

to restrain you? And is it not as heinous for you, that are so much obliged to it, voluntarily to restrain yourselves? O then deny not this necessary diligence to your necessitous children, as you love their souls, as you love the happiness of the church or commonwealth, as you love the honour and interest of Christ, and as you love your present and everlasting peace. Do not see your children the slaves of satan here, and the firebrands of hell for ever, if any diligence of yours may contribute to prevent it. Do not give conscience such matter of accusation against you, as to say, 'All this was long of thee! If thou hadst instructed them diligently, and watched over them, and corrected them, and done thy part, it is like they had never come to this.' You till your fields; you weed your gardens: what pains take you about your grounds and cattle? And will you not take more for your children's souls? Alas, what creatures will they be if you leave them to themselves? How ignorant, careless, rude and beastly? O what a lamentable case have ungodly parents brought the world into? Ignorance and selfishness, beastly sensuality, and devilish malignity have covered the face of the earth as a deluge, and driven away wisdom, and self-denial, and piety, and charity, and justice, and temperance almost out of the world, confining them to the breasts of a few obscure humble souls, that love virtue for virtue's sake, and look for their reward from God alone, and expect that by abstaining from iniquity, they make themselves a prey to wolves^d. Wicked education hath unmanned the world, and subdued it to satan, and made it almost like to hell. O do not join with the sons of Belial in this unnatural, horrid wickedness!

CHAPTER VII.

The mutual Duties of Husbands and Wives towards each other.

It is the pernicious subversion of all societies, and so of the world, that selfish, ungodly persons enter into all relations with a desire to serve themselves there, and fish out all that gratifieth their flesh, but without any sense of the

^d Isa. lix. 15.

duty of their relation. They bethink them what honour, or profit, or pleasure their relation will afford them, but not what God and man require or expect from them*. All their thought is, what they shall have, but not what they shall be, and do. They are very sensible what others should be, and do to them; but not what they should be, and do to others. Thus it is with magistrates, and with people, with too many pastors and their flocks, with husbands and wives, with parents and children, with masters and servants, and all other relations. Whereas our first care should be to know and perform the duties of our relations, and please God in them, and then look for his blessing by way of encouraging reward. Study and do your parts, and God will certainly do his.

Direct. 1. 'The first duty of husbands is to love their wives (and wives their husbands) with a true, entire conjugal love.' "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.— So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies; he that loveth his wife, loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.— Let every one of you in particular so love his wife, even as himself^b." It is a relation of love that you have entered. God hath made it your duty for your mutual help and comfort: that you may be as willing and ready to succour one another, as the hand is to help the eye or other fellow member, and that your converse may be sweet, and your burdens easy, and your lives may be comfortable. If love be removed but for an hour between husband and wife, they are so long as a bone out of joint; there is no ease, no order, no work well done, till they are restored and set in joint again. Therefore be sure that conjugal love be constantly maintained.

The sub-directions for maintaining conjugal love are such as these. *Direct.* 1. Choose one at first that is truly amiable, especially in the virtues of the mind. 2. Marry not till you are sure that you can love entirely. Be not drawn for sordid ends, to join with one that you have but ordinary affections for. 3. Be not too hasty, but know beforehand, all the imperfections, which may tempt you after-

* Gen. ii. 18. Prov. xviii. 22.

^b Eph. v. 25, 28, 29, 33. See Gen. ii. 22.

wards to loathing. But if these duties have been sinfully neglected, yet 4. Remember that justice commandeth you to love one that hath, as it were, forsaken all the world for you, and is contented to be the companion of your labours and sufferings, and be an equal sharer in all conditions with you, and that must be your companion until death. It is worse than barbarous inhumanity to entice such a one into a bond of love, and society with you, and then to say, you cannot love her. This was by perfidiousness to draw her into a snare to her undoing. What comfort can she have in her converse with you, and care, and labour, and necessary sufferings, if you deny her conjugal love? Especially, if she deny not love to you, the inhumanity is the greater. 5. Remember that women are ordinarily affectionate, passionate creatures, and as they love much themselves, so they expect much love from you. And when you joined yourself to such a nature, you obliged yourself to answerable duty: and if love cause not love, it is ungrateful and unjust contempt. 6. Remember that you are under God's command; and to deny conjugal love to your wives, is to deny a duty which God hath urgently imposed on you. Obedience therefore should command your love. 7. Remember that you are relatively, as it were, one flesh; you have drawn her to forsake father and mother, to cleave to you; you are conjoined for procreation of such children as must bear the image and nature of you both; your possessions and interests are in a manner the same. And therefore such nearness should command affection; they that are as yourselves, should be most easily loved as yourselves. 8. Take more notice of the good, that is in your wives, than of the evil. Let not the observation of their faults make you forget or overlook their virtues. Love is kindled by the sight of love or goodness. 9. Make not infirmities to seem odious faults, but excuse them as far as lawfully you may, by considering the frailty of the sex, and of their tempers, and considering also your own infirmities, and how much your wives must bear with you. 10. Stir up that most in them into exercise which is best, and stir not up that which is evil; and then the good will most appear, and the evil will be as buried, and you will more easily maintain your love. There is some uncleanness in the best on earth; and

if you will be daily stirring in the filth, no wonder if you have the annoyance; and for that you may thank yourselves: draw out the fragrant of that which is good and delectable in them, and do not by your own imprudence or peevishness stir up the worst, and then you shall find that even your faulty wives will appear more amiable to you. 11. Overcome them with love; and then whatever they are in themselves, they will be loving to you, and consequently lovely. Love will cause love, as fire kindleth fire. A good husband is the best means to make a good and loving wife. Make them not froward by your froward carriage, and then say, we cannot love them. 12. Give them examples of amiableness in yourselves; set them the pattern of a prudent, lowly, loving, meek, self-denying, patient, harmless, holy, heavenly life. Try this a while, and see whether it will not shame them from their faults, and make them walk more amiably themselves.

Direct. 11. 'Another duty of husbands and wives is, cohabitation and (where age prohibiteth not) a sober and modest conjunction for procreation.' Avoiding lasciviousness, unseasonableness, and whatever tendeth to corrupt the mind, and make it vain and filthy, and hinder it from holy employment. And therefore lust must not be cherished in the married; but the mind be brought to a moderate, chaste, and sober frame; and the remedy must not be turned into an increase of the disease, but used to extinguish it. For if the mind be left to the power of lust, and only marriage trusted to for the cure, with many it will be found an insufficient cure; and lust will rage still as it did before, and will be so much the more desperate and your case the more miserable, as your sin prevaleth against the remedy. Yet marriage being appointed for a remedy against lust, for the avoiding all unlawful congress, the apostle hath plainly described your duty. "It is good for a man not to touch a woman: nevertheless to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband; let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence; and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud you not one the other, except it be with consent for

a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer, and come together again, that satan tempt you not for your incontinency^c." Therefore those persons live contrary to the nature of their relation, who live a great part of their lives asunder, as many do for worldly respects; when they have several houses, possessions or trades, and the husband must live at one, and the wife at another, for their commodity sake; and only come together once in a week, or in many weeks; when this is done without great necessity, it is a constant violation of their duties. And so it is for men to go trade or live beyond sea, or in another land, and leave their wives behind them; yea, though they have their wives' consent; it is an unlawful course, except in a case of mere necessity, or public service, or when they are able on good grounds to say, that the benefits are like to be greater to soul and body than the loss; and that they are confirmed against the danger of incontinence. The offices which husband and wife are bound to perform for one another are such as, for the most part, suppose their cohabitation, like the offices of the members of the body for each other, which they cannot perform, if they be dismembered and divided.

Direct. III. 'Abhor not only adultery itself, but all that tendeth to unchasteness and the violation of your marriage-covenant^d.' Adultery is so contrary to the conjugal bond and state of life, that though 'de facto' it do not actually dissolve the bond, and nullify the marriage; yet it so far disobligeth the wronged innocent party, that 'de jure' it is to such a sufficient ground to warrant a divorce. And God required, that it be punished by death^e. When lust is the chiefest cause of marriage, and when married persons live not in the fear of God, but pamper the flesh and live licentiously, no wonder if marriage prove an insufficient remedy against such cherished lust. Such carnal, beastly persons are still casting fuel on the fire; by wanton, unbridled

^c 1 Cor. vii. 2—5.

^d Matt. v. 31, 32. xix. 9. John viii. 4, 5. Of Adultery. Heb. xiii. 4. Prov. xxii. 14. Hos. iv. 2, 3. Prov. ii. 17. 1 Cor. vi. 15, 19. Mal. ii. 15. Prov. vi. 32, 35. Deut. xxiii. 2. Lev. xxi. 9. xviii. 28. Numb. xxv. 9. Jer. v. 7—Gen. vi. 2, 3, &c. xxxiv. 27. 2 Sam. xiii. 22. xii. 10. Judg. xx. 10. Jer. xxiii. 14.

^e Lev. xx. 10.

thoughts and speeches, by gluttony, drinking, sports, and idleness, by vain, enticing company, and not avoiding occasions, opportunities, and temptations, they burn as much when they are married as they did before. And the devil that bloweth up this fire in their flesh, doth conduct and accommodate them in the satisfying of their lusts; so that their brutish concupiscence is like a fire burning in the sea; water itself will not quench it. One woman will not satisfy their bestiality; and perhaps they loathe their own wives, and run after others, though their own (in the eye of any impartial man) be the more comely and amiable, and their whores be never so deformed, or impudent, filthy lumps of dirt. So that one would think that they had no other reason, to love and follow such unlovely things, but only because God forbiddeth it; as if the devil did it to shew his power over them, that he can make them do that, as in despite of God, which else they would abhor themselves. When once their sensuality and their forsaking of God, hath provoked God to forsake them, and give them up to the rage of that sensuality, an unclean spirit sometimes takes possession of them, and wholly inclineth them to wallow in uncleanness: they can scarce look a comely person in the face, that is of the other sex, but unclean thoughts are rising in their hearts; they think of filthiness when they are alone; they dream of filthiness in the night; they talk of filthiness with others: the tongues of the dogs that licked Lazarus his sores, were not used in such a filthy employment as theirs are. "They are as fed horses in the morning; every one neigheth after his neighbour's wife^f." "They declare their sin as Sodom, and hide it not^g." And usually when they are given over to this filthy sin, it utterly debaucheth their consciences, and maketh them like blocks or beasts, insensible of their misery and the wrath of God, and given over to all other villanies, and even to hate and persecute godliness, if not civility itself^h. Some few adulterers I have known, that sin so much against their consciences, that they live in continual despair; tormented in the sense of their own unhappiness, and yet sinning still, as if the devil would make them a derision: and yet these

^f Jer. v. 8.

