or woman owe thee anything, set that on mine account. 'I have written it with my own hand, I will repay it,' Philem. 19. Suitable to which is the form of begging in Italy, *Fate ben per voi*. Not as ours in England, bestow somewhat for the Lord's sake, but, do good for your own sake: giving is the best way of thriving. Wells that are drawn spring more freely. The widow's oil increased by pouring out.

6. In prosperity, prepare for adversity. Summer will not last all the year, therefore men provide for winter.¹ The wind will not

¹ Ælian. Var. Hist., lib. ii.

always set in one corner. The south wind of prosperity now bloweth, but expect the north wind of adversity. If thou hast two heavens, thou hast more than Christ himself had. Babylon indeed said, 'I sit as a queen, and shall see no sorrow,' Rev. xviii. 7. She saw her state was high—a queen; and she presumed that it was firm by her posture in her place, 'I sit as a queen.' But the greater her presumption was, the greater her destruction was. Prosperity is not tied to us, as Dionysius thought his kingdom was to him, as chains of adamant. Job iii. 26, 'The thing that I feared is come upon me.' There is a fear of wisdom and caution; as also a fear of torment and vexation. Job's fear was the former; like Noah, being moved with fear, he prepared an ark before the flood came.

The atheist, by his prosperous condition, is wholly unfitted for affliction. He is so used to great fires and soft beds, that when he cometh to sharp air and stormy weather, he sickens and dieth. As Hannibal's soldiers were so much effeminated by the pleasures they enjoyed at Capua, that their bodies being used to fine raiment, could not bear the weight of heavy armour; and their heads being used to silken nightcaps, could not endure iron head-pieces. I fear that neck, saith Tertullian, which is used to pearl chains, will hardly offer itself to the sword. But Christians are better taught than in such times to neglect preparations for trial. Some observe this piece of providence in the hedgehog, that in summer she hoardeth up food in some hollow tree, where she hideth herself in hard weather.¹ Surely the Christian should not be inferior in prudence to this creature, but lay up against a dear year. The Egyptians in time of plenty laid up abundantly against the seven years of famine, or otherwise they might have starved. The Christian must in fair weather provide for a rainy day; in health and life, prepare for sickness and death, or he will be undone eternally. Oh how cutting is affliction! how killing is death to them whom they surprise on a sudden! Sudden, extraordinary mercies have, like a great quantity of strong waters, slain some; but what, then, will sudden, extraordinary miseries do? Sudden evils are the sorest evils, the most searching evils.

He that is ready armed, and prepared for his enemy, hath a very great advantage of him who is surprised on a sudden, and when he is not aware. Some say of the cockatrice, if a man see him first, he dieth, but if he see the man first, the man dieth. If a Christian see affliction first, by a provident foresight, it loseth all its rigour and venom: it can do a man no harm; but if that see a man

¹ Arist., lib. de Gen., cap. 5.

first, it often killeth him. As strong physic meeting with a very foul body, it hasteneth his end.

The ship must be rigged before the storm, for then it will be too late. Cæsar cashiered that soldier who was found whetting his weapons when he should have been using them. It will be sad with thee if thy grace be to get, as it was with the five foolish virgins, when thy grace is to use, and God should call thee to a winter of affliction before thou hast laid in provision. It is very sad, but certain, many a man's work is to do when his time is done.

Naturalists observe,¹ that whilst the halcyon bird is breeding her eggs, and bringing forth her young, there is usually fair weather, whence we call good times halcyon days. She neglecteth not any of those days, but sitteth close on her nest, and is very diligent in bringing forth, lest, if there should be a change of weather, the waters should grow high, and her young ones be in danger of drowning. Reader, now God giveth thee health and strength, and Sabbaths and seasons of grace, do not loiter, but improve them to the uttermost, in laying up a good foundation against the time of need. Alas ! thou knowest not how soon the weather may alter. God may speedily call thee to great changes in thy life. He will certainly call thee to a great change at death, and how wilt thou do to undergo them, if thou dost not make preparation for them ? It is preparation for suffering which will cause them to be, not mortal, but medicinal to thy soul.

As Anaxagoras said when he heard of his son's death, *Scio me genuisse mortalem*, I know that I begot one that was mortal. So when a Christian shall be called from wealth to want, from prosperity to persecution, if he can say, I know that Christ and his cross usually go together ; I know that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution, and that I must, through many tribulations, enter into the kingdom of heaven ; I know that religion might cost me my estate, my limbs, my liberty, and my life ; that if I would reign with Christ, I must suffer with him. All this I know beforehand, and I resolved upon it, and provided for it. The cross will never break the back of this man. The holy apostle did believe that bonds and afflictions did abide him in every city, Acts xx. 23, and being forewarned he was forearmed. He looked for those guests, and provided against their coming ; hence it was that he was so pious and patient under, and so victorious over, them all. A person who now enjoyeth honours and riches, who

¹ Plin. Nat. Hist., lib. x. cap. 13.

prepareth for disgrace and want when God calleth him to it, is like one that descendeth from the uppermost room in a high house, to the cellar, the lowermost, by stairs ; he cometh safely down ; whereas another, who is unprepared, when he is brought from a high to a low estate, doth, as the devil would have had Christ, cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, and thereby break his neck. 'A prudent man,' saith the wise man, 'foreseeth evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished,' Prov. xxvii. 12. Afflictions are often called falls in Scripture. A wise man when he falls, possibly from freedom to fetters, from soundness to sickness, from life to death, he falleth forwards, which is a great advantage to a man ; his hands will help therein to secure his head. He falleth into those troubles he did foresee, and for which he did provide and forecast. But when a simple man falleth, it may be from glory to ignominy, from a palace to a prison, from life to death, he falleth backward, like old Eli, and breaks his neck. He did not think of it beforehand, nor prepare for it, and therefore his fall is his downfall. He, many times, never riseth more. When once he is thrown, he is overthrown for ever. To help thee herein, I shall advise thee to these two things :—

First, Be sure thy peace be made with God. When the back is sound, a man may carry a burden cheerfully, but if the back be wounded and sore, a small burden will put a man to much pain, nay, he will be ready to flinch, and shrink, and throw it off. So when the conscience is sore with the guilt of sin, and curse of the law, and wrath of God, and fear of hell-fire, what torture and torment will afflictions put this man to. A small sword with these edges will cut deep, a little potion imbittered with these ingredients will make his back and belly, his head and heart, and all to ache to purpose. But when the conscience is sound, as being healed by the blood of Christ, and thereby reconciled to the blessed God, this man may bear a great burden with courage, and bid whatever befalls him welcome, as knowing it comes from a God in covenant : Rom. v. 1–3, 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' We glory in tribulation. We glory in disgrace, we triumph in troubles ; *καυχώμεθα*, the word speaketh the highest note that joy can possibly reach ; joy with boasting, with exultation. But mark, reader, the rich wine which did thus raise the spirits and rejoice the hearts of Christians : 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.' Peace with God hath such a sweetening property, that it will make the bitterest potion pleasant. They need not fear the saddest fits, whoever carry this

rich cordial about them ; what dangers and deaths may not they look in the face who have a reconciled God to countenance and encourage them ?

A person who hath secured his eternal life, may with courage bear any temporal losses. What is sickness of the body to him who hath a sound soul ? How little are they troubled at the frowns of men, who enjoy the favour of God ! The Hebrews could take the spoiling of their goods joyfully, knowing that they had a more enduring substance, Heb. x. 34. They who have all their portion and happiness in outward things, may well lay the loss of them to heart, for they are undone ; they were worth but a little, and this little is lost. But he that hath God for his friend may abide the most fiery trial without fear.

When there cometh a storm, and the ship leaketh, how can it do otherwise than sink ? Friend, if a storm of some extraordinary civil danger, or of sickness or death come, and the vessel of thy soul leak, be found in a carnal, unregenerate state, having God for thine enemy, and hell for thy heritage, it is impossible but thou shouldest sink into the gulf of misery and desperation. Oh how wilt thou do to behold or undergo that danger, which for aught thou knowest may both kill thee and damn thee ! Saints themselves, when they have but a little crack by some sin in their peace with God, have sounded but harshly when they have been stricken and afflicted.

Sin is the sting of every suffering ; if that be taken out, trouble may hum and make a noise, but it can never harm a Christian. Get but thy sins pardoned, and thy God pacified, and thou needest not fear the wrath of men, or rage of devils. He that hath drunk poison, vomits it quickly up, or if he drinketh after it he dieth. When thou art overtaken in sin, be quick in thy repentance, and petition for pardon, that so affliction may not surprise thee before thou hast made thy peace. The great question to every affliction must be that which the elders propounded to Samuel when they trembled at his coming, 'Comest thou peaceably ?' 1 Sam. xvi. If it answer, Peaceably, from a God at peace with thee, all will be well ; thou mayest bid it welcome, though it be death itself, for it cometh purposely to anoint thee, (as Samuel did David), to a glorious and eternal kingdom.

2. If thou wouldest in prosperity prepare for adversity, get thine affections mortified to all the comforts of this life. Though outward favours cling about thee, yet let thine heart climb above them. He who counteth all worldly gains to be small, will never count any

worldly loss to be great.¹ Excessive love to the creature causeth excessive grief in the loss of creatures. A man may pull off his glove quickly and quietly, but not his skin, because this sticks close to his flesh. The closer the world cleaves to us, the harder it will be to part it from us.

Jacob was overmuch perplexed at Joseph's supposed death; though his children came to comfort him, he refused to be comforted. But mark the cause of his impatient carriage, he over-loved, he over-valued him, Gen. xxxvii. 35. What we over-love in the fruition, we over-lament in its amission; we never err in our actions, till we err in our affections; and we never err in our affections, till we err in our judgments. According to the price we set upon things, such is our pleasure and joy in their presence, and our pain and sorrow in their absence; they who esteem the world as their portion, may well weep and wail at parting. He who wisely rates the world according to its true worth, (vanity of vanities, all is vanity,) will neither be proud of its smiles, nor perplexed much at its frowns.

Holy Paul was ready for all conditions: 'I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die for the name of the Lord Jesus.' It was all one to him whether God called him to a prison or to a palace, to a pleasant dinner or a painful death. But what made him so indifferent, and so ready for worldly afflictions? Truly, because he had mortified his earthly affections. He was crucified to the world; as a dead man, he did neither hear its music, nor fear its furnace; as a crucified person, he was neither tickled with its favours, nor troubled at its fury, Acts xxi. 13; Gal. vi. 14. It is easy to cut off the limbs of a dead man; whether he be used courteously or cruelly it is all one to him, for he takes notice of neither. He who is dead to the world, is the only man that lives indeed.

He may defy earth and hell, and be happy in spite of both, who hath but a heart weaned from the earth, and placed in heaven.² Reader, thou wilt patiently bear the loss of that to which thou hast but little love. It will be no hard thing to persuade thee to live apart from the world, if beforehand thou hast given it a bill of divorce. Study the emptiness of sublunary things, and when God puts them into thy hands, do thou put them under thy feet; hereby thou wilt be contented to leave them at God's call.

The meteors which are caused by fogs that arise out of the earth, never imprint any real evil on the sun and stars, which are far

¹ Eum nulla adversitas dejicit, quem nulla prosperitas corrumpit.—*Greg. Mor.*

² Fidem secunda poscunt, adversa exigunt.—*Senec. in Agamem.*

distant ; but in the lower region, by reason of their nearness to the earth, they often break out into thunder and lightning.¹ When earthly comforts lie near the heart, they must needs cause strange storms and tempests ; but when the heart is far from them, and much above them, there is no danger of evil by them. Therefore, friend, love heaven as thy paradise, and look on earth but as the place of thy pilgrimage, then thou wilt cheerfully travel in all ways, whether fair or foul, it will be enough that they lead to thy home.

What I am now writing is of no mean concernment to thy soul. Troubles will come possibly, nay, probably in the day of thy life, however in an hour of death, and what wilt thou do to meet thine enemies if thou art unarmed ? Tacitus speaketh of Cæcina (Annal., lib. i.,) that he was acquainted with dangers beforehand, and therefore so provident for them, as not to be fearful of them. None feel evil more when it comes, than those who would not prepare for them.

Thus, reader, I have finished what I intended to offer touching thy godliness in a prosperous estate. Shall I persuade thee so to demean thyself in it, that thy temporal benefits may not prove spiritual curses, but spiritual blessings ? Josephus tells us² that James, the son of Alpheus, was by commandment of Annas the high priest thrown down from the pinnacle of the temple at Jerusalem, and so lost his natural life. Alas ! how many hath Satan thrown down from the pinnacle of their high places and preferments to the loss of their eternal lives ! He catcheth those fish in a glistening pool, which he could not in a troubled sea ; though he could not get Christ to turn stones into bread, yet he gets men to turn bread into stones ; the mercies of God into the weapons of unrighteousness.

Plancus Plautius, hiding himself in the time of the proscription, was found out only by the smell of the sweet oils wherewith he was wont luxuriously to anoint himself, and so slain.³ Take thou heed, reader, lest what is given thee for meat to be nutritive, be turned into poison, and prove destructive ; but consider God's end in all his gracious acts, and endeavour to answer it, ' He brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness : and gave them the land of the heathen : and they inherited the labour of the people ; that they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the Lord,' Ps. cv. 43-45.

¹ Tempore sic duro est inspicienda fides.—*Ovid*.

² Antiq., xx. cap. 8.

³ Camerer. Med. Hist. Cent., i. cap. 20.

A good wish of a Christian in prosperity, wherein the former heads are epitomised.

A prosperous condition, being a sweet fruit of divine beneficence, and a strong obligation to obedience, both as it encourageth me to serve so bountiful a master, and as it affordeth me more talents and instruments of doing his work, I wish that I may never turn his grace into wantonness, nor suffer the showers of heaven's mercy to increase or ripen the weeds of my corruptions; but that as the heat of the sun putteth out the fire, so the warm beams of divine love may extinguish the fire of lust in my soul, and my heart may be so affected with his bounty as to be the more abundant in duty. Oh that, though others feed their hellish flame of uncleanness, drunkenness, pride, revenge, and atheism, with such fuel, as if they were delivered to do all these abominations, yet I may fear the Lord and his goodness, and the goodness of my God may lead me to repentance! Lord, since the renovation of my nature, and the reformation of my life, is the message upon which thou sendest thy mercies, let me never cause thee to miss of thine end, nor them of their errand; but let thy mercies prevail with me, to present my body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, to thy Majesty, which is my reasonable service, Rom. xii. 1.

I desire that I may often and seriously consider the horrid, heinous nature of sins against divine favours, the more to quicken me to caution, lest I should abuse my God's compassions. If the word of God brand Ahaz for sinning in his distress, with how black a coal shall I be marked by God himself, if I sin after deliverances! If not to hear the voice of the rod bring down such wrath, what fury will be my portion if I am deaf to the entreaties of mercy! When justice pursueth me, mercy can protect me; but if by abusing mercy I make it my foe, how can I ever hope to have justice my friend! If it be unworthiness and a high wickedness to fight against a prince, with a costly sword which he had sent his subject as a present, what is it for me to fight against God himself with his own favours! Christians must do good for evil. How contrary am I then to a Christian, if I return evil for good! Heathen themselves will requite good with good, and have abhorred the contrary; and shall I put off the nature of a man? The ox, though a dull beast, knoweth his owner, and shall I be below a brute? If my God be provoked with them that return evil for evil to their fellow-creatures, how much will he be incensed if I return

evil for good, and that to himself, the infinite Creator? Great persons cannot endure that their favours should be slighted, and will my God bear it, if his mercies be abused? Lord, should I, as Benhadad against Ahab, war against thee with that life which thou hast given me, would it not at last prove my death? And ah! how miserable would it be to be pressed to death with the weight of mercies, and to sink into hell under a load of loving-kindness! Oh let me never be guilty of such monstrous ingratitude! but since grace, and reason, and nature itself are against unthankfulness, cause me to hate it with perfect hatred, and out of thankfulness to thee, to walk before thee in holiness and righteousness all my days.

I wish that my desire to evidence my uprightness to my own conscience, may make me the more holy in my highest condition. Godliness in prosperity will best speak my sincerity. The day of light and comforts is a fitter season to discover the colour and complexion of the soul than the night of darkness and sorrows. An Ahab may walk softly when a writ is sent out against him, or upon a commination; a Pharaoh may cry for mercy when he is arrested upon an execution; but he is a Job, a rare person indeed, that can walk in a high place and not be giddy, abound in grace when he abounds in goods, and keep his heart within the compass of its duty to God and man when he is laden with comforts. Lord, though the hottest seasons discover others' spiritual diseases, and, like wild beasts, when the chains of affliction are taken off, that they enjoy their liberty, they bewray their wantonness and lusts, let me be faithful to thee, when thou art merciful to me; and the more thou discoverest thy love, the more let me discover that thy law is written in my heart, by a gracious and exemplary life.

Because prosperity is too often abused to profaneness, I wish that, as the dove, when I fare best I may fear most, and I walking in such a slippery place may walk the more warily. Bees are suffocated in their own honey, their combs being melted by the heat of the sun. How many, like those poor insects, find their death in that which they laboured for with so much diligence! In the warmest climates men live the shortest lives. Grace, like the palm-tree, seldom groweth in hot soils. Man's corrupt nature hath ever a will to commit wickedness, but sometimes it wanteth power. Now prosperity gives him strength and opportunity, which he useth, or rather abuseth, to his ruin. The prosperity of fools slayeth them. Nay, wise men have stumbled when they have drunk of this strong drink. Noah, who had seen the whole world drowned

in water, is himself no sooner delivered but he is drowned in wine. Lot is scarce preserved out of Sodom but he is polluted with sin. Yea, Solomon, the wisest king that ever the world had, was as notorious for apostasy as famous for prosperity. Lord, let others' falls make me to fear. Alas! if such torches were like to be blown out with the strong gales, in what danger is my poor rush-candle! If their load of benefits weighed them down, notwithstanding their strength, how surely will such burdens, though of precious things, break my weak back, unless thou puttest under thine everlasting arm! Though thy mercies be as the sail and wind, to further the vessel of my soul in its heavenly voyage, yet, except thy Spirit steer, they will drive another way. Oh, let thy grace to me, and thy grace in me, like the unicorn's horn, so heal those waters, which are apt, through corruptions, to poison my soul, that I may drink of them without danger, and be so refreshed thereby as with more speed and cheerfulness to run the ways of thy commandments.

I wish that I may keep a strong watch at that door at which Satan waiteth to enter; I mean, that I may be specially careful against those sins to which a prosperous estate makes me most prone. Ephraim and Manasseh, plenty and forgetfulness, are brethren. I am most apt to forget my God in my high estate, when he hath remembered me in my low estate. The more wealth, the more wanton. After good showers worms crawl; flies will settle on these sweet conserves; sin cleaves to wealth as rust to money. Men, like apes, when they climb high, discover most of their deformities. How prone am I to be proud when I prosper, to suffer my heart to swell with my heaps, and to boast myself in the multitude of my riches! Though the more mercies I receive, the more I am in debt here, and the greater will be my account hereafter; yet, as a new-blown bladder, my heart is ready to be puffed up with every blast, and, as a beggar, to be proud of my borrowed clothes. Lord, the greater sum in thine eye, let me be the lesser in my own; keep me humble in my highest estate, knowing that thy mere mercy, not my merit, is the sole cause of all my comforts, for I am much less than the least of all thy mercies.

I wish that my trust may have a surer foundation than these things which are vain and fading. My confidence is due, not to dead goods, but to the living God. My God can brook no rival, especially in that which is his prerogative-royal. If I make an idol of creatures, he will quickly make nothing of them; by leaning on these staves I break them in pieces. Should I rely on them,

I take the way to make them take their wings and fly away. Besides, if I say to gold, Thou art my hope, or to fine gold, Thou art my confidence, I deny and dishonour the God that is above. It is sinful for a wife to give that respect to her husband's picture which belongs only to his person ; but it is abominable to give it to some small present which he sendeth her. I may not trust my graces, much less my riches. Lord, though I am rich in this world, preserve me from the inflammation of pride. Whilst I condemn others for their poverty, I wound thee in thy providence, who givest every one his portion. Let me not, therefore, be high-minded, or trusting in uncertain riches ; but enable me to trust in thee, the living God, who givest me all things richly to enjoy.

I wish that this rich wine may never so fly up into my head, or so possess my heart, as to make me mindless of what I do, or senseless of what others suffer. Prosperity not seldom begetteth security. They who drink wine freely, little think of others' water or wormwood. Experience of misery is a strong provocation to mercy. Israel did the more pity strangers because they were strangers in the land of Egypt ; but they who live all their days in ease are little affected with others' pain. I have read that the Jews, when they build a house, will leave some part of it unfinished, in remembrance that Jerusalem lieth desolate ; at least some part unplastered, wherein they write in great letters, *Zecher Lechorban*, the memory of the desolation. Lord, in my greatest plenty, help me to mind and feel others' poverty, and in my most prosperous condition keep me from forgetting the afflictions of thy Joseph.

I wish that I may esteem myself, not by the abundance of creatures, but by the unsearchable riches that are in Christ. All my outward comforts are but ciphers, and signify nothing of special love, or of my right to eternal life. He that was rich on earth, faring deliciously every day, is a beggar in hell, frying in those unquenchable flames. The fairest trees are soonest marked for felling. How beautiful is a field of corn one day, when it is cut down the next ! Many are high in place, whose portion is in the bottomless pit. The money-changers were scourged out of the temple, as having little interest amongst God's people. The poor of the world are the heirs of heaven ; the rich have commonly their portion in this life. Why should I value myself by that which God gives to his foes, and denieth to his chiefest favourites ? Can I carry my earthly favours into hell with me, to bribe my flames, or corrupt my tormentors ? No. As I came into this world naked, so I must go out of the world naked. Neither my glory nor my

goods shall descend after me. Or can I with my possessions buy out my pardon before I come thither? No. The redemption of my soul is more precious, for all my treasure it must cease for ever. Lord, suffer me not to 'lay up for myself a treasure on earth, which rust or moth may corrupt,' but let me provide myself 'bags that wax not old, a treasure in heaven that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, nor moth corrupteth.' Let me ever esteem myself by thy favour, and not by these things which thy saints have trampled under their feet.

I wish that I may acknowledge my God to be the giver and author of all my mercies, that so I may bless him when he blesseth me. Though I reap a rich harvest, yet my God sowed all the corn; if I refuse to pay my rent I forfeit my lease. I can rationally expect the showers of blessings no longer than I continue to send up vapours of praises. Unthankfulness is the devil's sponge, wherewith he would wipe God's mercies out of my mind; but thankfulness is God's treasure and honour: 'He that offereth praise, glorifieth me.' Oh that I might never be worse than a Samaritan, in denying to praise him who prospereth me. The Philistines, upon the receipt of mercies, would offer sacrifice to their Dagon, the Romans to their Jupiter Capitolinus. When the god of this world hath his trophies erected, shall the God of heaven, who loadeth me and mine with benefits, go without? 'O Lord my God, how many are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts to me-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered,' Ps. xl. 5. I beseech thee, enable me to use all thy favours to me and mine, as so many stones to rear up and raise a pillar and monument of praise to thy name, and let the name of it be written on it, 'Ebenezer, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.' Yet I desire that when I am offering this sacrifice of thanksgiving to my God, my heart may be most affected with, and enlarged for, spiritual blessings. My God is worthy of glory for giving me health, food, raiment, friends, and all temporal benefits, when many others are racked with sickness, vexed with hunger, and pinched with poverty; but oh! what thanks doth he deserve for his gospel, his ordinances, his Spirit, and his dear Son! If the favours of his left hand, which his enemies may enjoy, call for praise, what hallelujahs may the favours of his right hand, the favours of his favourites, command? Lord, it will be the work of eternity to give honour, glory, praise, and thanks to thy Majesty for redeeming me to thyself by the blood of thy Son; help me to

ply this duty beforehand, that my soul may be put in tune here, to make the better music in heaven.

I wish that my heart, under the sunshine of prosperity, may (like wood laid out a-sunning) be the sooner fired, and the more inflamed with love to my God. His mercies are love-tokens, his kindnesses are cords of love; by these gifts which he presents me with, he wooeth for my affections. I can love my father, my friends, from whom I receive some small favours; and shall I not love my God, who is the fountain and father of all my mercies? Lord, let thy great love to me, as the beams of the sun united, kindle love in me; thou lovest, that thou may be loved. Circumcise my heart, that I may love thee with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my strength. Though I love thee much for thy compassion to me, let me love thee most for those perfections in thee; for thou art altogether lovely. When I was nothing, before I had a being, thou didst love me; when I was worse than nothing, in my blood and pollution, thou didst love me; the time of loathing was a time of love. In the womb, by thee I was wonderfully and curiously wrought; in my body I have not so many limbs as tokens of thy love. But oh! in my soul, capable of thy fear and favour, of thy love and likeness, how lively doth thy love appear! From my birth to this moment, all thy paths towards me have been mercy and truth. In my infancy thou wast my nurse, to preserve me from those knocks and falls to which I was liable. As I grew up, mercy grew up together with me. The journal of my whole life is but a volume of thy love. And shall (as too much wood puts out the fire) the multitude of thy mercies lessen my love? Lord, suffer me not to be so ungrateful, but as thou art infinitely both loving and lovely, let me think all my love too little for so worthy an object; and let my only measure of loving thee be to love thee without measure. Though others love thee only for their own sakes, because thou fillest their houses with good things, hence (as Amnon served Tamar, who was first sick for her, and having satisfied his lust was as sick of her) when they have served their own ends, they leave off to serve thee; let me love thee for thine own sake, as well for thy purity and holiness, as for thy mercy and goodness; let me love thee as my King and Lord, not only because thou art able to advance and prefer me, but also because thou dost command and purify me. Let me love thee striking me as well as stroking me: when thy hand is against me in the greatest affliction, let my heart be towards thee with the greatest affection; yea, cause my love, like lime, to be the hotter

for all waters of opposition, to be always increasing, till it comes to its perfection.

