

A

CHRISTIAN DIRECTORY.

PART II.

CHRISTIAN ECONOMICS:

OR,

THE FAMILY DIRECTORY, CONTAINING DIRECTIONS FOR THE
TRUE PRACTICE OF ALL DUTIES BELONGING TO FAMILY
RELATIONS, WITH THE APPURTENANCES.

CHAPTER I.

Directions about Marriage; for Choice and Contract.

As the persons of Christians in their most private capacities are holy, as being dedicated and separated unto God, so also must their families be: **HOLINESS TO THE LORD** must be as it were written on their doors, and on their relations, their possessions and affairs. To which it is requisite, 1. That there be a holy constitution of their families. 2. And a holy government of them, and discharge of the several duties of the members of the family. To the right constituting of a family, belongeth, (1.) The right contracting of marriage, and (2.) The right choice and contract betwixt masters and their servants. For the first,

Direct. 1. 'Take heed that neither lust nor rashness do thrust you into a married condition, before you see such reasons to invite you to it, as may assure you of the call and approbation of God.' For, 1. It is God that you must serve in your married state, and therefore it is meet that

you take his counsel before you rush upon it: for he knoweth best himself, what belongeth to his service. 2. And it is God that you must still depend upon, for the blessing and comforts of your relation: and therefore there is very great reason that you take his advice and consent, as the chief things requisite to the match. If the consent of parents be necessary, much more is the consent of God.

Quest. 'But how shall a man know whether God call him to marriage, or consent unto it? Hath he not here left all men to their liberties, as in a thing indifferent?'

Answ. God hath not made any universal law commanding or forbidding marriage; but in this regard hath left it indifferent to mankind: yet not allowing all to marry (for undoubtedly to some it is unlawful). But he hath by other general laws or rules directed men to know, in what cases it is lawful, and in what cases it is a sin. As every man is bound to choose that condition in which he may serve God with the best advantages, and which tendeth most to his spiritual welfare, and increase in holiness. Now there is nothing in marriage itself which maketh it commonly inconsistent with these benefits, and the fulfilling of these laws: and therefore it is said, that "he that marrieth doth well," that is, he doth that which of itself is not unlawful, and which to some is the most eligible state of life. But there is something in a single life which maketh it, especially to preachers and persecuted Christians, to be more usually the most advantageous state of life, to these ends of Christianity; and therefore it is said, that "he that marrieth not, doth better." And yet to individual persons, it is hard to imagine how it can choose but be either a duty or a sin; at least except in some unusual cases. For it is a thing of so great moment as to the ordering of our hearts and lives, that it is hard to imagine that it should ever be indifferent as a means to our main end, but must either be a very great help or hindrance. But yet if there be any persons whose case may be so equally poised with accidents on both sides, that to the most judicious man it is not discernible, whether a single or married state of life, is like to conduce more to their personal holiness or public usefulness, or the good

* 1 Cor. vii. 7. 38.

of others, to such persons marriage in the individual circumstantiated act is a thing indifferent.

By these conditions following you may know, what persons have a call from God to marry, and who have not his call or approbation. 1. If there be the peremptory will of command of parents to children that are under their power and government, and no greater matter on the contrary to hinder it, the command of parents signifieth the command of God: but if parents do but persuade and not command, though their desires must not be causelessly refused, yet a smaller impediment may preponderate than in case of a peremptory command. 2. They are called to marry who have not the gift of continence, and cannot by the use of lawful means attain it, and have no impediment which maketh it unlawful to them to marry. "But if they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn^b." But here the divers degrees of the urgent and the hindering causes must be compared, and the weightiest must prevail. For some that have very strong lusts may yet have stronger impediments: and though they cannot keep that chastity in their thoughts as they desire, yet in such a case they must abstain. And there is no man but may keep his body in chastity if he will do his part: yea, and thoughts themselves may be commonly, and for the most part kept pure, and wanton imaginations quickly checked, if men be godly, and will do what they can. But on the other side there are some that have a more tameable measure of concupiscence, and yet have no considerable hindrance, whose duty it may be to marry, as the most certain and successful means against that small degree, as long as there is nothing to forbid it. 3. Another cause that warranteth marriage is, when upon a wise casting up of all accounts, it is apparently most probable that in a married state, one may be most serviceable to God and the public good: that there will be in it greater helps and fewer hindrances to the great ends of our lives; the glorifying of God, and the saving of ourselves and others. And whereas it must be expected that every condition should be more helpful to us in one respect, and hinder us more in another respect; and that in one we have most helps for a contemplative life, and in another we are

^b 1 Cor. vii. 9.

better furnished for an active, serviceable life, the great skill therefore in the discerning of our duties, lieth in the prudent pondering and comparing of the commodities and discommodities, without the seduction of fantasy, lust or passion, and in a true discerning which side it is that hath the greatest weight ^c.

Here it must be carefully observed, 1. That the two first reasons for marriage (concupiscence and the will of parents), or any such like, have their strength but in subordination to the third (the final cause, or interest of God and our salvation). And that this last reason (from the end) is of itself sufficient without any of the other, but none of the other are sufficient without this. If it be clear that in a married state you have better advantages for the service of God, and doing good to others, and saving your own souls, than you can have in a single state of life, then it is undoubtedly your duty to marry: for our obligation to seek our ultimate end is the most constant, indispensable obligation. Though parents command it not, though you have no corporal necessity, yet it is a duty if it certainly make most for your ultimate end. 2. But yet observe also, that no pretence of your ultimate end itself will warrant you to marry, when any other accident hath first made it a thing unlawful, while that accident continueth. For we must not do evil that good may come by it. Our salvation is not furthered by sin: and though we saw a probability that we might do more good to others, if we did but commit such a sin to accomplish it, yet it is not to be done. For our lives and mercies being all in the hand of God, and the successes and acceptance of all our endeavours depending wholly upon him, it can never be a rational way to attain them, by wilful offending him by our sin! It is a likely means to public good for able and good men to be magistrates and ministers: and yet he that would lie, or be perjured, or commit any known sin that he may be a magistrate, or that he may preach the Gospel, might better expect a curse on himself and his endeavours, than God's acceptance, or his blessing and success: so he that would sin to change his state for the better, would

^c Unmarried men are the best friends, the best masters, the best servants; but not always the best subjects: for they are light to run away, and therefore venturous, &c. Lord Bacon, Essay 8.

find that he changed it for the worse: or if it do good to others, he may expect no good but ruin to himself, if repentance prevent it not. 3. Observe also that if the question be only which state of life it is (married or single) which best conduceth to this ultimate end, then any one of the subordinate reasons will prove that we have a call, if there be not greater reasons on the contrary side. As in case you have no corporal necessity, the will of parents alone may oblige you, if there be no greater thing against it: or if parents oblige you not, yet corporal necessity alone may do it: or if neither of these invite you, yet a clear probability of the attaining of such an estate or opportunity, as may make you more fit to relieve many others, or be serviceable to the church, or the blessing of children who may be devoted to God, may warrant your marriage, if no greater reasons lie against it: for when the scales are equal, any one of these may turn them.

By this also you may perceive who they be that have no call to marry, and to whom it is a sin. As 1. No man hath a call to marry, who laying all the commodities and discommodities together, may clearly discern that a married state is like to be a greater hindrance of his salvation, or to his serving or honouring God in the world, and so to disadvantage him as to his ultimate end.

Quest. 'But what if parents do command it? or will set against me if I disobey?'

Ans. Parents have no authority to command you any thing against God or your salvation, or your ultimate end. Therefore here you owe them no formal obedience: but yet the will of parents with all the consequents, must be put into the scales with all other considerations, and if they make the discommodities of a single life to become the greater, as to your end, then they may bring you under a duty or obligation to marry: not 'necessitate præcepti,' as obedience to their command; but 'necessitate medii,' as a means to your ultimate end, and in obedience to that general command of God, which requireth you to "seek first" your ultimate end, even "the kingdom of God, and his righteousness^d."

Quest. 'But what if I have a corporal necessity and yet

^d Matt. vi. 33.

I can foresee that marriage will greatly disadvantage me as to the service of God and my salvation?

Ans. 1. You must understand that no corporal necessity is absolute: for there is no man so lustful but may possibly bridle his lust by other lawful means: by diet, labour, sober company, diverting business, solitude, watching the thoughts and senses, or at least by the physician's help; so that the necessity is but 'secundum quid,' or an urgency rather than a simple necessity. And then 2. This measure of necessity must be itself laid in the balance with the other accidents: and if this necessity will turn the scales by making a single life more disadvantageous to your ultimate end, your lust being a greater impediment to you, than all the inconveniences of marriage will be, then the case is resolved, "it is better to marry than to burn." But if the hindrances in a married state are like to be greater, than the hindrances of your concupiscence, then you must set yourself to the curbing and curing of that concupiscence; and in the use of God's means expect his blessing.