^g Isa. iii. 9.

^h Rev. xxi. 8. Prov. v. 20. Read before Part i. Chap. 8. Part. v. Tit. 1.

are the better sort, because there is some testimony for a better life remaining in their minds; but others of them “being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness^l.” “They have eyes full of adultery that cannot cease from sin.—As natural brute beasts that are made to be taken and destroyed^k.” Take heed therefore of the causes of this odious sin, and of all appearance of it; suffer not your eye or thought to go after a stranger, nor to begin a breach in your covenant and conjugal fidelity.

Direct. iv. ‘Husband and wife must take delight in the love, and company, and converse of each other.’ There is nothing that man’s heart is so inordinately set upon as delight; and yet the lawful delight allowed them by God, they can turn into loathing and disdain. The delight which would entangle you in sin, and turn you from your duty and from God, is it that is forbidden you: but this is a delight that is helpful to you in your duty, and would keep you from sin. When husband and wife take pleasure in each other, it uniteth them in duty, it helpeth them with ease to do their work, and bear their burdens; and is not the least part of the comfort of the married state. “Rejoice with the wife of thy youth, as the loving hind and pleasant roe, let her breasts satisfy thee at all times, and be thou ravished always with her love^l.” Therefore a wife is called ‘The desire of the eyes^m.’ Avoid therefore all things that may represent you unpleasant or unlovely to each other; and use all lawful means to cherish complacency and delight: not by foolish, ridiculous, or proud attire, or immodest actions; but by cleanness, and decency, and kind deportment. Nastiness, and uncleanness, and unseemly carriage, and foolish speech, and whatever is loathsome in body or mind, must be shunned as temptations which would hinder you from that love, and pleasure, and content, which husband and wife should have in one another. And yet it is a foolish, fleshly person, that will continue love no longer than it is cherished with all this care. If there be any deformity of the body, or any thing unseemly in behaviour, or if God should visit them with any loathsome sores or sickness, they

^l Eph. iv. 19.

^k 2 Pet. ii. 10—12.

^l Prov. v. 18, 19.

^m Ezek. xxiv. 16.

must for all that love each other, yea, and take pleasure in their converse. It is not a true friend that leaveth you in adversity; nor is it true conjugal affection which is blasted by a loathsome sickness. The love of mothers to their children will make them take pleasure in them, notwithstanding their sickness or uncleanness; and so should their love be between a husband and his wife. He that considereth that his own flesh is liable to the same diseases, and like ere long to be as loathsome, will do as he would be done by, and not turn away in time of her affliction from her that is become his flesh. Much less excusable is the crime of them that, when they have nothing extraordinary to distaste or disaffect them, are weary of the company of one another, and had rather be in their neighbours' houses, than in their own, and find more pleasure in the company of a stranger, than of one another.

Direct. v. 'It is a great duty of husbands and wives to live in quietness and peace, and avoid all occasions of wrath and discord.' Because this is a duty of so great importance, I shall first open to you the great necessity of it, and then give you more particular Directions to perform it.

1. It is a duty which your union or near relation doth especially require. Will you fall out with yourselves? Cannot you agree with your own flesh? 2. Your discord will be your pain, and the vexation of your lives. Like a bile, or wound, or fracture in your own bodies, which will pain you till it is cured; you will hardly keep peace in your minds, when peace is broken so near your own family. As you would take heed of hurting yourselves, and as you would hasten the cure when you are hurt; so should you take heed of any breach of peace, and quickly seek to heal it when it is broken. 3. Dissention tends to cool your love; oft falling out doth tend to leave a habit of distaste and averseness on the mind. Wounding is separating; and to be tied together by any outward bonds, when your hearts are separated, is but to be tormented; and to have the insides of adversaries, while you have conjugal outsides. As the difference between my house and my prison is that I willingly and with delight dwell in the one, but am unwillingly confined to the other, such will be the difference between a quiet and an unquiet life, in your married state: it turneth

your dwelling and delight into a prison, where you are chained to those calamities, which in a free condition you might overrun. 4. Dissention between the husband and the wife, do disorder all their family affairs; they are like oxen unequally yoked, that can rid no work for striving with one another. Nothing is well done because of the variance of those that should do it, or oversee it. 5. It exceedingly unfitteth you for the worship of God; you are not fit to pray together, nor to confer together of heavenly things, nor to be helpers to each other's souls: I need not tell you this, you feel it by experience. Wrath and bitterness will not allow you so much exercise of love and holy composedness of mind, as every one of those duties do require. 6. Dissention disableth you to govern your families aright. Your children and servants will take example by you; or think they are at liberty to do what they list, when they find you taken up with such work between yourselves: and they will think you unfit to reprove them for their faults, when they see you guilty of such faults and folly of your own; nay you will become the shame and secret derision of your family, and bring yourselves into contempt. 7. Your dissentions will expose you to the malice of satan, and give him advantage for manifold temptations. A house divided cannot stand: an army divided is easily conquered, and made a prey to the enemy. You cannot foresee what abundance of sin you put yourselves in danger of. By all this you may see what dissentions between husband and wife do tend to, and how they should be avoided.

II. For the avoiding of them observe these sub-directions. 1. Keep up your conjugal love in a constant heat and vigor. Love will suppress wrath: you cannot have a bitter mind upon small provocations, against those that you dearly love; much less can you proceed to reviling words or to averseness and estrangedness, or any abuse of one another. Or if a breach and wound be unhappily made, the balsamic quality of love will heal it. But when love once cooleth, small matters exasperate and breed distaste.

2. Both husband and wife must mortify their pride and passion, which are the causes of impatience; and must pray and labour for a humble, meek, and quiet spirit. For it is the diseased temper of the heart, that causeth dissen-

tions, more than the occasions or matter of offence do. A proud heart is troubled and provoked by every word or carriage that seemeth to tend to their undervaluing. A peevish, froward mind is like a sore and ulcerated member, that will be hurt if it be touched. He that must live near such a sore, diseased, impatient mind, must live even as the nurse doth with the child, that maketh it her business to rock it, and lull, and sing it quiet when it crieth; for to be angry with it, will do no good: and if you have married one of such a sick or childish temper, you must resolve to bear and use them accordingly. But no Christian should bear with such a vexatious malady in themselves; nor be patient with such impatiency of mind. Once get the victory over yourselves, and get the cure of your own impatience, and you will easily keep peace with one another.

3. Remember still that you are both diseased persons, full of infirmities; and therefore expect the fruit of those infirmities in each other; and make not a strange matter of it, as if you had never known of it before. If you had married one that is lame, would you be angry with her for halting? Or if you had married one that had a putrid ulcer, would you fall out with her because it stinketh? Did you not know beforehand, that you married a person of such weaknesses, as would yield you some matter of daily trial and offence? If you could not bear this, you should not have married her; if you resolved that you could bear it then, you are obliged to bear it now. Resolve therefore to bear with one another; as remembering that you took one another as sinful, frail, imperfect persons, and not as angels, or as blameless and perfect.

4. Remember still that you are one flesh; and therefore be no more offended with the words or failings of each other, than you would be if they were your own. Fall out no more with your wife for her faults, than you do with yourself for your own faults; and than you would do, if hers had been your own. This will allow you such an anger and displeasure against a fault, as tendeth to heal it; but not such as tendeth but to fester and vex the diseased part. This will turn anger into compassion, and speedy, tender diligence for the cure.

5. Agree together beforehand, that when one is in the

diseased, angry fit, the other shall silently and gently bear, till it be past and you are come to yourselves again. Be not angry both at once; when the fire is kindled, quench it with gentle words and carriage, and do not cast on oil or fuel, by answering provokingly and sharply, or by multiplying words, and by answering wrath with wrath. But remember that now the work that you are called to is to mollify, and not to exasperate, to help, and not to hurt, to cure another rather than to right yourself: as if another fall and hurt him, your business is to help him up, and not to tread upon him.

6. Look before you, and remember that you must live together until death, and must be the companions of each others fortunes, and the comforts of each others lives, and then you will see how absurd it is for you to disagree and vex each other. Anger is the principle of revenge, and falling out doth tend to separation. Therefore those that must not revenge, should not give way to anger; and those that know they must not part, should not fall out.

7. As far as you are able, avoid all occasions of wrath and falling out, about the matters of your families. Some by their slothfulness bring themselves into want; and then being unable to bear it, they contract a discontented, peevish habit, and in their impatency they wrangle and disquiet one another. Some plunge themselves into a multitude of business, and have to do with so many things and persons, that one or other is still offending them, and then they are impatient with one another. Some have neither skill nor diligence to manage their businesses aright; and so things fall cross, and go out of order, and then their impatency turneth itself against each other. Avoid these occasions, if you would avoid the sin, and see that you be not unfurnished of patience, to bear that which cannot be avoided.

8. If you cannot quickly quench your passion, yet at least refrain your tongues; speak not reproachful or provoking words: talking it out hotly doth blow the fire, and increase the flame; be but silent, and you will the sooner return to your serenity and peace. Foul words tend to more displeasure. As Socrates said when his wife first railed at him, and next threw a vessel of foul water upon him, "I thought when I heard the thunder, there would

come rain:" so you may portend worse following, when foul, unseemly words begin. If you cannot easily allay your wrath, you may hold your tongues, if you are truly willing.

9. Let the sober party condescend to speak fair and to entreat the other, (unless it be with a person so insolent as will be the worse.) Usually a few sober, grave admonitions, will prove as water to the boiling pot. Say to your angry wife or husband, 'You know this should not be betwixt us; love must allay it, and it must be repented of. God doth not approve it, and we shall not approve it when this heat is over. This frame of mind is contrary to a praying frame, and this language contrary to a praying language; we must pray together anon; let us do nothing contrary to prayer now: sweet water and bitter come not from one spring,' &c. Some calm and condescending words of reason, may stop the torrent, and revive the reason which passion had overcome.