I wish that I may be a faithful steward in the improvement of my talents, and that the work I do my God may be answerable to the cost and charge he is at with me. My God is the owner of all I have—the fee-simple is his; I am but the possessor to employ it for his praise. Other creatures thrive somewhat answerable to their keeping; the better the pasture, the fatter is the beasts. Hares have longer legs behind than before, and therefore run the faster up hill; why should not I, who have more helps than others, make more haste than they up thy holy hill of Sion? Those whom my God calleth to the highest places, he calleth to the greatest service. If he planteth his vineyard in his best ground, he expecteth the most plentiful clusters of grapes. Oh that the rent which I pay to him might be somewhat proportionable to the lands which I hold of him! My God hath made me to be, not a cistern to hold in, but to be a conduit-pipe to convey out, the water of his blessings; I would not therefore, as the moon, who receiveth from the sun a full light, but reflecteth only a faint light again, return less than I receive from my God; much less, as fatted beasts, be the more unfitted for service, or like a carcase, be the more unsavoury for the hot beams of mercy. But, Lord, help me to be the more fruitful in holiness for the showers of thy goodness; let thy Spirit enable me to trade answerable to my talents, and let thy grace encourage me to be always abounding in thy work, believing that thou wilt at last recompense me with a glorious and eternal reward.

I wish that I may be so prudent and provident, as in a summer of prosperity to prepare and provide for a winter of adversity. Though the heavens are now clear and shining, yet they will be cloudy and showering. I cannot imagine that the day of my life should have no foul weather on it; there is no mountain so firm but may be moved with an earthquake. If men in policy will prepare a cloak for the wet, lay in provision for winter, shall I lay in nothing against a rainy day? This life is a valley of tears, and shall I think always to laugh? This world is a sea, and though now it be calm to me, yet I must expect tempests, and shall I not rig and fit the vessel of my soul before the storm cometh? Even silly pismires will in harvest provide for winter. The bee will gather honey whilst the flowers are in the field, to prevent her famishing in frost and snow, and some say, will foresee bad weather, and therefore go but a little way from her hive, that upon the least

alteration she may return speedily home. My God hath made me their master, but I may well be their scholar, to learn this lesson from them. Oh that, whilst health, and life, and time lasteth, I might prepare for sickness, death, and eternity ! To deny myself, and take up my cross, is a hard lesson ; but that scholar will say it best when called to it, that cons it most beforehand. How sore will those evils be which surprise me on a sudden ! like an enemy that comes behind me, and is unseen, they may easily kill me. Lord, cause me in my greatest plenty and best estate to think of and prepare for poverty, and the worst estate that can befall me.

To this end, let me be always suing out my pardon in thy gospel-office, that the evil of sin and the evil of suffering may not seize on me at the same time. How deep will the sword of affliction wound me, if sin sharpen its edge ! I may bear many miseries through thy mercy, but the least sin is a burden too heavy for me to bear. Affliction without sin is physic, which, though not toothsome, I can drink, if my Father put it into my hands ; but sin mingled with it, turns the potion into loathsome poison. Lord, let me, a poor condemned prisoner by the law, never be satisfied without some hope and sense of my pardon ; that so, whatsoever officer of affliction thou shalt send me, I may be nothing affrighted, being confident he cannot come to drag me to execution.

That I may be ever ready for the greatest losses and crosses ; I wish also that my heart may be loose to all the comforts of this life. If I give my heart to them, when they are taken from me, I may well be heartless. Alas ! my estate and my comfort will be buried in the same grave. Affections unmortified will be soon wounded, as a scalded head is soon broken ; the young man whose heart was set upon his heaps, could not think of parting with them without much heaviness. If I lay the stress of my affections on the things of this world, as the cripple his full weight on his crutches, no wonder if, when they are taken from me, I fall and bruise myself. When the vapours are gotten within the bowels of the earth, they may well cause concussions and earthquakes. Oh that my affections might be so weaned from all earthly possessions, and so placed on heavenly comforts, that I may be able to bless my God taking from me as fully as when he giveth to me. Lord, though I take outward mercies, let them never take me. Though I use the world, let me enjoy none but thyself. Thou madest me to be master of the work of thy hands, and hast put all things under my feet ; oh let me not be their servant by laying them in my heart. As thine apostle, when he had nothing, pos-

sessed all things; so, though I have all things, let me possess nothing.

Finally, I wish that, as a skilful alchymist, I may extract gold out of iron, improve these temporal blessings to my spiritual benefit; that whilst they are millstones to others, through their wicked hearts, sinking them into hell, they may be loadstones to me, through thy Holy Spirit, drawing me towards heaven. Lord, if the mercies of thy footstool be of such a price, how much worth are the mercies of thy throne! If uncertain riches bring such comfort, and are of such value as to answer all things, of what virtue are durable riches and righteousness! If the honour of men be so desirable, how amiable is that honour which cometh from God! If corporeal liberty be so precious, how precious is the glorious liberty of thy children! If a table spread with creature enjoyments be such savoury food, surely thy gospel dainties make a costly feast. If bodily health help me to relish these outward comforts, will not thy saving health sweeten the bitterest cup? If thou art so liberal to thy foes, how bountiful wilt thou be to thy friends and favourites! Put me not off with a portion in this life. Give me not my reward, my consolation, in this world; but whatsoever thou deny me, give me those mercies that accompany salvation. Though thou grantest me a plentiful allowance in my minority, let it not hinder me of the inheritance when I come to age. Whilst I have these things in possession, let me esteem thee only as my portion. Oh look upon me, and be merciful to me, as thou art unto them that love thy name. Amen.

CHAPTER IX.

*How a Christian may exercise himself to godliness in adversity.
Containing motives to it, and the nature of it.*

Adversity is a condition of life which consisteth in the want of outward good things, and presence of outward evil things, as sickness, disgrace, poverty, imprisonment, and the like.

1. The efficient cause of it is God. Whosoever or whatsoever be the rod, it is his hand that gives the stroke.¹ Though he abhorreth the thoughts of tempting men to sin—‘Let no man say when he is

¹ Afflictio est malum quod patitur creatura rationalis, cedens in gloriam Dei et electorum salutem.—*Polan. Syntag.*, lib. vi. cap. 4. Metonymice dicitur ira Dei.—*Rom.* i. 18. Metaphorice calamitas; Synecdochice, Visitatio.

tempted, I am tempted of God : for God tempteth no man,' James i. 13—yet he challengeth the power of bringing men to suffer. 'Is there any evil in the city which I have not done?' Amos iii. He created the natural light, and he formeth civil darkness, Isa. xlv. 7. The heathen hammered at this, that the same power dispenseth both comforts and crosses, when they painted fortune in two forms, with two faces of contrary colours, the foremost white, the hindermost black, to signify that good and evil came both from goddess Fortune,¹ 1 Sam. ii. 6, 7.

2. The meritorious cause of it is sin. The evil of corruption doth naturally beget the evil of affliction. Sin is the vapours and wind which causeth all these storms and tempests. 'Why doth living man complain? man suffereth for his sin,' Lam. iii. 39. Sin and suffering came into the world together : man had never tasted these sour herbs if he had not eaten of the forbidden fruit. Sin is the worm at the root of our tree of comforts, which, when it spreads fair, and is fully laden, makes it wither and die. And sin is the only mother that breedeth and bringeth forth all these Benonis, sons of our sorrows. Indeed, every affliction is not for sin ; yet every affliction is from sin. Sin is sometimes the natural cause of affliction, as intemperance of sickness, but it is ever the moral cause of affliction, 1 Kings xiii. 24 ; Micah vii. 9.

3. The formal cause of it is the absence of something necessary or convenient for us, or the presence of something troublesome or tedious to us. No affliction at present is joyous, but grievous. It is a potion which, though profitable, is not pleasant—a medicine which may be wholesome, but is not toothsome. Afflicting days are therefore called evil days, Eccles. xii. 1. And those that are afflicted find and feel them to be evil, and for that cause are said to be in heaviness, and to have no pleasure in them, 1 Pet. i. 6.

4. The final cause of it is either to prove or to purify.

(1.) Sometimes God afflicteth to prove men. Some men have strong backs, and therefore God layeth on them heavy burdens, that their strength may appear to his honour. The master who hath excellent scholars desireth that they may be examined, and posed thoroughly, because their profiting doth thereby appear to his praise. The Lord of hosts hath in his army of saints some heroic spirits, who delight to jeopard their lives in the high places of the field, against the world and wicked one for his sake. Now he calleth

¹ In rebus adversis cogitandum est homines et diabolum posse esse illarum ministros et instrumenta ; verum a Deo tanquam potissima causa immitti.—*Pet., Mart. Neces. in viii. cap. Exod.*

those valiant soldiers to dangerous services, that their noble exploits and conquests might redound to their general's renown and credit.¹ Job and Paul shall be picked out and sent upon the forlorn hope, to proclaim to the whole earth, that weak, dying man can overcome hell itself, through the assistance of Heaven. When the servant is put upon some extraordinary work, and performeth it well, both his master and himself are honoured thereby, Job ii. 3; 1 Pet. i. 7.

(2.) God usually afflicteth to purify. He sendeth sharp frosts to kill the weeds of sin; Isa. xxvii. 9, 'By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away their sin.' He useth his knife to cut out what is rotten in the fruit, and his hatchet to hew off the hard knots from his timber.² As refiners of sugar take much sugar out of a chest, some of which they melt often, and some but once, and the reason is because they intend to make the former more pure and white; so God giveth some affliction as physic, which they take but seldom, at spring and fall, when he giveth it others as diet drink, which they take constantly every day, (as in some sinners there is a legion of devils, so in some saints a legion of distresses,) and the end is to make the latter more healthy, more holy. 'He chastiseth for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness,' Heb. xii. As by black soap we make our clothes white, so doth God, by heavy afflictions, make holy persons. Affliction is like a sink, in itself unsavoury, but the whole house is the cleaner for it.

My work, reader, is to direct thee how thou mayest, like Samson, fetch meat out of this eater, and take this physic which is so unpleasing to thy flesh, for the greatest profit and advantage of thy spirit. If thou wilt take Scripture for thy rule, the wind of affliction may make the coal of thy graces to blaze the more by its blowing on them. Sweet spices, the more they are pounded, the more fragrant smell they send forth. The gold of grace shineth most brightly in the fire. The vulture feedeth and fetcheth nourishment from things of ill savour, and so may the Christian from what his God calls him to suffer. Wine will draw much good out of the flesh of vipers. The believer may gather grapes from those thorns, and figs from these thistles.

¹ Augustinus assignat fideles castigari, tribus de causis. 1. Ad demonstrationem debitæ miseræ. 2. Ad emendationem labilis vitæ. 3. Ad exercitationem necessariæ patientiæ.—*Tractat. in Johan.*, 124.

² Afflictiones humiliter sustinentes, cœlestia multiplicant.—*Greg. Homil. Super. Evang.*

Saints in this life must look to suffer. Affliction is their portion. They must not be Christians if they will not take up their cross. It was a notable speech of Sir Horace Vere, Baron of Tilbury, when in the Palatinate a council of war was called, and a Dutch lord said that it was dangerous to fight, for the emperor had many pieces of ordnance. My lords, if you fear the mouth of a cannon, you must never come into the field. They who fear hardships must not set out for heaven. In the world ye shall have tribulation; in this sea ye must expect tempests, John xvi. 33. Saints are ships richly laden, therefore will have many pirates watching for them, to rob and spoil them. Every one will have a cudgel for a tree laden with fruit. The thief striveth most to meet the traveller that hath most money in his purse. The highest and richest Christian is most eyed and envied by the enemies of our salvation.¹

Satan's rage is greatest against the people of God. It is the corn, not the chaff, he takes such pains to winnow. The tiger is enraged at the smell of sweet odours; so is the devil at the sweet scent of the saints' graces. If Christ's soldiers will storm heaven, and take it by force, he is resolved they shall have hot work of it, for he will raise all the powers of hell to oppose them. Many of those storms which vex the saints, as that which blew down the house of Job's children, are raised by Satan. He troubleth the waters, thinking that then it is the best fishing. The prince of the air raiseth the winds of affliction, hoping that the vessels of Christians' souls will be brought thereby to make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. Though all his winds tend, by God's over-ruling providence, to settling, yet he hopes thereby to overturn those trees that are planted in the house of the Lord. When we hear of any troubles and hardships befalling them that are holy, we may ask the question, which David did to the widow of Tekoah of Joab, Is not the hand of the devil in all this? He hath hand in most of their sins, and at least a finger in most of their sufferings. Like a dog, he barketh seldom at those of his own family, but always at strangers.

The world hateth the saints, and this is another cause why they meet with so many crosses. When the wind and tide cross each other, then are the greatest tempests.² They that are after the spirit are contrary to, and therefore persecuted by, them that are after the flesh. Contraries never meet but they fight. Saints are

¹ *Dura fidelium militia, ut exerceatur eorum fides.—Calvin in Ps. xxxix.*

² *Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum, Tendimus in cœlum.*

strangers here—‘ I am a stranger in this earth,’ Ps. cxix. 19—and it is ordinary for natives to gather themselves together against, and to abuse, strangers. Even princes in disguise,—such all God’s children are,—suffer many affronts.

God hath decreed the saints to distress. As he foreappointed them to heaven, so he foreappointed them to heaviness and hardships. ‘ Unto which also ye were appointed,’ saith the apostle, 1 Thes. iii. 3. The same God that appointed them to a crown as their end, appointed them to the cross as the way ;¹ and that they must through many tribulations enter into the kingdom of heaven. The wilderness is the road to Canaan. Christ went by Bethany, the house of grief, to Jerusalem, the vision of peace. What was said of Christ may be said of a Christian, ‘ Ought not Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory ? ’ Luke xxiv. 26. None ever yet went to heaven without combats and conflicts. Christians must therefore be always ready for, that they may be steady in, these storms. The wise man saith, ‘ If thou faintest in the day of adversity, thy strength is small,’ Prov. xxiv. 10. Yet it is true, he that standeth in a day of misery, his strength is great. Adversity hath strong temptations attending it as well as prosperity. Those who have conquered the world’s allurements, have been foiled by its affrightments. More clothes are required in winter than in summer. Though a small candle may be kept alight in a close room, yet in the open air, in a windy night, a torch is needful.

The philosopher tells us, they are the stronger sheep that hold the frost when it falleth ; those to be weak that through feebleness shake it off.² He is a skilful pilot indeed that can steer his vessel aright in storms, amidst rocks and sands.

Reader, in the prosecution of this particular, viz., that thou mayest exercise thyself to godliness in this estate, I shall,

1. Propound some motives to quicken thee to caution in this condition.

2. Speak to the matter, or shew thee wherein the power of religion doth manifest itself in affliction.

3. Offer thee some means or helps for the performance of it. I begin with the motives.

First, Consider, affliction will search whether thou art sound or no. Great troubles are great trials. Hence it is that afflictions

¹ Nulla calamitas casu aut cæco infortunio et sine voluntate Dei contingit, sed juxta æternum Dei consilium ; nam si ne pilus capitis, multo minus magna calamitas, sine voluntate Patris venit.—*Polan. Syn.*

² Arist. Hist. Anim., lib. viii. cap. 10.

are called temptations: 'My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations,' James i. 2—*i.e.*, into divers trials. Grace is brought to the proof, when it is brought to persecution; as gold to the trial, when to the touchstone. A saint comes to the test, when he comes to tribulation. The soldier's knowledge or ignorance, courage or cowardice, will appear when the enemy, strong and subtle, meets him in the field.

Many trees are thought sound and fast in the earth, till a high wind turneth them up by the roots, and discovereth them to be rotten. Much scouring will manifest whether a vessel be gilded only, or all gold. The hearts of some had never been known to have been so unholy, if they had not been brought to great hardships: Mat. xiii. 20, 21, 'He that receiveth the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution because of the word ariseth, he is offended.'

Locusts and grasshoppers are only for the summer season, the winter killeth them. The cuckoo and lizard hide themselves the four cold months. The hypocrite, like the hedgehog, if the wind change, will alter his nest, and be sure to make it in the warmest place. As the river Novanus in Lombardy, though at mid-summer he may seem to overflow the banks, yet in mid-winter he is clean dry.

Magistratus indicat virum. Magistracy will discover the man, and so will misery. Nature vexed betrayeth itself;¹ when the winds blow, the waters roar: 'Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth,' Rev. iii. 10. Crystal looks like pearl, till it comes to the hammer. So do they that have common grace, like those who have true special grace, till they come to the trial; but when the winter is approaching, the former fall off, like leaves in autumn.

Satan, the great politician, knew that some heavy cross, if anything, would bring Job to curse God: 'Touch him, and he will curse thee to thy face,' Job i. Do but touch him with some affliction, and like one that hath a boil or great sore, he will kick and fling to purpose. And indeed he guessed shrewdly; for had not Job been upright, the rod of God's hand would soon have discovered the rottenness of his heart. If the house of his holiness had had no higher foundation than that wherein his children were, and had

¹ Natura vexata prodit seipsam.

been built on the sand, that touch would have thrown it down. If worldly advantages had been the weights which had caused the wheels of his soul to move God-ward, when they had been taken away, he would have stood still.

Reader, hath God brought thy soul into great sufferings? I may say to thee, as Simeon did to the pillar, which he whipped before the earthquake, 'Stand fast, for thou shalt be shaken: take heed, for now thou art trying.' Give not God cause to say of thee, as once of Israel, 'When I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness of Samaria,' Hosea vii. 1. God was wounding Israel, that he might heal it;¹ he lanced their sores, and then their imposthumous matter did appear. Nay, as a physician when he gives physic to remove one disease, by the working of it discovers many; so when God, by his judgments, Hosea vi. 5, would have purged away Israel's sin, they discovered many more sins, and were impatient of their physic, hated to be healed, and like madmen railed and raged against their physicians. Affliction shakes the glass, and then the dreggy settlement in the bottom appears. Affliction, as a drift rain, searcheth the house, whether the windows be well pointed, and the roof well tiled, and often discovereth many places where it leaks, which were not before thought of.

Secondly, God intendeth to sanctify thee, and to make thee better by affliction.² He sendeth prosperity to quicken thee to praise, and he sendeth adversity to stir thee up to patience and prayer. He hath many ways to make his scholars learn their lessons,³ and one is by the rod, which Luther calls *Theologiam Christianorum*, the divinity of Christians; 'Blessed is the man whom thou correctest, and teachest in thy law.' He forceth thee, like the ark, to sail in deep waters, that thy soul might mount the nearer to heaven. The musician hangs his viol within scent of the fire, that when played on, it might make the sweeter music. The blessed God giveth thee bitter aloes to purge away the ill humours in thy heart, and keepeth thee in an afflicted estate, that thy prayers and performances may be more upright, humble, and spiritual, and thereby the more melodious in his ears. The husbandman throweth his seed into deep furrows, and is glad of a sharp winter, because it will thrive the better.

¹ In fornace ardet palea, et purgatur aurum.—*Aug. in Ps. lx.*

² Aurem cordis tribulatio aperit quam sæpe prosperitas claudit.—*Greg. in Moral.*

³ Tanquam in schola aliqua in vita præsentī per morbum, per afflictionem, per tentationes, per paupertates, per cætera item quæ mala esse videntur, erudimur, ut apti efficiamur ad futurorum bonorum perceptionem.—*Chrysost. Homil. Decim. in Epist. ad Roman.*

David taught the men of Ammon by making them pass through the brick-kiln, 2 Sam. xii. 31. He taught them more manners than to abuse his ambassadors, and so wickedly to despise the signs of his good-will. It may be, reader, thou art one that hast slighted God's messengers and message; thou hast taken little notice of his love-letters, his gospel, and his love-tokens, his favours of all sorts. Well, he makes thee pass through the brick-kiln; he brings thee to affliction, to teach thee to prize his ministers, and to value his mercies.

In the promontory Nimphæum, there cometh out a flaming fire, out of a rock which burneth the more for rain.¹ God sendeth the shower of troubles to increase the heat of thy zeal for him, and love to him. Therefore do not frustrate God of his end, let not his labour be lost. If thy friend send a servant to thee, thou wilt not send him away without his errand. If a king send a messenger to thee, what a stir wilt thou make to succeed his message! Affliction is a servant, a messenger from thy sovereign, and thy best friend; do not therefore dismiss him till his business be done, especially pondering that thy God hath sent him for thy profit.

Thirdly, Many are the worse for affliction. Beasts rage the more for being chained up; so do beastly men for the restraint afflictions put upon them. It was a true saying of a martyr, in the days of Queen Mary, to the smith who was fastening the chain with which he was to be bound, Be sure you make it fast, for the flesh will have its course. The flesh, like a violent stream, roareth the more, and riseth the higher, for being stopped. Though the fire heateth the water, and makes it more serviceable, yet it wholly consumeth the wood.² The same flail that purgeth the corn, bruise the stalk. Afflictions that better a saint, and make him more holy, harden a sinner. Sheep when it thundereth cast their young; and how many, when trouble comes, cast away their faith and confidence! Aristotle tells us goats are more impatient of cold than sheep. Ahaz in his distress sinneth more against the Lord, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 22, 23. As a beast by baiting, a wicked man by beating groweth mad and desperate. Every plague on Egypt increased the plague of Pharaoh's heart; his heart, like the smith's anvil, did but wax the harder for being smitten so often. When physic doth not work kindly, but co-operate with the disease, it leaves the patient much worse than it found him. Those that by suffering, as some men by

¹ Plin. Nat. Hist., lib. ii. cap. 170.

² Ignis non est diversus, tamen diversa agit; paleam in cineres vertit, auro sordes tollit.—*Aug. in Ps. xxxi.*

sickness, have been forced to keep their chambers, and have lost their stomachs, yet when they have recovered out of their afflictions, they have had canine appetites, fallen hungrily to their corruptions, and have committed iniquity with the more greediness.

The titmouse is a great destroyer of bees, and the better to obtain his prey, will in winter watch at the door of their hives ; and if any come forth, he snatcheth them ; if none appear, he will knock with his bill, and they flying out to know the cause, are taken and killed. Satan is Apollyon, the great destroyer of souls ; he watcheth, especially in the winter of affliction, to seize and surprise us. He is a cunning fowler, that then especially layeth his snares and lime-twigs, wherewith he taketh and killeth silly birds. When these fore-mentioned flying iusects are benumbed with cold, then mice and rats rob and plunder them.

Physicians tell us, men are never more subject to receive infection, than when their spirits are lowest, and therefore then they prescribe cordials. Experience teacheth us, that when their conditions are lowest, they are apt to take the deadliest contagions. How many, foolishly thinking to rid themselves of their misery, have poisoned their bodies ; and others, to get out of affliction, have polluted and poisoned their souls ! The very sheep of Christ have lost some of their fleece amongst the thorns. Sharp frosts have killed some flowers, and much nipped others.

Indeed the cedar of which the temple was made, was not liable to putrefaction, nor is it possible for the saint to fall finally by affliction : yet when he walketh in these stony ways, if he use not the more watchfulness, he may fall so foully as to wound his conscience, and his comfort, and to make him limp whilst he liveth.

Fourthly, If godliness be thy business, under the cross thou mayest expect God's company. The worse the ways and the weather are in which thou travellest, the more need thou wilt have of good society. Good company will be comfortable, when thou art called to journey in a dangerous road ; especially such a companion will be a mercy as will bear thy charges and thy cross all the way. Truly such a friend will thy God be to thee, if thou goest therein upon his errand. He is not so unkind a master as to leave his servants in the lurch when they fall sick in his service, and even in their sickness are solicitous about his business. Ah, *see thou to that*, may become a wicked Jew, (when his slave is dying in his cursed cause,) but it will never come out of the mouth of the blessed Jesus, Mat. xxvii. 3, 4. The captain of our salvation, as a faithful general, ever goeth foremost to look danger in the face, and seeth

all his soldiers safe before he leaves the field. The Christian's tide of comfort hath not seldom been at the highest, when the waters of affliction have been at the deepest. If the sick child carry himself dutifully, he need not fear but his mother will bring out her sweetmeats and cordials, which were denied him in his health.