2. Children are not ordinarily, called of God to marry, when their parents do absolutely and peremptorily forbid it. For though parents' commands cannot make it a duty, when we are sure it would hinder the interest of God our ultimate end; yet parents' prohibitions may make it a sin, when there is a clear probability that it would most conduce to our ultimate end, were it not prohibited. Because (1.) Affirmatives bind not 'semper et ad semper' as negatives or prohibitions do. (2.) Because the sin of disobedience to parents will cross the tendency of it unto good, and do more against our ultimate end, than all the advantages of marriage can do for it. A duty is then to us no duty, when it cannot be performed without a chosen, wilful sin. In many cases we are bound to forbear what a governor forbiddeth, when we are not bound to do the contrary if he command it. It is easier to make a duty to be no duty, than to make a sin to be no sin. One bad ingredient may turn a duty into a sin, when one good ingredient will not turn a sin into a duty, or into no sin.

Quest. 'But may not a governor's prohibition be overweighed by some great degrees of incommodity? It is better to marry than to burn. 1. What if parents forbid chil-

dren to marry absolutely until death, and so deprive them of the lawful remedy against lust? 2. And if they do not so, yet if they forbid it them when it is to them most seasonable and necessary, it seemeth little better. 3. Or if they forbid them to marry where their affections are so engaged, as that they cannot be taken off without their mutual ruin? May not children marry in such cases of necessity as these, without and against the will of their parents?

Ans. I cannot deny but some cases may be imagined or fall out, in which it is lawful to do what a governor forbid-deth, and to marry against the will of parents: for they have their power to edification, and not unto destruction. As if a son be qualified with eminent gifts for the work of the ministry, in a time and place that needeth much help; if a malignant parent, in hatred of that sacred office, should never so peremptorily forbid him, yet may the son devote himself to the blessed work of saving souls: even as a son may not forbear to relieve the poor (with that which is his own) though his parents should forbid him; nor forbear to put himself into a capacity to relieve them for the future; nor forbear his own necessary food and raiment though he be forbidden. As Daniel would not forbear praying openly in his house, when he was forbidden by the king and law. When any inseparable accident doth make a thing, of itself indifferent, become a duty, a governor's prohibition will not discharge us from that duty, unless the accident be smaller than the accident of the ruler's prohibition, and then it may be outweighed by it; but to determine what accidents are greater or less is a difficult task.

And as to the particular questions, to the first I answer, If parents forbid their children to marry while they live, it is convenient and safe to obey them until death, if no greater obligation to the contrary forbid it: but it is necessary to obey them during the time that the children live under the government of their parents, as in their houses, in their younger years (except in some few extraordinary cases). But when parents are dead (though they leave commands in their wills) or when age or former marriage hath removed children from under their government, a smaller matter will serve to justify their disobedience here, than when the children in minority are less fit to govern themselves. For

though we owe parents a limited obedience still, yet at full age the child is more at his own dispose than he was before. Nature hath given us a hint of her intention in the instinct of brutes, who are all taught to protect, and lead, and provide for their young ones, while the young are insufficient for themselves; but when they are grown to self-sufficiency, they drive them away or neglect them. If a wise son that hath a wife and many children, and great affairs to manage in the world, should be bound to as absolute obedience to his aged parents, as he was in his childhood, it would ruin their affairs, and parents' government would pull down that in their old age, which they built up in their middle age.

And to the second question I answer, that, 1. Children that pretend to unconquerable lust or love, must do all they can to subdue such inordinate affections, and bring their lusts to stoop to reason and their parents' wills. And if they do their best, there are either none, or not one of many hundreds, but may maintain their chastity together with their obedience. 2. And if any say, 'I have done my best, and yet am under a necessity of marriage; and am I not then bound to marry though my parents forbid me?' I answer, it is not to be believed: either you have not done your best, or else you are not under a necessity. And your urgency being your own fault (seeing you should subdue it), God still obligeth you both to subdue your vice, and to obey your parents. 3. But if there should be any one that hath such an (incredible) necessity of marriage, he is to procure some others to solicit his parents for their consent, and if he cannot obtain it, some say, it is his duty to marry without it: I should rather say that it is 'minus malum,' 'the lesser evil:' and that having cast himself into some necessity of sinning, it is still his duty to avoid both, and to choose neither; but it is the smaller sin to choose to disobey his parents, rather than to live in the flames of lust and the filth of unchastity. And some divines say, that in such a case a son should appeal to the magistrate, as a superior authority above the father. But others think, 1. That this leaveth it as difficult to resolve what he shall do, if the magistrate also consent not: and 2. That it doth but resolve one difficulty by a greater: it being very doubtful whether in domestic cases the authority of the parent or the magistrate be the greater.

3. The same answer serveth as to the third Question, when parents forbid you to marry the persons that you are most fond of. For such fondness (whether you call it lust or love) as will not stoop to reason and your parents' wills, is inordinate and sinful. And therefore the thing that God bindeth you to, is by his appointed means to subdue it, and to obey: but if you cannot, the accidents and probable consequents must tell you which is the lesser evil.

Quest. 'But what if the child have promised marriage, and the parents be against it?' *Ans.* If the child was under the parents' government, and short of years of discretion also, the promise is void for want of capacity. And if the child was at age, yet the promise was a sinful promise, as to the promising act, and also as to the thing promised during the parents' dissent. If the 'actus promittendi' only had been sinful ('the promise making') the promise might nevertheless oblige (unless it were null as well as sinful). But the 'materia promissa' being sinful ('the matter promised') to marry while parents do dissent, such a child is bound to forbear the fulfilling of that promise till the parents do consent or die. And yet he is bound from marrying any other (unless he be disobliged by the person that he made the promise to), because he knoweth not but his parents may consent hereafter; and whenever they consent or die, the promise then is obligatory, and must be performed.

The third Chapter of Numbers enableth parents to disoblige a daughter that is in their house, from a vow made to God, so be it they disavow it at the first hearing. Hence there are two doubts arise: 1. Whether this power extend not to the disobliging of a promise or contract of matrimony? 2. Whether it extend not to a son as well as a daughter. And most expositors are for the affirmative of both cases. But I have shewed before that it is upon uncertain grounds. 1. It is uncertain whether God, who would thus give up his own right in case of vowing, will also give away the right of others without their consent in case of promises or contracts. And 2. It is uncertain whether this be not an indulgence only of the weaker sex, seeing many words in the text seem plainly to intimate so much. And it is dangerous upon our own presumptions to stretch God's laws to

every thing we imagine there is the same reason for : seeing our imaginations may so easily be deceived : and God could have expressed such particulars if he would : and therefore (when there is not clear ground for our inferences in the text) it is but to say, ' Thus and thus God should have said,' when we cannot say, ' Thus he hath said.' We must not make laws under pretence of expounding them : whatsoever God commandeth thee, take heed that thou do it : thou shalt add nothing thereto, nor take aught therefrom^e.

Quest. If the question therefore be not of the sinfulness, but the nullity of such promises of children, because of the dissent of parents, for my part I am not able to prove any such nullity. It is said, that they are not ' sui juris,' ' their own,' and therefore their promises are null. But if they have attained to years, and use of discretion, they are naturally so far ' sui juris' as to be capable of disposing even of their souls, and therefore of their fidelity. They can oblige themselves to God or man : though they are not so far ' sui juris' as to be ungoverned. For so no child, no subject, no man is ' sui juris;' seeing all are under the government of God. And yet if a man promise to do a thing sinful, it is not a nullity, but a sin : not no promise, but a sinful promise. A nullity is when the ' actus promittendi' is ' reputative nullus, vel non actus.' And when no promise is made, then none can be broken.

Quest. But if the question be only how far such promises must be kept? I answer, by summing up what I have said : 1. If the child had not the use of reason, the want of natural capacity, proveth the promise null : here ' ignorantis non est consensus.' 2. If he was at age and use of reason, then 1. If the promising act only was sinful (as before I said of vows,) the promise must be both repented of, and kept. It must be repented of because it was a sin : it must be kept because it was a real promise, and the matter lawful. 2. If the promising act was not only a sin, but a nullity (by any other reason) then it is no obligation. 3. If not only the promising act be sin, but also the matter promised (as is marrying without parents' consent), then it must be repented of, and not performed until it become

^e Deut. xii. 32.

lawful; because an oath or promise cannot bind a man to violate the laws of God.