10. Confess your fault to one another, when passion hath prevailed against you; and ask forgiveness of each other, and join in prayer to God for pardon; and this will lay a greater engagement on you, the next time to forbear: you will sure be ashamed to do that which you have so confessed and asked forgiveness for of God and man. If you will but practise these ten directions, your conjugal and family peace may be preserved.

Direct. vi. 'A principal duty between husband and wife, is, with special care, and skill, and diligence, to help each other in the knowledge, and worship, and obedience of God in order to their salvation.' Because this is a duty in which you are the greatest helps and blessings to each other, if you perform it. I shall 1. Endeavour to quicken you to make conscience of it; and then 2. Direct you how to do it.

I. Consider, 1. How little it can stand with rational love, to neglect the souls of one another? I suppose you believe that you have immortal souls, and an endless life of joy or misery to live; and then you cannot choose but know that your great concernment and business is, to make sure provision for those souls, and for the endless life. Therefore if your love do not help one another in this which is your main concernment, it is little worth, and of little use. Eve-

ry thing in this world is valuable as it is useful. A useless or unprofitable love, is a worthless love. It is a trifling, or a childish, or a beastly love, which helpeth you but in trifling, childish, or beastly things. Do you love your wife, and yet will leave her in the power of satan, or will not help to save her soul? What! love her, and yet let her go to hell! and rather let her be damned than you will be at the pains to endeavour her salvation! If she were but in bodily pain or misery, and you refused to do your part to succour her, she would take it but for cold, unprofitable love, though you were never so kind to her in compliments and trifles. The devil himself maketh shew of such a love as that; he can vouchsafe men pleasures, and wealth, and honour, so he may but see the perdition of their souls. And if your love to your wife or husband, do tend to no greater matters than the pleasures of this life, while the soul is left to perish in sin, bethink yourselves seriously how little more kindness you shew them than the devil doth. O can you see the danger of one that you love so dearly, and do no more to save them from it? Can you think of the damnation of so dear a friend, and not do all that you are able to prevent it? Would you be separated from them in the world that you are going to? Would you not live with them in heaven for ever? Never say you love them, if you will not labour for their salvation. If ever they come to hell, or if ever you see them there, both they and you will then confess, that you behaved not yourselves like such as loved them. It doth not deserve the name of love, which can leave a soul to endless misery.

What then shall we say of them that do not only deny their help, but are hinderers of the holiness and salvation of each otherⁿ! And yet (the Lord have mercy on the poor miserable world!) how common a thing is this among us! If the wife be ignorant and ungodly, she will do her worst to make or keep her husband such as she is herself: and if God put any holy inclinations into his heart, she will be to it as water to the fire, to quench it or to keep it under. And if he will not be as sinful and miserable as herself, he shall have little quietness or rest. And if God open the eyes of the wife of a bad man, and shew her the amiableness and

ⁿ 1 Kings xi. 4. Acts v. 2. Eve is Adam's tempter. Job ii. 9.

necessity of a holy life, and she do but resolve to obey the Lord, and save her soul, what an enemy and tyrant will her husband prove to her, (if God restrain him not!) so that the devil himself doth scarce do more against the saving of their souls, than ungodly husbands and wives do against each other.

2. Consider also that you live not up to the ends of marriage, nor of humanity, if you are not helpers to each other's souls. To help each other only for your bellies, is to live together but like beasts. You are appointed to live together as "heirs of the grace of life." "And husbands must love their wives as Christ loved his church, who gave himself for it that he might sanctify it and cleanse it, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemish." That which is the end of your very life and being, must be the end of your relations, and your daily converse.

3. Consider also, if you neglect each other's souls, what enemies you are to one another, and how you prepare for your everlasting sorrows: when you should be preparing for your joyful meeting in heaven, you are laying up for yourselves everlasting horror. What a dreadful meeting and greeting will you have at the bar of Christ, or in the flames of hell, when you shall find there how perversely you have done? Is it not better to be praising God together in glory, than to be raging against each other in the horror of your consciences, and flying in the faces of one another with such accusations as these?—"O cruel husband! O merciless, deceitful wife! It was long of you that I came to this miserable, woeful end! I might have lived with Christ and his saints in joy, and now I am tormented in these flames in desperation! You were commanded by God to have given me warning, and told me of my sin and misery, and never to let me rest in it, but to have instructed and entreated me, till I had come home by Christ, that I might not have come to this place of torment: but you never so much as spake to me of God, and my salvation, unless it were lightly in jest or in your common talk! If the house had been on fire,

° 1 Pet. iii. 7.

° Ephes. v. 25—27.

° 1 Thes. v. 11. Heb. xii. 15. Col. ii. 19. Eph. iv. 16. 1 Cor. vii. 5. Gen. xxxv. 2. 4. Lev. xix. 17.

you would have been more earnest to have quenched it, than you were to save my soul from hell! You never told me seriously of the misery of a natural, unrenewed state! Nor of the great necessity of regeneration and a holy life! Nor ever talked to me of heaven and hell, as matters of such consequence should have been mentioned; but morning and night, your talk was nothing but about the world, and the things of the world^r. Your idle talk, and jesting, and froward, and carnal, and unprofitable discourse, was it that filled up all the time; and we had not one sober word of our salvation. You never seriously foretold me of this day: you never prayed with me, nor read the Scripture and good books to me. You took no pains to help me to knowledge, nor to humble my hardened heart for my sins, nor to save me from them, nor to draw me to the love of God and holiness by faith in Christ: you did not go before me, with the good example of a holy and heavenly conversation: but with the evil example of an ungodly, fleshly, worldly life. You neither cared for your own soul, nor mine; nor I for yours or mine own. And now we are justly condemned together, that would not live in holiness together!" O foolish, miserable souls, that by your ungodliness and negligence in this life, will prepare each other for such a life of endless woe and horror!

O therefore resolve without delay, to live together as heirs of heaven, and to be helpers to each other's souls. To which end I will give you these following Sub-directions, which if you will faithfully practise, may make you to be special blessings to each other.

Direct. 1. 'If you would help to save each other's souls, you must each of you be sure that you have a care of your own; and retain a deep and lively apprehension of those great and everlasting matters, of which you are to speak to others^s.' It cannot be reasonably expected that he should have a due compassion to another's soul, that hath none to his own; and that he should be at the pains that is needful to help another to salvation, that setteth so little by his own, as to sell it for the base and momentary ease and pleasure of the flesh. Nor is it to be expected that a man should speak with any suitable weight and seriousness about

^r Numb. xvi. 27. 32.

^s Gen. ii. 18.

those matters whose weight his heart did never feel, and about which he was never serious himself. First see that you feel throughly, that which would speak profitably; and that you be what you persuade another to be; and that all your counsel may be perceived to arise from the bottom of your hearts, and that you speak of things which by experience you are well acquainted with.

Direct. II. 'Take those opportunities which your ordinary nearness and familiarity affordeth you, to be speaking seriously to each other about the matters of God, and your salvation.' When you lie down and rise together, let not your worldly business have all your talk; but let God and your souls have the first and the last, and at least the freest and sweetest of your speech, if not the most. When you have said so much of your common business as the nature and dispatch of it requireth, lay it by, and talk together of the state and duty of your souls towards God, and of your hopes of heaven, as those that take these for their greatest business. And speak not lightly, or unreverently, or in a rude and wrangling manner; but with gravity and sobriety, as those that are advising together about the greatest matter that ever they had to do in the world.

Direct. III. 'When either husband or wife is speaking seriously about holy things, let the other be careful to cherish, and not to extinguish and put an end to the discourse.' There are two ways to cherish such discourse: the first is, by taking your turn, and bearing a due proportion in the discourse with wisdom and gravity; but all cannot do this, some are but learners, and those must take the second way, which is, to ask for resolution in matters of which they doubt, or are uninstruced, and to draw on more by pertinent questions. The two ways by which such discourse is silenced are these: the first is, by the constant silence of the hearer; when a man talketh as to a post, that giveth him no answer, nor putteth any pertinent question, he will be wearied out at last, and will give over: the second is, by a cross, contradicting, cavilling, wrangling against what is spoken, or by interruptions and diversions; when you come in presently with some worldly or impertinent talk, and wind about from sober conference to something that is unedifying: and some that will not seem merely profane, and vain,

and worldly, will destroy all holy, fruitful conference, even by a kind of religious talk; presently carrying you away from heart-searching and heavenly discourse, to some controversy, or doctrinal, or formal, or historical matter, that is sufficiently distant from the heart and heaven. Take heed of these courses, if you would help each other.

Direct. iv. 'Watch over the hearts and lives of one another, and labour to discern the state of one another's souls, and the strength or weakness of each other's sins and graces, and the failings of each other's lives, that so you may be able to apply to one another the most suitable help.' What you are unacquainted with, you cannot be very helpful in¹; you cannot cure unknown diseases; you cannot give wise and safe advice, about the state of one another's souls, if you are mistaken in them. God hath placed you nearest to each other, that you might have so much interest in each other, as to quicken you to a loving care, and so much acquaintance with each other, as to keep you from misunderstanding, and so from neglecting or deceiving one another. And you should be always provided of those fit remedies, that are most needful and suitable to each other's case. If that preacher be like to be dull and unsuccessful that is all upon mere doctrine, and little or nothing in close and lively application, you may conceive that it will be so also with your familiar conference.

Direct. v. 'See that you neither flatter one another through fond and foolish love, nor exasperate one another by a passionate or contemptuous kind of reprehension.' Some persons are so blinded with fond affection, that they can scarce see in husband, wife, or children any aggravated sin or misery; but they think all is well that they do, or not so ill as in another they would perceive it; but this is the same course that self-loving sinners take with their own souls, to their delusion and perdition. This flattering of yourselves or others, is but the devil's charm to keep you from effectual repentance and salvation: and the ease of such anodynes and narcotics doth endure but a little while. On the other side, some cannot speak to one another of their faults, without such bitterness of passion, or contempt, as tendeth to make the stomach of the receiver to loathe the

¹ Matt. xxvii. 19.

medicine, and so to refuse it, or to cast it up. If common reproofs to strangers must all be offered in love, much more between the nearest relations.

