

# A DIVINE HERBAL

OR,

## GARDEN OF GRACES.

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*For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God; but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.—HEB. VI. 7, 8.*

I PRESUME here is no atheist to hear and deny, 'the gospel is the power of God to salvation,' Rom. i. 16. I hope here is no libertine; if there be, let him hear also: it is the power of God to confusion. It is a double-edged sword, Heb. iv. 12, and gives either instruction or destruction. It is fire, that doth melt wax to repentance, and harden clay to vengeance. It is here a rain or dew falling on the ground of man's heart, causing one soil to be fertile in good works, another to abound with weeds of impiety: 'for it returneth not back to him that sent it, in vain.' That it conveys grace to us, and returns our fruitful gratitude to God, is a high and happy mercy. That it offers grace to the wicked, and by their corrupt natures occasions greater impiety, is a heavy but holy judgment.

Not to travel far for division, here lies *earth* before us. And as I have seen in some places of this land, one hedge parts a fruitful meadow and a barren heath, so of this *earth*, man; the same substance for nature's constitution, clay of the same heap in the creating hand of the potter; for matter, mass, and stuff, none made *de meliore luto*; though in respect of eternity's ordination, some vessels of honour, of dishonour others. Here be two kinds, a good and a bad soil; the one a garden, the other a desert: the former an enclosure of sweet herbs, excellent graces; the latter a wild and savage forest of briers and thorns, scratching and wounding offences.

For the better ground we will consider—1. The operative means or working cause of the fertility, 'the rain that cometh often upon it;' 2. The thankful returning of expected fruit, 'it bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed;' 3. The reward of mercy, 'it receiveth blessing from God.'

All is an allegory. I. The earth is man; II. The rain, God's word; III.

The herbs are graces; and, IV. The blessing is a sweet retribution of mercy.

I. The earth is the best ground that lies betwixt heaven and earth, man; the noblest part of this world; the worthiest creature, that hath earth for its pavement, and heaven for its ceiling; the Creator's image, and as some read, his shadow, which moves as the body doth whose it is. When the body puts forth an arm, the shadow shews an arm, &c.; so man in his actions and courses depends upon the disposition of God, as his all-powerful Maker and Mover. The blessed Deity (which hath in it a trinity of most equal and eternal Persons) is the first and best of all beings; the holy angels next; *et à Jove tertius Ajax*, man next them.

Ardens conceiteth upon Mark xvi., in the apostles' commission, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,' that by this 'every creature,' is meant man. For to lifeless, senseless, or reasonless things, God never enjoined to preach the gospel. But man is called 'every creature,' because he hath a participation of the best in all creatures. Stones have a being, not life; plants have a being and life, not sense; beasts have a being, life, and sense, but not understanding; angels have both being, life, sense, and understanding. Man participates with all these in their best. He hath a being with stones, life with plants, sense with beasts, understanding with angels: a sweet abstract or compendium of all creatures' perfections.

Let not all this make man proud. Even this word earth, though here used in a spiritual sense, puts him in mind that this excellent man is a mortal creature. Earth must to earth: hot earth to cold earth; that earth which hath now a life in it, to that earth which hath no life in it. Therefore I will say from the prophet, 'O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord,' Jer. xxii. 29. Bestow not too much pains in adorning this perishable earth, thy flesh: the earth thou must be careful of, and which God here waters from heaven with his holy dews, is thy heart, thy conscience.

I could willingly step out a little to chide those, that, neglecting God's earth, the soul, fall to trimming with a curious superstition the earth's earth, clay and loam: a body of corruption painted, till it shine like a lily, (like it in whiteness, not in humility, the candour of beauty, for the lily grows low: *lilium convallium*, Cant. ii. 1, a flower of the valleys and bottoms;) a little slime done over with a pasteboard; rottenness hid under golden leaves; stench lapped up in a bundle of silks; and, by reason of poison sucked from sin and hell, worthy of no better attribute than glorious damnation. Is there no sickness, is there no disgrace, is there no old age, is there no death, that you make so much of this earth? Or do you desperately resolve to dote on it living, as if you never hoped to find it again being dead? Fear not, you shall meet with it again; perhaps when you would not. God hath struck as gallant as you can make or think yourselves, with sudden, sore, and sure judgments. Believe it, his hand is his own. His arm was never yet broken, luxate, or manacled.

