

WOE TO DRUNKARDS.

To whom is woe? To whom is sorrow? To whom is strife? &c. In the end it will bite like a serpent, and sting like a cockatrice.—PROV. XXIII. 29, 32.

SEER, art thou also blind? Watchman, art thou also drunk or asleep? Isa. xxi. ; or hath a spirit of slumber put out thine eyes? Up to thy watch-tower; what descriest thou? Ah, Lord! what end or number is there of the vanities which mine eyes are weary of beholding? But what seest thou? I see men walking like the tops of trees shaken with the wind, like masts of ships reeling on the tempestuous seas. Drunkenness I mean, that hateful night-bird, which was wont to wait for the twilight, to seek nooks and corners, to avoid the hooting and wonderment of boys and girls. Now, as it were some eaglet, to dare the sunlight, to fly abroad at high noon in every street, in open markets and fairs, without fear or shame, without control or punishment, to the disgrace of the nation, the outfacing of magistracy and ministry, the utter undoing (without timely prevention) of health and wealth, piety and virtue, town and country, church and commonwealth. And dost thou, like a dumb dog, hold thy peace at these things? Dost thou, with Solomon's sluggard, fold thine hands in thy bosom, and give thyself to ease and drowsiness, while the envious man causeth the noisomest and basest of weeds to overrun the choicest Eden of God? Up and arise, lift up thy voice, spare not, and cry aloud. What shall I cry? Cry woe, and woe again, unto the crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim. Take up a parable, and tell them how it stingeth like the cockatrice, declare unto them the deadly poison of this odious sin. Shew them also the sovereign antidote and cure of it, in the cup that was drunk off by him that was able to overcome it. Cause them to behold the brazen serpent, and be healed. And what though some of these deaf adders will not be charmed nor cured, yea, though few or none of these swinish herd of habitual drunkards, accustomed to wallow in their mire, yea, deeply and irrecoverably plunged by legions of devils into the dead sea of their filthiness, what if not one of them will be washed and made clean, but turn again to their vomit, and trample the pearls of all admonition under feet, yea, turn again, and rend their reprovers with scoffs and scorn, making jests and songs on their ale-bench; yet may some young ones be deterred, and some novices reclaimed, some parents and magistrates awakened to prevent and suppress

the spreading of this gangrene, and God have his work in such as belong to his grace. And what is impossible to the work of his grace? Go to then now, ye drunkards, listen not what I, or any ordinary hedge-priest (as you style us), but that most wise and experienced royal preacher, hath to say unto you. And because you are a dull and thick-eared generation, he first deals with you by way of question, a figure of force and impression.* 'To whom is woe,' &c. You use to say, Woe be to hypocrites. It is true woe be to such, and all other witting and willing sinners; but there are no kind of offenders on whom woe doth so palpably, inevitably attend as to you drunkards. You promise yourselves mirth, pleasure, and jollity in your cups; but for one drop of your mad mirth be sure of gallons and tuns of woe, gall, wormwood, and bitterness here and hereafter. Other sinners shall taste of the cup, but you shall drink of the dregs of God's wrath and displeasure. 'To whom is strife?' You talk of good fellowship and friendship, but wine is a rager and tumultuous make-bate, and sets you a quarrelling and meddling. When wit is out of the head, and strength out of the body, it thrusts even cowards and dastards, unfenced and unarmed, into needless frays and combats. And then to whom are wounds, broken heads, blue eyes, maimed limbs? You have a drunken by-word, 'Drunkards take no harm;' but how many are the mishaps and untimely misfortunes that be-tide such, which, though they feel not in drink, they carry as marks and brands to their grave? You pretend you drink healths, and for healths; but to whom are all kind of diseases, infirmities, deformities, pearly faces, palsies, dropsies, headaches, if not to drunkards?

Upon these premises he forcibly infers his sober and serious advice. Look upon these woful effects and evils of drunkenness, and look not upon the wine, look upon the blue wounds, upon the red eyes it cansteth, and look not on the red colour when it sparkleth in the cup. If there were no worse than these, yet would no wise man be overtaken with wine; as if he should say, What see you in the cup or drink, that countervailth these dregs that lie in the bottom? Behold, this is the sugar you are to look for, and the tang it leaves behind. Woe, and alas! sorrow and strife, shame, poverty, and diseases, these are enough to make it odious, but that which followeth withal will make it hideous and fearful. For Solomon, duly considering that he speaks to men past shame and grace, senseless of blows, and therefore much more of reasons and words, insisteth not upon these petty woes, which they, bewitched and besotted with the love of wine, will easily oversee and overleap, but sets before their eyes the direful end and fruit, the black and poisonous tail, of this sin. 'In the end it stingeth like the serpent, it biteth like the cockatrice' (or adder), saith our new translation.