Direct. VI. 'Be sure that you keep up true conjugal love to one another, and that you grow not to disaffect the persons of each other.' For if you do, you will despise each other's counsels and reproofs. They that slight, or loathe, or are weary of each other, will disdain reproofs, and scorn advice from one another; when entire affection greatly disposeth to the right entertainment of instruction.

Direct. VII. 'Discourage not each other from instruction or reproof by taking it ill, or by churlish reflections, or by obstinate unreformedness.' When you will not learn, or will not amend, you discourage your instructor and reprover. Men will be apt to give over, when they are requited with ingratitude, and snappish retortions, or when they perceive that their labour is all in vain. And as it is the heaviest judgment of God that befalleth any upon earth, when he withdraweth his advice and help, and leaveth sinners wholly to themselves; so it is the saddest condition in your relations, when the ignorant and sinning party is forsaken by the other, and left to their own opinions and ways; though indeed it should not be so, because while there is life there is hope.

Direct. VIII. 'So far as you are able to instruct or quicken one another, call in for better helps: engage each other in the reading of the most convincing, quickening books, and in attendance on the most powerful ministry, and in profitable converse with the holiest persons.' Not so as to neglect your duty to one another ever the more, but that all helps concurring may be the more effectual. When they find you speak to them but the same things which ministers and other Christians speak, it will be the more easily received.

Direct. IX. 'Conceal not the state of your souls, nor hide your faults from one another.' You are as one flesh, and should have one heart: and as it is most dangerous for a man to be unknown to himself, so is it very hurtful to husband or wife to be unknown to one another, in those cases wherein they have need of help. It is foolish tenderness of yourselves, when you conceal your disease from your physician, or your helpful friend; and who should be so tender

of you, and helpful to you, as you should be to one another? Indeed in some few cases, where the opening of a fault or secret will but tend to quench affection, and not to get assistance from another, it is wisdom to conceal it; but that is not the ordinary case. The opening your hearts to each other is necessary to your mutual help.

Direct. x. ' Avoid as much as may be, contrariety of opinions in religion: ' for if once you be of different judgments in matters which you take to be of great concernment, you will be tempted to disaffect, contemn, or undervalue one another; and so to despise the help which you might receive: and if you fall into several sects, and follow several teachers, you will hardly avoid that contention and confusion, which will prove a great advantage to the devil, and a great impediment to your spiritual good.

Direct. xi. ' If difference in judgment in matters of religion do fall out between you, be sure that it be managed with holiness, humility, love, and peace, and not with carnality, pride, uncharitableness, or contention.' 1. To manage your differences holily, is to take God for the judge, and to refer the matter to his Word, and to aim at his glory, and the pleasing of his will, and to use his means for the concord of your judgments; which is, to search the Scripture, and consult with the faithful, able pastors of the church, and soberly and patiently to debate the case, and pray together for the illumination of the Spirit. On the contrary your differences are carnally managed, when carnal reasons breed or feed them; and when you run after this or that sect or party, through admiration of the persons, and value not the persons for the sake of the truth, but measure truth by the opinion and estimate of the persons; and when you end your differences by selfish, carnal principles and respects: and hence it comes to pass, that if the husband be a Papist or otherwise erroneous, it is two to one that the wife becometh of his erroneous religion, not because of any cogent evidence, but because he is of the stronger parts, and hath constant opportunity to persuade, and because love prepareth and inclineth her to be of his opinion: and thus man instead of God, is the master of the faith of many. 2. Your differences are managed in humility, when you have a just and modest suspicion of your own understandings, and debate

and practise your differences with meekness and submission; and do not proudly overvalue all your own apprehensions, and despise another's reasons as if they were not worthy of your consideration. 3. Your differences must be so far managed in love, not that mere love should make you turn to another's opinion be it true or false, but that you must be very desirous to be of the same mind, and if you cannot, must take it for a sore affliction, and must bear with the tolerable mistakes of one another, as you bear with your own infirmities; that they cool not love, nor alienate your hearts from one another, but only provoke you to a tender, healing, compassionate care, and endeavour to do each other good. 4. And you must manage your differences in quietness, without any passionate wranglings and dissensions, that no bitter fruits may be bred by it in your families, among yourselves. Thus all true Christians must manage their differences in matters of religion; but married persons above all.

Direct. XII. 'Be not either blindly indulgent to each other's faults, nor yet too censorious of each other's state, lest satan thereby get advantage to alienate your affections from one another.' To make nothing of the faults of those whom you love, is to love them foolishly, to their hurt, and to shew that it is not for their virtues that you love them. And to make too great a matter of one another's faults, is but to help the tempter to quench your love, and turn your hearts from one another. Thus many good women that have husbands that are guilty of too much coldness in religion, or worldlymindedness, or falling into ill company, and mispending their time, are first apt to overlook all possibility of any seed of grace that may be in them, and then looking on them as ungodly persons, to abate too much their love and duty to them. There is great wisdom and watchfulness requisite in this case, to keep you from being carried into either of the extremes.

Direct. XIII. 'If you are married to one that is indeed an infidel, or an ungodly person, yet keep up all the conjugal love which is due for the relation's sake.' Though you cannot love them as true Christians, yet love them as husband or wife. Even heathens are bound to love those that are thus related to them. The apostle hath determined the

case, 1 Cor. vii. that Christians must perform their duties to husbands or wives that are unbelievers. The faults of another discharge you not from your duty. As satan hath deceived some by separating principles about church communion, to deny almost all God's ordinances to many, to whom they are due; so doth he thus deceive some persons in family relations, and draw them from the duties which they owe for one another's good.

Direct. xiv. 'Join together in frequent and fervent prayer.' Prayer doth force the mind into some composedness and sobriety, and affecteth the heart with the presence and majesty of God. Pray also for each other when you are in secret, that God may do that work which you most desire, upon each other's hearts.

Direct. xv. Lastly, 'Help each other by an exemplary life.' Be that yourselves which you desire your husband or wife should be: excel in meekness, and humility, and charity, and dutifulness, and diligence, and self-denial, and patience, as far as you do excel in profession of religion. St. Peter saith, that even those that will not be won by the Word, may be won without it by the conversation of their wives: that is, the excellency of religion may so far appear to them, by the fruits of it in their wives' conversations, as may first incline them to think well and honourably of it, and so to inquire into the nature and reason of it, and to hearken to their wives; and all this without the public ministry. A life of undissembled holiness, and heavenliness, and self-denial, and meekness, and love, and mortification, is a powerful sermon; which, if you be constantly preaching before those that are still near you, will hardly miss of a good effect. Works are more palpably significant and persuasive, than words alone.

Direct. vii. 'Another great conjugal duty is, to be helpful to each other for the health and comfort of their bodies^u.' Not to pamper each other's flesh, or cherish the vices of pride, or sloth, or gluttony, or voluptuousness in each other; but to further the health and cheerfulness of the body, to fit it for the service of the soul and God. Such cherishing or pleasing of the flesh, which is unlawful in each person to himself, is also unlawful (ordinarily) to use to another. But

^u Rom. xiii. 13, 14. Ephes. v. 29, 31. Gen. ii. 18.

such as you may use for yourself, you may use also for your wife or husband. Not to live above your estates, nor as servants to your guts, to serve the appetites of one another by delicious fare; but to be careful of that health, without which your lives will be made unserviceable or uncomfortable: and this must proceed from such a love to one another as you have to yourselves: and that both in time of health and sickness.

1. In health, you must be careful to provide for each other (not so much pleasing as) wholesome food, and to keep each other from that which is hurtful to your health; dissuading each other from gluttony and idleness, the two great murderers of mankind. If the bodies of the poor, in hunger, and cold, and nakedness must be relieved, much more of those that are become as your own flesh.

2. Also in sickness, you are to be tenderly regardful of each other; and not to be sparing of any costs or pains, by which the health of each other may be restored, or your souls confirmed, and your comforts cherished*. You must not loathe the bodies of each other in the most loathsome sickness, nor shun them through loathing; no more than you would do your own†. "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity‡:" much more those that are so nearly bound for sickness and health, till death shall separate them. It is an odious sin to be weary of a sick or suffering friend, and desirous that God would take them, merely that you may be eased of the trouble. And usually such persons do meet with such measure as they measured to others; and those that they look for help and comfort from, will perhaps be as weary of them, and as glad to be rid of them.

Direct. VIII. 'Another duty of husbands and wives is to be helpful to each other in their worldly business, and estates*. Not for worldly ends, nor with a worldly mind; but in obedience to God who will have them labour, as well as pray, for their daily bread, and hath determined that in the sweat of their brows they shall eat their bread; and that six days they shall labour and do all that they have to do; and that he that will not work must not eat. The care of

* Gen. xxvii. 14. † Eph. v. 29. 31. Job. xix. 17. ii. 9. ‡ Prov. xvii. 17.

* See Prov. xxxi. Gen. xxxi. 40. Tit. ii. 5. 1 Tim. v. 14. v. 8.

their affairs doth lie upon them both, and neither of them must cast it off and live in idleness (unless one of them be an idiot, or so witless, as to be unfit for care, or so sick or lame, as to be unfit for labour).

Direct. ix. 'Also you must be careful of the lawful honour and good names of one another^b.' You must not divulge but conceal the dishonourable failings of each other: (as Abigail, except in any case compassion or justice require you to open them to any one for a cure, or to clear the truth.) The reputation of each other must be as dear to you as your own. It is a sinful and unfaithful practice of many, both husbands and wives, who among their companions are opening the faults and infirmities of each other, which they are bound in tenderness to cover. As if they perceived not that by dishonouring one another, they dishonour themselves. Love will cover a multitude of faults. Nay, many disaffected, peevish persons will aggravate all the faults of one another behind their backs to strangers; and sometimes slander them, and speak more than is truth. Many a man hath been put to clear his good name from the slanders of a jealous or a passionate wife: and an open enemy is not capable of doing one so much wrong as she that is in his bosom, because she will easily be believed, as being supposed to know him better than any other.