Quest. 'But what if the parties be actually married without the parents' consent? Must they live together, or be separated?' *Answ.* 1. If marriage be consummated 'per carnalem concubitum,' 'by the carnal knowledge of each other,' I see no reason to imagine that parents can dissolve it, or prohibit their cohabitation. For the marriage, for aught I ever saw, is not proved a nullity, but only a sin, and their 'concubitus' is not fornication: and parents cannot forbid husband and wife to live together: and in marriage they do (really though sinfully) forsake father and mother and cleave to each other, and so are now from under their government, though not disobliged from all obedience. 2. But if marriage be only by verbal conjunction, divines are disagreed what is to be done: some think that it is no perfect marriage 'ante concubitum,' and also that their conjunction hath but the nature of a promise (to be faithful to each other as husband and wife): and therefore the matter promised is unlawful till parents consent, and so not to be done. But I rather think, as most do, that it hath all that is essential to marriage 'ante concubitum;' and that this marriage is more than a promise of fidelity 'de futuro,' even an actual delivery of themselves to one another 'de præsentibus' also: and that the thing promised in marriage is lawful: for though it be a sin to marry without parents' consent, yet when that is past, it is lawful for married persons to come together though parents consent not: and therefore that such marriage is valid, and to be continued though it was sinfully made.

3. A third sort that are not called of God to marry, are they that have absolutely vowed not to marry: such may not marry, unless Providence disoblige them, by making it become an indispensable duty: and I can remember but two ways by which this may be done. 1. In case there be any of so strong lust, as no other lawful means but marriage can suffice to maintain their chastity; to such, marriage is as great a duty as to eat or drink, or cover one's nakedness, or to hinder another from uncleanness, or lying, or stealing, or the like. And if you should make a vow

that you will never eat or drink, or that you will go naked, or that you will never hinder any one from uncleanness, lying, or stealing, it is unlawful to fulfil this vow. But all the doubt is, whether there be any such persons that cannot overcome, or restrain their lust by any other lawful means? I suppose it is possible there may be such: but I believe it is not one of an hundred: if they will but practise the directions before given, Part i. Chap. viii. Part v. Tit. 1. and 2. I suppose their lust may be restrained: and if that prevail not, the help of a physician may. And if that prevail not, some think the help of a surgeon may be lawful, to keep a vow, in case it be not an apparent hazard of life. For Christ seemeth to allow of it, in mentioning it without reproof, Matt. xix. 12. if that text be to be understood of castration: but most expositors think it is meant only of a confirmed resolution of chastity. And ordinarily other means may make this needless. And if it be either needless or perilous it is unlawful without doubt.

2. The second way by which God may dispense with a vow of chastity is, by making the marriage of a person become of apparent necessity to the public safety. And I am able to discern but one instance that will reach the case; and that is, if a king have vowed chastity, and in case he marry not, his next heir being a professed enemy of Christianity, the religion, safety and happiness of the whole nation are apparently in danger to be overthrown. I think the case of such a king is like the case of a father that had vowed never to provide food or raiment for his children. Or as if Ahab had vowed that no well should be digged in the land; and when the drought cometh, it is become necessary to the saving of the people's lives. Or as if the ship-master should vow that the ship shall not be pumped; which when it leaketh doth become necessary to save their lives. In these cases God disobligeth you from your vow by a mutation of the matter; and a pastor may dispense with it declaratively. But for the pope or any mortal man to pretend to more, is impiety and deceit.

Quest. 'May the aged marry that are frigid, impotent, and incapable of procreation?' *Answ.* Yes, God hath not forbidden them: and there are other lawful ends of mar-

riage, as mutual help and comfort, &c. which may make it lawful^f.

Direct. 11. 'To restrain your inordinate forwardness to marriage, keep the ordinary inconveniencies of it in memory.' Rush not into a state of life, the inconveniencies of which you never thought on. If you have a call to it, the knowledge of the difficulties and duties will be necessary to your preparation, and faithful undergoing them: if you have no call, this knowledge is necessary to keep you off. I shall first name the inconveniencies common to all, and then some that are proper to the ministers of the Gospel, which have a greater reason to avoid a married life than other men have.

1. Marriage ordinarily plungeth men into excess of worldly cares: it multiplieth their business, and usually their wants. There are many things to mind and do: there are many to provide for. And many persons you will have to do with; who have all of them a selfish disposition and interest, and will judge of you but according as you fit their ends. And among many persons and businesses, some things will frequently fall cross: you must look for many rubs and disappointments. And your natures are not so strong, content and patient, as to bear all these without molestation.

2. Your wants in a married state are hardlier supplied, than in a single life. You will want so many things which before you never wanted, and have so many to provide for and content; that all will seem little enough, if you had never so much. Then you will be often at your wit's end, taking thought for the future, what you shall eat, and what you shall drink, and wherewith shall you and yours be clothed.

3. Your wants in a married state are far hardlier borne than in a single state. It is far easier to bear personal wants ourselves, than to see the wants of wife and children: affection will make their sufferings pinch you. And ingenuity will make it a trouble to your mind, to need the help of servants, and to want that which is fit for servants

^f Wives are young men's mistresses, companions for the middle age, and old men's nurses. So that a man may have a quarrel to marry when he will. Lord Bacon, *Essay* 8.

to expect. But especially the discontent and impatience of your family will more discontent you than all their wants. You cannot help your wife, and children, and servants to contented minds. O what a heart-cutting trial is it, to hear them repining, murmuring, and complaining! To hear them call for that which you have not for them; and grieve at their condition, and exclaim of you, or of the providence of God, because they have it not! And think not that riches will free you from these discontents: for as the rich are but few, so they that have much have much to do with it. A great foot must have a great shoe. When poor men want some small supplies, rich men may want great sums, or larger provisions, which the poor can do without. And their condition lifting them up to greater pride, doth torment them with greater discontents. How few in all the world that have families, are content with their estates!

4. Hereupon a married life containeth far more temptations to worldliness or covetousness, than a single state doth. For when you think you need more, you will desire more: and when you find all too little to satisfy those that you provide for, you will measure your estate by their desires, and be apt to think that you have never enough. Birds and beasts that have young ones to provide for, are most hungry and rapacious. You have so many now to scrape for, that you will think you are still in want: it is not only till death that you must now lay up; but you must provide for children that survive you. And while you take them to be as yourselves, you have two generations now to make provisions for: and most men are as covetous for their posterity, as if it were for themselves.

5. And hereupon you are hindered from works of charity to others: wife and children are the devouring gulf that swalloweth all. If you had but yourselves to provide for, a little would serve; and you could deny your own desires of unnecessary things; and so might have plentiful provision for good works. But by that time wife and children are provided for, and all their importunate desires satisfied, there is nothing considerable left for pious or charitable uses. Lamentable experience proclaimeth this.

6. And hereby it appeareth how much a married state doth ordinarily hinder men from honouring their profession.

It is their vows of single life that hath occasioned the Papists to do so many works of public charity, as is boasted of for the honour of their sect. For when they have no children to bequeath it to, and cannot keep it themselves, it is easy to them to leave it for such uses as will pacify their consciences most, and advance their names. And if it should prove as good a work and as acceptable to God, to educate your own children piously for his service, as to relieve the children of the poor, yet is it not so much regarded in the world, nor bringeth so much honour to religion. One hundred pounds given to the poor shall more advance the reputation of your liberality and virtue, than a thousand pounds given to your own children, though it be with as pious an end, to train them up for the service of the church. And though this is inconsiderable, as your own honour is concerned in it, yet it is considerable, as the honour of religion and the good of souls are concerned in it.

7. And it is no small patience which the natural imbecility of the female sex requireth you to prepare. Except it be very few that are patient and manlike, women are commonly of potent fantasies, and tender, passionate, impatient spirits, easily cast into anger, or jealousy, or discontent; and of weak understandings, and therefore unable to reform themselves. They are betwixt a man and a child: some few have more of the man, and many have more of the child; but most are but in a middle state. Weakness naturally inclineth persons to be froward and hard to please; as we see in children, old people, and sick persons. They are like a sore, distempered body; you can scarce touch them but you hurt them. With too many you can scarce tell how to speak or look but you displease them. If you should be very well versed in the art of pleasing, and set yourselves to it with all your care, as if you made it your very business and had little else to do, yet it would put you hard to it, to please some weak, impatient persons, if not quite surpass your ability and skill. And the more you love them, the more grievous it will be, to see them still in discontents, weary of their condition, and to hear the clamorous expressions of their disquiet minds. Nay the very multitude of words that very many are addicted to, doth make some men's lives a continual burden to them. Mark what the Scripture

saith; "It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.—It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.—A continual dropping in a very rainy day, and a contentious woman are alike.—One man among a thousand have I found: but a woman among all those have I not found^f."