All interpreters agree that he means some most virulent serpent, whose poison is present and deadly.† All the woes he hath mentioned before were but as the sting of some emmet, wasp, or nettle, in comparison of this cockatrice, which is even unto death, death speedy, death painful, and woful death, and that as naturally and inevitably as opium procureth sleep, as hellebore purgeth, or any poison killeth.

Three-forked is this sting, and threefold is the death it procureth to all that are stung therewith. The first is the death of grace, the second is of the body, the third is of soul and body eternal. All sin is the poison

* *Μεγάλη τῆς ἐρωτήσεως ἐνέργεια.*—Basil.

† *Φάρμακον Σανατήφορον, φθοροποιόν, δηλητήριο.* 'Novissimo tanquam serpens mordebit, et tanquam regulus punget.'—(Montanus et Mercerus.) 'Tanquam hæmorrhoids vel dipeas.'—(Tremelius.)

wherewithal the old serpent and red dragon envenoms the soul of man, but no sin (except it be that which is unto death) so mortal as this, which though not ever unpardonably, yet for the most part is also irrecoverably and inevitably unto death. Seest thou one bitten with any other snake, there is hope and help, as the father said of his son, when he had information of his gaming, of his prodigality, yea, of his whoring; but when he heard that he was poisoned with drunkenness, he gave him for dead, his case for desperate and forlorn. Age and experience often cures the other; but this increaseth with years, and parteth not till death. Whoring is a deep ditch, yet some few shall a man see return and lay hold on the ways of life, one of a thousand, but scarce one drunkard of ten thousand. One, Ambrose mentions, and one have I known, and but one of all that ever I knew or heard of. Often have I been asked, and often have I inquired, but never could meet with an instance, save one or two at the most. I speak of drunkards, not of one drunken,* of such who rarely and casually have, Noah-like, been surprised, overtaken at unawares. But if once a custom, ever necessity. Wine takes away the heart, and spoils the brain, overthrows the faculties and organs of repentance and resolution.† And is it not just with God, that he who will put out his natural light, should have his spiritual extinguished? He that will deprive himself of reason, should lose also the guide and pilot of reason, God's Spirit and grace; he that will wittingly and willingly make himself an habitation of unclean spirits, should not dispossess them at his own pleasure? Most aptly therefore is it translated by Tremelius, *hemorrhoids*, which Gesner confounds with the *dipsas*, or thirsty serpent, whose poison breedeth such thirst, drought, and inflammation, like that of ratsbane, that they never leave drinking till they burst and die withal. Would it not grieve and pity any Christian soul, to see a towardly hopeful young man, well-natured, well-nurtured, stung with this cockatrice, bewailing his own case, crying out against the baseness of the sin, inveighing against company, melting under the persuasions of friends, yea, protesting against all enticements, vow, covenant, and seriously indent with himself, and his friends, for the relinquishing of it; and yet if he meet with a companion that holds but up his finger, he follows him as a fool to the stocks, and as an ox to the slaughter-house, having no power to withstand the temptation, but in he goes with him to the tipping-house, not considering that its chambers are the chambers of death, and the guests, the guests of death; and there he continues as one bewitched, or conjured in a spell, out of which he returns not till he hath emptied his purse of money, his head of reason, and his heart of all his former seeming grace. There his eyes behold the strange woman, his heart speaketh perverse things, becoming heartless, as one (saith Solomon) in the heart of the sea, resolving to continue, and return to his vomit, whatever it cost him, to make it his daily work. 'I was sick, and knew it not. I was struck, and felt it not; when I awake, I will seek it yet still,' ver. 84, 85. And why indeed (without a miracle) should any expect that one stung with this viper should shake it off, and ever recover of it again? Yea, so far are they from recovering themselves, that they infect and become contagious and pestilent to all they come near; the dragon infusing his venom, and assimilating his elves to himself in no sin so much as in this, that it becomes as good as meat and drink to them, to spend their wits and money, to compass ale-house after ale-house, yea, town after town, to transform others with their Circean cups, till they have made them

* De ebrioso, non de ebrio; cujus vivere est bibere.