Direct. x. 'It is also a great part of the duty of husbands and wives, to be helpful to one another in the education of their children, and in the government of the inferiors of the family^c.' Some men cast all the care of their children while they are young upon their wives: and many women by their passion and indiscretion do make themselves unfit to help their husbands in the government either of their children or servants: but this is one of the greatest parts of their employment. As to the man's part, to govern his house well, it is a duty unquestionable. And it is not to be denied of the wife. "I will that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house^d." Bathsheba taught

^b 1 Sam. xxv. 25. Matt. xviii. 16. Matt. i. 19. 2 Sam. xi. 7. Prov. xxxi. 28. Eccles. vii. 3. Prov. xxii. 1. 2 Sam. vi. 20. Gen. ix. 22. 25.

^c 1 Tim. iii. 4. 12. Gen. xviii. 19. xxxv. 2, &c. Jos. xxiv. 14. Psal. ci.

^d 1 Tim. v. 14.

Solomon*. Abigail took better care of Nabal's house than he did himself. They that have a joint interest, and are one flesh, must have a joint part in government; although their power be not equal, and one may better oversee some business, and the other, other business; yet in their places they must divide the care, and help each other: and not as it is with many wicked persons, who are the most unruly part of the family themselves, and the chiefest cause that it is ungoverned and ungodly, or one party hindereth the other from keeping order, or doing any good.

Direct. XI. 'Another part of their duty is, to help each other in works of charity and hospitality^f.' While they have opportunity to do good to all, but especially to them of the household of faith; and to sow to the Spirit, that of the Spirit they may reap everlasting life: yea, to sow plentifully that they may reap plentifully^g, that if they are able their houses may afford relief and entertainment for the needy; especially for Christ's servants for their master's sake; who hath promised that "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward: and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward: and whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward^h." The woman of Shunem lost nothing by the entertainment of Elisha, when she said to her husband, "Behold, now I perceive that this is an holy man of God which passeth by us continually: let us make him a little chamber I pray thee on the wall, and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thitherⁱ." But now how common is it for the people to think all too little for themselves; and if one of them be addicted to works of charity, the other is covetous and is always hindering them.

Direct. XII. 'Lastly, it is a great part of the duty of hus-

* Prov. xxxi. i.

^f Heb. xiii. 2. Gen. xviii. 6, &c. Rom. xii. 13. 2 Cor. ix. 6. Luke xvi. 9. 1 Tim. iii. 2. v. 10. Prov. xi. 20. 28. Neh. viii. 10. Prov. xix. 17. Job xxix. 13. xxxi. 20. Acts xx. 35.

^g Gal. vi.

^h Matt. x. 41, 42.

ⁱ 2 Kings iv. 9, 10.

bands and wives, to be helpers and comforters of each other in order to a safe and happy death.' 1. In the time of health, you must often and seriously remember each other of the time when death will make the separation; and live together in your daily converse, as those that are still expecting the parting hour. Help to awaken each other's souls, to make ready all those graces which then will prove necessary, and to live in a constant preparation for your change. Reprove all that in one another, which will be unsavoury and ungrateful to your review at death. If you see each other dull and slow in your preparations, or to live in vanity, worldliness, or sloth, as if you had forgotten that you must shortly die, stir up one another to do all that without delay which the approach of such a day requireth. 2. And when death is at hand, O then what abundance of tenderness, and seriousness, and skill, and diligence, is needful for one, that hath the last office of love to perform, to the departing soul of so near a friend! O then what need will there be of your most wise, and faithful, and diligent help! When nature faileth, and the pains of flesh divert the mind, and temptations are strongest while the body is weakest; when a languishing body, and a doubting, fearful, troubled mind, do call for your compassion and help, O then what skill and holy seriousness will be necessary! O what a calamity is it to have a carnal, unsanctified husband or wife, which will neither help you to prepare for death, nor can speak a serious word of counsel or comfort to you at a dying hour: that can do nothing but stand by and weep over you; but have not a sensible word to say, about the life that you are going to, nor about the duty of a departing soul, nor against the temptations and fears which then may be ready to overwhelm you. They that are utterly unprepared and unfit to die themselves, can do little to prepare or help another. But they that live together as the heirs of heaven, and converse on earth as fellow-travellers to the land of promise, may help and encourage the souls of one another, and joyfully part at death, as expecting quickly to meet again in life eternal.

Were it not lest I be over-tedious, I should next speak of the manner how husbands and wives must perform their duties to each other: as 1. That it should be all done in

such entire love, as maketh the case of one another to you as your own. 2. That therefore all must be done in patience and mutual forbearance. 3. And in familiarity, and not with strangeness, distance, sourness, nor affected compliment. 4. And in secrecy; where I should have shewed you in what cases secrecy may be broken, and in what not. 5. And in confidence of each other's fidelity, and not in suspicion, jealousy, and distrust. 6. And in prudence to manage things aright, and to foresee and avoid impediments and inconveniencies. 7. And in holiness that God may be the first and last, and all in all. 8. And in constancy that you cease not your duties for one another until death. But necessary abbreviation alloweth me to say no more of these.

CHAPTER VIII.

The special Duties of Husbands to their Wives.

HE that will expect duty or comfort from his wife, must be faithful in doing the duty of a husband. The failing of yourselves in your own duty, may cause the failing of another to you, or at least will some other way as much afflict you, and will be more bitter to you in the end, than if an hundred failed of their duty to you. A good husband will either make a good wife, or easily and profitably endure a bad one. I shall therefore give you directions for your own part of duty, as that which your happiness is most concerned in.

Direct. 1. 'The husband must undertake the principal part of the government of the whole family, even of the wife herself.' And therefore I. He must labour to be fit and able for that government which he undertaketh: this ability consisteth 1. In holiness and spiritual wisdom, that he may be acquainted with the end to which he is to conduct them, and the rule by which he is to guide them; and the principal works which they are to do. An ungodly, irreligious man is both a stranger and an enemy to the chiefest part of family-government. 2. His ability consist-

eth in a due acquaintance with the works of his calling, and the labours in which his servants are to be employed. For he that is utterly unacquainted with their business, will be very unfit to govern them in it: unless he commit that part of their government to his wife or a steward that is acquainted with it. 3. And he must be acquainted both with the common temper and infirmities of mankind, that he may know how much is to be borne with, and also with the particular temper, and faults, and virtues of those whom he is to govern. 4. And he must have prudence to direct himself in all his carriage to them; and justice to deal with every one as they deserve; and love to do them all the good he can, for soul and body. II. And being thus able, he must make it his daily work, and especially be sure that he govern himself well, that his example may be part of his government of others.

Direct. II. 'The husband must so unite authority and love, that neither of them may be omitted or concealed, but both be exercised and maintained.' Love must not be exercised so imprudently as to destroy the exercise of authority: and authority must not be exercised over a wife so magisterially and imperiously, as to destroy the exercise of love. As your love must be a governing love, so your commands must all be loving commands. Lose not your authority; for that will but disable you from doing the office of a husband to your wife, or of a master to your servants. Yet must it be maintained by no means inconsistent with conjugal love; and therefore not by fierceness or cruelty, by threatenings or stripes (unless by distraction or loss of reason, they cease to be incapable of the carriage otherwise due to a wife). There are many cases of equality in which authority is not to be exercised; but there is no case of inequality or unworthiness so great, in which conjugal love is not to be exercised; and therefore nothing must exclude it.

Direct. III. 'It is the duty of husbands to preserve the authority of their wives, over the children and servants of the family.' For they are joint governors with them over all the inferiors. And the infirmities of women are apt many times to expose them to contempt: so that servants and children will be apt to slight them, and disobey them, if the husband intarpose not to preserve their honour and

authority. Yet this must be done with such cautions as these: 1. Justify not any error, vice or weakness of your wives. They may be concealed and excused as far as may be, but never owned or defended. 2. Urge not obedience to any unlawful command of theirs. No one hath authority to contradict the law of God, or disoblige any from his government. You will but diminish your own authority with persons of any understanding, if you justify any thing that is against God's authority. But if the thing commanded be lawful, though it may have some inconveniences, you must rebuke the disobedience of inferiours, and not suffer them to slight the commands of your wives, nor to set their own reason and wills against them, and say, 'We will not do it.' How can they help you in government, if you suffer them to be disobeyed.

Direct. iv. 'Also you must preserve the honour as well as the authority of your wives.' If they have any dishonourable infirmities, they are not to be mentioned by children or servants. As in the natural body we cover most carefully the most dishonourable parts (for our comely parts have no need ^a), so must it be here. Children or servants must not be suffered to carry themselves contemptuously or rudely towards them, nor to despise them, or speak unmannerly, proud or disdainful words to them. The husband must vindicate them from all such injury and contempt.

Direct. v. 'The husband is to excel the wife in knowledge, and be her teacher in the matters that belong to her salvation.' He must instruct her in the Word of God, and direct her in particular duties, and help her to subdue her own corruptions, and labour to confirm her against temptations; if she doubt of any thing that he can resolve her in, she is to ask his resolution, and he to open to her at home, the things which she understood not in the congregation ^b. But if the husband be indeed an ignorant sot, or have made himself unable to instruct his wife, she is not bound to ask him in vain, to teach her that which he understandeth not himself. Those husbands that despise the Word of God, and live in wilful ignorance, do not only despise their own souls, but their families also; and making themselves unable for their duties, they are usually themselves despised

^a 1 Cor. xii. 23, 24.

^b 1 Cor. xiv. 35.

by their inferiors: for God hath told such in his message to Eli, "Them that honour me, I will honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed^c."

Direct. vi. 'The husband must be the principal teacher of the family.' He must instruct them, and examine them, and rule them about the matters of God, as well as his own service, and see that the Lord's day and worship be observed by all that are within his gates. And therefore he must labour for such understanding and ability as is necessary hereunto. And if he be unable or negligent, it is his sin, and will be his shame. If the wife be wiser and abler, and it be cast upon her, it is his dishonour: but if neither of them do it, the sin, and shame, and suffering, will be common to them both.