Woe worth them that have put pride and covetousness fellow-commoners among us, for they outeat us all, and starve the whole house of our land! Covetise would be charitable, but there is that other sum to make up. Pride would give, or at least forbear to extort, but there is a ruff of the new fashion to be bought. Dignity, a carriage, or strange apparel is to be purchased; and who but the poor tenants must pay for it?—upon whom they (once so accoutred) afterward look betwixt scorn and anger, and go as if they were shut up in wainscot.

' Sed vitate viros cultum formasque professos ;  
 Quique suas ponunt in statione comas.'

Such a one will not give, lest his white hand should touch the poor beggars, who perhaps hath a hand cleaner than his ; I mean from aspersions of blood, rapine, injury, bribery, lust, and filthiness. He cannot intend to pray, for he is called to dinner just when his last lock is hung to his mind. Oh the monstrous curiosity of tricking up this earth of earth ! Yet from the courtier to the carter, from the lady to the inkle-beggar, there is this excess, and going beyond their calling.

But I have strayed out of my way to cut off a lap of pride's garment. I conclude this earth with this caution : *Respice, aspice, prospice*,—Look back upon what thou wast ; behold what thou art ; consider what thou must be. *Recole primordia, attende media, prævideto novissima. Hæc pudorem adducunt, illa dolorem ingerunt, ista timorem incutiunt ;\**—Call to mind former things, see the present, foresee the last. The first will breed in thee shame, the other grief, these fear. Remember thou wert taken out of the earth ; behold thy strength of life subject to diseases, manifold, manifest, sensible ones : foresee that thou must die ; this earth must to earth again.

But the earth here meant is a divine, spiritual, immortal nature,—called earth by a metaphor,—incapable of suffering terrene fragility. This is God's earth, and that in a high and mystical sense, though proper enough. Indeed, *Domini terra*, 'The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof,' saith the Psalmist. But he hath not such respect to the earth he made, as to this earth for whom he made it. This is *terra sigillata*, earth that he hath sealed and sanctified for himself, by setting his stamp and impression upon it. Now, the good man's heart is compared to earth for divers reasons :—

1. For humility. *Humus, quasi humilis*. The earth is the lowest of all elements, and the centre of the world. The godly heart is not so low in situation, but so lowly in its own estimation. God is said to hang the earth upon nothing : Job xxvi. 7, 'He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing,' that it might wholly depend on himself. So a true Christian heart, in regard of itself, is founded upon nothing, (hath a humble vilipending and disprizing of its own worth,) that it may wholly and safely rely on God. O man of earth, why exaltest thou thyself ? This is the way to prevent and frustrate the exaltation of God. Keep thyself lowly as the earth, reject all opinion of thy own worth, and thou shalt one day overtop the clouds. The earth is thy mother, that brought thee forth when thou wert not ; a stage that carries thee whiles thou art ; a tomb that receives thee when thou art not. It gives thee original, harbour, sepulchre. Like a kind mother, she bears her offspring on her back ; and her brood is her perpetual burden, till she receive them again into the same womb from whence she delivered them. She shall be yet more kind to thee, if her baseness can teach thee humility, and keep thee from being more proud of other things, than thou canst, with any reason, be of thy parentage. Few are proud of their souls, and none but fools can be proud of their bodies ; seeing here is all the difference betwixt him that walks, and his floor he walks on : living earth treads upon dead earth, and shall at last be as dead as his pavement. Many are the favours that the earth doth us ; yet amongst them all there is none greater than the schooling us to humility, and working in us a true acknowledgment of our own vileness, and so directing us to heaven, to find that above which she cannot give us below.