† Principia lædit et cædit, hominem in fungum et testudinem vertit.

brutes and swine worse than themselves. The adulterer and usurer desire to enjoy their sin alone, but the chiefest pastime of a drunkard is to heat and overcome others with wine, that he may discover their nakedness, and glory in their foil and folly. In a word, excess of wine and the spirit of grace are opposites: the former expels the latter out of the heart, as smoke doth bees out of the hive, and makes the man a mere slave and prey to Satan and his snares; when by this poison he hath put out his eyes, and spoiled him of his strength, he useth him as the Philistines did Samson, leads him in a string whither he pleaseth, like a very drudge, scorn, and make-sport to himself and his imps, makes him grind in the mill of all kind of sins and vices. And that I take to be the reason why drunkenness is not specially prohibited in any one of the ten commandments, because it is not the single breach of any one, but in effect the violation of all and every one; it is no one sin, but all sins, because it is the inlet and sluice to all other sins.* The devil having moistened and steeped him in his liquor, shapes him like soft clay into what mould he pleaseth; having shaken off his rudder and pilot, dashes his soul upon what rocks, sands, and syrtes he listeth, and that with as much ease as a man may push down his body with the least thrust of his hand or finger. He that in his right wits and sober mood seems religious, modest, chaste, courteous, secret; in his drunken fits swears, blasphemes, rages, strikes, talks filthily, blabs all secrets, commits folly, knows no difference of persons or sexes, becomes wholly at Satan's command, as a dead organ to be enacted at his will and pleasure.† O that God would be pleased to open the eyes of some drunkard to see what a dunghill and carrion his soul becomes, and how loathsome effects follow upon this spiritual death, and sting of this cockatrice, which is the fountain of the other two following, temporal and eternal death.

And well may it be, that some such as are altogether fearless and careless of the former death, will yet tremble and be moved with that which I shall in the second place tell them. Among all other sins that are, none brings forth bodily death so frequently as this, none so ordinarily slays in the act of sin as this. And what can be more horrible than to die in the act of a sin without the act of repentance? I pronounce no definitive sentence of damnation upon any particular so dying; but what door of hope or comfort is left to their friends behind of their salvation? The whoremaster, he hopes to have a space and time to repent in age, though sometimes it pleaseth God that death strikes Cosbi and Zimri napping, as the devil is said to slay one of the popes in the instant of his adultery, and carry him quick to hell. The swearer and blasphemer hath commonly space, though seldom grace to repent and amend; and some rare examples stories afford, of some taken with oaths and blasphemies in their mouths. The thief and oppressor may live, and repent, and make restitution, as Zaccheus, though I have seen one slain right out with the timber he stole half an hour before; and heard of one that having stolen a sheep, and laying it down upon a stone to rest him, was ginned and hanged with the struggling of it about his neck. But these are extraordinary and rare cases. God sometimes practising martial law, and doing present execution, lest fools should say in their hearts, there were no God, or judgment; but conniving and deferring the most, that men might expect a judge coming, and a solemn day

* *Omne vitium incendit et detegit, obstantem malis conatibus verecundiam remouet* — (Senec. Epist. 84.) *Ebrietas in se culpas complectitur omnes.*

† *Musto dolia ipsa rumpuntur, sic vino exestuante quidquid in imo latet effertur.* (Idem Ibidem.)

of judgment to come. But this sin of drunkenness is so odious to him, that he makes itself justice, judge, and executioner, slaying the ungodly with misfortune, bringing them to untimely, shameful ends in brutish and bestial manner, often in their own vomit and ordure; sending them sottish, sleeping, and senseless to hell, not leaving them either time, or reason, or grace to repent, and cry so much as 'Lord, have mercy upon us.' Were there (as in some cities in Italy) an office kept, or a record and register by every coroner in shires and counties, of such dismal events which God hath avenged this sin withal, what a volume would it have made within these few years in this our nation! How terrible a theatre of God's judgments against drunkards, such as might make their hearts to bleed and relent, if not their ears to tingle, to hear of a taste of some few such noted and remarkable examples of God's justice, as have come within the compass of mine own notice and certain knowledge; I think I should offend to conceal them from the world, whom they may happily keep from being the like to others, themselves.