Direct. vii. 'The husband is to be the mouth of the family, in their daily conjunct prayers unto God.' Therefore he must be able to pray, and also have a praying heart. He must be as it were the priest of the household; and therefore should be the most holy, that he may be fit to stand between them and God, and to offer up their prayers to him. If this be cast on the wife, it will be his dishonour.

Direct. viii. 'The husband is to be the chief provider for the family (ordinarily).' It is supposed that he is most able for mind and body, and is the chief disposer of the estate. Therefore he must be specially careful, that wife and children want nothing that is fit for them, so far as he can procure it.

Direct. ix. 'The husband must be strongest in family-patience; bearing with the weakness and passions of the wife: not so as to make light of any sin against God, but so as not to make a great matter of any frailty as against himself, and so as to preserve the love and peace which is to be as the natural temper of their relation.'

Direct. x. 'The manner of all these duties must also be carefully regarded.' As 1. That they be done in prudence, and not with folly, rashness, or inconsiderateness. 2. That all be done in conjugal love, and tenderness, as over one that is tender, and the weaker vessel; and that he do not teach, or command, or reprove a wife, in the same imperious manner as a child or servant. 3. That due familiarity be

^c 1 Sam. ii. 30.

maintained, and that he keep not at a distance and strangeness from his wife. 4. That love be confident, without base suspicions, and causeless jealousies. 5. That all be done in gentleness, and not in passion, roughness and sourness. 6. That there be no unjust and causeless concealment of secrets, which should be common to them both. 7. That there be no foolish opening of such secrets to her as may become her snare, and she is not able to bear or keep. 8. That none of their own matters, which should be kept secret, be made known to others. His teaching and reproving her, should be for the most part secret. 9. That he be constant, and not weary of his love or duty. This briefly of the manner.

CHAPTER IX.

The special Duties of Wives to Husbands.

THE wife that expecteth comfort in a husband, must make conscience of all her own duty to her husband: for though it be his duty to be kind and faithful to her, though she prove unkind and froward, yet 1. Men are frail and apt to fail in such difficult duties as well as women. 2. And it is so ordered by God, that comfort and duty shall go together, and you shall miss of comfort, if you cast off duty.

Direct. I. 'Be specially loving to your husbands:' your natures give you the advantage in this; and love feedeth love. This is your special requital for all the troubles that your infirmities put them to.

Direct. II. 'Live in a voluntary subjection and obedience to them.' If their softness or yieldingness cause them to relinquish their authority; and for peace they are fain to let you have your wills; yet remember that it is God that hath appointed them to be your heads and governors. I they are so silly as to be unable, you should not have chosen such to rule you as are unfit: but having chosen them, you must assist them with your better understanding, in a submissive, and not a ruling, masterly way. A servant that hath a foolish master, may help him without becoming master. And do not deceive yourselves by giving the bare titles

of government to your husbands, when yet you must needs in all things have your own wills; for this is but mockery, and not obedience. To be subject and obedient, is to take the understanding and will of another to govern you, before (though not without) your own; and to make your understandings and wills to follow the conduct of his that governeth you. Self-willedness is contrary to subjection and obedience.

Direct. III. 'Learn of your husbands as your appointed teachers, and be not self-conceited and wise in your own eyes, but ask of them such instructions as your case requireth.' "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted to them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law: and if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home;" (unless when the husband is so ignorant as to be utterly unable; which is his sin and shame. For it is vain to ask that of them which they know not.)

Direct. IV. 'Set yourselves seriously to amend all those faults which they reprove in you.' Do not take it ill to be reprov'd; swell not against it, as if they did you harm or wrong: it is a very ill sign to "hate reproof^b." And what doth their government of you signify, if you will not amend the faults that are reprov'd in you, but continue impenitent and grudge at the reproof? It is a miserable folly to desire to be flattered, and soothed by any, but especially by one that is bound to be faithful to you, and whose intimacy should make you as ready to hear of your faults from him, as to be acquainted with them yourselves; and especially when it concerneth the safety or benefit of your souls.

Direct. v. 'Honour your husbands according to their superiority.' Behave not yourselves towards them with unreverence and contempt, in titles, speeches, or any behaviour: if the worth of their persons deserve not honour, yet their place deserveth it. Speak not of their infirmities to others behind their backs; as some twattling gossips use to do, that know not that their husband's dishonour is their own, and that to open it causelessly to others, is their double shame. Those that silently hear you, will tell others behind your back, how foolishly and shamefully you spake to

^a 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35.

^b Prov. xii. 1. x. 17. xv. 10, 31, 32. xvii. 10.

them against your husbands. If God have made your nearest friend an affliction to you, why should you complain to one that is farther off? (Unless it be to some special, prudent friend, in case of true necessity for advice.)

Direct. VI. 'Live in a cheerful contentedness with your condition; and take heed of an impatient, murmuring spirit.' It is a continual burden to a man to have an impatient, discontented wife. Many a poor man can easily bear his poverty himself, that yet is not able to bear his wife's impatience under it. To hear her night and day complaining, and speaking distrustfully, and see her live disquietedly, is far heavier than his poverty itself. If his wife could bear it as patiently as he, it would be but light to him. Yea, in case of suffering for righteousness' sake, the impatience of a wife is a greater trial to a man than all the suffering itself; and many a man that could easily have suffered the loss of his estate, or banishment, or imprisonment for Christ, hath betrayed his conscience, and yielded to sin, because his wife hath grieved him with impatency, and could not bear what he could bear. Whereas a contented, cheerful wife doth help to make a man cheerful and contented in every state.

Direct. VII. 'In a special manner strive to subdue your passions, and to speak and do all in meekness and sobriety.' The rather because that the weakness of your sex doth usually subject you more to passions than men: and it is the common cause of the husband's disquietness, and the calamity of your relation. It is the vexation and sickness of your own minds; you find not yourselves at ease within as long as you are passionate. And then it is the grief and disquietness of your husbands: and being provoked by you, they provoke you more; and so your disquietness increaseth, and your lives are made a weary burden to you. By all means therefore keep down passion, and keep a composed, patient mind.

Direct. VIII. 'Take heed of a proud and contentious disposition; and maintain a humble, peaceable temper.' Pride will make you turbulent and unquiet with your husbands, and contentious with your neighbours: it will make you foolish and ridiculous, in striving for honour and precedency, and envying those that exceed you, or go before you. In a word, it is the devil's sin, and would make you a shame

and trouble to the world. But humility is the health, the peace, and the ornament of the soul. "A meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price^c." (Write those words in your bed-chamber on the walls where they may be daily before your eyes.) "Put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another^d." If this be the duty of all to one another; much more of wives to husbands. "Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble^e." Proud women oft ruin their husbands' estates, and quietness, and their own souls.

Direct. ix. 'Affect not a childish gaudiness of apparel, nor a vain, or costly, or troublesome curiosity in any thing about you.' Uncleaness and nastiness is a fault, but very small in comparison of this pride and curiosity. It dishonoureth your sex and selves to be so childish, as to overmind such toyish things. If you will needs be proud, be proud of somewhat that is of worth and proper to a man: to be proud of reason, or wisdom, or learning, or goodness, is bad enough; but this is to be proud of something. But to be proud of fashions and fine clothes, of spots and nakedness, of sumptuous entertainments, and neat rooms, is to be proud of your shame, and not your virtue; and of that which you are not so much as commendable for. And the cost, the time (O precious time!) which themselves and their servants must lay out, upon their dressings, entertainments and other curiosities, will be the shame and sorrow of their souls, whenever God shall open their eyes, and make them know what time was worth, and what greater matters they had to mind. If vain and empty persons like yourselves, commend you for your bravery or curiosity, so will not any judicious, sober person, whose commendation is much worth. And yet I must here with grief take notice, that when some few that in other matters seem wise and religious, are themselves a little tainted with this childish curiosity and pride, and let fall words of disparagement against those whose dress, and dwellings, and entertainments, are not so curious as their own; this proves the

^a 1 Pet. iii. 4.

^d Col. iii. 12.

^e 1 Pet. v. 5.

greatest maintainer of this sin, and the most notable service to the devil: for then abundance will plead this for this sinful curiosity and pride, and say, 'I shall else be accounted base or sordid; even such and such will speak against me.' Take heed, if you will needs be such yourselves, that you prate not against others that are not as vain and curious as you: for the nature of man is more prone to pride and vanity, than to humility, and the improvement of their time and cost in greater matters; and while you think that you speak but against indecency, you become the devil's preachers, and do him more service than you consider of. You may as wisely speak against people for using to eat or drink too little, when there is not one of a multitude that liveth not ordinarily in excess; and so excess will get advantage by it.

Direct. x. 'Be specially careful in the government of your tongues; and let your words be few, and well considered before you speak them.' A double diligence is needful in this, because it is the most common miscarriage of your sex: a laxative, running tongue, is so great a dishonour to you, that I never knew a woman very full of words, but she was the pity of her friends, and the contempt of others; who behind her back will make a scorn of her, and talk of her as some crack-brained or half-witted person; yea, though your talk be good, it will be tedious and contemptible, if it be thus poured out, and be too cheap. "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin; but he that refraineth his lips is wise^f." You must answer in judgment for your "idle words^g." You will take it ill to be accounted fools, and made the derision of those that talk of you: judge by the Scripture what occasion you give them. "A dream cometh by the multitude of business, and a fool's voice is known by a multitude of words: in the multitude of dreams, and many words, there are divers vanities." "The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself. The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness; and the end of his talk is mischievous madness: a fool also is full of words^h." Whereas a woman that is cautelous and sparing of her words, is commonly revered and supposed to be wise. So that if

^f Prov. x. 19. ^g Matt. xii. 36. ^h Eccles. v. 3. 7. ^b Eccles. x. 12—14.

you had no higher design in it, but merely to be well thought of, and honoured by men; you can scarcely take a surer way, than to let your words be few and weighty; though the avoiding of sin, and unquietness, should prevail with you much more.

Direct. XI. 'Be willing and diligent in your proper part, of the care and labour of the family.' As the primary provision of maintenance belongeth most to the husband, so the secondary provision within doors belongeth specially to the wife. Read over and over the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs; especially the care of nursing your own children, and teaching them, and watching over them when they are young; and also watching over the family at home, when your husbands are abroad, is your proper work.