2. For patience. The earth is called *terra, quia teritur* ; and this is the

\* Bernard.

natural earth. For they distinguish it into three sorts: *terra quam terimus*; *terra quam gerimus*; *terra quam quærimus*, which is the glorious land of promise. That earth is cut and wounded with culcers and shares, yet is patient to suffer it, and returns fruits to those that ploughed it. The good heart is thus rent with vexations and broken with sorrows; yet offers 'the other cheek to the smiter,' endureth all with a magnanimous patience, assured of that victory which comes by suffering: *Vincit qui patitur*. Neither is this all: it returns mercy for injury, prayers for persecutions, and blesseth them that cursed it. 'The ploughers ploughed upon my back: they made long their furrows,' Ps. cxxix. 3. 'They rewarded me evil for good to the spoiling of my soul. Yet when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; I was heavy, as one that mourned for his friend or brother; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom,' Ps. xxxv. 12, 13. When the heart of our Saviour was thus ploughed up with a spear, it ran streams of mercy, real mercy; which his vocal tongue interpreted, 'Father, forgive them: they know not what they do.' His blood had a voice, a merciful voice, and 'spake better things than the blood of Abel,' Heb. xii. 24. That cried from the caverns of the earth for revenge; this from the cross, in the sweet tune of compassion, for forgiveness. It is a strong argument of a heart rich in grace, to wrap and embrace his injurer in the arms of love; as the earth quietly receives those dead to burial, who living tore up her bowels.

3. For faithful constancy. The earth is called *solum*, because it stands alone, depending on nothing but the Maker's hand: 'One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth for ever,' Eccles. i. 4. She often changeth her burden, without any sensible mutation of herself: 'Thy faithfulness is to all generations; thou hast established the earth, and it standeth,' Ps. cxix. 90. The Hebrew is, 'to generation and generation;' inferring, that times, and men, and the sons of men, posterity after posterity, pass away; but the earth, whereon and whereout they pass, abideth. The parts thereof have been altered; and violent earthquakes, begot in its own bowels, have tottered it. But God hath laid 'the foundations of the earth,' (the original is, 'founded it upon her bases,') 'that it should not be removed for ever,' Ps. civ. 5; the body of it is immovable. Such a constant solidity is in the faithful heart, that should it thunder bulls from Rome, and bolts from heaven, *impavidum ferient ruinae*. Indeed, God hath sometimes bent an angry brow against his own dear ones; and then no marvel if they shudder, if the 'bones of David tremble,' and the 'teeth of Hezekiah chatter.' But God will not be long angry with his; and the balances, at first putting in of the evenest weights, may be a little swayed, not without some show of inequality, which yet, after a little motion, settle themselves in a just poise. So the first terror hath moved the godly, not removed them; they return to themselves, and rest in a resolved peace. Lord, do what thou wilt: 'if thou kill me, I will trust in thee.' Let us hear it from him that had it from the Lord: Ps. cxiii. 6, 'Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. His heart is established,' &c. O sweet description of a constant soul!

They give diverse causes of earthquakes. Aristotle, among the rest, admits the eclipse of the sun for one; the interposition of the moon's body hindering some places from his heat. I know not how certain this is in philosophy: in divinity it is most true, that only the eclipse of our sun, Jesus Christ, raiseth earthquakes in our hearts; when that inconstant and ever-

changing body of (the moon) the world steps betwixt our sun and us, and keeps us from the kindly vital heat of his favour ; then, oh then, the earth of our heart quakes ; and we feel a terror in our bones and bowels, as if the busy hand of death were searching them. But no eclipse lasts long ; especially not this : our sun will shine on us again ; we shall stand sure, even as ' Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.' Ps. cxxix. 1.

4. For charity. The earth brings forth food for all creatures that live on it. Green herb for the cattle ; oil and wine for man : ' The valleys stand thick with corn ; the mower filleth his scythe, and the binder up of sheaves his bosom.' A good man is so full of charity, he relieves all, without impudence to himself. He gives plentifully, that all may have some ; not indiscreetly, that some have all. On the earth stand many glorious cities, and goodly buildings ; fair monuments of her beauty and adoration. The sanctified soul, in a happy correspondency, hath manifold works of charity, manifest deeds of piety ; that sweetly become the faith which he professeth.