An alewife in Kesgrave, near to Ipswich, who would needs force three serving-men (that had been drinking in her house, and were taking their leaves), to stay and drink the three *outs* first (that is, wit out of the head, money out of the purse, ale out of the pot), as she was coming towards them with the pot in her hand, was suddenly taken speechless and sick, her tongue swollen in her mouth, never recovered speech, the third day after died. This Sir Anthony Felton, the next gentleman and justice, with divers other eye-witnesses of her in sickness, related to me; whereupon I went to the house with two or three witnesses, inquired the truth of it.

Two servants of a brewer in Ipswich, drinking for a rump of a turkey, struggling in their drink for it, fell into a scalding caldron backwards; whereof the one died presently, the other lingeringly and painfully, since my coming to Ipswich.

Anno 1619. A miller in Bromeswell coming home drunk from Wood-bridge (as he oft did), would needs go and swim in the mill-pond. His wife and servants, knowing he could not swim, dissuaded him, once by entreaty got him out of the water, but in he would needs go again, and there was drowned. I was at the house to inquire of this, and found it to be true.

In Barnwell, near to Cambridge, one at the sign of the plough, a lusty young man, with two of his neighbours, and one woman in their company, agreed to drink a barrel of strong beer. They drunk up the vessel. Three of them died within four and twenty hours, the fourth hardly escaped, after great sickness. This I have under a justice of peace's hand, near dwelling, besides the common fame.

A butcher in Haslingfield, hearing the minister inveigh against drunkenness, being at his cups in the alehouse, fell a jesting and scoffing at the minister and his sermons. As he was drinking, the drink, or something in the cup, quackled him, stuck so in his throat that he could not get it up nor down, but strangled him presently.

At Tillingham, in Dengy Hundred, in Essex, three young men meeting to drink strong waters, fell by degrees to half pints. One fell dead in the room, and the other,* prevented by company coming in, escaped not without much sickness.

At Bungey, in Norfolk, three coming out of an alehouse in a very dark evening, swore they thought it was not darker in hell itself. One of them fell off the bridge into the water, and was drowned. The second fell off his

* That is, 'the others.'—Ed.

horse. The third, sleeping on the ground by the river's side, was frozen to death. This have I often heard, but have no certain ground for the truth of it.

A bailiff of Hadly, upon the Lord's day, being drunk at Melford, would needs get upon his mare to ride through the street, affirming (as the report goes) that his mare would carry him to the devil. His mare casts him off, and broke his neck instantly. Reported by sundry sufficient witnesses.

Company drinking in an alehouse at Harwich in the night, over against one Mr Russel's, and by him, out of his window, once or twice willed to depart. At length he came down, and took one of them, and made as if he would carry him to prison, who, drawing his knife, fled from him, and was, three days after, taken out of the sea, with the knife in his hand. Related to me by Mr Russel himself, mayor of the town.

At Tenby, in Pembroke-shire, a drunkard being exceeding drunk, broke himself all to pieces off an high and steep rock in a most fearful manner, and yet the occasion and circumstances of his fall so ridiculous as I think not fit to relate, lest in so serious a judgment I should move laughter to the reader.

A glazier in Chancery Lane, in London, noted formerly for profession, fell to a common course of drinking, whereof, being oft by his wife and many Christian friends admonished, yet presuming much of God's mercy to himself, continued therein, till upon a time, having surcharged his stomach with drink, he fell vomiting, broke a vein, lay two days in extreme pain of body and distress of mind, till in the end, recovering a little comfort, he died. Both these examples related to me by a gentleman of worth, upon his own knowledge.

Four sundry instances of drunkards wallowing and tumbling in their drink, slain by carts, I forbear to mention, because such examples are so common and ordinary.

A yeoman's son, in Northamptonshire, being drunk at Wellingborough on a market-day, would needs ride his horse in a bravery over the ploughed lands, fell from his horse, and brake his neck. Reported to me by a kinsman of his own.

A knight notoriously given to drunkenness, carrying sometimes pails of drink into the open field to make people drunk withal, being upon a time drinking with company, a woman comes in, delivering him a ring with this poesy, 'Drink and die,' saying to him, This is for you, which he took and wore, and within a week after came to his end by drinking. Reported by sundry, and justified by a minister dwelling within a mile of the place.

Two examples have I known of children that murdered their own mothers in drink, and one notorious drunkard that attempted to kill his father, of which being hindered, he fired his barn, and was afterward executed. One of these formerly in print.