8. And there is such a meeting of faults and imperfections on both sides, that maketh it much the harder to bear the infirmities of others aright. If one party only were forward and impatient, the stedfastness of the other might make it the more tolerable: but we are all sick in some measure, of the same disease. And when weakness meeteth with weakness, and pride with pride, and passion with passion, it exasperateth the disease and doubleth the suffering. And our corruption is such, that though our intent be to help one another in our duties, yet we are apter far to stir up one another's distempers.

9. The business, care, and trouble of a married life, is a great temptation to call down your thoughts from God, and to divert them from the "one thing necessary^g," and to distract the mind, and make it indisposed to holy duty, and to serve God with a divided heart, as if we served him not. How hard is it to pray, or meditate with any serious fervency, when you come out of a crowd of cares and businesses! Hear what St. Paul saith, "For I would that all men were as I myself— I say to the unmarried and the widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I.—I suppose therefore that this is good for the present distress, that it is good for a man so to be:— such shall have trouble in the flesh. But I would have you be without carefulness: he that is unmarried, careth for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married, careth for the things of the world, how he may please his wife. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy, both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband. And this I speak for your own profit, not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely,

^f Prov. xxi. 9. 19. xxv. 24. xxvii. 15. Eccles. vii. 28.

^g Luke x. 42.

and that you may attend upon the Lord without distraction. He that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart, that he will keep his virgin, doeth well. So then he that marrieth doeth well, but he that marrieth not doeth better^b." And mark Christ's own words, "His disciples say unto him, if the case of a man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.—He that is able to receive it, let him receive itⁱ."

10. The business of a married state doth commonly devour almost all your time, so that little is left for holy contemplations, or serious thoughts of the life to come. All God's service is contracted and thrust into a corner, and done as it were on the bye: the world will scarce allow you time to meditate, or pray, or read the Scripture: you think yourselves (as Martha) under a greater necessity of dispatching your business, than of sitting at Christ's feet to hear his Word. O that single persons knew (for the most part) the preciousness of their leisure, and how free they are to attend the service of God, and learn his Word, in comparison of the married!

11. There is so great a diversity of temperaments and degrees of understanding, that there are scarce any two persons in the world, but there is some unsuitableness between them. Like stones that have some unevenness, that maketh them lie crooked in the building; some crossness there will be of opinion, or disposition, or interest, or will, by nature, or by custom and education; which will stir up frequent discontents.

12. There is a great deal of duty which husband and wife do owe to one another; as to instruct, admonish, pray, watch over one another, and to be continual helpers to each other in order to their everlasting happiness; and patiently to bear with the infirmities of each other. And to the weak and backward heart of man, the addition of so much duty doth add to their weariness, how good soever the work be in itself: and men should feel their strength, before they undertake more work.

13. And the more they love each other, the more they

^b 1 Cor. vii. 7, 8. 26—28. 32—35. 37, 38.

ⁱ Matt. xix. 11, 12.

participate in each other's griefs: and one or other will be frequently under some sort of suffering. If one be sick, or lame, or pained, or defamed, or wronged, or disquieted in mind, or by temptation fall into any wounding sin, the other beareth part of the distress. Therefore before you undertake to bear all the burdens of another, and suffer in all another's hurts, it concerneth you to observe your strength, how much more you have than your own burdens do require.

14. And if you should marry one that proveth ungodly, how exceeding great would the affliction be! If you loved them, your souls would be in continual danger by them: they would be the most powerful instruments in the world to pervert your judgments, to deaden your hearts, to take you off from a holy life, to kill your prayers, to corrupt your lives, and to damn your souls. And if you should have the grace to escape the snare, and save yourselves, it would be by so much the greater difficulty and suffering, as the temptation is the greater. And what a heart-breaking would it be to converse so nearly with a child of the devil, that is like to lie for ever in hell! The daily thoughts of it would be a daily death to you.

15. Women especially must expect so much suffering in a married life, that if God had not put into them a natural inclination to it, and so strong a love to their children, as maketh them patient under the most annoying troubles, the world would ere this have been at an end, through their refusal of so calamitous a life. Their sickness in breeding, their pain in bringing forth, with the danger of their lives, the tedious trouble night and day, which they have with their children in their nursing and their childhood; besides their subjection to their husbands, and continual care of family affairs; being forced to consume their lives in a multitude of low and troublesome businesses: all this, and much more would have utterly deterred that sex from marriage, if nature itself had not inclined them to it.

16. And O what abundance of duty is incumbent upon both the parents towards every child for the saving of their souls^k! What incessant labour is necessary in teaching them the doctrine of salvation! which made God twice over

^k Art thou discontented with thy childless state? Remember that of all the Roman kings, not one of them left the crown to his son. Plutarch de tranq. anim.

charge them to teach his word diligently (or sharpen them) "unto their children, and to talk of them when they sit in their houses, and when they walk by the way, and when they lie down, and when they rise up!" What abundance of obstinate, rooted corruptions are in the hearts of children, which parents must by all possible diligence root up! O how great and hard a work is it, to speak to them of their sins and Saviour, of their God, their souls, and the life to come, with that reverence, gravity, seriousness, and unwearied constancy as the weight of the matter doth require! and to suit all their actions and carriage to the same ends! Little do most that have children know, what abundance of care and labour God will require of them, for the sanctifying and saving of their children's souls. Consider your fitness for so great a work before you undertake it.

17. It is abundance of affliction that is ordinarily to be expected in the miscarriages of children, when you have done your best, much more if you neglect your duty, as even godly parents too often do. After all your pains, and care, and labour, you must look that the foolishness of some, and the obstinacy of others, and the unthankfulness of those that you have loved best, should even pierce your hearts. You must look that many vices should spring up and trouble you; and be the more grievous by how much your children are the more dear. And O what a grief it is to breed up a child to be a servant of the devil, and an enemy of God and godliness, and a persecutor of the church of God! And to think of lying in hell for ever! And alas! how great is the number of such!

18. And it is not a little care and trouble, that servants will put you to: so difficult is it to get those that are good, much more to make them good; so great is your duty in teaching them, and minding them of the matters of their salvation; so frequent will be the displeasures about your work and worldly business, and every one of those displeasures will hinder them for receiving your instructions; that most families are houses of correction or affliction.

19. And these marriage crosses are not for a year, but during life: they deprive you of all hope of relief while you live together. There is no room for repentance, nor casting

¹ Deut. vi. 6, 7. xi. 19.

about for a way to escape them. Death only must be your relief. And therefore such a change of your condition should be seriously forethought on, and all the troubles be foreseen and pondered.

20. And if love make you dear to one another, your parting at death will be the more grievous. And when you first come together, you know that such a parting you must have : through all the course of your lives you may foresee it : one of you must see the body of your beloved, turned into a cold; and ghastly clod : you must follow it weeping to the grave, and leave it there in dust and darkness : there it must lie rotting as a loathsome lump, whose sight or smell you cannot endure ; till you shortly follow it, and lie down yourself in the same condition. All these are the ordinary concomitants and consequents of marriage ; easily and quickly spoken, but long and hard to be endured ! No fictions, but realities, and less than most have reason to expect. And should such a life be vainly ventured on in a pang of lust ? or such a burden be undertaken without forethought ?

But especially the ministers of the Gospel should think what they do, and think again, before they enter upon a married life. Not that it is simply unlawful for them, or that they are to be tied from it by a law, as they are in the kingdom of Rome, for carnal ends and with odious effects. But so great a hindrance ordinarily is this troublesome state of life to the sacred ministration which they undertake, that a very clear call should be expected for their satisfaction. That I be not tedious, consider well but of these four things. 1. How well will a life of so much care and business agree to you, that have time little enough for the greater work which you have undertaken ? Do you know what you have to do in public and private ? in reading, meditating, praying, preaching, instructing personally, and from house to house ? And do you know of how great importance it is ? even for the saving of men's souls ? And have you time to spare for so much worldly cares and business ? Are you not charged, " Meditate on these things : give thyself wholly to them ^m." " No man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him that hath chosen him to be a soldier ⁿ."

^m 1 Tim. iv. 15.

ⁿ 2 Tim. ii. 4.