5. For riches. The earth is but poor without : the surface of it, especially when squalid winter hath bemired it, seems poor and barren ; but within it is full of rich mines, ores of gold, and quarries of precious minerals. For medals and metals, it is abundantly wealthy. The sanctified heart may seem poor to the world's eye, which only beholds and judgeth the rind and husk, and thinks there is no treasure in the cabinet, because it is covered with leather. But within he is full of golden mines and rich ores, the invisible graces of faith, fear, love, hope, patience, holiness ; sweeter than the spices of the East Indies, and richer than the gold of the West. *Omnis decor filix Sion ab intus*,—' The King's daughter is all glorious within,' Ps. xlv. 13. It is not the superficial skin, but the internal beauty, that moves the King of heaven to be enamoured of us, and to say, ' Thou art all fair, my love ; there is no spot in thee,' Cant. iv. 7.

6. Lastly, for fertility. The earth is fruitful : when the stars have given influence, the clouds showered down seasonable dews, and the sun bestowed his kindly heat ; lo, the thankful earth returns fruits, and that in abundance. The Christian soul, having received such holy operations, inspirations, and sanctifying motions from above, is never found without a grateful fertility. Yea, as the earth to man, so man to God, returns a blessed usury : ten for one ; nay, sometimes thirty, sometimes sixty, sometimes a hundred-fold.

But the succeeding doctrine will challenge this demonstration. I have been somewhat copious in the first word ; the brevity of the rest shall recompense it. The operative cause that worketh the good earth to this fruitfulness is a heavenly ' rain that falls often upon it ; ' and the earth doth ' drink it up.' Wherein is observable, that the rain doth come, that it is welcome ; God sends it plenteously, and man entertains it lovingly. It comes oft, and he drinks it up. God's love to man is declared in the coming ; in the welcoming, man's love to God. In the former we will consider—1. The matter ; 2. The manner. The matter that cometh is rain. The manner consists in three respects :—1. There is mercy ; ' it cometh.' It is not constrained, deserved, pulled down from heaven ; ' it cometh.' 2. Frequency ; ' it cometh often.' There is no scanting of this mercy ; it flows abundantly, as if the windows of heaven were opened : ' often.' 3. Direction of it right ; ' upon' this earth. It falls not near it, nor beside it, but upon it.

II. To begin with the rain :—

1. God's word is often compared to rain or dew. Moses begins his song with, ' My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass,'

Deut. xxxii. 2. Therefore in the first verse, he calls to the earth to hear his voice. Man is the earth, and his 'doctrine the rain.' 'Prophecy ye not,' Micah ii. 6; the original word is, 'Drop ye not,' &c. 'Thou sayest, Prophecy not against Israel, drop not thy word against the house of Isaac,' Amos vii. 16. 'Son of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem, and drop thy word toward the holy places,' Ezek. xxi. 2. The metaphor is usual; wherein stands the comparison? In six similitudes:—

(1.) It is the property of rain to cool heat. Experience tells us that a sweltering fervour of the air, which almost fries us, is allayed by a moderate shower sent from the clouds. The burning heat of sin in us, and of God's anger for sin against us, is quenched by the gospel. It cools our intemperate heat of malice, anger, ambition, avarice, lust; which are burning sins.

(2.) Another effect of rain is thirst quenched. The dry earth parched with heat, opens itself in reefs and crannies, as if it would devour the clouds for moisture. The Christian soul 'thirsts after righteousness,' is dry at heart till he can have the gospel: a shower of this mercy from heaven quenches his thirst; he is satisfied. 'Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life,' John iv. 14.

(3.) Rain doth allay the winds. When the air is in an uproar, and the stoutest cedars crouch to the ground before a violent blast, even towers and cities tremble; a shower of rain sent from the clouds mitigates this fury. When the potentates of the world, tyrants, little better than devils,—Gog and Magog, Moab and Ammon, Turkey, Rome, hell,—storm against us, God quiets all our fears, secures us from all their terrors by a gracious rain, drops of mercy in the never-failing promises of the gospel.

(4.) Rain hath a powerful efficacy to cleanse the air. When infectious fogs and contagious vapours have filled it full of corruption, the distilling showers wash away the noisome putrefaction. We know that too often filthy fumes of errors and heresies surge up in a land, that the soul of faith is almost stifled, and the uncleanness of corrupt doctrine gets a predominant place: the Lord then drops his word from heaven; the pure rain of his holy gospel cleanseth away this putrefaction, and gives new life to the almost-smothered truth. Woe to them, then, that would deprive men's souls of the gospel, and 'withhold the truth in unrighteousness!' When they 'lock up the gates of grace,' as Christ reproved the lawyers, and labour to make the 'heavens brass,' they must needs also make the 'earth iron.' How should the earth of man's heart bring forth fruits, when the rain is withheld from it? No marvel if their air be poisoned.