Direct. XII. 'Dispose not of your husband's estate, without his knowledge and consent.' You are not only to consider, whether the work be good that you lay it out upon, but what power you have to do it. *Quest.* But may a woman give nothing, nor lay out nothing in the house, without her husband's consent? *Ans.* 1. If she have his general or implicit consent, it may suffice; that is, if he allow her to follow her judgment; or, if he commit such a proportion to her power, to do what she will with it. Or, if she know, that if he knew it, he would not be against it. 2. Or, if the law, or his consent, do give her any propriety in any part of his estate, or make her a joint-proprietor, she may proportionably dispose of it in a necessary case¹. The husband is considerable, either as a proprietor, or as her governor. As a proprietor, he only may dispose of the estate, where he is the sole proprietor: but where consent or the law of the land doth make the woman joint-proprietor, she is not disabled from giving for the want of a propriety. But then no law exempteth her from his government; and therefore she is not to give any thing in a way of disobedience, though it be her own; except when he forbiddeth that which is her duty, or which he hath no power to forbid. So that in case of joint-proprietry she may give without him, so be it she exceed not her proportion, and also if it be in a case of duty, where he may not hinder her. As to save the lives of the poor in extreme necessity,

¹ See Dr. Gouge on Family Relations, who saith the most against women's giving.

famine, or imprisonment, or the like. 3. But if the thing be wholly her own, excepted from his propriety, and she be sole proprietor, then she need not ask his consent at all, any other way than as he is her guide, to direct her to the best way of disposing of it: which, if he forbid her, instead of directing her to it, she is not thereby excusable before God, for the abusing of her trust and talent. 4. I conceive that 'ad aliquid' as to certain absolutely necessary uses, the very relation maketh the woman as a joint-proprietor^k: as if her husband will not allow her such food and raiment as is necessary to preserve the lives and health of herself, and all her children; she is bound to do it without or against his will (if she can, and if it be not to a greater hurt, and the estate be his own, and he be able) rather than let her children contract such diseases, as apparently will follow to the hazard of their lives. Yea, and to save the life of another that in famine is ready to perish: for she is not as a stranger to his estate. But out of these cases, if a wife shall secretly waste or give, or lay it out on bravery or vanity, or set her wit against her husband's; and because she thinks him too strait or penurious, therefore she will dispose of it, without his consent. This is thievery, disobedience, and injustice.

Quest. 1. 'But as the case standeth with us in England, hath the wife a joint-propriety, or not?'

Ans. Three ways (at least) she may have a propriety. 1. By a reserve of what was her own before; which (however some question it) may in some cases be done in their agreement at marriage. 2. By the law of the land. 3. By the husband's consent or donation. What the law of the land saith in case, I leave to the lawyers: but it seemeth to me, that his words at marriage 'With all my worldly goods I thee endow,' do signify his consent to make her a joint-proprietor: and his consent is sufficient to the collation of a title, to that which was his own. Unless any can prove that law or custom, doth otherwise expound the words (as an empty formality), and that at the contract, this was or should be known to her to be the sense. And the law's al-

^k 2 Sam. xxv. 18, 29, 30. Prov. xxxi. 11—13, 20. Hos. vi. 6. Matt. ix. 13. xii. 7. 2 Kings iv. 9, 22.

lowing the wife the third part upon death or separation, doth intimate a joint-proprietry before.

Quest. 11. 'If the husband live upon unlawful gain, as cheating, stealing, robbing by the highway, &c. is not the wife guilty as a joint-proprietor, in retaining such ill-gotten goods, if she know it? And is she bound to accuse her husband, or to restore such goods?'

Ans. Her duty is first to admonish her husband of his sin and danger, and endeavour his repentance, in the mean time disclaiming all consent, and reception of the goods. And if she cannot prevail for his repentance, restitution, and reformation, she hath a double duty to perform; the one is to help them to their goods whom he hath injured and robbed (by prudent and just means): the other is to prevent his robbing of others for the time to come. But how these must be done is the great difficulty.

1. If she foresee (or may do) that either by her husband's displeasure, or by the cruel revenge of the injured party, the hurt of discovering the fraud or robbery, will be greater than the good, then I think that she is not bound to discover it. But by some secret, indirect way, to help the owner to his own; if it may be done without a greater hurt.

2. To prevent his sin and other men's future suffering by him, she seemeth to me to be bound to reveal her husband's sinful purposes to the magistrate, if she can no other way prevail with him to forbear. My reasons are, because the keeping of God's law, and the law of the land, and the public order and good, and the preventing of our neighbours' hurt by robbery or fraud; and so the interest of honesty and right, is of greater importance than any duty to her husband, or preservation of her own peace, which seemeth to be against it. But then I must suppose that she liveth under a magistrate, who will take but a just revenge. For if she know the laws and magistrate to be so unjust, as to punish a fault with death, which deserveth it not, she is not to tell such a magistrate, but to preserve her neighbours' safety by some other way of intimation.

If any one think that a wife may in no case, accuse a husband, to the hazard of his life or estate, let them, 1.

Remember what God obliged parents to do against the lives of incorrigible children, Deut. xxi. 2. And that the honour of God, and the lives of our neighbours, should be preferred before the life of one offender, and their estates before his estate alone. 3. And that the light of reason telleth us, that a wife is to reveal a treason against the king, which is plotted by a husband; and therefore also the robbing of the king's treasury, or deceiving him in any matter of great concernment. And therefore in due proportion, the laws and common good, and our neighbours' welfare, are to be preserved by us, though against the nearest relation: only all due tenderness of the life and reputation of the husband is to be preserved, in the manner of proceedings, as far as will stand with the interest of justice, and the common good.

Quest. III. 'May the wife go hear sermons when the husband forbiddeth her?'

Ans. There are some sermons which must not be heard; there are some sermons which may be heard, and must when no greater matter doth divert us; and there are some sermons which must be heard, whoever shall forbid it. Those which must not be heard are such as are heretical (ordinarily) and such as are superfluous, and at such times when greater duties call us another way. Those which may be heard, are either occasional sermons, or such lectures as are neither of necessity to ourselves, nor yet to the owning of God and his public worship. One that liveth where there are daily or hourly sermons, may hear them as oft as suiteth with their condition, and their other duties: but in this case, the command of a husband, with the inconveniences that will follow disobeying him, may make it a duty to forbear. But that we do sometimes publicly own God's worship, and church ordinances, and receive ministerial teaching for our edification, is of double necessity; that we deny not God, and that we betray not, or desert not our own souls. And this is especially necessary (ordinarily) on the Lord's days, which are appointed for these necessary uses. And here the husband hath no power to forbid the wife, nor should she (formally) obey his prohibition. But yet as affirmatives bind not 'ad semper,' and no duty is a duty at every season; so it is possible that on the Lord's day, it may extra-

ordinarily become a duty to forbear sermons or sacraments, or other public worship. As when any greater duty calleth us away: as to quench a fire; and to save men's lives; and to save our country from an enemy in the time of war; and to save our own lives (if we knew the assembly would be assaulted), or to preserve our liberty for greater service. Christ set us to learn the meaning of this lesson 'I will have mercy and not sacrifice.' In such a case also a mischief may be avoided, even from a husband by the omission of a duty at that time (when it would be no duty) for this is but a transposition of it. But this is but an act of prudent self-preservation, and not an act of formal obedience.

Quest. IV. 'If a woman have a husband so incorrigible in vice, as that by long trial she findeth that speaking against it, maketh him worse, and causeth him to abuse her, is she bound to continue her dissuasion, or to forbear?'

Answ. That is not here a duty which is not a means to do some good: and that is no means which we know beforehand is like, if not certain, to do no good, or to do more harm. We must not by weariness, laziness, or censoriousness, take a case to be desperate, which is not; nor must we so easily desist with so near a relation, as with a stranger or a neighbour. But yet Christ's indulgence of not exposing ourselves to be torn by dogs, and his word trodden in the dirt by swine, doth extend to relations as well as others. But then you must observe that she that is justly discouraged from sharp reproofs, may yet have hope that gentle and humble persuasions may succeed. And she that is discouraged from open, or frequent, or plain reproofs; may yet have hope that secret, or more seldom, or more distant and general admonitions may not be lost. And she that is discouraged from one way of doing him good, may yet have many other ways (as to set some minister whom he reverenceth, to speak to him; to put some suitable book into his hand, &c.) And she that is discouraged at the present, ought not totally to despair, but may make some more attempts hereafter; either in some sickness, or time of mortality, or danger, or affliction, or when possibly time and consideration may have better prepared him to hear. And in the mean time she is to continue all conjugal affection

and duty, and a convincing, winning course of life; which may prove the most effectual reproof.

Quest. v. 'What should a woman do in controverted cases of religion, when her judgment and her husband's differ?'

Ans. 1. Some make a controversy of that which with all good Christians or sober persons, should be past controversy; and some controversies are indeed of real, if not insuperable difficulty. 2. Some controversies are about important, necessary things, and some about things of lesser moment. 3. Some are about mere opinion, or other men's practice, and some about our own practice.

(1.) In all differences of judgment the wife must exercise such self-suspicion, and modesty, and submission, as may signify her due sense, both of the weakness of her sex, and of her subjection to her husband. (2.) In things indifferent she must in practice obey her husband; unless when superior powers do forbid it, and that in cases where their authority is greater. (3.) She may modestly give her reasons of dissent. (4.) She must not turn it to an unpeaceable quarrel, or matter of disaffection, or pretend any differences against her conjugal duties. (5.) In dark and difficult cases she should not be peremptory, and self-conceited, nor importunate; but if she have faith (that is, some more knowledge than he) have it to herself, in quietness and silence; and seek further information lest she err. (6.) She must speak no untruth, nor commit any known sin, in obedience to her husband's judgment. (7.) When she strongly suspecteth it to be sin, she must not do it merely in obedience to him, but seek for better satisfaction. For she is sure that he hath no power to force her to sin; and therefore hath no more assurance of his power in that point than she hath of the lawfulness of the thing. (8.) But if she prove to be in the error, she will sin on either side, till she recover. (9.) If a husband be in dangerous error, she must wisely, but unweariedly seek his reformation, by herself or others.