Is not this plain? Soldiers use not to look to farms and servants. If you are faithful ministers, I dare confidently say, you will find all your time so little for your proper work, that many a time you will groan and say, O how short and swift is time! and O, how great and slow is my work and duty! 2. Consider how well a life of so great diversions, avocations and distractions, doth suit with a mind devoted to God, that should be always free and ready for his service. Your studies are on such great and mysterious subjects, that they require the whole mind, and all too little. To resolve the many difficulties that are before you, to prepare those suitable, convincing words, which may pierce and persuade the hearers' hearts, to get within the bosom of an hypocrite, to follow on the Word till it attain its effect, and to deal with poor souls according to their great necessity, and handle God's Word according to its holiness and majesty, these are things that require a whole man, and are not employments for a divided or distracted mind. The talking of women, and the crying of children, and the cares and business of the world, are ill preparations or attendants on these studies^o. 3. Consider well whether a life of so great disturbance be agreeable to one whose affections should be taken up for God: and whose work must be all done, not formally and affectedly with the lips alone, but seriously with all the heart. If your heart and warm affections be at any time left behind, the life and power, the beauty and glory of your work are lost. How dead will your studies, and praying, and preaching, and conference be! And can you keep those affections warm and vigorous for God, and taken up with heaven and heavenly things, which are disturbed with the cares and the crosses of the world, and taken up with carnal matters? 4. And consider also how well that indigent life will agree to one that by charity and good works should second his doctrine, and win men's souls to the love of holiness^p. If you feed not the bodies

^o Non bene fit quod occupato animo fit. Hieron. Epist. 553. ad Paulin.

^p A single life doth well with churchmen, for charity will hardly water the ground, where it must fill a pool. Lord Bacon, Essay 8. The greatest works and foundations have been from childless men, who have sought to express the image of their minds, that have none of their body: so the care of posterity, hath been most in them that had no posterity. Lord Bacon, Essay 7. He that hath a wife and children hath given hostages to fortune: for they are impediments to great enter-

of the poor, they will less relish the food of the soul. Nay, if you abound not above others in good works, the blind, malicious world will see nothing that is good in you; but will say, You have good words, but where are your good works? What abundance have I known hardened against the Gospel and religion, by a common fame, that these preachers are as covetous, and worldly, and uncharitable as any others: and it must be something extraordinary that must confute such fame. And what abundance of success have I seen of the labours of those ministers, who give all they have in works of charity! And though a rich and resolved man may do some good in a married state, yet commonly it is next to nothing, as to the ends now mentioned: wife, and children, and family necessities devour all, if you have never so much. And some provision must be made for them, when you are dead: and the maintenance of the ministry is not so great as to suffice well for all this, much less for any eminent works of charity besides! Never reckon upon the doing of much good to the poor, if you have wives and children of your own! Such instances are rarities and wonders. All will be too little for yourselves. Whereas if all that were given to the poor which goeth to the maintenance of your families, you little know how much it would reconcile the minds of the ungodly, and further the success of your ministerial work.

Direct. III. 'If God call you to a married life, expect all these troubles, or most of them; and make a particular preparation for each temptation, cross and duty which you must expect.' Think not that you are entering into a state of mere delight; lest it prove but a fool's paradise to you. See that you be furnished with marriage strength and patience, for the duties and sufferings of a married state, before you venture on it. Especially, 1. Be well provided against temptations to a worldly mind and life: for here you are like to be most violently and dangerously assaulted. 2. See that you be well provided with conjugal affections: for they are necessary both to the duties and sufferings of a married life. And you should not enter upon the state without the necessary preparations. 3. See that you

prises.—The best works and of greatest merit, for the public, have proceeded from unmarried and childless men. Id. *ibid.* Essay 8.

be well provided with marriage prudence and understanding, that you may be able to instruct and edify your families, and may live with them as men of knowledge⁹, and may manage all your business with discretion^r. 4. See that you be provided with resolvedness and constancy, that you vex not yourself and relations by too late repentings; and come not off with 'had I wist,' or 'non putaram.' Levity and mutability is no fit preparative for a state that only death can change. Let the love and resolutions which brought you into that state, continue with you to the last. 5. See that you be provided with a diligence answerable to the greatness of your undertaken duties. A slothful mind is unfit for one that entereth himself voluntarily upon so much business; as a cowardly mind is unfit for him that listeth himself a soldier for the wars. 6. See that you are well provided with marriage patience; to bear with the infirmities of others, and undergo the daily crosses of your life, which your business, and necessities, and your own infirmities will unavoidably infer. To marry without all this preparation, is as foolish as to go to sea without the necessary preparation for your voyage, or to go to war without armour or ammunition, or to go to work without tools or strength, or to go to buy meat in the market when you have no money.

Direct. iv. 'Take special care, that fancy and passion overrule not reason, and friends' advice, in the choice of your condition, or of the person.' I know you must have love to those that you match with: but that love must be rational, and such as you can justify in the severest trial, by the evidences of worth and fitness in the person whom you love. To say you love, but you know not why, is more beseeing children or mad folks, than those that are soberly entering upon a change of life of so great importance to them. A blind love which maketh you think a person excellent and amiable, who in the eyes of the wisest that are impartial, is nothing so, or maketh you overvalue the person whom you fancy, and be fond of one as some admirable creature, that in the eyes of others is next to contemptible, this is but the index and evidence of your folly. And though you please yourselves in it, and honour

⁹ 1 Pet. iii: 7.

^r Psal. cxii. 15.

it with the name of love, there is none that is acquainted with it, that will give it any better name than lust or fancy. And the marriage that is made by lust or fancy will never tend to solid content or true felicity; but either will feed till death on the fuel that kindled it, and then go out in everlasting shame: or else more ordinarily it proveth but a blaze, and turneth into loathing and weariness of each other. And because this passion of lust (called love) is such a besotting, blinding thing, (like the longing of a woman with child) it is the duty of all that feel any touch of it to kindle upon their hearts, to call it presently to the trial, and to quench it effectually, and till that be done (if they have any relics of wit and reason) to suspect their own apprehensions, and much more to trust the judgment and advice of others.

The means to quench this lust called love, I have largely opened before. I shall now only remember you of these few. 1. Keep asunder, and at a sufficient distance from the person that you dote upon. The nearness of the fire and fuel causeth the combustion. Fancy and lust are inflamed by the senses. Keep out of sight, and in time the fever may abate. 2. Overvalue not vanity. Think not highly of a silken coat, or of the great names of ancestors, or of money, or lands, or of a painted or a spotted face, nor of that natural comeliness called beauty: judge not of things as children, but as men: play not the fools in magnifying trifles, and overlooking inward, real worth. Would you fall in love with a flower or picture at this rate? Be-think you what work the pox, or any other withering sickness will make with that silly beauty which you so admire: think what a spectacle death will make it. And how many thousands once more beautiful, are turned now to common earth! And how many thousand souls are now in hell, that by a beautiful body were drowned in lust, and tempted to neglect themselves! and how few in the world you can name that were ever much the better for it! what a childish thing it is to dote on a book of tales and lies, because it hath a beautiful, gilded cover! and to undervalue the writings of the wise, because they have a plain and homely outside! 3. Rule your thoughts, and let them not run masterless as fancy shall command them. If reason cannot call

off your thoughts from following a lustful desire and imagination, no wonder if one that rideth on such an unbridled colt be cast into the dirt. 4. Live not idly, but let the business of your callings take up your time, and employ your thoughts. An idle, fleshly mind is the carcase where the vermin of lust doth crawl, and the nest where the devil hatcheth both this and many other pernicious sins. 5. Lastly and chiefly, forget not the concernments of your souls: remember how near you are to eternity, and what work you have to do for your salvation: forget not the presence of God, nor the approach of death. Look oft by faith into heaven and hell, and keep conscience tender; and then I warrant you, you will find something else to mind than lust; and greater matters than a silly carcase to take up your thoughts, and you will feel that heavenly love within you, which will extinguish earthly, carnal love.

Direct. v. 'Be not too hasty in your choice or resolution, but deliberate well, and throughly know the person on whom so much of the comfort or sorrow of your life will necessarily depend.' Where repentance hath no place, there is the greater care to be used to prevent it. Reason requireth you to be well acquainted with those that you trust but with an important secret, much more with all your honour or estates: and most of all, with one whom you must trust with so much of the comfort of your lives, and your advantages for a better life. No care and caution can be too great in a matter of so great importance.