At a tavern in Bread Street, in London, certain gentlemen drinking health to their lords on whom they had dependence, one desperate wretch steps to the table's end, lays hold on a pottle pot full of Canary sack, swears a deep oath, What! will none here drink a health to my noble lord and master? and so setting the pottle pot to his mouth, drinks it off to the bottom; was not able to rise up or to speak when he had done, but fell into a deep snoring sleep, and being removed, laid aside, and covered by one of the servants of the house, attending the time of the drinking, was within the space of two hours irrecoverably dead. Witnessed at the time of the printing hereof, by the same servant that stood by him in the act, and helped to remove him.

In Dengy Hundred, near Maldon, about the beginning of his majesty's reign, there fell out an extraordinary judgment upon five or six that plotted a solemn drinking at one of their houses; laid in beer for the once, drunk healths in a strange manner, and died thereof within a few weeks, some sooner, and some later. Witnessed to me by one that was with one of them on his deathbed, to demand a debt, and often spoken of by Mr Heydon, late preacher of Maldon, in the hearing of many. The particular circumstances were exceeding remarkable, but having not sufficient proof for the particulars, I will not report them.

One of Aylesham, in Norfolk, a notorious drunkard, drowned in a shallow brook of water, with his horse by him.

Whilst this was at the press, a man eighty-five years old or thereabout, in Suffolk, overtaken with wine (though never in all his life before, as he himself said a little before his fall, seeming to bewail his present condition, and others that knew him so say of him), yet, going down a pair of stairs, against the persuasion of a woman sitting by him in his chamber, fell, and was so dangerously hurt, as he died soon after, not being able to speak from the time of his fall to his death.

The names of the parties thus punished, I forbear, for the kindred's sake yet living.

If conscionable ministers of all places of the land, would give notice of such judgments as come within the compass of their certain knowledge, it might be a great mean to suppress this sin, which reigns everywhere, to the scandal of our nation, and high displeasure of Almighty God.

These may suffice for a taste of God's judgments. Easy were it to abound in sundry particular casualties, and fearful examples of this nature. Drunkard, that which hath befallen any one of these may befall thee, if thou wilt dally with this cockatrice, whatever leagues thou makest with death, and dispensations thou givest thyself from the like. Some of these were young, some were rich, some thought themselves as wise as thou; none of them ever looked for such ignominious ends more than thou, whoever thou art. If thou hatest such ends, God give thee grace to decline such courses.

If thou beest yet insensate with wine, void of wit and fear, I know not what further to mind thee of, but of that third and worst sting of all the rest, which will ever be gnawing and never dying; which if thou wilt not fear here, sure thou art to feel there, when the red dragon hath gotten thee into his den, and shall fill thy soul with the gall of scorpions, where thou shalt yell and howl for a drop of water to cool thy tongue withal, and shalt be denied so small a refreshing, and have no other liquor to allay thy thirst but that which the lake of brimstone shall afford thee. And that worthily, for that thou wouldst incur the wrath of the Lamb for so base and sordid a sin as drunkenness, of which thou mayest think as venially and slightly as thou wilt. But Paul, that knew the danger of it, gives thee fair warning, and bids thee not deceive thyself, expressly and by name mentioning it among the mortal sins excluding from the kingdom of heaven, 1 Cor. vi. 10. And the prophet Isaiah tells thee, that for it hell hath enlarged itself, opened its mouth wide, and without measure, Isa. v. 14; and therefore shall the multitude and their pomp, and the jolliest among them, descend into it. Consider this, you that are strong to pour in drink, that love to drink sorrow and care away. And be you well assured, that there you shall drink enough for all, having for every drop of your former bousings, vials, yea, whole seas of God's wrath, never to be exhaust.