Naturalists tell us that those violets are the sweetest which grow near garlic, and such strong-scented herbs, because they draw away any noxious nourishment; sure I am the saints' inward comforts are then often greatest, when their outward conditions are lowest. Under a shower of stones about Stephen's ears, his eyes saw the best sight that ever was seen, Acts vii. 56. If God's sons be in danger of death, then his bowels yearn over them, and he thinks nothing too good for them. Israel had the rarest manifestations of God, when they were in the wilderness. On a watery cloud the sun causeth curious and beautiful colours in the rainbow. Whoever be neglected, the sick child shall be tended, and that not by the maid, but by the mother herself. Though God may leave his prospering saints to angels, yet his afflicted ones shall be sure of his presence and favour, both in the water and in the fire, Isa. xliii. 3, 4.

The hare is called in Greek *δασύπους*, of her hairy feet;¹ this defence nature hath given her, to keep her tender, fleshy feet from galling when she is forced to much running. The only way to keep thy feet from being hurt when thou art pursued by thine enemies, is to be holy, to have thy feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. It is the godly person that, as the Irish, can tread lightly, and run swiftly over those bogs in which others sink and perish.

Reader, I would here only give thee one caution, and then proceed to the second particular. Take heed that thou dost not bring affliction upon thyself, either through thy wickedness or thy wilfulness. All men gather those rods themselves with which they are scourged; but some silly Protestants, like superstitious papists, whip themselves. The lion will beat himself (if there be none to vex him) till he be angry. Some Christians bring themselves into sufferings; every one ought to take up his cross and follow Christ, but they make their crosses either by being evil-doers or busybodies. That man can expect little countenance from his parents, whose prodigality and pride hath cast him into a prison; nor that person any encouragement from God, who hath put fetters upon his own legs, and then entreats him to set him at liberty. If, like turpentine, thou drawest fire to thyself, expect to be burnt. The

¹ *Δασύπους* pro lepore a *δασὺς* densus et *πόδες* pes.—*Arist. Hist. Anim.*, lib. iv.

Lord make me so holy as to choose suffering before sin, and yet withal so wise, as to know for what I suffer. If I sacrifice a stout body to a stubborn mind, it will be but as the offering up of swine's flesh, an abomination to the Lord. Zopyrus wounded and mangled himself that he might attain his own ends. But though pirates by sea, and thieves by land, often suffer much, yet none pitieth them.

I come now to the second thing, to direct thee how thou mayest so behave thyself in this encounter, that, like Joseph, thy bow may abide in strength, though the archers should sorely grieve thee, shoot at thee, and hate thee. Nay, that every stone thrown at thee, may become a precious stone to adorn and enrich thee. Health and strong persons, saith Plutarch, concoct serpents, when weak stomachs nauseate delicates.

As to the nature of making religion thy business in this condition, it consisteth partly in avoiding those sins which an afflicted estate is prone to, as despising God's hand, impatience, envying at those that prosper; and partly in exercising those graces which are required, and proper in adversity, as faith, rejoicing in the Lord, contentedness with thy condition, &c. But I shall propound them to thee in these particulars.

First, Be sensible of God's hand; it is a sin to faint under it, but it is a duty to feel it: 'My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him,' Heb. xii. 5. A Christian must carefully avoid these two extremes of despising the chastening of the Lord, or despairing when he is chastened, and walk in the golden mean between them both. To despise God's hand is not patience, but pertinacy, and much nearer a stoical apathy, than Christian magnanimity.

When the proud Greeks had lost two castles, Zembenie, or Coiridoeastron, the hog's castle, and Maditus, upon the Turk's first setting foot in Europe, they said vainly, There is but a hog-sty lost.¹ And afterwards, when they were deprived of Callipolis, they would, in a jeering manner, say, The Turks have taken from us but a bottle of wine. But they are most undutiful children who laugh when their father is scourging them. It is an ill sign when the chirurgeon lanceth the sore, and the patient is not sensible. Wounds that bleed well, do much the better. Till men be sensible, affliction will never be profitable.

Holy Job, when God rent his possessions and his relations from him, rent his garments, to shew that his heart was rent. When

¹ Turk. Hist. in Life of Orchanes.

God humbled him with sufferings, he humbled himself with sorrow. Had his limbs, (his children which came out of his loins,) been cut off, and he not felt it, certainly he had been cauterised; but when God cast him down with the strokes of his hand, he cast himself down by sensibleness of heart: 'Then Job arose and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground and worshipped,' Job i. 20.

God cannot bear it, that his blows should not be felt: 'Thou hast stricken them, and they have not grieved,' Jer. v. 3. They are not affected with aught that hath been inflicted upon them, either by Sennacherib, Pharaoh-Necho, or the Chaldeans. Though thy rod had fetched blood from their backs, yet it hath not fetched tears from their eyes, Isa. x. 5, 6; 2 Kings xxiii. 37, and xxiv. 17.

It is reported of Galienus the Roman emperor, that hearing how Egypt was revolted from him, he said, *Quid! Sine lino Ægyptio vivere non possumus?* What! Can we not live without the hemp of Egypt? ¹ So many, when God takes some part of their estates, or one child, Let him take all if he will, say they; we can do well enough without them: 'The bricks are fallen (say they, Isa. ix. 10,) but we will build with hewn stone.' It is an unhappiness, but we know how to help it. These stocks and stones, instead of moving God to pity them, provoke him to punish them more severely. When the rod will not do, the jail must, with the stubborn servant.

Reader, doth God call thee to suffer? Bear thy cross as thy burden; do not make a fire of it. If thou fearest thy God, thou wilt feel his rod. Do not slight any suffering, like the dog, that when he gets out of the water, into which he was cast, shakes his ears, runs away, and makes nothing of it. But as thou wouldest hear the voice of the rod, do thou feel the strokes of it. The scholar will never mind his lesson, who is regardless of whipping. It is a dreadful sign for any to be, like Pharaoh, sleeping when God is thundering. Surely those that can snore when their house is on fire, as if they were no whit concerned, will be consumed in its flames.

Affliction is a messenger sent by the great God to us, about business of concernment. Now as David could not bear it, that those servants which he sent to the Ammonites out of good-will, should be despised, so neither can God endure it, that his messenger should be slighted. He that slighteth the messenger, affronts his master.

As thy duty is to be sensible of God's hand, so also to be submissive to it. Though we must groan and feel God's hand, yet we

¹ Turk. Hist.

must not grumble and fret at his dealings. Obedience is due to his severest precepts, and patience is thy duty under the sharpest providence. He is too just to be questioned, too good to be suspected, and too great to be quarrelled with. Holy Eli, when he heard such news, as like a sudden clap of thunder made the ears of such as heard it to tingle, and their hearts to tremble, calmly and quietly submitted to it: 'It is the Lord, let him do what he pleaseth,' 1 Sam. iii. 18. He doth not fly in God's face in a passion, but falls down at his feet in a humble submission: 'It is the Lord, let him do what he pleaseth.' So Aaron, when God was speaking, (for his rod hath a voice, Amos vi.,) had the manners and the grace to be silent: 'And Aaron held his peace,' Lev. x. 3. If we consider the greatness of the punishment, we shall find the more cause to commend the greatness of his patience. Stars shine in the night that were not seen in the day.

1. He lost his children. The loss of a man's estate is nothing to the loss of a child. The child is the father's bowels, Philem. 12. How strong is the stream of parents' love to their children! Truly so great, that the blessed God expresseth his infinite affection to his chosen by this comparison, Ps. ciii. 12. Therefore Satan, the arch-politician, reserved the loss of Job's children, as the great cannon, till the last onset, knowing that if any loss brought him to curse God this would do it. How sadly doth Rachel screech out, 'Give me children or I die.' It was the lack of children that Abraham so much lamented: 'Lord, what wilt thou give me, if I go childless?' Yet at the loss of children Aaron is contented: 'And Aaron held his peace.'

2. He lost two children. How pathetically doth David bewail the loss of one! 'O my son Absalom, my son, my son, Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!' 2 Sam. xviii. 33. Rebekah could not think of losing both her sons without extreme sorrow: 'Why should I be deprived of you both in one day?' Gen. xxvii. 45. Yet Aaron loseth two children in one day, in one hour, and saith not a word: 'He held his peace.'

3. He lost two sons. Sons are in themselves greater blessings than daughters. The masculine gender is more worthy than the feminine. When God would give Abraham a child to his great comfort, the promise runs to Sarah, 'Thou shalt bear a son,' Gen. xviii. 10. Sons bear their father's name, and bear up their families. Parents are most desirous of sons. Elkanah's speech to Hannah implieth it: 'Am not I better to thee than ten sons?'

The Shunammite's words express it: 'Did I desire a son of my Lord?' 2 Kings iv. 28. And their greatest delight is in sons: 'God hath given me a son,' saith Rachel, Gen. xxx. 6. 'And fear not, thou hast born a son,' was thought to be a cordial strong enough to revive a dying mother, 1 Sam. iv. 20. Yet Aaron loseth two sons, and is not sullen, though he held his peace.

4. He lost his two eldest sons. If two of his younger sons had died it had been a great affliction, but to lose his eldest, his first-born, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power, did sharpen the edge of the dispensation. The greatest grief in this world, even the grief for crucifying the Lord Jesus, is set out by a parent's sorrow for the loss of his eldest son: 'And shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born,' Zech. xii. 10. Yet Aaron, at the loss of his two eldest sons, is silent: 'He held his peace.'

5. He lost his two eldest sons by a sudden death. Sickness is usually the usher of death, to prepare the way before it. Had he been forewarned, he would have been forearmed. What we fear, for that we prepare. David took the loss of his young child patiently—the disease had fitted him for his death; but he took the sudden death of Absalom passionately; that serjeant arrested him before he was ready. Yet Aaron loseth his two eldest sons by a sudden death, when he might have thought they had been rejoicing in their new office, and under this sharp providence held his peace.

6. He lost his two eldest sons by a violent death. Though they had died suddenly, so they had died naturally, from some inward distemper, the cause of grief had not been so great; but they died not in their natural beds, but by a supernatural rod. 'And there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord,' Lev. x. 2. Though they were consumed by fire, yet Aaron was not in a fury, but held his peace.

7. He lost his two eldest sons suddenly by a violent death, in such a manner as might speak God's anger. A religious father had rather lose all his children in the favour of God, than one child in the fury of God. But the way of their suffering pointed out their sin, and gave fear that they died in their sins.¹ Strange fire was their sin, and strange fire was their punishment, which might occasion Aaron to fear it was but the forerunner of the un-

¹ Duo fecerunt contra mandatum Dei. 1. Quod igne extero usi sunt. 2. Quod locum sacrum ingrediebantur, quod ne summo sacerdoti licbat, nisi certis legibus certoque tempore.—*Jun. in loc.*

quenchable fire. He might think, Surely my sons were overjoyed at their new office, the first time they were called to their honourable work; they were so unworthy as to manifest abominable wickedness, and the jealous God would not bear it, that man's will should be the rule of his worship; wherefore I fear he hath sent them from their mirth to mourning, from solace to the place of eternal sorrows. The head of this arrow seems keen enough to pierce any sensible man to the heart! Yet whatever pain he felt he was not impatient against God, for Aaron held his peace.

Reader, when thy flesh is prompting thee to passion, lay before thee this pattern of patience. Do not say, None is afflicted as thou art. Consider Job's and Aaron's trials in all their circumstances, and let thy tribulation work patience. Compare thy condition with many others on earth, and in hell, and thou wilt find infinitely more cause to extol him with praise than to wrangle with him for thy pain. Hast thou lost thy friend, thy child, thy husband, thy estate? Truly here is no loss, so long as thou hast not lost thy soul and thy Saviour. Dost thou think of them whose souls, whose God, is lost for ever? I may say to thee of thy loss, compared with theirs, what the Turk said of his master's loss at the battle of Lepanto, compared with the Venetians' loss of Cyprus: My master's loss is like the shaving a man's beard, which will quickly grow again, but the loss of the Venetians is like the cutting off an arm, which can never be recovered. Thy loss will be made up, but theirs never.

Holy Greenham endured much torture with much content. He could lie spread upon his form, quietly looking for the chirurgeon's knife, and bind himself as fast with a resolved patience as others with the strongest cords, and endure the carving of his flesh, and rifling of his bowels, whilst others are passionate at the pricking of a vein.

Some men are like flints, they are no sooner smitten but fire issueth out of them. If God scourge them they are full of fury, and in their wrath and rage will not spare heaven; as the Thracians, when it thundereth, impudently shoot up their arrows against heaven. But it is brutish, and the voice of an ass, to say, Why smitest thou me? and exceeding childish to strike at the thing that hurts us.

Heathen themselves have been famous for their courage under crosses, though they wanted our Christian principle. Valerius Maximus, when he heard that his mother and wife, whom he loved dearly, were slain by the fall of a house, and that his younger son, a hopeful youth, died at the same time at Umbria, never changed

countenance, but went on with the business of the commonwealth as if no disaster had befallen him. When Pompey the Great, in his travels, called at Rhodes to see Possidonius the philosopher, whom he found much affected with the gout, and told him he was sorry he could not hear his lectures, he answered him, That for all his disease he could discourse; and when the torches were put to his feet he spake excellently, That nothing was good but what was honest, and nothing was evil but what was criminal; and after such discourse, at last concluded, Oh pain, in vain dost thou attempt me, for I will never confess thee to be evil as long as I can honestly bear thee. Plato, being asked how we might know a wise man, answered: He is a wise man who, being praised, will not be proud, and being punished or rebuked, will not be passionate. Socrates said, My mind and my means are matched. Yet some Christians, when called to the cross, though they have higher hopes, and every way greater helps, are hearty in nothing but crying and complaining.

The truth is, an impatient person is his own punishment; he that murmurs at God, martyrs himself. Affliction, like the high wind, doth not hurt the stalks of corn that yield to it, but rents in pieces the sturdy oak that resists it. Massurius Sabinus tells us, that the image of the goddess Angerona, was, with a muffler on her mouth, placed at the altar of Volupiae, to signify that pleasure will be their portion who bear sorrows with silence. But the discontented both lose the comfort of their present mercies, and double their misery. They lose the comfort of their present mercies, for, like children, because they have not that piece which they desire, they will have none at all. Because Rachel had not children, as an aguish palate she tasted no savour; she could relish neither life, nor health, nor food, nor husband, nor any of those millions of mercies which she enjoyed. The hedgehog is an apt hieroglyphic of such a person. Naturalists tell us she will gather many great apples upon her bristles, and then go to a hedge-side to eat them; but if she happen to let one fall by the way, she throweth down all the rest, and will not so much as touch them. An impatient person also doubleth his misery. The prisoner that kicks and flings about because of his chains on his feet, galls himself the more with his fetters. The bird that flutters about with his wings on the lime-twigs, is the more entangled.

Thirdly, Justify God in the greatest affliction which befalleth thee. Doth God lay heavy things on thee, in the loss of thy health, or estate, or liberty? Have thou high thoughts of him. Though

he condemn thee, do thou acquit him? 'Glorify the Lord,' saith the prophet, 'in the fire,' Isa. xxiv. 15. In the fire—that is, in affliction. In the fire, God purifieth us; and therefore in the fire we must glorify him. Nay, in the fire he magnifieth us, and therefore in the fire we must magnify him, Job vii. 18. It is observable that the children of God have lifted him up very high, when he hath cast them down very low. As men in a deep well or pit in the day-time have seen the stars, when they that were on the top of the earth could not behold them, so a Christian in deep waters, in deep affliction, hath many times seen the goodness and justice of God to shine forth clearly, when they who prospered could not behold them. Holy Job doth notably commend that power of God which he felt to his smart and punishment, Job ix. chap. *per tot.* The psalmist acknowledgeth God to be good, even then when he suffered much evil, when he was plagned very sore, Ps. lxxiii. 14. When the church was under the heaviest cross, at the lowest ebb, when God poured on her his fury like fire, even then she findeth cause to justify him, Lam. i. 18. The Lord is righteous. Her apprehensions of him were honourable when her condition was most sad and miserable. Though God dealt hardly with her, yet she would not speak hardly of him. In the darkest night of dread and terror, saints can see the righteousness of God to sparkle gloriously.

Sinners sometimes do this forcedly. Their confession, as water out of a still, is caused by the fire. 'I have sinned,' saith Pharaoh under the rod; 'the Lord is righteous,' Exod. v. These, as persons condemned by the Dutch to die, are racked, and their acknowledgments extorted from them. Toads, if beaten, vomit up their venom; but saints do it freely. Their confessions are as water out of a spring. When the children of Israel were grievously oppressed, they acquitted God. 'O Lord, righteousness belongeth to thee, but to us confusion of face, because we have sinned. For the Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth; for we obeyed not his voice,' Dan. ix. 7, 8, 14—*i. e.*, Lord, though some may be apt to accuse thee of severity, when they hear of thy chosen's captivity, yet we acquit thee. Thou art righteous; we have not the least wrong; we may thank ourselves for all our sorrows. The pain which we feel is of our own procuring; the rods which scourge us are of our own gathering; our own sins are the spring and source of all our suffering; our own wickedness is the original of our woe; the web in which we are entangled, like the spider's, is woven out of our own bowels; we obeyed not his voice. Nay, they are so sensible of their sins that they acknowledge his dealings in

regard of rigour and sharpness to come far short of their deservings : Ezra ix. 13, ' And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, seeing thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve.' Mark, Ezra first confesseth their iniquities to be the mother of all their misery, and then their many afflictions to be less than the merit of their transgressions. Do we drink water? thinks he; we might have been drinking blood. Have we grievous burdens on earth? we might have been burning in hell. Our God is not only righteous in laying thus much on us, but also gracious that he layeth no more : ' Thou hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve.'

It is recorded of Themistocles, that, having invited many philosophers to supper, he borrowed all his dishes of one Amyntas, who came in the midst of supper and took away half of them. One of the philosophers asked Themistocles how he could bear such an affront. He answered mildly, He might have taken away all. So saith a Christian when God takes away part of his estate, or one of his children, and some of his comforts, He might have taken away all.

Wicked men, ordinarily, when they are tied with the cords of their own corruptions, instead of indicting themselves, arraign God ; and when they should fall down at his feet, fly in his very face. ' And they (*i.e.*, the wicked Jews) shall pass through it, (meaning the land of Judah,) hardly bestead, and hungry, and shall fret themselves, and curse their king, and their God, and look upward,' Isa. viii. 21. As a pot boiling with a good fire under it (this metaphor is included in this word *fret*) casteth up its scum and filth, truly so do ungodly men in affliction.¹ They rage under the rod, and instead of blessing, blaspheme the name of God, Rev. xvi. 9, 10. As the ravens in Arabia, when they are hungry, screech horribly, and the Syrians, when they come to die, roar dreadfully ; so when sinners come into dangers and civil deaths, their spirits boil with wrath, and their mouths are black with blasphemies against the Lord. ' The foolishness of man perverteth his way, and then his heart fretteth against the Lord,' Prov. xix. 3. The apostate Julian shot up his darts against heaven when he was in distress.² As rusty hinges of a door, when the door is opened and shut, they shriek and make a noise, because they want oil ; so wicked men in affliction fly out, and cry out against God himself sometimes ; but the reason is, they want the oil of grace.

¹ In eadem afflictione mali Deum detestantur et blasphemant ; boni autem precantur et laudant.—*Aug. De Civit. Dei*, lib. i. cap. 8.

² Niceph., lib. x. cap. 35.

Reader, whatsoever the rod be with which thou art scourged, do thou kiss it. Though God should dishonour thee, do thou glorify him. When he punisheth thee, do thou praise him. Bless God taking from thee, as well as giving to thee, and this will turn thy blows into a blessing, the grievous cross on thy back into a glorious crown on thy head. It is easy and ordinary, as to commend a person when we are hired with large presents, so to speak well of God, when he dealeth well with us; but it is hard and rare, as to extol one who vilifieth us, so to advance God when he debaseth us. The hypocrite is in and out with God, as he dispenseth himself towards him in blessings or crosses; as men will commend the bee when they taste of its honey, but are out of patience with it when they feel its sting. Thou art a Christian indeed, if, under the saddest dispensation, thou canst say, as the holy Emperor Mauritius, when his wife and children were slain before his eyes, Righteous art thou, O Lord, and in very faithfulness hast afflicted me—if thou canst bless him when he maketh breach upon breach on thee.

Possibly thou art the man that hast seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. God hath shewed thee great and sore troubles. Thy whole life, it may be, hath been a winter, and most of thy days accompanied with stormy weather. In this case, it will be much for thy credit and comfort if thou canst justify God under the cross.

When thy sense and reason are at a stand, that thou canst not apprehend the ground and cause of such severe corrections, set faith awork, and believe God to be wise and righteous and gracious, even then when thou canst not see him to be so. God's paths are often in the seas, and his goings in deep waters. His judgments are a great deep, which our short reason can never fathom or find out. There are as hard chapters, and as dark texts, in the provinces¹ of God, as in his prophecies. Now, because we cannot expound them, we are apt to accuse them. Job was somewhat rash, according to some, 'Behold I cry out of wrong, but am not heard; is it good that thou shouldst oppress?' But observe the reason, 'Who is this,' saith God, 'that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge,' Job x. 2, ix. 7, and xl. 2. Samson's friends quarrelled with him, because they could not understand his riddle. Some of God's friends have been ready to question him when they could not find him. Pompey, when beaten by Cæsar, said, there was a mist over the eye of providence, when indeed the mist was over his own eyes. How many wrangle with God, merely because they cannot reach God; and reprehend him, because they cannot comprehend him. But herein

¹ Qu., "providences"—Ed.

appeareth the excellency of Christianity, that when sense is tired, and reason nonplussed in the conflict, faith will believe God's justice, and bring the soul off with conquest. Hence Jeremiah, when he could not see God to be righteous, would say that God was righteous: Jer. xii. 1, 2, 'Righteous art thou, O Lord; let me plead with thee of thy judgments.' His carnal part seemed to plead against it, but his spiritual part would be sure to premise it, and profess it. Human reason is no fit judge of divine actions; not that any of God's works are against reason, but because many of his ways are above our reason. God's actions are the highest, the truest reason, yet such reason as is above our natural reach.

As a stick in the water seemeth crooked to the eye of sense, through the refractions of a double medium, the air and water, when the eye of our understanding seeth and knoweth it to be straight; so the dealings of God with his people seem to the eye of sense many times to be harsh and rigid, as if in the ways of his providence he did tread awry; but even then the eye of faith seeth them to be right, and knoweth assuredly all his footsteps to be equal and straight. Faith believeth men may do justly, but faith is confident God cannot but do justly. Papists tell us, saith Luther, that the Pope may do what he will, none must question him. Sure I am, what they falsely ascribe to the man of sin, faith doth most truly and fitly in the darkest dispensations ascribe to the holy God. He giveth not account of any of his matters, and who may say to him, What dost thou? God's works are sometimes like a printer composing his sheets, who setteth his letters backwards. Now we feel and see the letters, but cannot read them, nor spell out the meaning of them; but in the life to come, we shall fully know the sense of them, and see infinite reason and wisdom in every passage of divine providence.

Fourthly, Wait God's leisure for deliverance. There is a twofold patience required in every Christian.

1. A patience of bearing the evil inflicted; and,
2. A patience of forbearing the good promised. God, indeed, hath engaged to deliver his people out of all their troubles; but between the seed-time of the promise, and the harvest of the performance, a sharp winter often interposeth; therefore the Christian must wait. David had a promise that he should be Israel's prince, yet, after this, he is hunted as a partridge upon the mountains. What, therefore, doth he do in the meantime? 'Truly, my soul waiteth on God; from him is my salvation,' Ps. lxxii. 11, 5; or, as it is in the original, 'Nevertheless, my soul is silent to Jehovah;' as

if he had said, Though I, who have a patent from heaven for the crown, am in lieu thereof laden with crosses; though the providences of God towards me are so grievous that they seem to contradict rather than to confirm his promises, yet my soul hath not a word to say against God, but I am contented to suffer his pleasure, and to stay his leisure, knowing that it is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of God. Nevertheless, my soul is silent to Jehovah.

It was a great sin in Israel, that though they had had such experience of his power, they would not take his word for a drop of water: 'They waited not for his counsel, but limited the holy One of Israel,' Ps. lxxviii. 41. God must come at their call, at their time, or else they conclude he will not come at all. It was a witty speech of a king, that he liked a circle about his head, meaning his crown, but he could not endure a circle about his feet; he would have them at liberty to go and come when he pleased. It is dishonourable to God to be limited. What an affront is it to a prince to be made his subjects' prisoner! and it is unprofitable to man. Mercies in haste, or deliverance before God's time, is like meat overdriven, which will not take salt, but quickly corrupteth and putrefieth; or like fruit that children cry for before it is ripe, which breedeth worms and diseases. Jacob had a promise of a blessing, but he is too quick with God for it. He stayeth not God's leisure, but hasteneth its accomplishment with a lie. Now, what doth he get by it? indeed, he obtaineth the blessing, but with many blows, the smart of which he felt to his dying day. Had he stayed till the vintage, where the grapes of the promise had been ripe, he had found them sweet and cordial; but because he gathered them green, no wonder that they were sour, and set his teeth on edge so long. His sufferings for so many years are attributed to his unwillingness to wait on God some few days.