(5.) Rain hath yet another working: to mollify a hard matter. The parched and heat-hardened earth is made soft by the dews of heaven. Oh, how hard and obdurate is the heart of man till this rain falls on it! Is the heart covetous? No tears from distressed eyes can melt a penny out of it. Is it malicious? No supplications can beg forbearance of the least wrong. Is it given to drunkenness? You may melt his body into a dropsy, before his heart into sobriety. Is it ambitious? You may as well treat with Lucifer about humiliation. Is it factious? A choir of angels cannot sing him into peace. No means on earth can soften the heart; whether you anoint it with the supple balms of entreaties, or thunder against it the bolts of menaces, or beat it with the hammer of mortal blows. Behold! God showers this rain of the gospel from heaven, and it is suddenly softened. One sermon may 'prick him at the heart;' one drop of a Saviour's blood

distilled on it by the Spirit, in the preaching of the word, melts him like wax. The drunkard is made sober, the adulterer chaste, Zaccheus merciful, and raging Paul as tame as a lamb.

They that have erst served the devil with an eager appetite, and were hurried by him with a voluntary precipitation, have all their chains eaten off by this *aqua fortis*: one drop of this rain hath broken their fetters; and now all the powers of hell cannot prevail against them. There is a legend—I had as good say a tale—of a hermit that heard, as he imagined, all the devils of hell on the other side of the wall lifting, and blowing, and groaning, as if they were a-removing the world. The hermit desires to see them. Admitted, behold they were all lifting at a feather, and could not stir it. The application may serve, yield the fable idle. Satan and his armies,—spirits, lusts, vanities, sins,—that erst could toss and blow a man up and down like a feather, and did not sooner present a wickedness to his sight but he was more ready for action than they for instigation; now they cannot stir him: they may sooner remove the world from its pillars than him from the grace and mercy of God. The dew of heaven hath watered him, and made him grow, and the power of hell shall not supplant him. The rain of mercy hath softened his heart, and the heat of sin shall never harden it.

(6.) Lastly, rain is one principal subordinate cause that all things fructify. This holy dew is the operative means, next to the grace of God in our Lord Jesus Christ, that the souls of Christians should bring forth the fruits of faith and obedience. I know God can save without it: we dispute not of his power, but of his work, of ordinary, not extraordinary operations. God usually worketh this in our hearts by his word.

2. Thus far the matter; the manner is—(1.) 'It cometh;' (2.) 'often;' (3.) 'upon it.'

(1.) 'It cometh.' It is not forced, nor fetched, but comes of his own mere mercy whose it is. So saith the Apostle, 'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights,' James i. 17. They that want it have no merit of congruity to draw it to them; they that have it have no merit of condignity to keep it with them. It is the mercy and gratuitous favour of God that this gospel cometh to us. For, if *ipsum minus* be *munus*, how highly is this great gift to be praised! What deserve we more than other nations? They have as pregnant wits, as proportionable bodies, as strong sinews, as we; and perhaps would bring forth better fruits. Yet they want it; with us it is. We need not travel from coast to coast, nor journey to it; it is come to us. *Venit ad lmina virtus*: will you step over your thresholds and gather manna? When the gospel was far off from our fathers, yet in them *studium audiendi superabat tædium accedendi*,—the desire of hearing it beguiled the length of the way. But we will scarce put forth our hand to take this bread; and, as in some ignorant country towns, be more eager to catch the rain that falls from the outside of the church in their buckets, than this rain of grace preached in it, in their hearts. Oh, you wrong us; we are fond of it; we call for preaching. Yes, as your forefathers of the blind times would call apace for holy water; yet when the sexton cast it on them, they would turn away their faces, and let it fall on their backs. Let God sow as thick as he will, you will come up thin. You will admit frequency of preaching, but you have taken an order with yourselves of rare practising. You are content this rain should come, as the next circumstance gives it—

(2.) 'Often.' God hath respect to our infirmities, and sends us a plenti-

ful rain. One shower will not make us fruitful; it must come 'oft upon us.'