Now, then, I appeal from yourselves in drink to yourselves in your sober

fits. Reason a little the case, and tell me calmly, would you, for your own or any man's pleasure, to gratify friend or companion, if you knew there had been a toad in the wine-pot (as twice I have known happened, to the death of drinkers); or did you think that some Cæsar Borgia or Brasutus had tempered the cup; or did you see but a spider in the glass,—would you, or durst you, carouse it off? And are you so simple to fear the poison that can kill the body, and not that which killeth the soul and body ever, yea, for ever and ever, and if it were possible for more than for ever, for evermore? Oh, thou vain fellow, what tellest thou me of friendship or good fellowship? Wilt thou account him thy friend or good fellow that draws thee into his company that he may poison thee, and never thinks he hath given thee right entertainment or shewed thee kindness enough till he hath killed thy soul with his kindness, and with beer made thy body a carcass fit for the bier, a laughing and loathing-stock, not to boys and girls alone, but to men and angels? Why rather sayest thou not to such, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Belial, ye poisonous generation of vipers, that hunt for the precious life of a man? Oh, but there are few good wits or great spirits now-a-days but will pot it a little for company. What hear I? Oh, base and low-spirited times, if that were true! if we were fallen into such lees of time foretold of by Seneca,* in which all were so drowned in the dregs of vices, that it should be virtue and honour to bear most drink. But thanks be to God, who has reserved many thousands of men, and, without all comparison, more witty and valorous than such pot-wits and spirits of the buttury, who never bared their knees to drink healths, nor ever needed to whet their wits with wine, or arm their courage with pot-harness. And if it were so, yet, if no such wits or spirits shall ever enter into heaven without repentance, let my spirit never come and enter into their paradise; ever abhor to partake of their brutish pleasures, lest I partake of their endless woes. If young Cyrus could refuse to drink wine, and tell Astyages he thought it to be poison, for he saw it metamorphose men into beasts and carcasses, what would he have said if he had known that which we may know, that the wine of drunkards is the wine of Sodom and Gomorrah, Deut. xxxii. 32, their grapes the grapes of gall, their clusters the clusters of bitterness, the juice of dragons and the venom of asps. In which words Moses, in a full commentary upon Solomon, largely expressing that he speaks here more briefly, 'It stings like the serpent, and bites like the cockatrice;' to the which I may not unfitly add that of Paul's, and think I ought to write of such with more passion and compassion than he did of the Christians in his time, which sure were not such monsters as ours in the shapes of Christians, 'whose god is their belly' (whom they serve with drink-offerings), 'whose glory is their shame, and whose end is damnation.'

What then? Take we pleasure in thundering out hell against drunkards? Is there nothing but death and damnation to drunkards? Nothing else to them, so continuing, so dying. But what? Is there no help nor hope, no amulet, antidote, or triacle? Are there no precedents found of recovery? Ambrose, I remember, tells of one that, having been a spectacle of drunkenness, proved, after his conversion, a pattern of sobriety.† And I myself must confess that one have I known, yet living, who, having drunk out his

* Seneca de Beneficiis, lib. i. cap. 10, Quum plurimum meri sumpsisse virtus erit, &c.

† Qui ludibrium fuerat ebrietatis, factus est postea sobrietatis exemplum.—Amb. de Hes.

bodily eyes, had his spiritual eyes opened, proved diligent in hearing and practising. Though the pit be deep, miry, and narrow, like that dungeon into which Jeremiah was put, yet, if it please God to let down the cords of his divine mercy, and cause the party to lay hold thereon, it is possible they may escape the snares of death. There is, even for the most debauched drunkard that ever was, a sovereign medicine,* a rich triacle, of force enough to cure and recover his disease, to obtain his pardon, and to furnish him with strength to overcome this deadly poison, fatal to the most. And though we may well say of it, as men out of experience do of quartan agues, that it is the disgrace of all moral physic, of all reproofs, counsels, and admonitions, yet is there a salve for this sore. There came one from heaven that trod the winepress of his Father's fierceness, drunk off a cup tempered with all the bitterness of God's wrath and the devil's malice, that he might heal even such as have drunk deepest of the sweet cup of sin. And let all such know, that in all the former discovery of this poison I have only aimed to cause them feel their sting, and that they might with earnest eyes behold the brazen serpent, and seriously repair to him for mercy and grace, who is perfectly able to eject even this kind, which so rarely and hardly is thrown out where once he gets possession. This seed of the woman is able to bruise this serpent's head. Oh, that they would listen to the gracious offers of Christ! If once there be wrought in thy soul a spiritual thirst after mercy, as the thirsty land hath after rain, a longing appetite after the water that comes out of the Rock, after the blood that was shed for thee, then let him that is athirst come, let him drink of the water of life without any money, of which if thou hast took but one true and thorough draught, thou wilt never long after thy old puddle waters of sin any more. Easy will it be for thee, after thou hast tasted of the bread and wine in thy Father's house, ever to loathe the husks and swill thou wert wont to follow after with greediness. The Lord Christ will bring thee into his mother's house, Cant. viii. 2, cause thee to drink of his spiced wine, of the new wine of the pomegranate. Yea, he will bring thee into his cellar, spread his banner of love over thee, stay thee with flagons, fill thee with his love, till thou beest sick and overcome with the sweetness of his consolations, Cant. ii. 4. In other drink there is excess, but here can be no danger. The devil hath his invitation, 'Come, let us drink;' and Christ hath his *inebriamini*, 'Be ye filled with the Spirit.'† Here is a fountain set open, and proclamation made; and if it were possible for the brutishest drunkard in the world to know who it is that offereth, and what kind of water he offereth, he would ask, and God would give it frankly without money; he should drink liberally, be satisfied, and out of his belly should sally springs of the water of life, quenching and extinguishing all his inordinate longings after stolen water of sin and death.