Reader, hath God laid on thee some heavy cross? be not impatient, but let God take his own time to remove it. Chirurgeons know best how long wounds must be kept open; the patients that skin them over, because they put them to pain, and heal them up in haste, do it to their own hurt. Men in misery are like prisoners in the jail, who are sure to be released, if they will but stay quietly till the assize; but when they are hasty for their liberty, and take indirect courses, breaking the prison to get out, they are taken again, fastened with more fetters, and either stay longer for their freedom, or are dismissed from the jail and sent to the gallows. If Saul in distress will turn to a witch, it doth but increase his woe.

A man that washeth himself, sometimes ventures past his depth before he is aware ; now this man, being in danger of drowning, hastily catcheth at what comes next to hand, possibly on sedgy weeds, that do but entangle him and draw him deeper under water, and there keep him down from ever getting up, till he, by that whereby he thought to save himself, be drowned indeed. Thus, whilst many, unwilling to wait God's leisure for deliverance out of distress, catch at what comes next to help themselves, they do but plunge themselves further into a labyrinth of evils, out of which they never escape.

It is a true saying in this sense, I am sure, Haste makes waste, and, 'The more haste the less speed.' Many have by woeful experience found the truth of those proverbs. Friends, God's time is the best time. 'The Lord is a God of judgment,' saith the prophet ; therefore, 'blessed are all they that wait for him,' Isa. xxxvi. 18. Judgment is here not opposed to mercy, but to folly. The Lord is a God of wisdom, and can time and order all affairs to the best. Though it be a burden to wait upon a fool who maketh rage or weakness his rule, yet they are blessed who wait for the resolutions of the only wise God, to whom angels are comparative fools, Job iv. 17, 18, who maketh reason the rule of all his actions, who will not let his promises bring forth to his people before they have gone their full time, lest the birth should prove abortive ; and who will not let them stay a moment beyond their reckoning, but then will cause them to fall in labour, and to bring forth in full feature and favour answerable to their conceptions. O reader ! thou wilt never repent of thy patience, when those vessels of the promises, which stayed so many years in the Indies, come home richly laden with their silver and golden wedges. With the sense of thy Father's love, the fruits of thy Saviour's death, and freedom from all thy fears and fetters which now affright thee, how wilt thou with the church sing victory, shout for joy, and cry up thy wise and faithful God with an *Ecce* of admiration : 'Lo, this is my God ; I have waited for him, he will save me. This is the Lord ; I have waited for him, I will be glad and rejoice in his salvation,' Isa. xxv. 9.

Fifthly, Rejoice in God in the meantime. Saints are compared to lilies, afflictions to thorns. The lily is fresh, and looks fair in the midst of thorns. A Christian may be cheerful under the heaviest bodily cross. He hath fair weather overhead, the sunshine of God's favour, therefore he may go merrily on though it be dirty under feet. 'The king shall rejoice in God,' saith David, Ps. lxiii. 2, when he wandered as a poor exile in the wilderness of

Keilah ; when he had neither relations nor possessions, for he was banished from both, to rejoice in, he had a God still.¹ So, when his condition was more dangerous, and indeed seemed to be desperate, his estate was plundered, his wives and children captivated, and his own life endangered, for his own soldiers spake of stoning him. 'But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God,'² 1 Sam. xxx. 6. In cold weather, the blood and spirits retreat to the heart and inward parts, which are the source and fountain of them. In the hardest season a believer may retire to, and be refreshed by, the fountain of his being and blessedness. The Lacedæmonians use music in their wars ; truly so may the saint in his wars with the affrightments of the world, and make the joy of the Lord his strength. There is mention made of some poor Christians banished, and one standing by and seeing them pass along said, It is a sad condition these persons are in, to be hurried from the society of men, and to be made companions of beasts. True, said another, it were sad indeed, if they were carried to a place where they should not find their God ; but let them be of good cheer, God goeth along with them.³

The bells ring as pleasantly at a funeral as at a wedding. The godly man may be merry in the absence, as well as in the presence, of outward mercies. When the streams are dried up, he hath the spring. The upper city of Jerusalem built on Mount Zion was called Millo—fulness or plenty—because, amongst the people of God, there is want of nothing, whilst they have him who is all things. This was the church's consolation in her most dreadful condition : 'The Lord is my portion, saith my soul ; therefore I will hope in him,' Lam. iii. 24. She could not say friends were her portion ; her lovers and friends were put far away. She could not say honour, or riches, or pleasure were her portion : 'The enemies wagged their heads at the daughter of Jerusalem. They that did feed delicately were desolate in the streets ; they that were brought up in scarlet, embraced dunghills,' Lam. ii. 15, 16, and iv. 5. The Chaldeans had robbed her of all such jewels ; but that which kept her head above water, and her heart from sinking, when those boisterous waves went over her soul, was this, 'The Lord is my portion.' He that hath God for his portion hath all things, even when he hath nothing. Hagar's provision and patience were both spent at once ; her bottle and her hope both out together ; because her

¹ *Tua præsentia, Domine, Laurentio ipsam craticulam dulcem fecit.—Aug. in Ps.*

² *Qui habet habentem omnia, habet omnia.—Augustine.*

³ *Aug. de Civit. Dei. lib. ii. cap. 26.*

water was gone she falls a-weeping, but had she seen the fountain so near she would have saved her tears. There is a witty conceit mentioned of one of the Dukes of Florence, that he should have for his arms a fair spread tree, having one branch only lopped off, with this motto, *Uno avulso non deficit alter*; intimating that, whilst the tree was well-rooted, there was no fear though a branch or two were lopped. A godly man may rejoice though he lose his estate, for he hath a better treasure in heaven; he may rejoice though he lose his children, his liberty, nay, and his life; for though those branches are lopped off, he hath his God, the root of all.

It was the speech of Paulinus Nolanus, when his city was taken by the barbarians, *Domine, ne excrucier ob aurum et argentum; tu enim es omnia*; Lord, let me not be troubled for my silver and gold which I have lost, for thou art all things.' As Noah, when the whole world was overwhelmed with water, had a fair epitome of it in the ark, having all sorts of beasts and fowls there; so he that in a deluge hath God to be his God, hath the original of all mercies. He who enjoyeth the ocean may rejoice, though some drops are taken from him. But he, indeed, who hath no god, may well mourn when he is deprived of his goods. A consumptionate man, when he cometh into a sharp, searching air, sickeneth and dieth because his vitals were not sound, but he who hath good inwards, is the better for a cold winter.

Aristippus having lost a farm, by a law-suit, to one that bewailed his loss, made this answer, I have two farms left still, and that is more by one than you have, or than I have lost. When wicked men, though it be but seldom, pity a saint in distress, a saint with a compassionate heart may answer him, as Christ did the woman who followed him weeping, Weep not for me, but weep for thyself, and the misery that is coming upon thee, unless thou reformest thy life; for notwithstanding my sad losses, yet I have my Saviour, my soul, and my eternal happiness left still, and that is far more than you have.

The lapwing hath his name in Latin *upupa*, and in Greek *ἐπύψ*, because she hath always, whether she be full or hungry, a sad, querulous cry cry, Pu, pu. Every sinner hath cause to be sad, whether he be full of comforts, or be under crosses; therefore it is no wonder that in distress his heart, like Nabal's, dieth within him. Creatures on the earth are all for accumulation, as the ant and bee, and they cannot live without it; but those, as birds that mount up to heaven, neither sow nor reap, yet have their merry notes.

Saints have rejoiced in their greatest sufferings, and triumphed in their most grievous tribulations. They have gloried in their disgrace for Christ: 'And they departed from the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name sake,' Acts v. 41. Their spirits have been most enlarged, when their flesh hath been most straitened. Paul and Silas in the stocks could sing; the fetters on their feet were more precious and honourable in their eyes, than the costliest chains of gold about their necks could have been: Acts xvi. 25, 'At midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises to God.' Wicked men, like common birds, can sing in summer; but saints, like special birds, can sing in winter.

It is a privilege to imitate Christ in his passion; the Philippians were to count it a favour that God called them to suffer, Phil. i. 29. These are God's gems and precious jewels, said Munster to his friends, pointing to his sores and ulcers.¹ Ignatius triumphed in his journey to Rome to suffer, considering that his blood should be found among the mighty worthies, and that when the Lord makes inquisition for blood, he will count from the blood of Abel, not only to the blood of Zacharias, but also to the blood of mean Ignatius. To die for Christ, saith Philpot, is the greatest promotion that God can bring any to in this vale of misery; yea, so great an honour that the glorious angels in heaven are not permitted to have.² It were easy to instance and shew how many of the martyrs were merrier when they were going to the fire, than ever carnal wretch was when he was sitting down to a delicate feast: Mat. v. 10-12, 'Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.' Leap and skip for joy, as wanton cattle do in spring-time, when they graze in good and pleasant pastures, so the word, *σκιρτάω*, signifieth.

It is an honour to weak, sinful man to be scourged by the great and glorious God; it is a favour that he will condescend to correct us. Some saints are more famous for their crosses, than ever Cæsar or Alexander for all their victories and conquests. The rod wherewith they are afflicted, is a sceptre wherewith they are adorned: 'My brethren, count it (saith the apostle) *πάναν χαρὰν*, all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations,' James i. 2. Though the nature of affliction be evil, and so not joyous but grievous, yet the concomitants and consequents of it are so excellently good, that the Christian may rejoice in it.

The Neapolitans wore garlands, and triumphed when Pompey

¹ Joh. Manl., *Loc. Com.*

² Acts and Mon., p. 1744.

was sick at Naples, out of respect and honour to him. Those infidels had better thoughts of sufferings than many Christians. Two sights, saith Luther, the devil delights in—to see a wicked man merry, and a saint sorrowful; but two sights do intolerably vex him—to see a sinner mournful for his sins, and to see a saint joyful in his sufferings. David, saith he,¹ made psalms, and sung them; we sing psalms as well as we can to the honour of our God, to spite and deride the devil and his spouse.

Sixthly, Take heed of envying wicked men in prosperity. Men who are at the bottom of the hill, are apt to envy those that are at the top. When David was chastened every morning, and in great adversity: 'I was envious at the foolish,' saith he, 'when I saw the prosperity of the wicked,' Ps. lxxiii. 3. 'When I saw;' his sight was an inlet to this sin. The basilisk is called *rex invidorum*, because the strength of its poison is conveyed by the eye; it kills with its look. The envious man is described by his evil eye, Mat. xxi. 22. The bright and glorious sunshine of wicked men's prosperity did pierce and pain David's sore eyes; and the truth is, it hath been a pearl in many of the saints' eyes, Jer. xii. 1–3; Hab. i. 13. Corrupt nature first looked out at this window, Gen. iv. 'The spirit that dwelleth in us, lusteth to envy,' James iv. 5. Those especially who are afflicted, are prone to conceive evil at the good which others receive.

He who doth but consider the state of wicked men, will rather pity than envy them in the most prosperous condition. Alas! the devil, like an indulgent father, doth not disturb them, because they are his own children, as the crocodile, according to Aristotle, suffereth the bird trochylus to enter into his mouth, and pick his teeth, and then to fly away without any harm.

Reader, if thou art sick of this distemper, use David's receipt for its cure. It is a tried remedy, received out of the sanctuary. David considered that their prosperity is neither full nor fast; it is not full, it is but bodily at best, and usually but skin deep; their mirth is rather in their brows, than in their breasts: 'In the midst of his sufficiency, he is in straits,' Job xx. 22. Like the kidney of a beast, he is lean, even when he is covered with fat. All his heaps cannot cure the itch of the head, or afford one hour's quiet of heart: 'As a dream, O Lord,' saith the psalmist, Ps. lxxiii. 7. He compareth their prosperity to a dream; now we know the comfort or satisfaction which a man enjoyeth in a dream, is but fancied and imaginary, not solid or substantial. All their laughter is from the

¹ Luth. Colloqu. Mensal., cap. 37.

teeth outward. Haman, in the midst of all his honour and favour at court, had somewhat lay like a lump of lead on his spirit to im-bitter all: 'All this availeth me nothing,' saith he. Because he wanted a bow from Mordecai, all his comforts were nothing worth. The abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep. A small bird sings pleasantly in his little bed of down, when the bigger birds in their great nests of briers and thorns have but harsh notes. Great men have such gnats of cares to sting them in the night that many times they cannot sleep, when the sleep of a labouring man is sweet. How many of them possess a great estate, who enjoy nothing! Eccles. ii. 26. As the stag hath great horns, but no courage to use them.

Their prosperity is not fast. Their riches and honours do but shew themselves like a rainbow in all their dainty colours, and then vanish away: 'Thou hast set them in slippery places,' ver. 18. They stand on ice; are as soon off almost as on. How quickly is the beauty of all worldly blessings blasted! 'The triumphing of the wicked is short,' Job xx. 5. Though their pains shall be for ever, yet their pleasures of sin are but for a season: They are rich in this world, not in the other world, 1 Tim. vi. 17; 'They live in pleasures on earth,' James v. 5. The place of their pilgrimage is the only place of their pleasures. They have a time of mirth, but they shall have an eternity of mourning. God hath some work for wicked men to do, (though they observe not his precepts, yet they serve his providence,) and till that be done, his providence will serve them; but when the building is erected and finished, the scaffold, as high and as sure as it is seated, shall be taken down: 'Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work on mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria,' Isa. x. 12. When those busy bees have done all their work, and that will be in a short time, they shall be smothered with smoke, and destroyed.

Their prosperity is fatal. Their sins are the greater, and their sufferings will be more grievous. How certainly do their mercies, like perfume to one sick of the plague, convey the infection by its sweet smell! As the moon at the full darkens the sun most, so in the abundance of favours they dishonour God most. Vatablus expoundeth that clause in Ezek. iii. 20, 'I lay a stumbling-block before him,'—that is, I will prosper him in all things, and not keep him from sin by affliction. I will not hedge up his way with thorns, but lay all common, and suffer him to wander whither he will. God strikes most heavily when he doth not strike at all: Isa. i. 5,

'Why should they be smitten any more? ye revolt more and more.' Their sufferings are the greater also. They are raised to their ruin: 'Thou hast set them in slippery places, and turnest them down to destruction,' ver. 18.

Naturalists tell us that the eagle lifteth the shell-fish very high, and lets it fall on some rock, whereby it is broken, and then devoured. Ungodly men are lifted up high on earth, to be thrown the lower into hell:¹ 'The prosperity of fools slayeth them,' Prov. i. 32. Like the Roman monster, they hang themselves with their silken halters. As the phoenix is consumed in a bed of rich spices, so are profane men by all their hoards and heaps. Their comforts are but as a vessel of rich wine, presented to one sick of a high fever, which he drinketh largely of, whereby he is inflamed and dieth. The more wealth they have in this world, the greater their woe will be in the other world. As a river dammed up for a time, when that which hindereth is removed, poureth forth with the greater violence; so that flood of wrath which is stopped for a time by God's infinite patience, when it comes to break forth, will rush upon thee with the more dreadful vengeance. Prosperity, like physic to an incurable disease, hasteneth death, and makes it more painful.

Who will envy a fellow that goeth up a high ladder to be turned off and hanged? Who would grieve that his enemy hath a curious, richly enamelled knife, when with it he cuts his own throat? Surely none can grudge them their sweetest morsels on earth, who believe the bitter reckoning which they must pay in hell. He is brutish in his knowledge, that can envy a beast its high and sweet pasture, when it is but thereby fitted for the slaughter. What man would not think of Theramenes rather with pity than envy, who being one of the thirty tyrants at Athens, though he escaped when his house fell down on him, yet afterwards was tortured to death by his colleagues!

It was the speech of a soldier going to execution for stealing grapes, to one that asked him, What! are you eating grapes now? Oh, saith he, do not envy me; my grapes they cost me dear, they must cost me my life. Truly so may sinners bespeak envious saints: Do not envy us our honours, our high seats; do not envy us our carnal pleasures, and our huge treasures; do not envy us our plays and our pastimes, our sinful sports, and our vain delights. Alas! they must cost us dear, they must cost us our lives, nay, the life of our very souls; they must cost us our heaven, our God, our

¹ *Parci sibi putat cum excæctur, et servetur ad ultimam opportunamque vindictam.—Aug. in Ps. ix.*

Saviour, and that for ever. Who would envy a beast the garland and ribands with which the heathen adorned them when they went to be sacrificed? 'Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, neither be thou envious at the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down as the grass, and wither as the green herb, Ps. xxxvii. 1, 2.

A man may see a trade and not know the mystery of it, and the various and curious contrivances in it. A country fellow may see a picture excellently drawn, and yet be wholly ignorant of that rare art which appeareth in it. There is embroidered wisdom in God's works, which men are not aware of. 'When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed for ever,' Ps. xcii. 7. When with those wisps he hath scoured his vessels, he will throw them into the fire.

Besides, the best of wicked men is infinitely inferior to the worst estate of a saint. The palest gold is better than the brightest brass; persecuted piety is better than prospering profaneness. They have but the bran, the dregs, thou hast the flour, the spirits, of outward things. Thou canst say, God is thy portion; and dost thou complain of thy part? Nay, canst thou forbear saying, Ps. xvi. 5, 6, 'The lines are fallen to me in a pleasant place, and I have a goodly heritage.'

It was an aggravation, and a great one, of David's sin, that being a rich man, and having great flocks, he should take away the poor man's only lamb; so it is a sad heightening of thy sin, if, when thou art rich, and hast multitudes of real mercies, (the covenant of grace, the blood of Christ, the love and image of God, which are worth thousands and millions, and which will do thee good to all eternity,) thou shouldst envy a poor sinner who hath only a little sleep, and meat, and drink, with many an aching heart, and gripes of conscience, like a condemned prisoner, till the set day appointed for his execution. Thales being asked how a man might be cheerful and bear up in affliction, answered, If he see his enemy in a worse condition than himself. His expression savours of vitiated nature, and is contrary to grace; but if the misery of an enemy can make a heathen merry in affliction, sure I am it may preserve a Christian from envy.

Queen Elizabeth envied the milkmaid when she was in prison; but had she known the glorious reign which she was to have for forty-four years, she would not have repined at the poor happiness of so mean a person. Christians are too prone to envy the husks which wandering sinners fill themselves with here below; but would they set before them their glorious hopes of a heaven, how they

must reign with Christ for ever and ever, they would see little reason for their repining. Alas ! what a pitiful nothing is the portion of the world's greatest potentates, compared with the inheritance of the saints in light. Those fowls that fly aloft have so small a spleen, saith the great naturalist,¹ that it can hardly be discerned, and he gives this reason, because those birds that mount in the air have least of that part which is terrestrial, for the spleen is the seat of melancholy, which hath an earthly quality, being dry and cold. Sure I am, those saints have least of this spleen of envy, who mount up to heaven oftenest on the wings of faith and meditation, and take a view of their future happiness.

Lastly, Study and answer God's end in thy afflictions. This indeed, though named last, is the first and chiefest of all. The errand upon which a messenger is sent from a great prince is much to be minded. It is not enough to forbear fretting at him, or to rejoice with him, but to interpret his language, to spell out his meaning, is required. A disease once known is half cured. It is a great piece of prudence to find out God's end, and a special part of piety to answer God's end when found out. God spake as truly by his ten works, his ten plagues to Egypt, as he did by his ten words, his ten precepts, to Israel. Every affliction comes to thee with a message, as Ehud did to Eglon—'I have an errand to thee from God'—with an errand and message to thee from the great God.²

Gideon took briers and thorns and taught the men of Succoth. God takes these sharp prickles of affliction, thereby intending to teach thee his statutes :³ Ps. xciv. 11, 'Blessed is the man whom thou correctest and teachest in thy law.'

I shall first shew thee what God's ends are, and then help thee to find out his end in thy particular affliction.⁴

God's ends in afflicting are divers.

First, It may be to try and discover thee to thyself ; to try the strength of grace. Thou couldst hardly have thought thy faith to have been so weak till thou wast, like Peter, walking on these tempestuous waters, and ready to sink in them. Thieves, when endeavouring to break into a house, and are prevented, do this courtesy often to the master of the house, that they shew him the weakest part of his dwelling. Satan, by the troubles he brings on saints, doth them often this kindness, that by his rough waters

¹ Hist., ii. cap. 15.

² Qui beneficiis non intelligitur vel plagis intelligatur.—*Cypr. in Dementia.*

³ Crux est velut instrumentum quo Deus nos expolit.—*Polan.*, lib. vi. cap. 39.

⁴ Verberat et lacerat ; non est s.evitia, certamen est.—*Senec. de Prov.*, cap. 4.

their leaks are made known to them. To try the truth of grace, God therefore led Israel many years through the wilderness, when he could have carried them a nearer way in a few days to Canaan, 'to prove them, and to know what was in their hearts,' Deut. viii. 2. The Psilli, a people, saith Pliny, (lib. xxviii.) whom no venom will hurt, if they suspect any of their children to be none of their own, put an adder to its breast; if it be stung, and the flesh swell, they cast it away as spurious. It is not affliction, but a holy enduring of it,—'if ye *endure* chastening,' Heb. xii. 7,—which is a sign of adoption. A father will sometimes cross his child to try his disposition. I have read a story of a little child about eight or nine years old, that being extremely pinched with hunger, looked one day pitifully necessitous on her mother, and said, Mother do you think that God will starve us? The mother answered, No, child, he will not. The child replied, But if he do, yet we must love him and serve him. Here was language that spake a well-grown Christian. For indeed God brings us to want and misery, to try us whether we love him for his own sake, or for our own sakes; for those excellencies that are in him, or for those mercies we have from him; to see whether we will say, with the cynic to Antisthenes, *Nullus tam durus erit baculus*, &c. There shall be no cudgel so crabbed as to beat me from thee.

Secondly, It may be to purge out some sin which thou harbourest; the stock is purged by salt water. A garment is stricken with a staff that the dust may be beaten out. Tribulation comes from *tribulus*, a flail, because it makes the husk fly off. Crows, when sick, take stones which make them vomit, and then they are well. Affliction doth, as a serjeant or bailiff, it comes to bring our sins, our debts, to remembrance. Joseph spake roughly to his brethren, to make them remember themselves, and repent of their sin; when that was done, he discovered himself, and spake kindly to them. So God dealeth severely with his children, to make them mindful of, and mournful for, their sins. When once he hath brought them to that, he smileth on them. David hath one psalm which he calls 'A psalm to bring to remembrance,' Ps. xxxviii. 1, which treateth of his great afflictions, because they, like Pharaoh's dream to his butler, make men remember their faults.¹

Art not thou in love with the world? No wonder that then God makes it an iron furnace, that thou mayest no longer value it as an ivory palace. He turneth earth into a kind of hell to thee,

¹ Sciebat enim quam facile et cito evanescent pœnæ divinitus inflictæ, quibus in totam vitam nos erudiri decebat.—*Calv. in loc.*

because thou hast made it thy heaven. God carried Israel about in the wilderness, because their hearts hankered after Egypt. He rubs wormwood on the breasts of the world to wean thee from it.

Art thou not secure? No wonder then that he applieth blisters to thy neck, cupping-glasses to thy back, and wax-lights to thy feet, to awaken thee out of thy lethargy. Shouldst thou be suffered to continue sleeping, thou wouldst sleep the sleep of death. He beats up thy quarters, to make thee stand upon thy guard. When enemies flank an army, it makes them orderly in their march, and keeps them from straggling.

Art thou not proud and conceited? If so, he gives thee a thorn in thy flesh, to prick thy bladder of pride, lest thou shouldst be puffed up above measure. He makes thee low in thy condition, that thou mayest be lowly in thy disposition. That which lessens our heaps and estates, often lesseneth¹ our hearts. God therefore brought the Jews to great hardships, to make them humble, Deut. vi. 2. The poor useth entreaties, saith Solomon.

Hast thou not dallied with mercies? Now God removes them from thee, that by the want of them, thou mayest know the worth of them. Naturalists tell us, if musk hath lost its scent, by being put into a sink, it will recover it again. Hunger and fasting will make thee relish thy food; sickness will make thee prize thy health. The spring is more pleasant after a sharp winter; harmonious sounds are much commended to us by the darkness and silence of the night; the bells sound best near the waters; no meat so delightful as those dishes wherein sour things are conveniently mingled with sweet.

Possibly thy heart is hard; thou wast hardly ever sensible of thy own sins, or others' sufferings. Now there are but two ways to cure the stone in the bladder, either to dissolve it by soft medicines, or by cutting the party. God tried mercies with thee, soft means, and could not dissolve the stone of thy heart, therefore he is now cutting thee, with an intent to cure thee. A good fire will melt the hardest metals. In Silesia, there is *Fons Solis*, the Fountain of the Sun, out of which at mid-day, when the sun is nearest, floweth cold water; and at midnight, when the sun is furthest, floweth hot water. Those who have been cold in bemoaning their sin when they have prospered in the world, when they have been visited with affliction, their reins chastising them in the night seasons, have been hot and fervent at it.

Possibly thou didst rely on creatures. Thy leaning on those staves hath broken them in pieces, which otherwise would have

¹ Qu., "lesseneth"?—ED.

been helpful to thee in thy journey. Many a time hath our Father made the creature our grief, that it might not be our god. If any of these, or any other sin, be the end for which thou art afflicted, search it out. As the mariners in a storm inquired for whose sake it came, and never ceased till they found him out, and had thrown that Jonah overboard; so do thou search as narrowly for thy lust as for thy life—expect no calm till this be done. When thou hast found out the sin, go to God speedily, confess it thoroughly, with all its aggravations, and bewail it heartily. When the Jews had found out Paul, whom they supposed to be a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition, they cry out, ‘Men of Israel, help: This is the man that teacheth everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place: and further, brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this place,’ Acts xxi. 28. So do thou cry to God, Help, Lord; this is the sin that hath so much provoked thy majesty, profaned thy name, grieved thy Spirit, and polluted my own soul! Lord, help me to mourn for it, and help me to turn from it. Let the hatred wherewith I shall hate it, be greater than the love wherewith I have ever loved it. Help, Lord; this is the sin that hath caused all my sorrows, all my sufferings.