Direct. vi. 'Let no carnal motives persuade you to join yourself to an ungodly person; but let the holy fear of God be preferred in your choice before all worldly excellency whatsoever.' Marry not a swine for a golden trough: nor an ugly soul for a comely body. Consider, 1. You will else give cause of great suspicion that you are yourselves ungodly: for they that know truly the misery of an unrenewed soul, and the excellency of the image of God, can never be indifferent whether they be joined to the godly or the ungodly. To prefer things temporal, before things spiritual habitually, and in the predominant acts of heart and life, is the certain character of a graceless soul! And he that in so near a case doth deliberately prefer riches or comeliness in another, before the image and fear of God,

doth give a very dangerous sign, of such a graceless heart and will. If you set more by beauty or riches than by godliness, you have the surest mark that you are ungodly. If you do not set more by them, how come you deliberately to prefer them? How could you do a thing that detecteth your ungodliness, and condemneth you more clearly? And do you not shew that you either believe not the Word of God, or else that you love him not, and regard not his interest? Otherwise you would take his friends as your friends, and his enemies as your enemies. Tell me, would you marry an enemy of your own, before any change and reconciliation? I am confident you would not. And can you so easily marry an enemy of God? If you know not that all the ungodly and unsanctified are his enemies, you know not, or believe not the Word of God: which telleth you that "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be, so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." 2. If you fear God yourselves, your chief end in marriage will be to have one that will be a helper to your soul, and further you in the way to heaven: but if you marry with a person that is ungodly, either you have no such end, or else you may easily know you have no more wisely chosen the means, than if you had chosen water to kindle the fire, or a bed of snow to keep you warm. Will an ignorant or ungodly person assist you in prayer or holy watchfulness, and stir you up to the love of God, and a heavenly mind? And can you so willingly lose all the spiritual benefit, which you should principally desire and intend? 3. Nay, instead of a helper, you will have a continual hinderer: when you should go to prayer, you will have one to pull you back, or to fill your minds with diversions or disquietments! When you should keep close to God in holy meditations, you will have one to cast in worldly thoughts, or trouble your minds with vanity and vexation. When you should discourse of God and heavenly things, you will have one to stifle such discourse, and fill your ears with idle, impertinent, or worldly talk. And one such a hindrance so near you, in your bosom, will be worse than a thousand further off. As an ungodly heart which is next of all to us, is our greatest hin-

* Rom. viii. 7, 8.

dance, so an ungodly husband or wife, which is next to that, is worse to us than many ungodly neighbours. And if you think that you can well enough overcome such hindrances, and your heart is so good, that no such clogs can keep it down, you do but shew that you have a proud, un-humbled heart, that is prepared for a fall. If you know yourselves, and the badness of your hearts, you will know that you have no need of hindrances in any holy work, and that all the helps in the world are little enough, and too little to keep your souls in the love of God. 4. And such an ungodly companion will be to you a continual temptation to sin. Instead of stirring you up to good, you will have one to stir you up to evil, to passion or discontent, or covetousness, or pride, or revenge, or sensuality. And can you not sin enough without such a tempter? 5. And what a continual grief will it be to you, if you are believers, to have a child of the devil in your bosom! and to think how far you must be separated at death! and in what torments those must lie for ever, that are so dear unto you now! 6. Yea such companions will be incapable of the principal part of your love. You may love them as husbands or wives, but you cannot love them as saints or members of Christ. And how great a want this will be in your love, those know that know what this holy love is.

Quest. 'But how can I tell who are godly, when there is so much hypocrisy in the world?' *Ans.* At least you may know who is ungodly if it be palpably discovered. I take not a barren knowledge for ungodliness, nor a nimble tongue for godliness: judge of them by their love: such as a man's love is, such is the man: if they love the Word, and servants, and worship of God, and love a holy life, and hate the contrary, you may close with such, though their knowledge be small, and their parts be weak. But if they have no love to these, but had rather live a common, careless, carnal life, you may well avoid them as ungodly.

Quest. 'But if ungodly persons may marry, why may not I marry with one that is ungodly?' *Ans.* Though dogs and swine may join in generating, it followeth not, men or women may join with them. Pardon the comparison (while Christ calleth the wicked dogs and swine¹), it doth

¹ Matt. vii. 6.

but shew the badness of your consequence. Unbelievers may marry, and yet we may not marry with unbelievers. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God—— wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, &c." "

Quest. 'But I make no doubt but they may be converted: God can call them when he will: if there be but love, they will easily be won to be of the mind as those they love are?' *Answ.* 1. Then it seems because you love an ungodly person, you will be easily turned to be ungodly. If so, you are not much better already. If love will not draw you to their mind to be ungodly, why should you think love will draw them to your mind to be godly? Are you stronger in grace than they are in sin? 2. If you know well what grace is, and what a sinful, unrenewed soul is, you would not think it so easy a matter to convert a soul. Why are there so few converted, if it be so easy a thing? You cannot make yourselves better by adding higher degrees to the grace you have: much less can you make another better, by giving them the grace which they have not. 3. It is true that God is able to convert them when he will: and it is true that for aught I know it may be done. But what of that? Will you in so weighty a case take up with a mere possibility? God can make a beggar rich, and for aught you know to the contrary, he will do it: and yet you will not therefore marry a beggar? nor will you marry a leper, because God can heal him? Why then should you marry an ungodly person, because God can convert him? See it done first, if you love your peace and safety.

Quest. 'But what if my parents command me to marry an ungodly person?' *Answ.* God having forbidden it, no parent hath authority to command you to do so great a mischief to yourself, no more than to cut your own throats, or to dismember your bodies.

" 2 Cor. vi. 14—16.

Quest. 'But what if I have a necessity of marrying, and can get none but an ungodly person?' *Answ.* If that really be your case, that your necessity be real, and you can get no other, I think it is lawful.

Quest. 'But is it not better have a good-natured person that is ungodly, than an ill-natured person that is religious, as many such are? And may not a bad man be a good husband?' *Answ.* 1. A bad man may be a good tailor, or shoe-maker, or carpenter, or seaman, because there is no moral virtue necessary to the well-doing of their work. But a bad man cannot be simply a good magistrate, or minister, or husband, or parent, because there is much moral virtue necessary to their duties. 2. A bad nature unmortified and untamed is inconsistent with true godliness: such persons may talk and profess what they please; but "if any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain."^{*} 3. I did not say that godliness alone is all that you must look after: though this be the first, yet more is necessary.

Direct. VII. 'Next to the fear of God, make choice of a nature, or temperament that is not too much unsuitable to you.' A crossness of dispositions will be a continual vexation: and you will have a domestic war instead of love, especially make sure of these following qualities: 1. That there be a loving, and not a selfish nature, that hath no regard to another but for their own end. 2. That there be a nature competently quiet and patient, and not intolerably froward, and unpleasable. 3. That there be a competency of wit: for no one can live lovingly and comfortably with a fool. 4. That there be a competent humility: for there is no quietness to be expected with the proud. 5. That there be a power to be silent, as well as to speak: for a babbling tongue is a continual vexation.

Direct. VIII. 'Next to grace and nature, have a due and moderate respect to person, education and estate.' 1: So far have respect to the person as that there be no unhealthfulness to make your condition over-burdensome; nor any such deformity as may hinder your affections. 2. And so far have respect to parentage and education as that there be no great unsuitableness of mind, nor any prejudicate opin-

^{*} James i. 26.

ions in religion, which may make you too unequal. Differing opinions in religion are much more tolerable in persons more distant, than in so near relations. And those that are bred too high in idleness and luxury, must have a thorough work of grace to make them fit for a low condition, and cure the pride and sensuality which are taken for the honourable badges of their gentility; and it is scarce considerable how rich such are: for their pride and luxury will make even with all, and be still in greater want, than honest, contented, temperate poverty.

Direct. ix. 'If God call you to marriage, take notice of the helps and comforts of that condition, as well as of the hindrances and troubles; that you may cheerfully serve God in it, in the expectation of his blessing.' Though man's corruption have filled that and every state of life with snares and troubles, yet from the beginning it was not so; God appointed it for mutual help, and as such it may be used. As a married life hath its temptations and afflictions, so it hath its peculiar benefits, which you are thankfully to accept and acknowledge unto God¹. 1. It is a mercy in order to the propagating of a people on earth to love and honour their Creator, and to serve God in the world and enjoy him for ever. It is no small mercy to be the parents of a godly seed; and this is the end of the institution of marriage². And this parents may expect, if they be not wanting on their part; however sometimes their children prove ungodly. 2. It is a mercy to have a faithful friend, that loveth you entirely, and is as true to you as yourself, to whom you may open your mind and communicate your affairs, and who would be ready to strengthen you, and divide the cares of your affairs and family with you, and help you to bear your burdens, and comfort you in your sorrows, and be the daily companion of your lives, and partaker of your joys and sorrows. 3. And it is a mercy to have so near a friend to be a helper to your soul; to join with you in prayer and other holy exercises; to watch over you and tell you of your sins and dangers, and to stir up in you the grace of God, and remember you of the life to come, and cheerfully accompany you in the ways of holiness. "A prudent wife

¹ See Eccles. iv. 10—12.

² Mal. ii. 15.

is from the Lord ^a." Thus it is said, "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord ^b."