All this while little hope have I to work upon many drunkards, especially by a sermon read (of less life and force in God's ordinance, and in its own nature, than preached). My first drift is, to stir up the spirits of parents and masters, who in all places complain of this evil, robbing them of good servants and dutiful children, by all care and industry to prevent it in their domestical education, by carrying a watchful and restraining hand over them. Parents, if you love either soul or body, thrift or piety, look to keep them from the infection. Lay all the bars of your authority, cautions, threats, and charges for the avoiding of this epidemical pestilence. If any of them be bitten of this cockatrice, sleep not, rest not, till you have cured

* *Magna medicina tollit peccata magna.*—Am.

† *Habet Deus suum inebriamini, &c.*—Bernard in Cant.

them of it, if you love their health, husbandry, grace, their present or future lives. Dead are they while they live, if they live in this sin. Mothers, lay about you, as Bathsheba, with all entreaties, 'What, my son, my son of my loves and delights, wine is not for you,' &c.

My next hope is, to arouse and awaken the vigilancy of all faithful pastors and teachers. I speak not to such stars as this dragon hath swept down from heaven with its tail; for of such the prophets, the fathers of the primitive, yea, all ages, complain of. I hate and abhor to mention this abomination. To alter the proverb, 'As drunk as a beggar,' to a gentleman is odious; but to a man of God, to an angel, how harsh and hellish a sound is it in a Christian's ears! I speak, therefore, to sober watchmen, 'Watch and be sober,' and labour to keep your charges sober and watchful, that they may be so found of Him that comes like a thief in the night. Two means have you of great virtue for the quelling of this serpent,—zealous preaching and praying against it. It is an old received antidote, that man's spittle, especially fasting spittle, is mortal to serpents.* Saint Donatus is famous in story for spitting upon a dragon that kept a highway, and devoured many passengers. This have I made good observation of, that where God hath raised up zealous preachers, in such towns this serpent hath no nestling, no stabling or denning. If this will not do, Augustine enforceth another, which I conceive God's and man's laws allow us upon the reason he gives. If Paul (saith he) forbid to eat with such our common bread in our private houses, how much more the Lord's body in church assemblies? If in our times this were strictly observed, the serpent would soon languish and vanish. In the time of an epidemical disease, such as the sweating or sneezing sickness, a wise physician would leave the study of all other diseases to find out the cure of the present raging evil; if Chrysostom were now alive, the bent of all his homilies, or at least one part of them, should be spent to cry down drunkenness, as he did swearing in Antioch, never desisting to reprove it till (if not the fear of God, yet) his importunity made them weary of the sin.

Such Anakims and Zanzummims as the spiritual sword will not work upon, I turn them over to the secular arm, with a signification of the dangerous and contagious spreading of this poison in the veins and bowels of the commonwealth, in the church's, and Christ's name also, entreating them to carry a more vigilant eye over the dens and burrows of this cockatrice, superfluous, blind, and clandestine ale-houses: I mean the very pest houses of the nation. Which I could wish had all for their sign, a picture of some hideous serpent, or a pair of them, as the best hieroglyphic of the genius of the place, to warn passengers to shun and avoid the danger of them. Who sees and knows not, that some one needless alehouse in a country town, undoes all the rest of the houses in it, eating up the thrift and fruit of their labours; the ill manner of sundry places being there to meet in some one night of the week, and spend what they have gathered and spared all the days of the same before, to the prejudice of their poor wives and children at home, and upon the Lord's day, after evening prayers there to quench and drown all the good lessons they have heard that day at church. If this go on, what shall become of us in time? If woe be to single drunkards, is not a national woe to be feared and expected of a nation overrun with drunkenness? Had we no other sin reigning but this,

* Ut serpens hominis quum tacta salivâ,
Disperit, ac sese mandendo conficit ipsa.—

Lucretius: vide etiam Ophilium et Gesnerum, &c.