When God had afflicted that noble worthy, he tells God, ‘Thou inquirest after my iniquity, and searchest after my sin,’ Job x. 6. Now if God by affliction searcheth after thy sin, it concerneth thee to search and try thy ways, Lam. iii. 4; for if thou dost not find out thy iniquities, be confident thy iniquities will find thee out; and then thou mayest say, as Ahab to Elijah, ‘Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?’ for it will come to thee, as the prophet to the king, with dreadful, doleful tidings indeed.

Thirdly, It may be, the end of God in afflicting thee is to increase thy graces. Wisps scour vessels and make them the brighter. ‘I will bring a third part into the fire, and refine them as silver is refined,’ Zeeh. xiii. 9. The fire purifieth the vessels of gold, and makes them more meet for the master’s use. True Christians, like the vine, bear the more fruit for bleeding: Dan. xi. 33–35, ‘And some of them of understanding shall fall to try them, and to purge them, and to make them white.’ Here are the three ends of affliction. Some refer their fall to the sad afflictions which they suffered in the days of Antiochus, of which there should be this threefold use:—1. Some should be tried; 2. Some should be purged; 3. Some should be made white. Those frosts and showers should whiten and purify the faithful.

Israel in Egypt, the more oppressed, the more they multiplied.

The camomile springs the more and the better for being trodden on. Pliny, in his *Natural History*,¹ writeth of certain trees growing in the Red Seas, which, being beat upon by the waves, stand like a rock, immoveable, and in a full sea they are quite covered with water; these trees are bettered by the roughness of the waves. A Christian that is by faith planted into the Red Sea of Christ's blood, doth not only stand fast in, but also flourisheth the more for, the billows of afflictions.

It is reported of the lioness that she leaves her whelps till they are almost killed with crying, and hereby makes them the fuller of courage. So God often leaveth his children till they are even ready to despair; he lets his David cry out till his throat be dry, and his moisture turned into the drought of summer, before he sendeth from heaven and saveth him, and hereby he increaseth his faith and patience. 'Here is the faith and patience of the saints,' saith the apostle, speaking of great afflictions, Rev. xiii. 10. Here it is exercised, and here it is increased; for frequent acts of grace strengthen the habits of grace. The fire strengthens our liquors; the better they are boiled, the stronger they are. The hottest cordial water, and strongest spirits, are distilled and extracted by fire. The fire of affliction increaseth the strength of our graces. As in winter the outward cold fortifieth our inward parts, by forcing in, and uniting our natural heat; so adversity strengtheneth the Christian, by forcing him to use and unite all his courage.

Now it is probable thou wilt say, I would willingly answer God's end, but how may I find it out? I cannot understand the language of the rod, and so cannot obey its voice.

To satisfy this query, I would advise thee,

1. To observe the kind of thy affliction. Sometimes the sin is written in broad letters on the forehead of the punishment. When Absalom killed Amnon, and defiled his father's concubines, and was afterwards slain by Joab, David might easily see his sin in the face of his suffering. Because he neglected to do justice on Amnon, therefore God suffered Absalom to murder him unjustly. Because he defiled the wife of Uriah secretly, God permitted Absalom to lie with his wives openly. Because he cockered Absalom, though the blood of Amnon required blood, therefore God let out the blood of Absalom by the hand of Joab. The Sodomites burned with unnatural fire, that was their sin, and God punished them with supernatural fire. The Egyptians killed the Jewish children,

¹ Lib. xii. cap. 5.

and God slew their first-born; punishment often bears the image and superscription of the sin upon it.

Art thou oppressed in thy estate? Consider whether thou never didst oppress others, as the greater fish devouring the smaller. Art thou cheated and cozened of thy right? Look back upon thy life; didst thou never defraud others of their due, like a beast of prey, tearing away by thy power others' portions? Art thou disgraced? Examine thyself, whether thou hast not slandered others, as a cupping-glass drawing their worst humours, and revealing their faults, when thou hast concealed their virtues. So, whatsoever thy affliction be, put the question to thy soul, whether thou hast not to others occasioned the same suffering? God payeth some in their own coin. If sickness or continual pain be thy affliction, consider whether thou hast not been intemperate, and so brought thyself to the rack. The sinner sometimes reapeth the same seed which he soweth; you may read who is the father of the child, what sin begot the affliction, by the favour and features of the child's face, it doth so much resemble its father.

2. If thou canst not find out the cause of thy disease by that symptom, hearken to the voice of conscience. Look into that book, and see what debts thou owest to divine justice, for which thou art now arrested. When the debtor doth not mind his payments, the serjeant or bailiff is sent to quicken him. Is there no way of wickedness which thou allowest? Though in the day of prosperity carnal pleasures make such a noise that the voice of conscience cannot be heard, yet in the silent night of adversity conscience often obtains audience. And in affliction, like an officer, it sheweth the *mittimus*, which mentions the offence for which the malefactor is committed to prison.

It is possible God may be reckoning with thee for some old debt which thou hadst forgotten. Look into thy remembrance, thy register-book, and there thou mayest find it. It is observable that the patriarchs had committed a great sin in the sale of Joseph, which passed many years unregarded and unrepented. The golden dust of prosperity had so covered the looking-glass of conscience, that they could not behold in it the ugly face of their crimson fault; but when they came to be in great perplexity in Egypt, adversity did them that friendly office, as to wipe off that dust, and then conscience makes a true representation to them of their sin. As what is written with the juice of lemons, their sin was legible when brought to the fire. 'We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he be-

sought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us,' Gen. xliii. 21. Affliction untieth the tongue of conscience, that it speaketh plainly to men and women—this is the sin, this is the lust, that hath brought this load of sufferings. And affliction unstoppeth the ears of men and women, that they hearken to its cry. Oh! it is true indeed, we did thus and thus, conscience charged, and God commanded us to the contrary, and we would not hear; we are verily guilty, therefore is this distress come upon us.

3. If thou hast been faithful in empannelling conscience upon the indictment, and that bring in an *ignoramus*, go to God, and entreat him to acquaint thee with his mind in his providence, and with the meaning of thy punishment. When the children struggled in Rebekah's womb, she said, 'Why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb,' Gen. xxv. 22. So now thou art in the midst of strivings and strugglings, go to God, inquire of him; possibly he may answer thee, Two parties, two princes, are within thee, flesh and spirit, Christ and Satan, and they are striving which shall be the conqueror. Or do as Job under his sore troubles, 'Lord, do not condemn me; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me,' Job x. 2. Lord, my troubles and crosses are well known; the eyes of others see them, and my heart feels them; but the cause of them is unknown. There is a veil upon my understanding, that I cannot discern thy meaning; there is a curtain drawn between me and the ground of my crosses. Oh scatter these mists that hinder my sight, that I may know the reason of my sufferings; for though I know that I am a sinner, and am guilty of many weaknesses, yet I know also that I am not wicked. I have examined myself, and am not conscious of any ungodliness or close hypocrisy, much less of any profaneness or scandalous enormity, which should provoke thee thus severely to punish me. I do not desire to know it as suspecting thy goodness and holiness, but as suspecting my own evil heart. Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me, whether it be for sin or no; if for sin, for what sin; that I may repent of it, and return to thee. If not for sin, shew me for what end, whether to prove and try me, or to purify and strengthen me.

There is no better way for a prisoner to know the reason of his confinement, than to ask the justice or magistrate that committed him; there is no surer way to know the cause of our sufferings, than to go to that God that sends them. Every wise agent can give a rational account of his actions. Though God's will be a sufficient answer to all our queries,—'he doth whatsoever he pleaseth

in heaven, and in earth, and in all deep places,'—yet he wills nothing without infinite reason, and is pleased to let his friends know what is his end in his actings. 'The secrets of the Lord are with them that fear him,' Ps. xxv.

But, reader, when thou goest to God by prayer, to know why thou dost suffer, do it in a serious, solemn manner, and with a settled purpose to answer his afflicting providence. An ordinary seeking will not serve turn in extraordinary sufferings. When a famine was in the days of David upon Israel three years, year after year, the holy king doubtless did often desire of God to know what fault in Israel had incensed him to send a famine on Israel. It is not probable he would suffer so mortal a distemper to infect the body politic so long, and never look after its cause and cure; yet he could not find it out, till at last, after the end of three years, he goeth to God, by that grand and most solemn way of inquiry, by Urim and Thummim, and then God answers him, 'It is for Saul and his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites,' 2 Sam. xxi. 1. Upon which he hangs up some of Saul's sons, and the judgment was removed. If thou canst not by thy daily fervent prayers find out the cause, set apart a day, or days, of humiliation and fasting. As some devils will not be cast out without fasting and prayer, so the reason of some distresses will not be found out without fasting and prayer. On such a day of prayer unbosom thyself freely and fully to God. Oh, it is sad to be hiding thy sins when God is searching for them. Entreat him to try thee; say, as the psalmist, 'Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting,' Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24. Bewail thy original pollution, which is the grand remote cause of all affliction, though some particular corruption may be a nearer cause, as the brittleness of man's body is the natural remote cause of death, though some one disease be the next and immediate cause. Bemoan also all thy actual transgressions, which thou canst possibly remember, and accent them with their crying circumstances. After this, condemn thyself for them, and resolve, through divine help, to forsake them. If God make known to thee which is thy darling sin, that hath cost thee so much sorrow, which is the Absalom, (that had he received his due, had been hanged long before for the murder of Christ,) that now is in arms to rob thee of thy crown and life, causing such disturbance and distress unto thee. As thou lovest thy soul, entertain not any favourable thoughts of him. Do not wish, Oh that he might be spared, and dealt gently with for thy sake; but with the

greatest hatred hasten his execution. Let such a day be as the fast among the Jews, wherein all their blasphemers were put to death. Let no one malefactor be hid, like Joash, in a secret chamber, to avoid the stroke of vengeance. After this renew thy covenant with the Lord, to walk before him in holiness and righteousness all thy days. Resolve upon every known duty, and against every known iniquity. Call aloud to Jesus Christ, to stand bound for thee, and to be thy surety for thy good behaviour; and if thou art but sincere and faithful in these particulars, thy affliction may be removed. When the wound is well the plaster falls off; the messenger departs when he hath done his errand; or however it is sanctified to thee, and sanctified misery is a greater mercy than the whole creation. Now thou mayest 'rejoice in tribulation; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in thy heart.'¹ Though thy chastisement be no infallible sign of God's love, yet thy improvement of it in this gracious manner is a sure sign of his special favour. If the philosopher Zeno, after his shipwreck, blessed fortune for his prosperous misfortune, because it made him a better scholar, having deprived him of that which had diverted him from his studies, surely thou hast more cause to bless providence for thy happy unhappiness, because it hath made thee the better Christian. Thou mayest say, 'Lord, it was good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep thy word,' Ps. cxix. 67.

But, on the other hand, it will be ill if, after thy afflictions, and the pains God hath taken with thee, thou art not more holy. It is sad to be put to pain to no profit, to be cut and lanced, and not to have thy bad blood let out. God complaineth of this: 'In vain have I smitten your children, and they have not received correction,' Jer. ii. 30. I gave them physic, but to no purpose; but it is doleful for a man to come out of affliction, as a sheep out of a ditch, dirty and defiled; or as a piece of iron out of the smith's hand, after it hath been first in the fire and then in the water, more hardened than it was before. It is bad not to be the better for affliction; for a person to come out of his chamber, where he was at the gate of death, amended in body but not in soul. Ephraim remembers his incorrigibleness upon the day of his repentance: 'Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke,' Jer. xxxi. 18—rather kicking at, than sub-

¹ Post afflictiones vita bonis tranquillior.—*Nazian. in Orat. ad Cyp.*

mitting to, my deserved sufferings. To such a man Augustine sadly expresseth himself, *Perdidisti utilitatem calamitatis*; Thou hast lost the profit of thy physic.¹ The cost which God was at with thee was thrown away. But oh how intolerable is it for the child to be the more froward when he is corrected for his faults! The next thing he may expect is to be turned out of doors. Not to be reformed by afflictions, speaks a child of rebellion and disobedience; but to wax worse by affliction, speaks a son of reprobation and perdition. The tree which, after dunging and pruning, is unfruitful, is for the fire. If the ten plagues do not reform Pharaoh, the Red Sea shall ruin him.

CHAPTER X.

The means whereby Christians may exercise themselves to godliness in adversity. As also a good wish about that condition.

Having laid down the motives, and also discovered wherein the nature of exercising thyself to godliness in adversity consisteth, I proceed to the third thing promised, and that is to acquaint thee with the means which may be helpful to thee herein.

First, If thou wouldst exercise thyself to godliness in affliction, labour to see God's hand in all thy afflictions. Do not, like the dog, snarl at the stone, but look up to the hand that throweth it. Consider, whosoever be the messenger that bringeth it, God is the master that sendeth it, and then the present, whatsoever it be, will have the more acceptance for the author's sake. 'Can a bird fall into a snare, where no gin is for him? Shall there be any evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?' Amos iii. 6, 7. The bird seems to be taken by chance, but he is taken by providence. The bird did not see the snare, but the fowler set the snare purposely for him. Afflictions seem to come accidentally on men, but we are caught in them intentionally by God. Though we do not foresee them, yet God fore-appoints them, and to him we must look if we would improve such providences.

We are at least silent when we suffer from them who are much our superiors. Though, when our equals or inferiors strike us, we presently run for a writ; yet if our sovereign, whose laws we have

¹ *Perdidistis utilitatem calamitatis; et miserrimi facti estis, et pessimi permanistis.*—*Aug. de Civitate Dei*, lib. i. cap. 33.

broken, scourge us, or brand us by his officers, we submit. Boys will reverence the rod in the hand of their master, though they laugh at it in the hands of their fellows. 'Who art thou that repliest against God?' is sufficient to make a Christian both patient and pious under the heaviest cross. This consideration moved Job, instead of blaspheming, to bless God, when he received such smart blows from God: 'The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.' Had he said and thought, The Lord hath given, and the Chaldeans and Sabeans have taken away, his rage might probably have conquered his reason, and Satan might have been gratified in what he so impatiently desired; but because Job knew that his potion was sent him from heaven, he cheerfully takes it, and pays, according to his estate, his thanks to his physician: 'The Lord hath taken, blessed be the name of the Lord.' We value and esteem our gifts according to the quality and sincerity of the giver. Jerome would persuade his friend Julian to say, upon the loss of children, Lord, thou hast taken away the children which thou gavest me; I do not murmur at thee for taking them, but I thank thee for giving them. His dominion over us commandeth submission.¹ He giveth out of his mercy, and he takes away out of justice: may not he do what he will with his own? Mat. xx. 15.

A sight of God, like the word of Christ in the ship, did allay and calm those high winds and boisterous waves which threatened to overturn the soul of the psalmist: 'I was dumb, and opened not my mouth; because thou, Lord, didst it,' Ps. xxxix. 9.² If you consider the third verse of the psalm, you will find that his heart was very hot, and the fire of his inward passion was so great, by reason of his afflictions from Saul and his courtiers, that it was like to break out into a flame to his own ruin. But this was the water that quenched it: 'Thou, Lord, didst it.' As when our lungs are exceeding hot with their motion, and ready to burn up themselves with their own heat, even then they are cooled by the air which they suck in; so the heart of the prophet, heated with anger and impatience, was cooled with this gale, that it was God's pleasure. When he once saw God's hand and seal to the warrant for his correction, he durst not open his mouth against it. The hand of an infinite, unquestionable, only wise God, is such a muzzle on a saint's

¹ Tulisti liberos quos ipse dederas: non contristor quod recepisti, sed gratias ago quod dedisti.—*Jerome*.

² Quia tu fecisti, i.e., non casu aut fortuna, aut temere ista mihi accidunt, sed sapientissimo tuo consilio, et justo judicio res hominum reguntur.—*Moller, in loc.*

mouth that he cannot murmur, 'I was dumb, and opened not my mouth; because thou, Lord, didst it.'¹

As men generally look not up to the author of their mercies, and thence are so unthankful, so they look not up to the author of their afflictions, and hence are so impatient and fretful. It is observable that patience did wonderfully triumph in David's breast under Shimei's bitter railings. Though that traitor struck fire again and again, he was wet tinder, he did not take. Yet at another time, when Nabal offered him a little unkindness, that small wind raised a grievous storm of passion in his spirit: 'So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that pertain to him by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall,' 1 Sam. xxv. 22. But if we read the story, we may quickly see the reason. David heard God's voice in Shimei's language, but did not see God's hand in Nabal's carriage. 'Let him alone, and let him curse,' saith he of Shimei; 'for the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David,' 2 Sam. xvi. 9, 10. The Lord hath bidden him with a word of sufferance, though not of allowance, with the word of his providence, though not of his precept;² therefore I must bear it with submission and patience; he who hears God speaking will, if he know himself, be silent.

The foolish heathen, whose understandings were darkened, could see no farther than second causes, hence acted like distracted persons under the cross.³ Xerxes, the Persian monarch, having received a loss by the rage of Hellespontus, caused three hundred stripes to be given it, and cast fetters into the water, as if he could make it his prisoner, and bind it at his pleasure. Darius, because the river Gynde had drowned his white horse, threatened to divide it into many channels, and so weaken its strength, that one should go over it on foot.⁴ Those that look only at means thus murmur, and bewray their madness.

When men drink of waters far from the spring, and nigh the sea, they are brackish, and of an ill taste; but if they drink them in the fountain (*Dulcius ex ipso fonte, &c.*), they are sweet. As Solinus reports of Hypanis, a Scythian river, that the water thereof is bitter, as it passeth through Exampius, but very sweet in the spring.⁵ When men drink the waters of affliction, in the musty vessels of instruments, no wonder that they are the waters of

¹ Nihil ad compescendos doloris impetus aptius est, quam ubi nobis in mentem venit, non cum homine mortali, sed cum Deo negotium esse.—*Calvin, in loc.*

² Verbo providentiæ, non præcepti.—*Jun., in loc.*

³ Herodot., lib. vii.

⁴ Sence., De Ira.

⁵ Cap. 20.

Marah, bitter waters, and set men, as those waters did the Israelites, a-murmuring; but when they drink them in the fountain, consider them in the blessed God, the principal efficient, they are tolerable, if not pleasant. Christians can take anything kindly from the hands of their God. It was a holy speech of that honourable Lord Duplessis, at the death of his only son, I could not have borne this from a man, but I can from my God. Beasts will take blows from their master, surely then we may from our Maker.

2. Consider, God's affection is the spring, as to him, of all thy afflictions. Thy temporal cross comes from the same love that thy eternal crown comes from. Infinite and eternal love is the root from which every rod springeth, with which God scourgeth thee.¹ 'As many as I love, I rebuke; whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth,' Rev. iii. 17; Heb. xii. 5. Men will not take the pains to correct stubborn servants, but turn them out of doors; but love forceth them to chastise their sons. God out of hatred lets many a sinner go unpunished in this world. He prunes not the tree which he intends for the eternal fire. When the rope is designed, the rod is spared. The malefactor, according to our law, escapes the whipping-post that is condemned to the gallows. 'The wicked is reserved to the day of destruction; they shall be brought forth at the day of wrath,' Job. xxi. 30. But out of love, he afflicteth saints.² 'In very faithfulness thou hast afflicted me,' saith David, Ps. cxix. 75; as if David had said, Lord, thou art not only righteous in giving me to drink the fruit of my disobedience to thy law, but thou art also gracious in causing me therein to taste the effects of thy love. Thy correcting severity proceeds from thine electing mercy;³ thou couldst not be faithful to my soul and thy covenant of salvation, if thou shouldst suffer me to wander from thy commands, and not bring me home, though by Weeping-cross. It is worthy our observation, that God binds himself as well to give his children a rod in their minority when they offend, as the inheritance when they come to age. 'If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their iniquity with a rod, and their transgressions with stripes; nevertheless, my loving-kindness I will not take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. Once have I sworn by my holiness, I will not lie unto David.' How then should

¹ Magna est misericordia hic virga corrigi, ne alibi duro malleo conterantur.—*Nic. de Clemang. Epist.* 58.

² Quod Deus amat, indurat et exerceat non in deliciis sed in castris.—*Sen. Epist.* 67.

³ Magna ira est, quando peccantibus non irascitur Deus.—*Jerome Epist.* 33.

he be faithful to his word, if they who transgress so often should never feel his rod, much less if he should let them run on to their ruin ! He visits their iniquities with stripes, that he might not take from them his loving-kindness, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. The punishments of sinners are vindictive, the fruits of pure wrath ; but the afflictions of saints are corrective, the genuine product of true love. ' All his ways are mercy and truth ; ' not only his comforting, but his correcting ways. If he smile, it is in mercy ; and if he smite, it is in mercy. God may change his dispensation towards his children, but never his disposition, Ps. xxv. 10.

Some write of the Russians, that their women think those husbands do not love them who do not beat them, and those husbands to love them most who beat them most. Sure I am, those that have felt most of the weight of God's hand have had the greatest room in his heart. As it was said of Asher, his shoes are iron and brass, but his feet are dipped in oil, in love ; so I may say of God. When his shoes are iron and brass, when he treads hard and treads heavy, yet his feet are dipped in oil, in love, Deut. xxxiii. 24, 25. Those bands of affliction with which he binds his saints, are bonds of kindness, and those cords with which he scourgeth his chosen, are cords of love ; every lash speaks love, and is laid on by love.

Now, what a sweet syrup is this for thee, O Christian, to take the bitter pill of affliction in ; I cannot but think it must needs go down the glibber, and also work the better. Doth love send it, and wilt thou slight it ? Shall love present it to thee, and wilt thou be pettish and peevish at it ? God's anger is more grievous than any pressure whatsoever, but his love will make amends for the want of any outward favour. Thy loving-kindness is better than life ; therefore, as long as thou hast this sauce in thy dish, it may make anything go down. ' A dinner of herbs with love, is better than a stalled ox with strife.' The eye is a tender part ; yet, when dim or dusky, we apply sharp powders or waters to eat out the web, or dry up the rheum, and yet love it nevertheless. Friend, God may love thee as the apple of his eye, even then when he afflicteth thee sharply ; therefore, take his love-token kindly.

Gentlemen prize their hawks, and delight to feed them, yet they put wervils upon their legs, and a hood upon their heads. But why, saith Bernard, is she blinded and fettered ? because they esteem her, and would have her always within call. If they have a hawk that they regard not, they will not take such pains with them, but let them fly away. Some sinners escape scourging, and are suffered to take their swing, because God doth not love nor

esteem them; but his saints, whom he valueth, he will be sure to correct, that he may have them always within his call and command.¹

Children will take that potion willingly which a mother gives them, when, if a stranger should pour such a draught down their throats, they would cry out, We are poisoned. And what is the reason? why, they are persuaded of their parent's love, that is the lump of sugar which sweetens it. He in Terence could say, when he was in his own thoughts hardly used, *Pater est; si pater non esset*, &c. : It is my father; if it were not my father I should not take it so well. Anything is pleasing which love doth present; even blows in love are lovely, and the wounds of a friend are healing. David had much rather lose his life by the hands of courteous Jonathan, who loved him, than of cruel Saul, who hated him, 1 Sam. xx. 8. Elijah could beg death from a gracious God,—‘It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life’—even then when he feared it, and fled from it, by the hands of a spiteful, malicious woman, 1 Kings xix. 3, 4. Our blessed Redeemer drank off freely that cup of venom and poison, of gall and wormwood, which would have turned the stomachs of all men and angels in the world to have tasted it, when it was put into his hands by a loving Father. When sinless nature had a reluctancy, the thought of a father carried it: ‘The cup which my Father giveth me to drink, shall I not drink it?’ Had the Lord Jesus considered only the fury of hell, and the wrath of his foes on earth, his potion would have been much less pleasing; but when he thought of the love of his Father—how love provided it for him, and love presented it to him; how there was not the least bitter ingredient in it, but love prescribed it, and love prepared it, he drank off his cup, thus spiced with his Father's love, cheerfully.

The truth is, our eyes are bad, and in our journey towards heaven, mountains and hills interposing, we lose the sight of the true Sun, and the sense of our Father's love; but when we come to our Father's house, we shall see grace and love displayed in all its colours.² Though our Jesus now, like Joseph, acts the part of a seeming enemy, yet then we shall see that he loved us, all the while that he used us so hardly; then he will speak plainly: I am your

¹ *Disce gratiam esse, ubi Deus cito peccata punit; per hoc enim cumulus peccatorum decrescit: cum enim poenas diffèrat, tunc cum his culpa augetur ac consequenter pœna.*—*Cornel. a Lap. in Gen. xv.*

² *Exaudit iratus, non exaudit propitius; non parcit propitius, parcit iratus.*—*Aug. Cont. Jul., lib. v. cap. 4.*

brother Joseph whom ye sold—I am your brother Jesus whom ye crucified.