Direct. x. 'Let your marriage covenant be made understandingly, deliberately, heartily, in the fear of God, with a fixed resolution faithfully to perform it.' Understand well all the duties of your relation before you enter into it: and run not upon it as boys to a play, but with the sense of your duty, as those that engage themselves to a great deal of work of great importance towards God and towards each other. Address yourselves therefore beforehand to God for counsel, and earnestly beg his guidance, and his blessing, and run not without him, or before him. Reckon upon the worst, and foresee all temptations which would diminish your affections, or make you unfaithful to each other: and see that you be fortified against them all.

Direct. xi. 'Be sure that God be the ultimate end of your marriage, and that you principally choose that state of life, that in it you may be most serviceable to him; and that you heartily devote yourselves, and your families unto God; that so it may be to you a sanctified condition.' It is nothing but making God our guide and end that can sanctify our state of life. They that unfeignedly follow God's counsel, and aim at his glory, and do it to please him, will find God owning and blessing their relation. But they that do it principally to please the flesh, to satisfy lust, and increase their estates, and to have children surviving them to receive the fruit of their pride and covetousness, can expect to reap no better than they sow; and to have the flesh, the world, and the devil the masters of their family, according to their own desire and choice.

Direct. xii. 'At your first conjunction (and through the rest of your lives) remember the day of your separation.' And think not that you are settling yourselves in a state of rest, or felicity, or continuance, but only assuming a companion in your travels. Whether you live in a married or an unmarried life, remember that you are hastening to the everlasting life, where there is neither "marrying nor giving in marriage ^c." You are going as fast to another world in one state of life as in the other. You are but to help each

^a Prov. xix. 14.

^b Prov. xviii. 22. See Prov. xxxi. 10—12, &c.

^c 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30.

other in your way, that your journey may be the easier to you, and that you may happily meet again in the heavenly Jerusalem. When worldlings marry, they take it for a settling themselves in the world; and as regenerate persons begin the world anew, by beginning to lay up a treasure in heaven; so worldlings call their marriage, their beginning the world, because then as engaged servants to the world, they set themselves to seek it with greater diligence than ever before. They do but in marriage begin (as seekers) that life of foolery, which when he had found what he sought, that rich man ended with a "This I will do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods: and I will say to my soul, Soul thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry: but God said unto him, Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided^d?" If you would not die such fools, do not marry and live such worldlings.

Tit. 2. Cases of Marriage.

Quest. 1. 'What should one follow as a certain rule, about the prohibited degrees of consanguinity or affinity? seeing 1. The law of Moses is not in force to us. 2. And if it were, it is very dark, whether it may by parity of reason be extended to more degrees than are named in the text. 3. And seeing the law of nature is so hardly legible in this case^e?'

Answ. 1. It is certain that the prohibited degrees are not so stately and universally unlawful, as that such marriage may not be made lawful by any necessity. For Adam's sons did lawfully marry their own sisters.

2. But now the world is peopled, such necessities as will warrant such marriages must needs be very rare, and such as we are never like to meet with.

3. The law of nature is it which prohibiteth the degrees

^d Luke xii. 19, 20.

^e The case of Polygamy is so fully and plainly resolved by Christ, that I take it not to be necessary to decide it, especially while the law of the land doth make it death.

that are now unlawful; and though this law be dark as to some degrees, it is not so as to others.

4. The law of God to the Jews^f, doth not prohibit those degrees there named, because of any reason proper to the Jews; but as an exposition of the law of nature, and so on reasons common to all.

5. Therefore, though the Jewish law cease (yea, never bound other nations) formally as that political national law; yet as it was God's exposition of his own law of nature, it is of use, and consequential obligation to all men, even to this day; for if God once had told but one man, 'This is the sense of the law of nature,' it remaineth true, and all must believe it; and then the law of nature itself, so expounded, will still oblige.

6. The world is so wide for choice, and a necessity of doubtful marriage is so rare, and the trouble so great, that prudence telleth every one that it is their sin, without flat necessity, to marry in a doubtful degree; and therefore it is thus safest, to avoid all degrees that seem to be equal to those named Lev. xviii. and to have the same reason, though they be not named.

7. But because it is not certain that indeed the unnamed cases have the same reason, (while God doth not acquaint us with all the reasons of his law) therefore when the thing is done, we must not censure others too deeply; nor trouble ourselves too much about those unnamed, doubtful cases. We must avoid them beforehand, because else we shall cast ourselves into doubts and troubles unnecessarily; but when it is past, the case must be considered of as I shall after open.

Quest. II. 'What if the law of the land forbid more or fewer degrees than Lev. xviii. doth?'

Ans. If it forbid fewer, the rest are nevertheless to be avoided as forbidden by God. If it forbid more, the forbidden ones must be avoided in obedience to our ruler.

Quest. III. 'Is the marriage of cousin-germans, that is, of brothers' children, or sisters' children, or brothers' and sisters' children, unlawful?'

Ans. I think not; 1. Because not forbidden by God. 2. Because none of that same rank are forbidden; that is,

^f Lev. xviii.

none that on both sides are two degrees from the root. I refer the reader for my reasons to a Latin Treatise of Charles Butler on this subject, for in those I rest. As all the children of Noah's sons did marry their cousin-germans, (for they could not marry in any remoter degree) so have others since without reproof, and none are forbidden. 3. But it is safest to do otherwise, because there is choice enough beside, and because many divines being of the contrary opinion, may make it matter of scruple and trouble afterwards, to those that venture upon it without need.

Quest. iv. 'What would you have those do that have married cousin-germans, and now doubt whether it be lawful so to do?'

Answ. I would have them cast away such doubts, or at least conclude that it is now their duty to live peaceably in the state in which they are: and a great sin for them to be separated on such scruples. The reason is, because, if it be not certain, that the degree is lawful, at least no man can be certain that it is unlawful. And for husband and wife to break their covenants and part, without a necessary cause, is a great sin: and that which no man can prove to be a sin, is no necessary or lawful cause of a divorce. Marriage duties are certainly commanded to the married, but the marriage of cousin-germans is not certainly forbidden. Therefore if it were a sin to marry so, to them that doubted; or if they are since fallen into doubt whether it was not a sin; yet may they be sure that the continuance of it is a duty, and that all they have to do is to repent of doing a doubtful thing, but not to part, nor to forbear their covenanted duties. No, nor to indulge or suffer those troublesome scruples, which would hinder the cheerful discharge of their duties, and the comfortable serving of God in their relations.

Quest. v. 'What should those do that are married in those degrees which are not forbidden by name in Lev. xviii. and yet are at the same distance from the root with those that are named, and seem to have the same reason of unlawfulness?'

Answ. If there be clearly a parity of degree and also of the reason of the prohibition, then no doubt but they must part as incestuous, and not continue in a forbidden state. But because divines are disagreed whether there be in all in-

stances a parity of the reason of the prohibition, where there is an equal distance as to degrees ; and so in those cases some think it a duty to be separated, and others think it enough to repent of their conjunction and not to be separated, because the case is doubtful (as the controversy sheweth), I shall not venture to cast in my judgment in a case, where so many and such men are disagreed ; but shall only advise all to prevent such troublesome doubts beforehand, and not by rashness to run themselves into perplexities, when there is no necessity ; unless they will call their carnal ends or sinful passions, a necessity.

Quest. vi. 'But if a man do marry in a degree expressly there forbidden, is it in all cases a sin to continue in that state? If necessity made such marriage a duty to Adam's children, why may not necessity make the continuance lawful to others? As suppose the king or parents command it? suppose the woman will die or be distracted with grief else? suppose one hath made a vow to marry no other, and yet cannot live single, &c.?' Here I shall suppose, that if a lustful person marry a kinswoman that he may have change, as foreknowing that he must be divorced, punishment, and not continuance in the sin must be his sentence : and if one that hath married a kinswoman be glad to be divorced, because he hateth her or loveth change, punishment must rebuke him, but he must not continue in incest.

Ans. 1. Natural necessity justified Adam's children, and such would now justify you. Yea, the benediction "Increase and multiply," did not only allow, but oblige them then to marry, to replenish the earth (when else mankind had ceased); but so it doth not us now when the earth is replenished. Yet I deny not, but if a man and his sister were cast alone upon a foreign wilderness, where they justly despaired of any other company, if God should bid them there "increase and multiply," it would warrant them to marry. But else there is no necessity of it, and therefore no lawfulness. For 2. A vicious necessity justifieth not the sin. If the man or woman that should abstain will be mad or dead with passion, rather than obey God, and deny and mortify their lust, it is not one sin that will justify them in another. The thing that is necessary, is to conform their wills to the law of God, and if they will not, and then say,

‘They cannot,’ they must bear what they get by it. 3. And it is no necessity that is imposed by that command of king or parents, which is against the law of God. 4. No, nor by a vow neither: for a vow to break God’s law is not an obligation to be kept, but to be repented of; nor is the necessity remediless which such a one bringeth on himself, by vowing never to marry any other; seeing chastity may be kept.