'Gutta cavat lapidem, non vi, sed sæpe cadendo,'—

The rain dints the hard stone, not by violence, but by oft-falling drops. Line must be added to line; 'here a little, and there a little.' God could pour a whole flood on us at once; but man's understanding

'Is like a vial, narrow at the top;  
Not capable of more than drop by drop,'

says the poet. If much were poured at once, a great deal would fall besides, and be spilt. Like children, we must be fed by spoonfuls, according to the capacity of our weak natures. It is not an abundant rain falling at once that makes the plants grow, but kindly and frequent showers. One sermon in a year contents some thoroughly; and God is highly beholden to them if they will sit out that waking. You desire your fields, your gardens, your plants to be often watered; your souls will grow well enough with one rain. How happy would man be if he were as wise for his soul as he is for his body! Some there are that would hear often, maybe too often, till edification turn to tedification; and get themselves a multitude of teachers; but they will do nothing. You shall have them run ten miles to a sermon, but not step to their own doors with a morsel of bread to a poor brother. They wish well to the cause of Christ, but they will do nothing for it, worth 'God-a-mercy.' The world is full of good wishes, but heaven only full of good works. Others would have this rain fall often, so it be such as they desire it. Such a cloud must give it, and it must be begotten in thunder—faction and innovation: till *evangelium Christi fit evangelium hominis*; aut *quod pejus est, diaboli*,\*—till the gospel of Christ be made man's gospel, or, which is worse, the devil's. If the rain, as it falls, do not smale of novelty, it shall fall besides them. They regard not so much heaven, whence it comes, as who brings it. I have read of two, that, meeting at a tavern, fell a-tossing their religion about as merrily as their cups, and much drunken discourse was of their profession. One professed himself of Doctor Martin's religion; the other swore he was of Doctor Luther's religion; whereas Martin and Luther was one man. No rain shall water them, but such a man's; otherwise, be it never so wholesome, they spew it up again. As if their conscience were so nice and delicate as that ground at Cologne, where some of St Ursula's eleven thousand virgins were buried; which will cast up again in the night any that have been interred there in the day, except of that company, though it were a child newly baptized. For ourselves, limits of sobriety being kept, desire we to hear the gospel often; and let our due succeeding obedience justify the goodness of our thirst. When Christ spake of the 'bread of life,' the transported disciples beseech him, 'Lord, evermore give us this bread,' John vi. 34. So pray we: Lord, evermore shower down upon us this rain!

(3.) 'Upon it.' God so directs this dew of his word that it shall fall on our hearts, not besides. The rain of the gospel, like the rain of the clouds, hath sometimes gone by coasts: 'I have withholden the rain from you, and I have caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered,' Amos iv. 7. But I have wetted your fields, moistened your hearts with the dews of heaven, given you 'my statutes and ordinances,' saith the Lord: 'I have not dealt so with every people;' there be some

\* Hier. in Ep. ad Galat.



that 'have not the knowledge of my laws,' Ps. cxlvii. 20. The sun shines on many nations where this spiritual rain falls not. This is not all; but as at the last day 'two in one bed' shall be divorced, so even now one seat in the church may hold two, upon one whereof this saving rain may fall, not on the other. The 'Spirit blows where it pleaseth;' and though the sound of the rain be to all open ears alike, yet the spiritual dew drops only into the open heart. Many come to Jacob's well, but bring no pitchers with them wherewith to draw the water. A good shower may come on the earth, yet if a man house himself, or be shrouded under a thick bush, or burrowed in the ground, he will be dry still. God sends down his rain: one houseth himself in the darkness of security—he is too drowsy to be tolled in with the bells; another sits dallying with the delights of lust under a green bush; a third is burrowed in the ground, mining and entrenching himself in the quest of riches. Alas, how should the dew of grace fall upon these! Thou wouldst not shelter the ground from the clouds, lest it grow barren: oh, then, keep not thy soul from the rain of heaven!