Thirdly, Consider, God will proportion thy burden to thy back. He will not assess thee above thy estate. When any were scourged among the Jews, they fitted the whip to the person, and gave either all the stripes which God allowed, not exceeding forty, Deut. xxv. 3, at once, or at two several times, according to the strength of the offender; to this end, the work of one of their judges was to number the strokes, that they might be sure not to exceed. God numbereth as well the saints' sufferings as their sins, and will not permit one stroke beyond their strength. He limits their sufferings, both for their nature and their length; he hath some strong, able servants, old men and fathers, therefore he calleth them to the harder services, that their strength might not be lost. Those that have great estates, much spiritual riches, must live accordingly, or else their wealth would be given them in vain. He hath others who are weak babes in Christ, little children; now, though he drives these towards their heavenly country, when they would loiter and play with the toys of the world by the way, yet he doth not over-drive them, but, as Jacob's ewes great with young, drive them tenderly, 'as they are able to bear it,' Gen. xxxiii. 14.

God is not like an empiric, who hath but one remedy for all persons, and all maladies, but first considers his patients, what age they are, of how long standing in Christ's school, of what strength, what proficiency they have made since they were entered, and accordingly writes his bill. Because some bodies will bear it, he will give them physic two or three days together: 'Let us return unto the Lord: he hath torn, and he will heal us. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight,' Hosea vi. 1, 2. Nay, possibly ten days together he may give a diet drink: 'Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, and ye shall have tribulation ten days,' Rev. ii. 10. But because others of his children are of weak constitutions, he will purge them only one day, Zech. iii. 9, or give them pills one night: 'Heaviness shall endure for a night,' Ps. xxx. 5. Nay, if they be very sickly, it shall work but an hour: the apostle mentioneth, 'an hour of temptation,' Rev. iii. 10. Nay, as the patient may be but a moment: 'These light afflictions, which are but for a moment,' 2 Cor. iv. 17. And if there be any of his weaklings, whose stomachs cannot bear it so long, they shall have it less time, (if it may be, that this point is divisible:) 'For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee,' Isa. liv. 7, 8. Well might the

apostle say, 'God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able.' With which verse Latimer comforted Ridley, when they were both going to the stake, adding, Be confident, brother, God will either assuage the violence of the flames, or give us strength to bear it.

After their physic, he gives cordials to keep them from fainting, he is so tender of his faithful ones. If he knock down Paul with one hand, and strike him blind, he will lift him up with the other hand, and that to the third heavens, where he shall see such blessed sights as mortal ears cannot hear of. He sendeth snow in Salmon, light in darkness. When it showers, it shines on a saint. I thank my God for this prison, said one of the martyrs, more than for any palace; for in it I find my God most sweet to me. When Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, was prisoner a long time together under Charles the Fifth, he was asked what upheld him; he answered, I feel the divine comforts of the martyrs. The cross of Christ is sweet wood; it bears cordial spices. These lions, as Samson's, prove a hive of sweetness, and produce a swarm of comforts to the saints. When the waterpots are full of water, then the best wine is coming. It may be said of the Christian, what Plutarch speaketh of Egypt, He hath many poisons, but as many antidotes.¹

I have read of one that, digging under a cross, found a great treasure; saints have never found greater riches of grace and comfort than under the cross. The wine of their joy is usually most brisk and lively when they drink it in those low, damp cellars, at the head of the pipe. When Jacob halts through a blow on his thigh, the place is turned into a Peniel, that is, the face of God. It was a happy sight that was accompanied with a sight of God's face.

There are three great differences between the punishments God inflicts on sinners, and the afflictions he brings on saints in this world; 'Hath he smitten him, as he smote those that smote him?' Isa. xxvii. 7. No; for,

1. They differ in the manner. God punisheth his enemies with joy: 'Ah, I will ease me of mine enemies,' Isa. i. 24. As if he were in pain till they are punished, and could have no ease but in their pain; whereas, when he afflicts his children, it is with much compassion: 'His soul is grieved for the miseries of Israel,' Judges x. 15. He takes the rod into his hand with tears, as I may say, in his eyes. And when he hath it in his hand, hath many conflicts with himself, whether he should strike or no: 'How shall I deliver

¹ Multa venena, et multa salubria.—*Plut.*

thee up, O Ephraim? how shall I give thee up, O Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? (Admah and Zeboim were part of the Pentapolis which God destroyed; the other three were Sodom, Gomorrah, and Zoar;) my bowels are rolled within me, my repentings are kindled together,' Hosea xi. 8, 9. Mark how he striveth with himself before he can strike his people. As if he had said, O Ephraim, O Israel, thou art a wicked, stubborn child, and art worthy to be whipped till thou bleedest; nay, to be whipped to death, and to be a monument of my fury, like to those cities which I consumed with fire; but though thine iniquities deserve it, and thine adversaries desire it, yet my tender mercies debate it, and implead it. How can I do it?

When God is destroying his enemies, he laughs at every lash, though it fetch blood from their backs: 'I will laugh at your destruction, and mock when your fear cometh,' Prov. i. Their destruction is the object of his derision. He strikes them with hatred and detestation of them, as a man strikes a toad. But when he is chastising his friends, his sons, after he hath overcome himself to do it, from the necessity of it, truly even then he doth it with sorrow, and every stroke, as it were, goeth to his very heart: 'In all their afflictions he is afflicted,' Isa. lxiii.

2. They differ in the measure. When God punisheth his enemies, he hath no regard at all what they can endure, and what they cannot, but strikes according as they have deserved: 'I will reward you according to all the evil of your doings, and till they be utterly destroyed,' Jer. xxv. But when he afflicteth his people, he doth consider what they are able to suffer: 'As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth their frame; he remembereth they are but dust,' Ps. ciii. 12, 13. He observeth what weak vessels they are, and therefore will not use them to hard knocks, nor suffer them to be too near, or too long by the fire, lest they fly in pieces.

He correcteth his people, not according to the greatness of his power: 'Will he plead against me with his great power?' No; but 'he will put strength into me,' Job xxiii. 6. Nor according to the fierceness of his anger: 'Many a time turned he away his anger, and did not stir up all his wrath,' Ps. lxxviii. 38. Nor according to the grievousness of their errors: 'Thou hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve,' Ezra ix. 13. But he correcteth them in measure: 'Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet I will not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee wholly un-

punished,' Jer. xxx. 11. He meteth out their sufferings in a due proportion, like those that do things exactly by weight and measure, (not a drachm too much,) with respect both to the quality of the disease, and the ability of the patient's body.

As a judge, when he correcteth his child, hath respect not only to the child's wantonness, but also to the child's weakness, and accordingly whips him; but when he sits on the bench, and is sentencing a malefactor at the bar, only considers his offence, and what the law inflicts; never whether the poor prisoner be able to endure burning on the hand, or hanging; so God deals with his children in the relation of a Father—mildly, moderately, according to their strength; but with others, in the relation of a judge—severely, yet justly, according to their demerits.

3. They differ in the end. God afflicteth his children to sanctify their polluted hearts; he punisheth his enemies to satisfy his offended justice. God cometh to his people, as a chirurgeon to his patient, pricking and cutting him to let out his bad blood, it may be, bleeding him till he is ready to faint, that there may be a spring of better; but he comes to his enemies as a creditor to his debtor, taking him by the throat, and bidding him pay what thou owest, which because he cannot, to prison he must go.

When God striketh his children, he doth, as a fencer to his scholars, now and then give them a blow with a blunt weapon, for instruction, to teach them the better how to defend themselves; but when he striketh sinners, he strikes as one of the Roman gladiators, to kill and slay; he first whets his glittering sword, and his hand takes hold of judgment, and then he renders vengeance to his enemies, and a reward to them that hate him, Deut. xxxi. 41. His judgments on the sinners are for their punishment, as an earnest-penny of their endless misery; but his corrections on the saints are for their profit, for the preventing or purging away of their iniquities. But more of this in the next particular.

Fourthly, Consider that all thy afflictions are needful, and shall work for thy good. Nothing is intolerable that is necessary. The waters are not more needful to waft the ship, than afflictions are to carry the vessels of our souls to their port of bliss. Affliction, saith the martyr to his friend, will scour and rub you bright, that you may be fit to be set on the high shelf in heaven: 'Though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations,' 1 Pet. i. 6. 'If need be;' whilst we have diseased bodies, physic is as needful as food; whilst we have diseased souls, misery is as needful as outward mercies. The winter is as necessary to bring on

harvest as the spring; affliction is as helpful to bring forward the harvest of glory as any condition. Winds and thunder trouble the air, but withal they purge it. Corrections are grievous, but withal they purify and make us gracious. There is a necessity that the patient be made sick, for otherwise he cannot be well. We hold but our arm to a chirurgeon, to lance us for our good, when if another should cut us, we would be ready to take the law of him.¹ Christian, thou mayest well with patience undergo divine corrections, because they are for thy profit.

God and the world differ much in their ends about the saints' affliction.² The world persecuteth them out of hatred; God afflicteth them out of love, the world intendeth evil in it. As Joseph said to the patriarchs, 'Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, as it is this day, to save much people alive,' Gen. xv. 20. So the saints may bespeak the world in regard of those slanders and fetters, and other calamities which they bring on them: As for you, ye thought evil against us, but God meant it to good, as it appeareth this day, to save our souls alive. The physician and the leech have several ends in drawing the patient's blood: the end of the leech is to satisfy herself; the end of the physician is to better the state of his patient's body. The end which the world aimeth at in the crosses which they bring on Christians is to satisfy their own pride, and malice, and revenge: 'My lust shall be satisfied upon them,' saith Pharaoh, when he was pursuing Israel, Exod. xv. 9; but God's end is to sanctify his people's souls.

One of the sharpest calamities that ever befell Israel was the Babylonish captivity, yet even this was in mercy: Jer. xxiv. 5, 6, 'Thus saith the Lord; Like the good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for their good.' How! of freemen be made prisoners, and that in a strange land amongst heathen, to be removed from their own houses, vineyards, friends, nay, and from the temple of God, and all this for their good!

Possibly, reader, thou wilt be apt to say, as the unbelieving lord, Though God should work a miracle, could this be? I tell thee, God doth with his rod of correction, as Moses with his rod in Egypt, work wonders, and it shall be.³ As the goat, through common providence, can digest hemlock, and draw good sustenance from it, which is counted a deadly weed to other creatures; so the Christian,

¹ Finis dat amabilitatem et facilitatem mediis.

² Venenum aliquando pro remedio fuit.—*Senec. De Benefic.*, lib. ii. cap. 18.

³ Medici pedes et alas Cantharidis, cum sit ipsa mortifera, prodesse dicunt.—*Plut.*

through special assistance, can feed on the evil of affliction, and get strength from it, as deadly as it is to profane persons.

Sometimes God prevents sin by affliction. A purge or bleeding in the spring may prevent diseases in autumn. Suffering hath many a time killed sin in the embryo, and prevented its birth. When Cato urged in the senate ¹ that Carthage might be destroyed, Scipio opposed it, saying, that the fear of Carthage made the Romans watchful, whereas, if it should be destroyed, they would degenerate into luxury. Salt marshes preserve sheep from the rot, which otherwise they would be infected with, and die of. When the waters are abated, the dove herself is apt to wander and to be defiled, therefore the continuance of the waters is for her good; it prevents her wandering out of the ark.

External hardships have hindered souls from hell, from eternal heaviness. Manasseh's iron chains prevented the chains of everlasting darkness. 'We are chastened of the Lord, that we might not be condemned with the world,' 1 Cor. xi. 31. God hath by adversity carted some to heaven, whom prosperity would have coached to hell. A corroding plaster, though it puts a man to pain, yet, by eating out the festered matter, prevents the cutting off his limb, and many times the loss of his life. Had the prodigal found his fill of husks, it is probable he had not thought of his father's house.² Now, reader, is not that needful, and for thy good, which prevents sin, nay, which preventeth hell?

Sometimes God purgeth away sin by affliction. He useth the file to take away that which is rugged. Affliction, saith Chrysostom, is the shepherd's dog, which takes the lamb into its mouth when it goeth astray; not to bite it, but to bring it home. God's design in thy sufferings is not to ruin, but to reform, thee. A gardener diggeth his ground, breaketh the clods, maketh the earth as small as he can; but an ordinary capacity knoweth his end is to mend it, not to mar it: Prov. xx. 30, 'The blueness of the wound cleanseth away evil; so do stripes the inward parts of the belly.' There was a time when the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen their weapons. It may be God lets wicked men loose upon thee, to detract, backbite, and slander thee; but his end is that their evil words should make thee more watchful, and help to sharpen thy spiritual weapons.

¹ Flor., lib. ii.

² Nisi ego fuisset mordax (inquit Luth.) Papa fuisset vorax. Had not I been a perch, with sharp fins, the pope had swallowed me; so had Satan many a Christian, had it not been for affliction.—*Col. Mensal.*, cap. 37.

The Christian is like the Athenians, of whom some write, *Non nisi atrati*, they mend not till they are in mourning. Trees set in the winter thrive most; the oftener the hair is shaved, the thicker and the more it groweth. It is said of the Phrygians, they wax not wise except they are beaten to it; and one of our great statesmen observeth of us English, that we are best when we are in black. When we are merry, we are worst; when we are sorrowful, we are best.¹

Apollonius writes of a certain people that could see nothing in the day, but anything in the night. Saints, like those creatures that have fiery eyes, see best the sinfulness of sin, the worthlessness of the word, and the preciousness of their Saviour, in the dark night of affliction. In the day of light and outward comforts, the sunshine of prosperity doth many times so dazzle their eyes, that they are almost blind.² Oh, how much doth the Christian esteem the smiles of the Lord, when he is under the frowns of the world! There are no strains in music so delightful as those in which discords are artificially bound up with concords. Dark shadows set forth a beautiful picture, and represent it more lovely and lively. Tribulation, saith Luther, is the best expositor of Scripture, without which a man can never know the will, or the goodwill, or love of God.

Quails love to fly with the wind, because of their small strength and little bodies, yet not with the south wind, which is moist and heavy, but with the cold north wind. Holiness oftener accompanieth the cold north wind of adversity, than the warm south wind of prosperity. It was observed, in the days of Edward the Sixth, when the sweating sickness raged in England, and swept away many, then the churches were thronged, and servants sent to this and that minister, You must come to my lord; you must come to my lady; they beseech you to pray with them, to pray for them; here is a bag of money they desire you to give to the poor. Since that, when the plague raged in England, and the bills of mortality swelled to several thousands in one week, in one city, how piously were fasts observed, how zealously was heaven importuned, how devoutly were Sabbaths sanctified! But as soon as those judgments were removed, piety was abated, profaneness abounded, and the Author and Father of all our mercies provoked to his face.

¹ *Anglica gens est optima flens, et pessima gaudens.*

² *Cum tremore nobis considerandum est quod justus et omnipotens Deus, quum irascitur præcedentibus peccatis, permittit ut cœcata mens in alia dilabatur.*—*Greg. M. Ezek. iii.*

Men mistake often the end of God in their sufferings, hence are so unwilling to undergo them. When the taste is vitiated, as in diseased persons, they mistake their meats, and therefore nothing pleaseth them. If there be a suffusion in the eye, as in the jaundice, everything seemeth yellow; when those who have seen God's end have counted affliction a favour and an honour. Luther prayed for it, *Feri, Domine, feri*, Strike, Lord, strike, and it shall be a mercy. King Alfred prayed God to send him some sickness to keep under his flesh. Job, speaking to God of afflicting him, saith, Job vii. 18, 'What is man, that thou shouldst magnify him? that thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment?'

Reader, art thou in great troubles? ponder this—thy God brings them on thee for thy profit. Thou wilt take bitter physic for the good of thy body, and shouldst thou not be as ready for that which tendeth so much to the health of thy soul? ¹ Though the whetstone grate upon, and somewhat wear the knife, yet withal it sharpeneth it. Sufferings may somewhat pain and wear thee, but they will quicken thee God-ward, and sharpen thine appetite after spiritual things.

If thy God deny thee a confluence of outward comforts which he granteth to others, thou mayest be confident it is for thy good. Infinite wisdom seeth it best to keep thee short. Thy God knoweth how much the vessel of thy soul will carry, and therefore putteth no more goods aboard, lest thou shouldst sink in the bottomless gulf of perdition, as many poor barks have done out of covetousness, to take in a greater freight than they could safely sail to heaven with. Because the storms of temptation threaten danger to none so much as to those that are deepest laden, he lades thee lightly, that thou mayest sail to thy port of bliss safely.

Further, thou mayest be assured that thine afflictions shall work for thy good. God hath promised it, and he will perform it, Rom. viii. 28. There is a twofold kingdom of Christ; the one is his spiritual kingdom, whereby he ruleth by his Spirit and word in the hearts of his people. In this respect he is called King of saints, for they submit to him as their sovereign.

The other is his providential kingdom, whereby he ruleth in the world, disposing of all things therein; in this respect he is called King of nations. He sits at the stern of the world, and steereth it which way he pleaseth, for the government is upon his shoulders.

¹ Quicquid divinitus ante ultimum judicium vindicatur, non ad interitum hominum, sed ad medicinam valere credendum est.—*Aug. Cont. Epist. Mar.*, cap. 1.

Now he ordereth his providential kingdom for the advancement of his spiritual kingdom ; so that his kingdom, which ruleth over all, shall be disposed as may be most for the welfare of his people. Thou mayest say of thy affliction, if thou art a member of Christ, as Paul did of his, ' I know that this shall turn to my salvation,' Phil. i. 19. Though instruments intend thy destruction, yet thy God, who governeth all, will turn it to thy salvation.

Wouldst thou be angry if thy father should send workmen to pull down an old smoky cottage in which thou livest, and to build up a handsome, stately dwelling at his own charge ? ¹ And canst thou take it otherwise than kindly at the hands of thy God, when he sendeth afflictions to pull down sin and thy body of death, though he thereby put thee to a little trouble, when he intendeth to build up thy soul a more pure and glorious piece ? It is the observation of Salmeron,² If a man should throw a rich diamond at you, and hit you upon the hand, so you might have the diamond for it, would you count that an injury ? ' All things shall work together for good to them that love God.' All things, not only thy comforts, but also thy crosses ; not only the love of God, but also the hatred of the world, and the malice of hell.

Fifthly, Consider how the people of God have formerly endured great afflictions ; nay, how the Son of God himself drank deepest of this cup. The best of saints have borne the worst of sufferings. Heaven's chief favourites have been trampled on as the world's filth. Thou thinkest none hath suffered so much as thou hast, but, alas ! hast thou resisted unto blood ? Dost thou know the racks and tortures which many of the Lord's chosen have endured ? Socrates was wont to say, If all the calamities of mortal men were heaped into one storehouse, from whence every one should take an equal portion, each man would choose rather to go away with that part and pain which he hath already.

David was the song of the drunkards ; Elijah fled for his life ; Jeremiah was cast into a dungeon ; Daniel into a lion's den ; Micaiah fed in prison with bread and water ; Paul's whole life, after his conversion, was, as it were, one continued affliction, till he came at last to end all with his life under Nero. Consider the patience of Job ; saith the apostle, ' Take the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for examples of suffering affliction, and of patience,' James v. 10. How deep did the primitive worthies wade in these waters ! *Solamen miseris*, &c. It is some comfort that thou hast

¹ O servum illum beatum cujus emendationi Deus instat, cui dignatur irasci ?—*Ter. de Patient.*, cap. 11.

² Salmer. in Johan., iii.

company; thou dost not break this snowy, icy way. The road is already beaten by many who have gone before thee.

Antiochus being to fight with Judas, captain of the host of the Jews, to make his elephants fight the better, he shewed them the blood of grapes. The Romans, in the place of their Olympic games, pictured those who had been famous at that exercise, to encourage others to do worthily.

Reader, thou art compassed about with a great cloud, or pillar, of witnesses, do thou therefore run with patience the race set before thee, Heb. xii. 1. It is enough for thee to fare as the rest of thy father's children. If they drunk so much wormwood, and did eat such bread of affliction, who were so dutiful and obedient, thou hast little reason, who art so froward and stubborn, to expect better. Why shouldst thou desire God should make thee a new way to heaven, different from that wherein his people have always gone? How unreasonable is it to think that the world, which was their purgatory, should be thy paradise; that, above all thy brethren, thou must have two heavens! Remember Midas, who would turn everything he touched into gold, ruined himself by it.

Remember especially what thy Saviour suffered. Though he were without sin, yet he was a man of sorrows; all thy sufferings to his are but a feather to a mountain of lead. If God spared not his own Son, who was without sin, he hath little cause to spare thee, who art little else but sin; if he dealt so severely with the green tree, how severely may he deal with the dry.

When Alexander marched through Persia, his way was stopped with ice and snow, insomuch that his soldiers, being tired before with hard marches, were wholly discouraged, and would have gone no further, which he perceiving, dismounted, and went on foot through, the midst of them all, making his way with a pickaxe, whereat they being ashamed, first his friends and officers, and then all the rest, fell to work.¹ Thy Saviour hath gone before thee, and given thee an example, that thou mightest follow his steps, 1 Pet. ii. 21. Art thou poor? so was Christ; he had not a house to put his head in, Mat. viii. 20. Art thou slandered? so was Christ; a friend of publicans and sinners, a Samaritan, one that had a devil, was the language the Jews gave him. Art thou hungry, and thirsty, and weary? so was Christ. Art thou tempted? so was Christ, Mat. iv. Is thy soul sorrowful? so was his, unto death. Do thy friends wrong thee and forsake thee? so did his. Doth God hide his face from thee? so he did from him. And canst

¹ Prior bibit medicus, ut libere non dubitaret aegrotus.

thou imitate a better than thy Saviour? should not his pattern be prevalent with thee? It is reported,¹ that though the amber-ring were of no esteem among the Romans for a long time together, yet when the emperor did once wear it, every one followed him. How contrary soever the cross is to thy nature, yet one would think thou shouldst be ambitious to resemble the king of saints. Hath he drunk to thee in a cup of affliction, and hast thou neither the manners nor grace to pledge him?

Sixthly, Consider, thy sin is the meritorious cause of all thy sufferings. Sin is the weight on the clock which makes the hammer to strike. God may say to thee under the saddest providence, as he said to the Roman emperor, formerly a cutler, This is the sword which thou madest, and by which thou now must die; this is the cross which thou madest, and by which you now must smart. Thou complainest of thy cross, but thou mayest thank thyself for it; therefore, turn thy complaint against thy corruptions.

If sin lie heavy upon thee, all afflictions will be light. Luther gives this reason why he slighted the rage of pope and emperor, and all his outward enemies; They are all little to me, saith he, because sin is so weighty on me.² The like we may observe of the blessed apostle Paul; he cried out much of his sins, and thence complained not at all of his sufferings. Though he was in great distresses, and in deaths often, yet he never bewailed them, saying, 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the death of this body!' because he bemoaned sin so much. 'O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death!' Sense of sin swalloweth up sense of afflictions, as the ocean doth little rivers. He who hath carried a good part of a sheet of lead upon his back, will make nothing of a few bags of feathers. Truly, affliction to sin is but as a feather to a sheet of lead.

Reader, I assure thee this is an excellent receipt for the cure of thy murmuring and impatience under the hand of God. Consider, whom canst thou be angry with but thyself, when thou hast brought thy troubles on thyself?³ 'I will patiently bear the indignation of the Lord,' saith the church, 'because I have sinned against him,' Micah vii. 9. It is as natural for sin to beget suffering, as for a father to beget a son.

It will break the violence of the stream, thy passion, by turning

¹ Tacitus.

² The heathens could see this. *Sua quemque fraus, suus terror maxime vexat; suum quemque scelus agitat, &c.*—*Cic. Orat. pro Rosc.*

³ *Quid de acerbitate pœnarum querimur? unusquisque nostrum ipse se punit.*—*Salvi. de Gub. Dei*, lib. iii.

the water of thy sorrow into another channel—from thy affliction to thy sin. When men spit blood, or bleed too much at the nose, physicians ordinarily cure it by opening a vein, and turning the blood another way. Thy worldly sorrow is as dangerous to thy spirit as inward bleeding to thy flesh: to stop it, try but this remedy of diverting it into sorrow for sin, and I am confident thou wilt set thy *probatum est* to the receipt. Godly sorrow will eat up worldly, as Moses' rod did the rods of the magicians. The noise of a great cannon in the ear drowns the noise of pistols, that they are not heard at all.

Lastly, Look much up to heaven. To allay thy present sufferings, think of thy future solace. Though thou hast a hell here, where wicked men enjoy their heaven, yet thy hell shall end in heaven, and thy heaven shall never end. The meditation of heaven will much abate thy heaviness. Those birds that fly lowest mourn most. The dove hath a doleful note, but the eagle, which soareth higher, hath no such mournful voice. Moses had an eye to the recompense of reward, and therefore he 'chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season,' Heb. xi.