Quest. VII. ‘Is it lawful for one to marry, that hath vowed chastity during life, and not to marry, and afterward findeth a necessity of marrying, for the avoiding lust and fornication?’

Ans. I know that many great divines have easily absolved those, that under Popery vowed chastity. The principal part of the solution of the question, you must fetch from my solution of the Case of Vows, Part iii. Chap. v. Tit. 2. At the present this shall suffice to be added to it.

1. Such vows of chastity that are absolute, without any exceptions of after alterations or difficulties that may arise, are sinfully made, or are unlawful ‘quoad actum jurandi.’

2. If parents or others impose such oaths and vows on their children or subjects, or induce them to it, it is sinfully done of them, and the ‘actus imperantium’ is also unlawful.

3. Yet as long as the ‘materia jurata’ ‘the matter vowed’ remaineth lawful, the vow doth bind, and it is perfidiousness to break it. For the sinfulness of the imposer’s act proveth no more, but that such a command did not oblige you to vow. And a vow made arbitrarily without any command, doth nevertheless bind. And the sinfulness of the making of the vow, doth only call for repentance; (as if you made it causelessly, rashly, upon ill motives, and to ill ends, or in ill circumstances, &c.) But yet that vow which you repent that ever you made, must be nevertheless kept, if the thing vowed be a lawful thing, and the act of vowing be not made a nullity (though it was a sin). And when it is a nullity, I have shewed in the forecited place.

4. A vow of celibate or chastity during life, which hath this condition or exception expressed or implied in the true intent of the votary (unless any thing fall out which shall make it a sin to me not to marry), may in some cases be a

‘By this you may see how to resolve the cases about vows and covenants which are the grand controversies of this time among us.’

lawful vow : as to one that foreseeth great inconveniences in marriage, and would by firm resolution fortify himself against temptations and mutability.

5. If there were no such excepting thought in the person vowing, yet when the thing becometh unlawful, the vow is not to be kept; though it oblige us under guilt for sinful making it, yet God commandeth us not to keep it, because we vowed that which he forbade us not only to vow but to do.

6. Either the Papists suppose such exceptions to be always implied by their votaries, or at least that they are contained in the law of God, or else sure they durst never pretend that the pope hath power to dispense with such vows; (as they have oft done for princes, men and women, that they might be taken from a monastery to a crown.) For if they suppose, that the persons before the dispensation are under the obligation of their vow, and bound by God to keep it, then it would be too gross and odious blasphemy for the pope to claim a power of disobliging them, and dissolving God's commands; and not only antichristianity, but antitheistical, or a setting himself above God Almighty, under pretence of his own commission. But if they only pretend to dissolve such vows judicially or decisively, by judging when the person is no longer obliged to keep them by God's law, then they suppose, that the obligation of God's law is ceased, before they judicially declare it to be ceased. And if that were all that the pope undertook, he had no power to do it out of his own parish, nor more than any lawful bishop hath in his proper charge.

7. The matter of a vow of celibate or chastity is then unlawful, when it cannot be kept without greater sin than that life of chastity escapeth, and which would be escaped if it were forsaken; or without the omission of greater duty, and a mission of greater good, than that life of chastity containeth or attaineth. For the further opening of this, let it be noted, that,

8. It is not every degree of sin which marriage would cure, that will warrant the breach of a vow of chastity. As if I had some more lustful thoughts or instigations and irritations in a single life than I should have if I married. The reason is, because, 1. No man liveth without some sin, and it is supposed that there are greater sins of another kind,

which by a life of chastity I avoid. And the breach of the vow itself is a greater matter than a lustful thought.

9. So it is not every degree of good which by marriage I may attain or do, that will warrant it against a vow of chastity. Because I may do and get a greater good by chastity, and because the evil of perjury is not to be done that good may be done by it; till I can prove, that it is not only good in itself, but a duty 'hic et nunc' to me.

10. A man should rather break his vow of celibate, than once commit fornication, if there were a necessity that he must do the one. Because fornication is a sin which no vow will warrant any man to commit.

11. A man should rather break his vow of celibate, than live in such constant or ordinary lust, as unfitteth him for prayer, and a holy life, and keepeth him in ordinary danger of fornication, if there were a necessity that he must do the one. The reason is also because now the matter vowed is become unlawful, and no vow can warrant a man to live in so great sin, (unless there were some greater sin on the other side which could not be avoided in a married life, which is hardly to be supposed, however popish priests think disobedience to the pope, and the incommmodity and disgrace of a married life, &c. to be a greater sin than fornication itself.)

12. If a prince vow chastity, when it is like to endanger the kingdom for want of a safe and sure succession, he is bound to break that vow; because he may not lawfully give away the people's right, nor do that which is injurious to so many.

13. Whether the command of a parent or prince may dissolve the obligation of a vow of celibate, I have answered already. I now say but this, 1. When parents or princes may justly command it, we may justly obey them. But this is not one of those accidental evils, which may be lawfully done, though unlawfully commanded. 2. It is parents that God hath committed more of this care and power to, about children's marriage, than to princes. 3. Parents nor princes may not lawfully command the breach of such a vow, (not nullified at first) except in such cases as disoblige us, whether they do it or not; so that the resolving of the main case doth suffice for all.

14. He that, by lawful means can overcome his lust, to

the measure before mentioned, is under no necessity of violating his vow of single life.

15. I think that it is not one of twenty that have bodies so unavoidably prone to lust, but that by due means it might be so far (though not totally) overcome, without marriage, fornication, wilful self-pollution, or violent, vexatious, lustful thoughts. That is, 1. If they employ themselves constantly and diligently in a lawful calling, and be not guilty of such idleness, as leaveth room in their minds and imaginations for vain and filthy thoughts. If they follow such a calling as shall lay a necessity upon them to keep their thoughts close employed about it. 2. If they use such abstinence and coarseness in their diet, as is meet to tame inordinate lusts, without destroying health : and not only avoid fullness and gulosity, and vain sports and pleasures, but also use convenient fasting, and tame the body by necessary austerities. 3. If they sufficiently avoid all tempting company and sights, and keep at a meet distance from them. 4. If they set such a restraint upon their thoughts as they may do. 5. If they use such a quality of diet and physic, as is most apt for the altering of those bodily distempers, which are the cause. 6. And lastly, If they are earnest in prayer to God, and live in mortifying meditations, especially in a constant familiarity with a crucified Christ, and with the grave, and with the heavenly society. He that breaketh his vow to save himself the labour and suffering of these ungrateful means, I take to be perfidious, though perhaps he sinfully made that vow. And no greater a number are excusable for continence after such a vow, than these that have bodies so extraordinary lustful, as no such other means can tame, and those forementioned that have extraordinary accidents to make a single life unlawful.

16. It must not be forgotten here, that if men trust to marriage itself alone as the cure of their lust, without other means, such violent lusts as nothing else will cure, may possibly be much uncured afterwards. For adulterers are as violent in their lusts as the unmarried, and oftentimes find it as hard to restrain them. And therefore the married as well as others have need to be careful to overcome their lust. And the rather because it is in them a double sin.

17. But yet when all other means do fail, marriage is God's appointed means, to quench those flames from which men's vows cannot, in cases of true necessity, disoblige them.

CHAPTER II.

Directions for the right Choice of Servants and Masters.

PART I.

Directions for the right Choice of Servants.

SERVANTS being integral parts of the family, who contribute much to the holiness or unholiness of it, and to the happiness or misery of it, it much concerneth masters to be careful in their choice. And the harder it is to find such as are indeed desirable, the more careful and diligent in it should you be.

Direct. 1. 'To bid you choose such as are fittest for your service, is a direction which nature and interest will give you, without any persuasions of mine.' And indeed it is not mere honesty or piety that will make a good servant, nor do your work. Three things are necessary to make a servant fit for you: 1. Strength. 2. Skill. 3. Willingness. And no two of these will serve without the third. Strength and skill without willingness, will do nothing: skill and willingness without strength, can do nothing: strength and willingness without skill, will do as bad, or worse than nothing. No less than all will make you a good servant. Therefore choose one, 1. That is healthful. 2. That hath been used to such work as you must employ him in: and, 3. One that is not of a fleshpleasing, or lazy, sluggish disposition. For to exact labour from one that is sickly will seem cruelty: and to expect labour from one that is unskilful and unexercised will seem folly: and heavy, fleshly, slothful persons, will do all with so much unwillingness, and pain, and weariness, that they will think all too much, and their service will be a continual toil and displeasure to them, and they will think you wrong them, or deal hardly with them, if you will not allow them in their flesh-