You have heard how the rain is come; now hear how it is made welcome. The good ground drinks it; nay, drinks it in: *imbibit*. The comparison stands thus: the thirsty land drinks up the rain greedily, which the clouds pour upon it. You would wonder what becomes of it; you may find it in your fruits. When your vines hang full of clusters, your gardens stand thick with flowers, your meadows with grass, your fields with corn; you will say, the earth hath been beholden to the heaven. That hath rained moisture, this hath drunk it in; we see it in our fruits. 'The Lord saith, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel,' Hos. ii. 21. The fruits of corn, wine, oil, witness that the earth hath heard them, that heaven hath heard the earth, and that the Lord hath heard the heaven. The heavens give influence to the ground, the ground sap to the plants, the plants nourishment to us, the Lord a blessing to all. The Lord 'watereth the hills from the chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: wine to make glad his heart, and oil to make his face shine, and bread to strengthen man's heart,' &c., Ps. civ. 13–15. With such thirsty appetite, and no less happy success, doth the good soul swallow the dew of grace. If you perceive not when the faithful take it, you may see they have it; for their fruits testify it. It is a most evident demonstration that they have been beholden to the gospel, they have a sanctified life. 'Drinks it in.'

There be very many great drinkers in the world. The main drunkenness, that gives denomination to all the rest, is that throat-drunkenness, whereof the prophet, *Væ fortibus ad potandum!* These are they that will not drink this mystical wine in the church, so willingly as be drunk in the taphouse. Wine-worshippers, that are at it on their knees, protesting from the bottom of their hearts to the bottom of their cups; if the health be not pledged, *actum est de amicitia*, farewell friendship. I have read of a street in Rome, called *Vicus sobrius*, Sober Street. Find such a street in any city or populous town in England, and some good man will put it in the chronicle.

It hath been said, that the Germans are great drinkers; and therefore to carouse is held to be derived from them, the word being originally to garrowse, which is to drink off all: *gar* signifying *totum*. So the Germans are called by themselves *Germani*, *quasi toti homines*, as if a German were *All-man*; according to another denomination of their country, *Allemand*. And so we are grown to think him that can tipple soundly, a tall man, nay,

all-man from top to toe. But if England plies her liquor so fast as she begins, Germany is like to lose her charter. I have heard how the Jesuits outstripped the Franciscans. Indeed St Francis at the first meeting saw six thousand friars. Ignatius, because he could not begin his order with so many, made up the number in devils. The Germans had of us both priority and number for drunkards. Our English beggars first got the fashion; but because their number was short, and it was like that the nation would be disgraced, it was agreed to make it up in gallants.

No marvel if the Lord for this threaten us with the rod of famine, and to scourge us with that most smarting string of his whip. God hath laid himself fair in his bow already, and is ready to draw this arrow up to the head, and send it singing into our bosoms. *Ferro scævior fames*; it is one of God's sorest judgments. Beasts and sword kill quickly; and the plague is not long in despatching us; but dearth is a lingering death. 'They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger; for these pine away, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field,' Lam. iv. 9. We see how our seasons are changed, because we can find no season for repentance. Our springs have been graves rather than cradles; our summers have not shot up, but withered our grass; our autumns have taken away the flocks of our sheep; and for our latest harvest, we have had cause to invert the words of our Saviour, Luke x. 2. He saith, 'The harvest is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord to send forth more labourers into his harvest.' But we might have said, 'The labourers are many, and the harvest is small: pray ye therefore the Lord to send a greater harvest for the labourers.' God hath thus, as it were, pulled the cup from the drunkard's lips; and since he will know no measure, the Lord will stint him. If there will be no voluntary, there shall be an enforced fast. We have other great drinkers besides.

What say you to those that drink up whole towns, unpeople countries, depopulate villages, enclose fields? that, Pharisee-like, swallow up poor men's houses, drink their goods, though mingled with tears of dam and young ones, mother and children? Are not these horrible drinkers? Sure God will one day hold the cup of vengeance to their lips, and bid them drink their fills.

The proud man is a great drinker. It is not his belly, but his back, that is the drunkard. He pincheth the poor, racks out the other fine, enhanceth the rent, spends his own means, and what he can finger besides, upon clothes. If his rent-day make even with his silk-man, mercer, tailor, he is well. And his white madam drinks deeper than he. The walls of the city are kept in reparation with easier cost than a lady's face, and the appurtenances to her head.