When Saul was anointed to a kingdom, though many sons of Belial despised him, yet he held his peace. And shall not the thought of thine eternal, glorious kingdom, to which the Spirit of God hath anointed thee, move thee to patience under all the world's calumnies and cruelties!¹ What the sponge is to the cannon, cooling it when it is so heated with much shooting that it is ready to fly in pieces, that is a sight of heaven by faith to a suffering Christian; it cools his heats, and quiets his heart, when it is ready to break in pieces through impatience. It is no wonder that Paul was so valiant to suffer; that whatsoever cross God laid down for him, he took it up as cheerfully as if it had been a crown—triumphing in tribulations, defying death itself, and scorning the world's most direful threatenings as bugbears to fright children with, when he had before been rapt up into the third heavens, and heard there things unutterable. That celestial music had so ravished and enchanted his ears, that they were deaf ever after to the roarings of the world's lions. Ah! what hardship will not that soul endure, that walks within the view of heaven!

The worldling, who, like the silk-worm, is wholly for the earth, may well, as they, be terrified unto death at the noise of thunder,

¹ *Vitus duas habemus, unam in qua sumus, alteram quam speramus. Toleramus in qua es, et habebis quam nondum habes, in qua non tolerabis.—Aug. in Ps.*

but the Christian that can mount up to heaven may sing in such weather.¹

Indeed, reader, if thou refusest to suffer with Christ, thou refusest to reign with him.² He who putteth off his gospel-shoe, as a suffering spirit is called, Eph. vi. 17, doth as he who put off his shoe among the Jews, Deut. xxv. 9, 10; Ruth iv. 7, 8, disclaim any right to inheritance. But those who attend Christ on mount Calvary to his crucifixion, shall attend him on mount Tabor to his glorification. When David went to Hebron to the crown, he carried all those with him who had followed him up and down in the caves of the earth. Christ will own and honour all them in his glory who owned him in his ignominy. Solomon spared the life of Abiathar, though he had been guilty of high treason, upon this account, 'Because,' saith he, 'thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted,' 1 Kings ii. 26. And will not the true Solomon prefer and advance them that have fellowship with him in his sufferings?

The sufferings which thou now endurest are not worthy to be named with the joys which God hath provided for thee. If we rightly consider, saith Luther, how great the glory of the life to come will be, we should not be so unwilling to suffer all manner of tribulations, which by the wicked world are put upon us. When the Son of man, our Lord Jesus Christ, shall appear to sentence the good and the bad, then we shall be ashamed, if any possibility of shame, that we so unwillingly suffered a small cross and a slight tribulation, as a wrongful imprisonment, a casting into a dungeon, &c. Then we shall say, Oh fie upon me, in that I threw not myself down under the feet of all the ungodly, to be trod and trampled upon, for thy glory's sake, which now I see revealed. Therefore, St Paul well and truly saith, 'For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.'

The apostle doth, as it were, put the cross, with all its encumbrances, into one scale, and the saint's crown, which will be the end of his sufferings, into the other scale, and tells us that our present burdens are so infinitely outweighed by our future bliss, that they are not worthy to be mentioned with it, or compared to it. I reckon,³ saith he, it is an allusion either to an accountant that reckons up disbursements and receipts, and at the foot of them sums up all what they amount to—*i.e.*, I have examined strictly

¹ Ulys. Aldrovand. Hist. de Insect., lib. ii. ² Look my Sermon on Rom. viii. 18.

³ λογίζομαι, Numero, concludo.

your layings out for Christ in this world, and have also cast up what he hath laid up for you, and ye shall receive from him in the other world, and find that your receipts do infinitely surpass your disbursements ; nay, they amount to such millions that all imaginable expenses here deserve not to be named the same day with the glory hereafter. Or it is an allusion to a disputant, who seriously weigheth arguments *pro* and *con*, and afterwards delivers his judgment—i.e., I have soberly pondered all your sufferings that are possible, how much it may cost you to reign with Jesus Christ, and after all my consideration, this is my collection, my conclusion ; that the sufferings of this present life are no more comparable to the glory to be revealed, than this small drop or moment, in which narrow compass all our sufferings are contracted, is to the vast ocean of eternity.

Reader, chew that text a little with the mouth of faith, and thou wilt find it sweet.

1. Thy sufferings are little, some few drops may light on thee in thy journey, but thy glory is great. Thou shalt bathe thy soul in rivers of pleasures when thou comest home. For thy light afflictions thou shalt have a far more exceeding weight of glory. Thy cross is little, is light, but thy crown is massy, is weighty indeed. Oh what a small pain is this, said a Dutch martyr in the flames, to the pleasure hereafter.

2. Thy sufferings are outward only, in thy name, or estate, or body : neither men nor devils can hurt thy soul, or make a flaw in that diamond ; but thy glory shall be both outward and inward. Thy body shall shine like the sun in its noonday dress ; but ten thousand suns will be darkness to thy soul's attire. Thy soul is the chiefest seat of grace, and thy soul will be the choicest subject of glory.

3. Thy sufferings are mixed with solace ; there is some sugar in the bitterest cup. *Non dantur puræ tenebræ*. But thy glory shall be pure, there shall be not the least mixture of shame or sorrow, or any evil to allay its virtue, or abate its value. If thy condition here be like the lower heavens, foul and fair in the same day, thy condition hereafter will be like the upper heavens, always shining, never showering.

4. Thy sufferings here are generally common to mankind. Man is born to sorrow, as the sparks fly upward ; but thy glory hereafter is special, as Joseph's field, 'a portion above thy brethren.' Though thou sharest with the world in their sufferings, they shall not share with thee in thy solace.

5. Thy sufferings are due to thee; the snares in which thou art taken are of thine own laying; the cords in which thou art bound are of thy own twisting; but thy glory is free, a gift of grace. In regard of God's promise, it is called a crown of righteousness; in regard of the price paid for it by Christ, it is called the purchased possession; but in regard of the persons to whom it is promised, and for whom it was purchased, it is called mercy: 'The mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life,' 2 Tim. iv. 8; Eph. i. 14; Jude 23.

6. Thy sufferings are short, only for this present time. Heaviness may endure for a night, mourning lasteth but till morning; it is but a *day* of adversity at most. *Hæc non durant ætatem*, These things will not last an age, said Jewel in the Marian days, Eccles. vii. 16; but thy glory is eternal, an eternal weight of glory. That sun will never be clouded, will never set. Who would not suffer a while for eternal glory!

A good wish of a Christian in adversity, wherein the former heads are applied.

The mighty possessor of heaven and earth, who, out of his manifold wisdom, hath appointed from all eternity his providences to be chequer-work, a night and a day, a summer and a winter, an ebb and a tide, a mixture of sour and sweet in this world, as knowing that to be best for his creatures—if they felt nothing but fear, they would despair; if nothing but mercy, they would be secure,—reserving pure wrath and pure rest, pure mercy and pure misery, for the other world; and who foreordaineth his own chosen to drink deepest of the cup of affliction, and to take up their cross and follow Christ; having out of his love and grace called me to a suffering condition, which he knoweth to be most needful for my spirit, though it be painful to my flesh, I wish that my feet may be so shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, that I may cheerfully endure hardship, as a good soldier of Christ, and be so faithful unto death, that at last I may obtain a crown of life. Lord, since thou vouchsafest me this favour and honour, as to take the pains, and stoop so low to chastise me, when thou mightest permit me to run on in sin till I come to hell, let instruction accompany my correction, that I may imitate my Saviour, and learn obedience by the things that I suffer. Oh enable me so to hear the voice of thy rod,

that I may, like a torch, burn the brighter, and, as some trees, bear the better for beating. As the earth by a winter becomes the more fruitful at harvest, so let me by thy afflicting hand be the more abundant in holiness, that I may at last, through many tribulations, enter into the kingdom of heaven.

I wish that, now my God is searching and examining me, as the chief captain did Paul, by scourging, I may be found sincere. The rod of his hand will discover the rottenness of many hearts; unsound fruit falls off apace in stormy weather; sharp air trieth my body, whether sickly or no; and so will sufferings try my soul, and great batteries will prove the strength of the bulwark. The eagle proveth her young by holding them up to the sun; if they can behold it in its full glory and beauty, she acknowledgeth the birds to be her own brood. My God is examining me by the sun of persecution, whether I am a bastard or one of his children. He hath brought me to the fire to discover what metal I am, whether true or counterfeit; he knoweth me thoroughly, but would have me known to myself. 'Though I go on the left hand, where he doth work, I cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him; but he knoweth the way that I take. Oh that, when he hath tried me, I might come forth like gold,' Job xxiii. 9, 10. Lord, though others, like cranes, never fly against, but always with, the wind of the times, and if they see any alteration of weather, sit still on the ground, let me never follow a multitude to do evil, but follow the Lamb wherever he goeth; be so ready for all resistance which the world or hell can make against me, that over all I may be more than a conqueror, through him that loveth me. My God led Israel in the wilderness forty years, to humble them and to prove them—to know what was in their hearts, whether they would keep his commandments or no. Oh that, when he trieth me, he may find truth in mine inward parts! Lord, though many, like earthen, empty vessels, break in pieces when they come to the fire, let the trial of my faith, which is more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, be found to my praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

I wish that, considering how wicked hearts naturally grow worse by afflictions, as Jeroboam by his withered hand, I may be the more watchful. Stinking weeds, the more they are bruised, are the more unsavoury. Water after heating groweth colder than before. The thief on the cross rails even on Jesus Christ. How many are more filthy under their misery! Corruption stopped in its course

by affliction, as a river by a bridge, doth roar and swell the more. These waters have not seldom polluted those persons whom they should have cleansed. Not a few have been more sinful after their sufferings. Children do not shoot up more in bodily stature after an ague, than they in ungodliness after affliction. Though I am one of Christ's sheep, yet I am in danger of losing my fleece amongst these thorns and briers, if I have not the more care. Oh that I might be so watchful, that that scouring and rubbing which frets others, may make me shine the brighter, and that weight which crusheth others, cause me, like the palm-tree, to grow the better ! Lord, thou knowest more ballast of grace is requisited in the vessel of my soul in this tempestuous season than in a quiet sea, to prevent my sinking. Let thy Spirit so poise this small bark, that I may be steady in all storms, and all these high winds which threaten to overturn me, may further me in my voyage towards my eternal and blessed haven.

I wish, since my God afflicteth me, not as fathers of the flesh, merely for his pleasure, but for my profit, to make me partaker of his holiness, that I may, as a rose in the still, smell the sweeter, and as a vessel of gold, by this fire be the more purified for my master's use. Fish thrive best in cold and salt waters. The pomander becomes the more fragrant for chafing. The viper, when lashed, casts up his poison. The traitor, when on the rack, will tell the whole truth. Even a Joab, in distress, will lay hold on the horns of the altar. My God leads me through this great and terrible wilderness, wherein are fiery serpents, and scorpions, to do me good at my latter end, Deut. viii. 16. Oh that his fires might burn up my dross, and his flails beat off my husks, and that this might be the fruit of affliction, even the taking away of sin ! Lord, when thou layest me on my back, let me look up to thee for thy blessing ; teach me, as a nightingale, to warble out thy praises the more pleasantly for these thorns at my breast. Since my affliction is a messenger sent by thee to purge out my present wickedness, and prevent my future wanderings, let it not return unto thee void, but accomplish that which pleaseth thee, and prosper in the thing whereto thou hast sent it.

I wish that I may be so patient and pious in my sufferings, that my God may not disdain to give me a visit in my sickness. Surely my God and adversity will be good company. If I go to prison, and there enjoy his gracious presence, it will be more comfortable than the most glorious court ; if I be disgraced, he will be a crown of glory ; if I be impoverished, he will be better than rubies, than all

riches. Do I sit in darkness? the Lord will be a light unto me. Am I called to die? in his favour is life; yea, his loving-kindness is better than life. Whatsoever my distress be, I am safe whilst he is my defence. My God will supply all my needs out of the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus. Though mine iniquities provoke him to put me into the fire, lest I should be condemned, yet his mercy will prevail with him, to pluck me as a brand out of the fire, lest I should be consumed. If he afford his help, nothing can hurt. The most heavy burden will be but light, if he please to strengthen my back; I can do all things through Christ strengthening me. Oh that these thoughts might prevail with me, to be so Christian in my carriage under the hardest cross, that whatsoever I want, I may not want the company of my God! Lord, thou hast spoken by the prophet, Zech. i. 8, 'I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood amongst the myrtle-trees that were in the bottom.' Thy saints are the myrtle-trees, low and weak plants, but lovely and of great price; their lot in this world is to be in the bottom; thy myrtle-trees delight in valleys, and sea-shores, and river-sides; thy saints here below are in mean and low estates, many of those waves go over their souls, and indeed they thrive best by those waters. But, Lord, who is that man on the red horse, that is so kind and full of compassion, as to own thy saints in their abject condition? It is much below thy majesty to take notice of such unworthy ones in their misery; yet surely it is thy Son, the Son of man, and the Son of God, for thou callest him (ver. 20) the Lord. And is my Saviour so pitiful as to be present amongst his afflicted people? Will he not only be with them in his sanctuary, but also in their sufferings? How contrary is this carriage to the course of the world amongst men! Though the rich find many friends, yet the poor is forsaken of his neighbour. And yet thy Son owns his poor afflicted, despised, persecuted saints. No wonder that thy chosen are so cheerful in their misery; and, like leviathan, can laugh at the spears which the world and hell shake at them, when they have such good company. Oh grant me this favour, in my greatest danger to have the presence of my Lord Jesus, and then, though thou castest me with the three children into a fiery furnace, it will be more pleasant than the stateliest palace. Lord, bring me into what distress, what danger, what dungeon thou pleasest, so I may but enjoy my Saviour's powerful comforting presence; for I know that hell itself with Christ, would be changed into heaven. 'To be with Christ is best of all.'

I have heard of some that afflict themselves with wilful famine,

walking barefoot in pilgrimage, whipping themselves till they bleed. I wish that I may take up my cross which my God layeth down for me, and follow Christ, but never make my cross, and go before him. He is a bold servant that runneth before his master. My God saves me this labour, for he whips me daily with the scourge of a sickly body, the suffering of my fellow-members, and many times with the eclipses of his own gracious countenance, which is much the sorer, because it concerns the tenderest part, my soul. Oh teach me to make a right use of thy corrections, and then I shall not need to correct myself !

I wish that I may never faint when I am afflicted, yet that I may always feel my afflictions. Corrections are my God's love-tokens, and how ill would he take it if I should despise them ! When physic makes not the patient sick, it is the more unlikely to make him well ; he who doth not feel the smart of the rod, will never hear the voice of the rod. Besides, if a touch of God's finger will not fetch tears, I must expect the weight of his whole hand to fetch blood.

Should I, like a salamander, live in the fire here, and not feel it, I must expect a hotter fire hereafter in hell. Let me never, as some men, who, when they have been in a shower, dry themselves, and mind it no more ; but feel my sufferings, so as to fear the more, whilst I live, the meritorious cause thereof, my own sin. Lord, what an undutiful child am I, if when thou troublest thyself to correct me for my frowardness, I neither see thy hand, nor hear thy voice, but add to my guilt, and to thine anger, by my senselessness ! Mayest thou not justly cast me off for a castaway, and say, Why should he be smitten any more ? He revolteth more and more. How dreadful then should my condition be ! Correction is the lot of thy children ; but rejection is the portion of rebels, of reprobates. Oh rather, since my heart is so hard, let thy hand be so heavy, as to make it soft and sensible. Thou art a wise physician ; if weak lenitives will not stir me, give me a stronger potion, rather than permit me to perish. Scourge me, strike me, lance me, to recover me out of my lethargy. Do what thou wilt with me here, so thou love me now, and spare me hereafter.

I wish that, when I feel the smart of the rod, my pain may never make me out of patience. If I quarrel with instruments, I bewray my distraction. What man in his wits ever was angry with a knife for cutting, or a thorn for piercing ? The worst malefactor on the gallows will pardon the executioner. If I quarrel with the efficient, I discover the height of rebellion. Shall the clay strive with the

potter, or the creature contend with his Creator ! Who am I, that I should reply against God ? I have a little derived propriety in my children and cattle. My son offends me, I scourge him, probably out of passion, and without reason ; yet how ill do I take it, if he offer in the least to resist or repine ! If he do me reverence, who am but the father of his flesh, when I chastise him for my pleasure, shall not I much more be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live ? My beast under me flags, I switch him forward ; he still slacks, I spur him till he bleeds again and again ; he bears all quietly. Shall beasts take blows from their master, and not I from my Maker ? If any demand the cause why I use my child, my cattle, with so much cruelty, I answer, What doth it concern them ? Are they not my own children, my own cattle ? May not I do what I will with mine own ? And shall not my God do what he will with his own ? Hath not he a greater propriety in me, than I have in any of my children or cattle ? His propriety is essential, mine derivative ; his is absolute, mine conditional ; his is illimited and eternal, and mine is in trust for his use, and but for a short time. Shall I scourge, nay, possibly abuse, another's servants, (for they are far more God's than mine,) and take it ill if I be questioned, and when my God (whose I am, by all manner of titles and right imaginable) correcteth me with infinite reason and righteousness, shall I quarrel with him ? Oh that I might never be so mad as to rage at instruments, much less so desperately and impudently traitorous as to wrangle with the principal efficient, but let my heart speak under the severest execution, what Eli did under a dreadful threatening : ' It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.' Further, the murmurer is his own martyr. I double my misery by despising or disputing it. He that strives with his burden, makes it the heavier. The partridge that flutters in the net, doth not break it, but her own wings. If I struggle, I do but as a fish on the hook, both fasten and torture myself the more. Lord, though others are so much their own foes, as when they are afflicted for their good to fret against thee, let me be so satisfied in thy dominion over me, and so sensible of thine affection to me, that as by faith I possess my Saviour, and by love I possess thy saints, so by patience I may possess my own soul.

I wish that I may not only submit humbly to my punishments, but also acquit my God honourably under the sharpest providences. Heathen moralists have with courage undergone heavy crosses, and without murmuring drunk down their portion of misery. And if I do no more than those, what singular things do I ? Nay, a Pharaoh

under torment, can utter this truth, 'The Lord is righteous, I have sinned.' And shall I, a Christian, come behind that hardened Egyptian? Oh that I might from my heart, what he did only from the teeth outward, even justify my God when he condemneth me. Men *may* do justly, my God *cannot but* do justly; righteousness is an accident in them, which may be parted from them. Sometimes they are ignorant, and so through weakness, like David in the case of Mephibosheth, pass a wrong judgment. When the eyes are blinded, the hands strike at a venture, friends or foes. Sometimes they are wrathful, and so through wickedness, as Saul frequently, they pass an unrighteous sentence; dogs in a rage bite them of their own families, or the next that come by. But justice is the essence of my God, and inseparable from him. He knoweth vain man thoroughly, and therefore cannot err through ignorance. All things are naked and open to his eyes; he is light, and in him there is no darkness at all; he will not suffer an unrighteous person to enter heaven, much less will he suffer an unrighteous act to be done by his own hand. Alas! the least of his mercies is infinitely above my merits, and the greatest of my suffering are infinitely beneath my sins; and shall I not justify him, who is both righteous and gracious? Lord, help me so to behold thy justice sparkling in the darkest night of my sufferings—yea, and thy goodness also, in giving me to be chastened of the Lord, that I might not be condemned with the world—that I may lift thee up when thou castest me down, and see and say, 'The Lord is holy in all his ways, and righteous in all his works.' When my body is sick, I send to a physician for something proper for my distemper. He sends me a bitter pill; though my stomach loathes it, I force it down, and withal I thank and reward him. My soul is sick, I am not sensible, (the more dangerous is my disease) my heavenly Father seeth it, pitieth me, and, unsent to, (the more am I beholden to him,) sends me something that is wholesome, though not toothsome, for my cure; and shall my heart rise against the bitter physic, and repine at my physician? Oh let thy love so sweeten all my wormwood, and let the health of my soul be so precious to me, that I may receive it thankfully, drink it up cheerfully, and bless thee as well for crosses as for comforts; 'For righteous art thou, O Lord, and in very faithfulness hast afflicted me.'

I wish that, since my God is wise, and knoweth which is the best time, I may quietly wait for his salvation. Though it be a burden to attend the pleasure of a fool, who lets his opportunity slip, yet it is easy to stay for the resolutions of the wise, who do not delay

out of rashness, but reason, and defer only till an opportunity is come. It is likely, now I am in trouble, I shall be tempted to rid myself out of it by any means, whether right or wrong. When a man that hath lands is arrested for debt, the usurer offereth him money if he will mortgage his lands to his loss, thereby preventing his prison at present, but making way for his future poverty. When saints are distressed, Satan offereth his help for their deliverance. If Cranmer be in fetters, he will find a way for his freedom, if he will but deny his Saviour, and mortgage his soul to him, thereby easing him of present frights and fears in his flesh, but bringing him to far worse terror and horror in his conscience. How many hath he, by his cursed counsel, helped out of a fire on earth, to help them into the fire of hell ! Oh that, how greatly soever I may be distressed, though Philistines be upon me, and the Lord seem to depart from me, yet I may never, like Saul, run to a witch, or take any unlawful course for ease ;—thereby I shall but, as that wicked prince, increase my pain,—but ‘ wait on the Lord, who hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and look to him,’ Isa. viii. 17. To lengthen my patience, is the best way to shorten my troubles ; and to lessen my patience, is the speediest way to lengthen my pain. Women that are in labour, being impatient of their pangs, send sometimes in haste for a man-midwife, and thereby have suffered much more torture, and, it may be, have destroyed both their babes and themselves ; whereas, if they had waited with patience some hours longer, they might have been delivered with more ease and safety. I am my own foe if I offer to limit God. He is sure, though, to my depraved flesh, he be slow. ‘ I shall reap in time, if I faint not.’ My God never fails of coming at his own time, the best time, though he seldom comes at our time. ‘ The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie.’ Though it tarry, it will surely come ; it will not tarry one moment beyond God’s time. Servants wait on their masters, because of their dependence ; subjects wait on their sovereign, because of their distance, and are willing, when they prefer a petition, to stay their leisure for an answer. O my soul, hast thou not a greater dependence on thy God, when thy life and all thy comforts, thy being and all thy blessings, hang every moment on his mercy ? And is there not an infinitely greater distance betwixt thee, a poor worm, and heaven’s glorious majesty, when the whole creation in comparison of him is less than nothing ? Didst thou never see a poor beggar, that had nothing of her own to subsist on, but lived wholly on others’ charity, how quietly and resolvedly she sits herself down at the rich man’s

door ? how she begs and waits—she works and waits ? Though an alms be not presently given her, she doth not limit, but wait her good dame's leisure. Nay, though she be not only deferred, but denied, yet she will wait a long time in hope. Hast thou not infinitely more reason to wait on thy God in all respects ? Thy wants are more, thy dependence is greater ; he is engaged to thee by promise, and will be sure to perform them in season. Those indeed that receive but small sums, as some few pounds, have ready money ; but they who are to receive hundreds and thousands, are contented to take bond, and to give time, and do it cheerfully, when their estate lieth in safe hands. The men of the world, whose portion is in this life, are greedy for ready money ; and their wealth being but some small matter, a little empty honour, and brutish pleasure, and earthly treasure, thy God giveth them present pay. But thy estate, thy freedom from all evil, and the fruition of all good, in the eternal, full, and immediate enjoyment of the blessed God, is of unspeakable value, worth thousands and millions ; therefore thou mayest well be satisfied with the bond of the promises, and give him his own day for their accomplishment, especially considering thy wealth lieth in sure hands, and the public faith of heaven is engaged for thy security. Besides, O my soul, by thy patient continuance in well-doing, under the evil things which thou sufferest, thy joy groweth sweeter, thy glory higher, and thy reward greater. If thou patiently waitest and sufferest the fruit, which is of incomparable worth, to hang on the tree of the promise till it is ripe, it will be both the bigger and the pleasanter. They who reap their corn whilst it is green, find it to grow, and to be of smaller price than that which is ripe. Winter corn, though it be longer between sowing and reaping, is more worth than other corn. Oh, sow liberally, both in doing and suffering the will of thy God, and be patient till the harvest ! and the longer thou stayest, the more liberally thou shalt reap. Lord, though others,—like Tamar, because Shelah was not presently given her to be her husband, defiled herself with Judah ;—because the good things engaged to them are not presently bestowed, commit spiritual fornication with earthly vanities, and take them into their bosom and embraces ; let me never forego heaven in hope, for earth in hand ; nor, as that wicked king, draw a hellish use from a heavenly doctrine, and say, ' This evil is from the Lord, why should I wait on the Lord any longer ? ' but ' as the eyes of servants are to the hands of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden are to the hand of her mistress ; so let mine eyes wait upon the Lord my God till he have mercy on me, '

Ps. exxiii. 2. Though others are all for ready money, and therefore, like Demas, forsake Christ to embrace the present world, make me a follower of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises.