which cannot reign alone, will not God justly spew us out of his mouth for this alone? We read of whole countries wasted, dispeopled, by serpents. Pliny tells us of the Amyclæ, Lycophron of Salamis, Herodotus of the Neuri, utterly depopulate and made uninhabitable by them. Verily, if this cockatrice multiply and get head amongst us a while longer, as they have of late begun, where shall the people have sober servants to till their lands, or children to hold and enjoy them? They speak of draining fens; but if this evil be not stopped, we shall all shortly be drowned with it. I wish the magistracy, gentry, and yeomanry would take it to serious consideration, how to deal with this serpent, before he grow too strong and fierce for them. It is past the egg already,* and much at that pass, of which Augustine complains of in his time, that he scarce knew what remedy to advise, but thought it required the meeting of a general council.† The best course I think of is, if the great persons would first begin thorough reformation in their own families, banish the spirits of their butteries, abandon that foolish and vicious custom, as Ambrose and Basil calls it, of drinking healths,‡ and making that a sacrifice to God for the health of others, which is rather a sacrifice to the devil, and a bane of their own. I remember well, Sigismund the emperor's grave answer, wherein there concurred excellent wisdom and wit (seldom meeting in one saying) which he gave before the Council of Constance, to such as proposed a reformation of the church, to begin with the Franciscans and Minorites. You will never do any good, saith he, unless you begin with the Majorites first. Sure till it be out of fashion and grace in gentlemen's tables, butteries, and cellars, hardly shall you persuade the countryman to lay it down, who, as in fashions, so in vices, will ever be the ape of the gentry.

If this help not, I shall then conclude it to be such an evil as is only by sovereign power, and the king's hand, curable. And verily next under the word of God, which is omnipotent, how potent and wonder-working is the word of a king!§ When both meet as the sun and some good star in a benign conjunction, what enemy shall stand before the sword of God and Gideon? What vice so predominant which these subdue not? If the lion roar, what beast of the forest shall not tremble and hide their head? Have we not a noble experiment hereof yet fresh in our memory, and worthy never to die, in the timely and speedy suppression of that impudent abomination of women's mannish habits, threatening the confusion of sexes, and ruin of modesty? The same royal hand and care the church and commonwealth implores for the vanquishing of this poison, no less pernicious, more spreading, and prevailing. 'Take us these little foxes,' was wont to be the suit of the church, for they gnabble our grapes, and hurt our tender branches; but now it is become more serious. Take us these serpents, lest they destroy our vines, vinedressers, vineyards and all. This hath ever been royal game. How famous, in the story of Diodorus Siculus, is the royal munificence of Ptolemy, king of Egypt, for provision of nets, and maintenance of huntsmen, for the taking and destroying of serpents, noxious and noisome to his country. The like of Philip in Aris-

* Εἶπε δὲ ἱερὰν μάλιστα ἐκπνοὴν, ὅσοι ὑποφύοντα τῶν κοκκῶν ἔκγονοι.

—Elian. lib. 14. c. 27.

† Tanta potentia nullo, ut sanari prorsus sine concilii auctoritate non possit.

—Aug. Ep. 64 ad Aurelium.

‡ Bibamus pro salute Imperatorum, comitum. Om̄ scultitiam, vitium sacrificium putant.—Amb. de Helia, &c. Basil. Hom. contra Ebrios.

§ Where the word of a king is, there is power, Eccles. viii. 4.

totle, and of Attilius Regulus in Aulus Gellius. The emblem mentioned at large by Plutarch, engraven on Hercules' shield, what is it but a symbol of the divine honour due to princes following their Herculean labours, in subduing the like hydras, too mighty for any inferior person to take in hand? It is their honour to tread upon basilisks, and trample dragons under their feet. Solomon thinks it not unworthy his pen to discourse their danger.

A royal and elegant oration is happily and worthily preserved in the large volume of ancient writings, with this title, *Oratio magnifici et pacifici Edgari Regis, habita ad Dunstanum Archiep. Episcopos, &c.* The main scope whereof is, to excite the clergy's care and devotion for the suppressing of this vice for the common good. Undertakers of difficult plots promise themselves speed and effect, if once they interest the king, and make him party. And what more generally beneficial can be devised or proposed than this, with more honour and less charge to be effected, if it shall please his Majesty but to make trial of the strength of his temporal and spiritual arms. For the effecting of it, if this help not, what have we else remaining, but wishes and prayers to cast out this kind withal? God help us! To him I commend the success of these labours, and the vanquishing of this cockatrice.