The ambitious is a deep drinker. Oh, he hath a dry thirst upon him. He loves the wine of promotion extremely. Put a whole monopoly into the cup, and he will carouse it off. There is a time when other drunkards give over for a sleeping-while: this drinker hath never enough.

Your grim usurer is a monstrous drinker. You shall seldom see him drunk at his own cost; yet he hath vowed not to be sober till his doomsday. His brains and his gown are lined with fox; he is ever a-foxing. It may be, some infernal spirit hath put love-powder in his drink, for he dotes upon the devil extremely. Let him take heed; he shall one day drink his own obligations, and they will choke him.

The rob-altar is a huge drinker. He loves, like Belshazzar, to drink only in the goblets of the temple. Woe unto him, he carouses the wine he never

sweat for, and keeps the poor minister thirsty! The tenth sheaf is his diet; the tenth fleece (oh, it is a golden fleece, he thinks) is his drink; but the wool shall choke him. Some drink down whole churches and steeples; but the bells shall ring in their bellies.

Every covetous worldling is a great drinker; he swallows *aurum potabile* as his diet-drink. And like an absolute, dissolute drunkard, the more he drinks, the drier he is; for he hath never enough. It may be said of him as it was of Bonosus, whom the emperor Aurelian set to drink with the German ambassador: Not a man, but a rundlet filled with wine.

And my fine precise artisan, that shuns a tavern as the devil doth a cross, is often as drunk as the rankest. His language doth not savour of the pot; he swears not, but 'indeed!' But trust him, and indeed he will cozen you to your face. The love of money hath made him drunk. And though the proverb be, *In vino veritas*; yet as drunk as he is, you shall never have truth break out of his lips.

And the unconscionable lawyer, that takes fees on both hands, as if he could not drink but with two cups at once, is not he a great drinker? If what is wanting in the goodness of the cause be supplied in the greatness of the fees, oh these

'Fœcundi calices, quem non fecere disertum?'

Let all think these ebrieties must be accounted for. How fearful were it if a man's latter end should take him drunk! 'Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and so that day come upon you unawares,' Luke xxi. 34. In corporal ebriety the soul leaves a drunken body; in spiritual, the body leaves a drunken soul: both desperately fearful.

There is yet a last, and those a blessed sort of drinkers, which drink in this sweet rain of grace and mercy. They do not only taste it; so do the wicked: ver. 4, 'They have tasted of the heavenly gift; they have tasted of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come.' Nor drink it only to their throat, as if they did gargarise the word, as carnal politicians and formal professors do. They must attend, they must admit, but no further than their throats; they will but gargarise the gospel. It shall never come into their stomachs, never near their hearts. But these drink it in, digest it in their consciences, take liberal draughts of it, and do indeed drink healths thereof. Common health-maintainers drink their sickness. Therefore says the modern poet honestly:—

'Una salus sanis nullam potare salutem.'

But this is a 'saving health:' such as our Saviour began to us, when he drank to us in his own blood, 'a saving health to all nations.' And we are bound to pledge him in our faith and thankfulness, as David: 'I will take the cup of salvation, and bless the name of the Lord.' This is a hearty draught of the waters of life; the deeper the sweeter. Blessed he is that drinks soundly of it, and with a thirsty appetite! There is, as divines say, *sancta ebrietas*;<sup>\*</sup> such as fell on the blessed apostles on Whitsunday, Acts ii. They were drunk, not with new wine, but with the Holy Ghost. This holy plentitude doth, as it were, inebriate the souls of the saints: 'They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures,' Ps. xxxvi. 8. The spouse sings of her kindness: 'He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his

\* *Ardens.*

banner over me was love. Stay me with flagons, and comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love,' Cant. ii. 4, 5. In the original it is called, 'house of wine.' Christ hath broached to his church the sweet wine of the gospel, and our hearts are cheered with it; our souls made merry with flagons of mercy. Come to this wine, *Bibite et inebriamini*,—'Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved,' Cant. v. 1: drink and be drunk with it. God will be pleased with this, and no other but this, drunkenness. The vessel of our heart being once thus filled with grace, shall hereafter be replenished with glory.