I wish that, whilst I have little in possession, I may rejoice in the hope of my reversion; and whilst I am pinched with present poverty, comfort my heart with that plenty in my father's house, which is preserved for me when I come to age. He that hath store of good bills and bonds is rich, though he hath not a penny in his purse. If others have the stars, I have the sun; if they have some cities, I have the kingdom; if they have some gifts, I am the child of the promise, and have all. 'Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all is mine.' The inventory of my estate includes all that earth and heaven are worth; and am not I a discontented, covetous wretch indeed, if the covenant of grace, the unsearchable riches in Christ, and the boundless God, will not satisfy me? Though it be a paradox, yet it is orthodox. When I have nothing, I possess all things; and will not all this afford matter of mirth? Oh that though others can only swim in a warm bath, and never sing but in a sunshiny day, I might, as Paul and Silas, sing in a prison at midnight. Belshazzar can rejoice in his stately palace, but the three children can sing in a fiery furnace. He that was hunted like a partridge in Israel, was the sweetest singer in Israel. It is both the duty and privilege of saints in all things to give thanks. A heathen can say,¹ Be it supposed a man hath a princely court, with gallant orchards, pleasant gardens, fruitful trees, were it not an unreasonable thing for this man to repine and complain that a few leaves are blown off by the wind, when the house, the trees, and the fruit remain? And shall not I, a Christian, be contented and cheerful, though the gale of providence hath blown off some small outward mercies, when my soul is safe, and my eternal salvation secure? Lord, let me, when I receive earthly comforts, live upon thee above them, and now I want them, live upon thee without them. Enable me so to see thy goodness in calling me to suffer here, that I might not suffer hereafter; in causing me to be scourged with whips, to prevent my scourging with scorpions; that I may not only kiss thy rod, but also thank thee for this infinite favour; and under my greatest cross, stab Satan, who longs to hear me blaspheme thee, to the heart with this dagger: 'The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'

¹ Senec. ad Polyb.

I wish that, though I am perishing in my outward condition, I may never envy those that are prospering in their profaneness. Alas! their seeming prosperity is their real misery, and calls more for heart pity than envy. The higher they are at this day, the lower they shall be another day. Their greatness is but like the swelling of a dropsy, which hasteneth their death and destruction. Their riches are but like fuel to make the unquenchable fire the hotter, in which they must fry for ever. Their pleasures are but shallow, skin-deep. They may sometimes counterfeit a smile; but if thou press these glowworms that in the night of this world make such a lightsome, fiery show of joy, thou findest nothing save a cold and crude moisture. But their pain is real; their sins gripe them many a time, and even cause their hearts to ache with the forethoughts of their future torments. What is a little giggling of the countenance, to the grumbling and racking of their consciences? or a few smiles of the brow, to that inward wolf which lieth gnawing at their breast? Their pleasures are short; their race is soon at an end; their sun soon sets; they shall soon be cut down as the grass, and wither as the green herb; but their pain is eternal. Their day of light is a winter day—short, and little heat of true comfort; but their night of darkness is long, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. Would I eat of their dishes to pay their reckoning? How unreasonable is it for one that is worth thousands, to envy him that acts the part of a lord, upon the stage of this world, for one short day of life, and afterwards is a beggar for ever in hell! What is all their wealth to spiritual wisdom? What is all their greatness to the eternal weight of glory? and what are their pleasantest gardens to the true paradise? The prosperous sinner hath some cause to envy the perishing saint; but the most afflicted saint hath cause to pity the most prosperous sinner. Besides, how dishonourable is it to my God that I should thus question his wisdom, and quarrel with the works of his providence. May not he dispose of his gifts according to his own will? Must he ask my leave in what measure, and to what persons, to distribute his favours? Is mine eye evil because his is good? Must I needs be sick because others are well, and make their plenty the foundation of my pain? Lord, though, when I am in adversity, mine enemies are joyful, yet now they are in prosperity, let not me be fretful. Though thou hast put them into fresh pastures, yet thou art but fattening them for the slaughter. When thou hast whipped out the folly that is in the hearts of thy children, thou wilt throw thy rod into the fire. Preserve me from fretting myself because of

evil-doers, or being envious at the wicked ; for there shall be no reward to the evil man—the candle of the wicked shall be put out.

I wish that, as Joshua, when Israel was discomfited before the men of Ai, went and fell down before the Lord, with his clothes rent, and dust on his head, to know the cause ; and when he had found out that Achan was the person, he stoned him to death ; so now my God hath distressed my soul, I may with a humble, broken heart inquire into the source of my sufferings, what accursed thing hath caused my sorrows, and never be quiet till I have discovered and executed that troubler of my peace. There is some root of bitterness in me, which occasions my God to write bitter things against me. How happy should I be, if I might both find and answer the end for which my God afflicteth me. Afflictions are servants which he hath under him. ‘ He saith to one, Go, and he goeth ; to another, Come, and he cometh : ’ he is infinitely wise, and never sends his servants abroad but upon weighty errands. I am sure, in general, the account upon which this messenger is come, is to persuade me to abandon and deliver up those traitors to execution, which I have lately entertained, and return to my obedience to his master. I may say to him, as the woman to the prophet, Art thou come to call my sins to remembrance ? But, oh that I knew what rebel it is that hath hid himself in my house undiscerned ! Sure enough there is some Sheba in it, which hath lift up his hand against the Son of David, for whose sake he hath sent his servant to besiege me ; and till the head of this traitor be thrown over the wall, he will not depart but in my destruction. Lord, help me, as the wise woman of Abel, to find out the cause why thou dost beleaguer me so closely and strictly. If my heart doth not deceive me, I would live peaceably and faithfully in Israel. I know assuredly thou seekest not to destroy any soul, much less to swallow up any part of thine own inheritance ; but some son of Bichri, some enemy to the crown and sceptre of thy Christ, hath, without my knowledge, sheltered himself in my heart. Oh that it might please thee to discover him to me, and to help me to destroy him, that thou mayest enlarge me. Do not condemn me ; shew me why thou contendest with me. I can never expect this swelling should decrease, or its throbbing and aching abate, unless the thorn in my flesh which causeth it, be taken out. In vain doth the sick man tumble and toss from one side of his bed to the other for ease, whilst his disease, the original of his pain, continueth. Oh that, though others are most industrious how their afflictions may

be removed, I might be most industrious how mine may be improved; that mine eyes, like the windows of Solomon's temple, might be broad inwards, to find out my own provocation, and that I might not be asleep, and so lose the season and benefit of God's visitation. 'Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting,' Ps. cxxxix.

I wish that I may not only feel, but also see, the hand of my God in all the afflictions that befall me. Affliction doth not spring out of the earth, nor trouble come out of the ground. The evil of sin hath only a deficient cause, but the evil of suffering hath an efficient cause. My God challengeth it, as one of the prerogatives of his crown, to make war or peace. Is there any evil in the city, and I have not done it? Could I but see my God at the end of all my troubles, how silent should I be under it! how submissive to it! and how sedulous to improve it! He is my Father, correcting me out of love for my fault, and therefore I must reform. He is my sovereign, punishing me according to law, and therefore I must not resist. He is my God, who doth whatsoever he pleaseth, and therefore I may not so much as repine. He is too great to be despised, too good to be suspected, and too wise to be questioned. The whole earth cannot lessen, and hell itself cannot add, one scruple to the weight which he hath allotted me. My proportion was debated and concluded at heaven's council table from eternity, and is surely beyond all exception. To this very suffering, both for the nature and measure, was I fore-appointed. His arm is almighty, and so above all opposition. Who ever contended with him, and prevailed? He that strikes me, loves me; though his hand be against me, his heart is towards me; nay, it is love that strikes every stroke, and shall I be so unthankful as to despise it, or so unbelieving as to despair under it? It were extreme folly to doubt of his wisdom, the greatest madness to oppose his power, and monstrous ingratitude to slight his love. Lord, thy servant David could say, 'Let the righteous (man) smite me, though only with his tongue; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil,' Ps. cxli. 5. And shall not I, when thou, the righteous God, art pleased to favour me so much as to strike me with thy hand, take it kindly at thy hands? Oh, whatsoever hatred others may return for such friendly reproofs, let me love thee the more, especially considering that by such stripes I am healed; that such wounding is an excellent oil to cure my spiritual wickedness.

I wish that I may divert the point of that anger against instruments or efficient, which I am prone to under the cross, by turning it upon myself, and the procuring cause of all my sin. The worms which pain me are bred in my own bowels; the vipers which sting me are hatched in my own bosom; the rod which whips me is of my own making; and the dart which wounds me of my own shooting; and have I the least cause of complaining? Men and devils could not afflict me; the great God would not, if I did not afflict myself. I may well accept the punishment of mine own iniquity. Some that have more grace have fewer mercies, and that have less sin, have more afflictions than I. Besides, in vain do I, like the silly deer, mourn and bleed inwardly for the pain which I endure whilst the dart sticks in my side.

I may long enough work at the labour in vain, in seeking to dam up the stream whilst the spring is unstopped, and in working at the pump whilst the leak continueth. Oh that all my sorrow and anger might be spent upon my sins, the original of all my sufferings. That all this water, which I am apt daily to draw and spill, might be employed in helping the mill of my heart to grind and consume my corruptions. Oh what pity is it that such pearls should be cast away upon swine, that such sweet water should be cast away upon nasty sinks, which would serve for most excellent uses!

Lord, let all my anger be against myself for provoking thee to anger, and let all my sorrow and grief be for my sins, whereby I have grieved thy good Spirit, and made the soul of thy dear Son sorrowful unto death. Let mine eyes and heart be ever more towards that which dishonoureth thy name, than that which disturbeth my peace. Though the sting of sin to others be affliction, let the sting of affliction to me be sin: and when the desire of their soul is, Take away this plague, entreat the Lord to take away this death only, the prayer of my soul may be, Lord, make me to know the plague of my own heart. Take away this body of death, take away all iniquity, receive me graciously, so will I render the calves of my lips.

I wish that I may consider my God loveth me when he lasheth me; and that he therefore lasheth me because he loveth me. Though Absalom were banished for his fault, and not admitted to see David's face, yet the king's heart was towards Absalom. Now, my God denieth me his favourable presence, and makes me feel the effects of his fury, yet his heart is towards me. He is pained in my pain, in all my afflictions he is afflicted.

Whilst he is a God correcting, he is a God in covenant: 'I will

bring the third part into the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God,' Zech. xiii. 9. Though the son of Joseph speak so roughly to me, and seem to deal so ruggedly with me, to bring my sins to remembrance, and to try my love to my brother Benjamin, yet all the while he keeps his affection and relation, and will ere long speak plainly to me, I am thy brother Joseph. Because he affecteth me, he afflicteth me; but because he hateth others, he will not take the pains to scourge them. He useth not the rod where he intends to use the sword. The whipping-post is for them that shall escape execution. It is the same love which chose me from eternity which chasteneth me in time. There is not a twig in my rod, but love fetched it, nor a drachm in my potion, but love infused it. Love was the root upon which they grew, love was the hand with which they were gathered; shall not I accept it? Pure love denieth those outward mercies to me, which pure wrath granteth to others. The father will allow his servants that luscious, unwholesome fruit which they are so greedy for, when he denieth it to his children. Oh, what an unbelieving heart have I, to think I have less love, because I have less allowance, than others! The power of my God is as great in making a little fly as in making a great ox; and his love may be as great, often greater, in giving a penny, as in giving many pounds. If I am his child, though my portion be but a penny, it hath the image and superscription of my Father's love, which is better than life.

Lord, strengthen my inward sight, that I may behold thy love in the darkest night of affliction; be pleased to enable me, by the eye of faith, to spell and read thy love in the hardest characters—nay, when thou writest it in red letters, in letters of blood: for I know that thy thoughts are not as my thoughts, nor thy ways as my ways. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are thy thoughts higher than my thoughts.' Thou knowest the thoughts which thou hast towards me, thoughts of good and not of evil, to give me an expected end.

I wish that I could set before me those worthy patterns of constancy and courage, under the greatest crosses, which are chronicled in Scripture, to encourage me to undergo my sufferings with patience; it is some comfort in my journey, though the road be deep and dirty, to travel with much and good company. All the saints in the several parts of the world, at this day, go to heaven in the same way of sufferings; the same afflictions are accomplished

in my brethren, which are in the world ; they that are gone before, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and the rest, did all enter into glory through this strait gate ; there is no temptation hath befallen me, but such as is common to men, to Christians. Some indeed found the path so full of serpents, that their blood was sucked out as they journeyed ; they lost their lives on earth, to find them in heaven ; but all found it full of thorns and briers. Some had trial of cruel mockings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment ; others were stoned, were sawn asunder, were slain with the sword ; they wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented. The wilderness to them all was the way to Canaan : they went by the cross to their crown. I have a threefold advantage by their examples ; I see that the way to bliss (though it be deep) is passable. I do not undertake an impossible task, when I set out for the Father's house ; the noble army of martyrs waded through it, even there where it was much out of their depths. It is doleful to travel in a very bad way, that is wholly untrodden ; but I may with the more delight pass on, when I see the steps of thousands that have passed before me. They had the same flesh and blood with me, they were as sensible of pain as I, they loved their relations as well as I ; life was as dear to them as to me ; yet they trampled upon their relations, scorned their scorers, triumphed in their tribulations, jeopardized their lives in the high places of the field, endured the shot of earth and hell, fought every inch of their way through men and devils, and at last went off the ground (though killed) conquerors, carrying with them the spoils and trophies they had gained from their enemies, as tokens of their valour and victory. Why may not my soul fight the Lord's battles with the same success ? Indeed, had that power by which they prevailed been their own, I should never expect the same event ; but they were of themselves as weak as I ; my God can be as strong in me as in them. Oh that I might have their grace, and then what end my God pleaseth.

Again, the heroic acts of the Lord's worthies encourage me to such noble enterprises. How famous are they for their bloody combats in the cause of Christ ! How brightly do their names sparkle (as stars in the firmament) in the Holy Scripture ! The Roman generals were never so illustrious and honourable for their triumphs, as Christ's private soldiers for their trials ; the poorest saint that is a sufferer, is more illustrious than Cæsar the conqueror. The greatest battles that ever Alexander fought and won, was but children's play with pop-guns, in comparison of the noble exploits

of the soldiers of the Lord of hosts in their conflicts with, and conquests over, the world and hell. Who would not be ambitious to follow such file-leaders! Once more, I have the less reason to expect freedom from the cross, when the people of God in all ages have been afflicted. My betters have suffered worse things than I suffer. Those that were more holy than I, have suffered more hardships than I. Christ himself, who was free from transgression, was yet fullest of afflictions. He was a man of sorrows, made up of sorrow. His whole life, from the womb to the tomb, was a circle of sorrows. When Christ himself hath drunk to me in a cup of affliction, shall I not pledge him? Should there not be a symmetry betwixt the head and the members? God had one Son without sin, but no son without suffering. There is no son whom the father chasteneth not. And would not I be used like a son? Cannot I be contented to fare as my brethren?

Lord, let me never join in that presumptuous petition of the sons of Zebedee, to desire to fare better than my fellows; but seeing I am compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, help me to 'lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset me, and to run with patience the race set before me, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.'

I wish that, now I am afflicted, I may be the more pious, because my God aimeth therein at my spiritual profit. How much do worldlings suffer to increase their heaps of earth, though death, like a passenger's foot, will trample it all down! How do they run, and ride, waste their time, wear out their strength, lose their sleep, venture their health and life, nay, and inestimable souls! Like spaniels, they follow their master, the world, through hedge and ditch, through thick and thin, and all for a few bones. How busy are they, like bees, flying to this and that field; fighting by the way with wasps and drones, to carry a little more honey to their hives, though after all their pains and toil, within a few days they must be consumed with flames and leave it! And have not I more cause to suffer any hardship, and to take any pains for those riches which are durable, which will be current in the other world? How much do wicked men suffer for the gratifying their lusts! They lavish their estates, undo their children, dishonour their names, wreck their own bodies, and ruin their families, by gaming or uncleanness, or intemperance. How do they lackey after the devil, like pack-horses, doing his drudgery, and bearing his burdens all

the days of their life, though, after all their hard service, he will turn them at the night of death, with their galled backs, into the stable of hell ! And shall not I, for the sanctifying my soul, be willing to endure what my God calls me to suffer in the way to heaven ? If need be, I am in heaviness. The rod of God is as needful for me as the word of God. The plough and harrow are as necessary for the earth, in order to the harvest, as the seed is. By it he openeth mine ears, and sealeth my instruction. Many blows are needful to fell a stout oak, and many strokes are necessary to subdue my stubborn heart. Resty horses will not move till they bleed with the spur. How little is corn worth, or to what use doth it serve, till it be cut down with the sickle, beaten out with the flail, ground small in the mill, and baked in the oven ? And of how little use I should be to my soul, and my Saviour, without affliction, my God knoweth. Oh that self-love might make me as willing to suffer, as my God is to have me suffer !

Lord, thou comparest me to a vine ; I know the best vine, if not pruned, will run out into superfluous stems, and become less fruitful ; so will my soul, if thou shouldst deny me the favour of pruning, run out into luxuriant branches, and become less serviceable to thy majesty. If it be painful to bleed, it is far worse to burn. Thou art a wise husbandman, and knowest what is needful for all the plants in thy vineyard ; rather prune me with the knife, that I may bring forth more fruit, than suffer me to decay and wither, and to be cut up at last with thy bill for the unquenchable fire.

I wish that the consideration of my God's wisdom and tenderness may make me more cheerful and contented in all my trials. Though his anger at sin provoke him to scourge me for it, yet his love to my soul will move him to proportion his strokes to my strength. He hath a perfect estimate by him of all my spiritual riches, and therefore I need not fear to be taxed above my estate. He never yet called any of his children to a martyr's fire, till he had indued them with a martyr's faith. If my body were distempered, and my skilful physician thought fit to purge me several days together ; though I were fearful of my own strength to bear it, yet I should believe him in his calling, and being confident of his knowledge of me, and love to me, undergo it with courage. My God is fully acquainted what the diseases of my soul require, and what the strength of my soul can endure. He is the only wise God, whether he purge me much or little, once or often. Oh that I might rely on his love, and submit to his wisdom ! I read indeed that the saints of God ' have been pressed out of measure, above

strength, insomuch that they despaired even of life,' 2 Cor. i. 8. But yet I believe that, at the same time, they were corrected in measure, for they were delivered, and did escape. They were pressed above their own human strength, but not above their divine strength. How often hath the voice of their flesh been, 'I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul,' when it hath quickly been corrected with the voice of faith, 'I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living!' Lord, how many a time hath this weak vessel been loaded so deep in the vast seas of troubles, that the waters have come up to the brim, and I have been ready to cry out, with thy disciples of old, 'Save me, master, I perish?' Is not this frail flesh a ship of thine own building? and is not the burden it carrieth of thine own lading? Thou knowest how deep it is already, and I know thou wilt not overcharge it. It is impossible for me to sink whilst I sail in thy love. Though a deluge overflow the whole earth, yet I need not fear drowning, whilst I am housed in that ark, if thou pleasest to shut me in. I confess he is a presumptuous child that would choose his own rod; yet, oh that I might prevail not to be scourged with the withdrawings of thy comfortable presence! Blessed Father, by the strength and the sense of thy love, I can bear the greatest load; but if that be withdrawn, I am ready to fall, nay, to die, under the lightest. I find a wounded estate, I feel a wounded body, and if thou put a wounded spirit upon me too, who can bear it? Oh what a night of heaviness and sorrow will ensue, if thou, O Sun of righteousness, shouldst depart? Nevertheless, I yield to thy judgment, and rest on thine affection: for thou art infinitely wise, infinitely loving, infinitely faithful, and wilt not suffer me to be tempted above what I am able, but wilt with the temptation also make a way to escape, that I may be able to bear it, 1 Cor. x. 3.

I wish that the thought of my future happiness may make me joyful under my present hardships. My hope of the rivers of God's own pleasures, and of the glory to be revealed, may well bear up my heart, and counterbalance all my pain and disgrace. What though I am under the rod, whilst I am a child, and am denied those toys and rattles which others have to play with! yet I am a great heir, and shall shortly be of age and enjoy the inheritance, when I shall be above both that rod and those rattles. As I now have more sufferings than others, so then I shall have more solace than others; as I exceed them in affliction, so I shall excel them in consolation. The deeper I am ploughed, the greater will my harvest be. In all the furrows of my misery are sown the seeds of saving mercy. And the more liberally I sow, the more

liberally I shall reap. It is true I sow in tears, but I shall reap in joy ; I may well be contented with a wet seed-time, when I am sure of a sunshiny and joyful harvest. Oh that I had the wings of a dove, that I could fly up to heaven, by faith and meditation, and see that vast and boundless recompense of reward ! surely I should then leave my mournful tone, and sing another tune. These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work in me, or work me for, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. For my afflictions I shall have glory. Who would not, with Joseph, go through a prison into a palace, and with Jésus suffer many things, and so enter into his glory ! My afflictions are light, but my glory is a weight, a far more exceeding weight ; I may well carry a little bag of thorns, when I shall be rewarded for it with a heavy bag of pearls. Who would not endure a few affronts for a large kingdom ? My afflictions are but for a moment, but my weight of glory is eternal. I do but pass through a short shower to an endless banquet ; and sail through the narrow seas, which are quickly passed, in a moment, to an everlasting, blessed haven. Besides, these light afflictions work and fit me for this weight of glory ; as by the fire the plate is wrought into a vessel of gold for a prince's table. The boiling waters are not more necessary for clothes, that are to be cast into a pure scarlet dye, than afflictions are to prepare my soul for my God's presence. Lord, it is thy pleasure that every man shall have both a heaven and a hell ; the wicked man hath his heaven on earth, his hell is to come. His hell is miserable, because eternal ; his heaven is uncomfortable, because, at best, but short and uncertain. My hell is in this world, in manifold temptations ; my heaven in the other world, in endless bliss. If it be ill with me in this world, it is well with me, because my hell is so little, and so short. Let me never be so covetous as to desire two heavens ; only let my hell here fit me for my heaven hereafter, and let my heaven hereafter support me under my hell here ; 'for I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed.'

Finally, I wish that I may gather grapes from these thorns, and figs from these thistles. I mean, that I may so demean myself, like a Christian, under the greatest cross, that I may turn these stones into bread, and these blows on my outward man, into blessings to my inward man ; yea, that my joy and obedience may be at the highest, when my worldly comforts are at the lowest. Although I want the streams, what do or can I lose whilst I enjoy

the fountain? What conditions is there wherein I may not draw water with joy out of that well of salvation? Am I in fetters? the Son hath made me free, and therefore I am free indeed. Though my prison be some low, dark dungeon, yet there I may find more light than in a court, and may pity the darkness of others' liberty. They have but the natural sun to enlighten their world, which every cloud dimmeth and hideth from their eyes; but the Father of lights (in comparison of whom all the bright stars of heaven are but as the snuff of some dim candle) shines into my pit, and makes it a heaven of comfort, which the world intended to be a hell of sorrow. What darkness can be where the Father of lights shineth? Am I banished my country? If I were banished my God, I might weep and wail; but when neither earth nor ocean can separate betwixt him and me, I may well be satisfied. If heaven be my home, my God is my heaven; and so, wherever I am with him, I am at home. He cannot be said to fly that never stirs from his house, from his home. When I have all my relations by me, and all my possessions with me, I cannot be called an exile; I have all these, and infinitely more, in one God. Am I hated of the world? It is a good sign that I am not a man of the world, for the world loveth its own. It cannot hate me so much as God hates it, nor more than it hates God. What need I care to be hated of them who hate, and are hated of, God himself? Surely he is a wicked servant who would fare better than his master; and he is unworthy of God's love who cannot think it happiness enough without the world's favour. Well, let the world condemn me, I will be revenged, by requiting it with like for like. I will have as base and contemptible thoughts of it, through the strength of Christ, as it can have of me. Am I poor? It is impossible; I cannot be less than vastly rich, whilst I possess him who is the mighty possessor of heaven and earth. What though I have no money! I have the pearl of price, worth millions; and a treasure in heaven, above all apprehensions. I have no lands on earth, but I have the inheritance of the saints in light. That is improperly called riches, which may be lost, which must be left. My estate is riches in the most proper sense, for it is durable; it is the good part which can never be taken from me. If I forego all to my skin, yet I have not lost the least part of my portion; for if he be rich that hath something, how rich is he that hath the maker and owner of all things! Am I diseased in my body? my physician is both omniscient and almighty, and therefore I cannot miscarry. My soul is sound, and I must not

say I am sick when my sins are forgiven me. Although my house doth not grow, nor my cattle, nor my corn, nor my children are sure to me, yet my God hath made with me an everlasting covenant, stable in all things and sure, which is all my salvation, and all my desire. Oh, what can I want who have all-sufficiency for my supply? My God is liberty in prison, home in banishment, light in darkness, glory in disgrace, life in death, and all things in nothing. Oh make me fearful of nothing but thine anger, and careful of nothing but thy favour, which, whilst I enjoy, I shall be happy in spite of earth and hell.

Lord, help me, whilst I am here in these lower regions, amidst such boisterous winds and waters, to endure all with patience, to be a gainer by every providence, and in all things so to obey thy precepts, that when my body shall be parted from my soul, my soul may be parted from all these sufferings, and translated to thine upper region of heaven, whither those vapours which cause these storms and tempests can never ascend; where all tears shall be wiped from my eyes; where thou wilt give me beauty for ashes, the garment of gladness for the spirit of heaviness, (and, after all my grievous conflicts with the flesh, the world, and the wicked one,) a crown of glory on my head, a song of triumph in my mouth, a palm of victory in my hand, and to reign with Christ for ever and ever. Amen.