Cases about Divorce and Separation.

Quest. 1. 'Is it lawful for husband and wife to be long absent from each other? and how long, and in what cases?'

Answ. It is lawful to be absent either in the case of prayer which Paul mentioneth, or in case of the needful affairs of their estates, so long as may be no danger to either of them as to mental or corporal incontinency, nor to any other hurt which will be greater than the benefits of their absence, nor cause them to be guilty of the neglect of any real duty. Therefore the cases of several persons do much differ according to the different tempers of their minds, and bodies, and affairs. He that hath a wife of a chaste, contented, prudent temper, may stay many months or years in some cases, when, all things considered, it tendeth to more good than hurt: as lawyers by their callings are often necessitated to follow their callings at terms and assizes: and merchants may be some years absent in some weighty cases. But if you ask, whether the getting of money be a sufficient cause? I answer, that it is sufficient to those whose families must be so maintained, and their wives are easily continent, and so the good of their gain is greater than any loss or danger that cometh by it. But when covetousness puts them upon it needlessly, and their wives cannot bear it, or in any case when the hurt that is like to follow is greater than the good, it is unlawful.

Quest. II. ' May husband and wife be separated by the bare command of princes, if they make a law that in certain cases they shall part: as suppose it to ministers, judges, or soldiers?'

Answ. You must distinguish between the bare command or law, and the reasons and ends of that command: and so between a lawful command and an unlawful. In some cases a prince may justly command a separation for a time, or such as is like to prove for perpetuity, and in some cases he may not. If a king command a separation without sufficient cause, so that you have no motive but his authority, and the question is, whether formally you are bound to obedience: I answer, No; because what God hath joined, no man hath power to put asunder. Nor can either prince, pope, or prelate dispense with your marriage covenant. In such a case, it is as a private act, because God hath given them no authority for it; and therefore their commands or laws are nullities: only if a prince say, he that will be a judge or a justice shall part with his wife, it is lawful to leave

the office, and so obey the law. But if he say to all ministers of the gospel, you shall forsake your wives or your ministry, they should do neither, because they are divinely obliged to both, and he hath no power to forbid them, or to dispense with that obligation.

But it may fall out, that the ends of the command may be so great as to make it lawful, and then it must be obeyed both formally for the authority of the prince, and finally for the reasons of the thing. As if the safety of the commonwealth should require, that married persons be soldiers, and that they go far off; yea, though there be no likelihood of returning to their families, and withal they cannot take their wives with them, without detriment or danger to their service; in this case men must obey the magistrate, and are called by God to forsake their wives, as if it were by death. Nor is it any violation of their marriage covenant, because that was intended or meant to suppose the exception of any such call of God, which cannot be resisted when it will make a separation.

Quest. III. ' May ministers leave their wives to go abroad to preach the Gospel?'

Answ. If they can neither do God's work so well at home, nor yet take their wives with them, nor be excused from doing that part of service, by other men's doing it who have no such impediment; they may and must leave their wives to do it. In this case, the interest of the church, and of the souls of many, must over-rule the interest of wife and family. Those pastors who have fixed stations, must neither leave flock or family without necessity, or a clear call from God. But in several cases a preacher may be necessitated to go abroad; as in case of persecution at home, or of some necessity of foreign or remote parts, which cannot be otherwise supplied: or when some door is opened for the conversion of infidels, heretics, or idolaters, and none else so fit to do that work, or none that will. In any such case, when the cause of God in any part of the world 'consideratis considerandis' doth require his help, a minister must leave wife and family, yea, and a particular flock to do it. For our obligations are greatest to the Catholic church, and public good; and the greatest good must be preferred. If a king command a subject to be an ambassador in the most remote

part of the world, and the public good withal requireth it, if wife and children cannot be taken with him, they must be left behind, and he must go. So must a consecrated minister of Christ for the service of the church refuse all entanglements, which would more hinder his work than the contrary benefits will countervail. And this exception also was supposed in the marriage contract, that family interests and comforts must give way to the public interest, and to God's disposals.

And therefore it is, that ministers should not rashly venture upon marriage, nor any woman that is wise venture to marry a minister, till she is first well prepared for such accidents as may separate them for a shorter or a longer time.

Quest. iv. ' May one leave a wife to save his life, in case of personal persecution or danger ?'

Ans. Yes, if she cannot be taken with him ; for the means which are for the helps of life, do suppose the preservation of life itself : if he live, he may further serve God, and possibly return to his wife and family ; but if he die, he is removed from them all.

Quest. v. ' May husband and wife part by mutual consent, if they find it to be for the good of both ?'

Ans. If you speak not of a dissolving the bond of their relations, but withdrawing as to cohabitation, I answer, 1. It is not to be done upon passions and discontents, to feed and gratify each other's vicious distempers or interest ; for then both the consent and the separation are their sins : but if really such an uncurable unsuitableness be between them, as that their lives must needs be miserable by their cohabitation, I know not but they may live asunder ; so be it, that (after all other means used in vain) they do it by deliberate, free consent. But if one of them should by craft or cruelty constrain the other to consent, it is unlawful to the con-strainer. Nor must impatience make either of them ungroundedly despair of the cure of any unsuitableness which is really curable. But many sad instances might be given, in which cohabitation may be a constant calamity to both, and distance may be their relief, and further them both in God's service, and in their corporal concernments. Yet I say not that this is no sin ; for their unsuitableness is their sin : and God still obligeth them to lay down that sin which

maketh them unsuitable ; and therefore doth not allow them to live asunder, it being still their duty to live together in love and peace : and saying they cannot, freeth them not from the duty. But yet that moral impotency may make such a separation as aforesaid, to be a lesser sin than their unpeaceable cohabitation.

Quest. vi. ' May not the relation itself be dissolved by mutual, free consent, so that they may marry others ?'

Ans. As to the relation, they will still be related as those that did covenant to live in conjugal society, and are still allowed it and obliged to it, if the impediments were but removed : and it is but the exercise which is hindered. And they may not consent to marry others : 1. Because the contracted relation was for life, Rom. vii. 2. and God's law accordingly obligeth them. Marriages ' pro tempore,' dissoluble by consent, are not of God's institution, but contrary to it. 2. They know not but their impediments of cohabitation may be removed. 3. If he that marrieth an innocent divorced woman commit adultery, by parity of reason (with advantage) it will be so here. If you say, what if either of them cannot contain ? I answer, he that will not take heed before, must be patient afterwards, and not make advantage of his own folly, to the fulfilling of his lusts. If he will do what he ought to do in the use of all means, he may live chastely. And 4. The public interest must overrule the private, and that which would be unjust in private respects, may for public good become a duty : it seemeth unjust here with us, that the innocent country should repay every man his money, who between sun and sun is robbed on the road ; and yet because it will engage the country to watchfulness, it is just, as for the common good : and he that consenteth to be a member of a commonwealth, doth thereby consent to submit his own right to the common interest. So here, if all should have leave to marry others when they consent to part, it would bring utter confusion, and it would encourage wicked men to abuse their wives, till they forced them to consent. Therefore some must bear the trouble which their folly hath brought on themselves, rather than the common order should be confounded.

Quest. vii. ' Doth adultery dissolve the bond of marriage, or not ? Amesius saith it doth : and Mr. Whateley

having said so, afterward recanted it by the persuasion of other divines.'

Answ. The difference is only about the name and not about the matter itself. The reason which moved Dr. Ames is, because the injured person is free; therefore not bound; therefore the bond is dissolved. The reason which Mr. Whateley could not answer is, because it is not fornication, but lawful, if they continue their conjugal familiarity after adultery; therefore that bond is not dissolved. In all which it is easy to perceive, that one of them taketh the word 'vinculum' or bond in one sense, that is, 'For their covenant-obligation to continue their relation and mutual duties. And the other taketh it in another sense, that is, 'For the relation itself, as by it they are allowed conjugal familiarity; if the injured person will continue it.' The first 'vinculum' or bond is dissolved, the second is not. In the matter we are agreed, that the injured man may put away an adulterous wife (in a regular way) if he please; but withal that he may continue the relation if he please. So that his continued consent shall suffice to continue it a lawful relation and exercise; and his will on the contrary shall suffice to dissolve the relation, and disoblige him. (Saving the public order.)

Quest. VIII. 'But is not the injured party at all obliged to separate, but left free?'

Answ. Considering the thing simply in itself, he is wholly free to do as he please. But for all that, accidents or circumstances may make it one man's duty to divorce, and another's duty to continue the relation; according as it is like to do more good or hurt. Sometimes it may be a duty to expose the sin to public shame, for the prevention of it in others; and also to deliver one'sself from a calamity. And sometimes there may be so great repentance, and hope of better effects by forgiving, that it may be a duty to forgive: and prudence must lay one thing with another, to discern on which side the duty lieth.

Quest. IX. 'Is it only the privilege of the man, that he may put away an adulterous wife? or also of the woman, to depart from an adulterous husband? The reason of the doubt is, because Christ mentioneth the man's power only, Matt. v. xix.'

Ans. 1. The reason why Christ speaketh only of the man's case is, because he was occasioned only to restrain the vicious custom of men's causeless putting away their wives; having no occasion to restrain women from leaving their husbands. Men having the rule did abuse it to the woman's injury, which Christ forbiddeth. And as it is an act of power, it concerneth the man alone; but as it is an act of liberty, it seemeth to me to be supposed, that the woman hath the same freedom; seeing the covenant is violated to her wrong. And the apostle in 1 Cor. vii. doth make the case of the man and of the woman to be equal in the point of infidelity and desertion. I confess that it is unsafe, extending the sense of Scripture beyond the importance of the words upon pretence of a parity of reason (as many of the perjured do by Lev. xxx. in case of vows); lest man's deceitful wit should make a law to itself as divine, upon pretence of interpreting God's laws; but yet when the plain text doth speak but of one case (that is, of men's putting away their wives,) he that will thence gather an exclusion of the woman's liberty, doth seem by addition to be the corrupter of the law. And where the context plainly sheweth a parity of reason, and that reason is made the ground of the determination in the text, there it is safe to expound the law extensively accordingly. Surely the covenant of marriage hath its conditions on both parts; and some of those conditions are necessary to the very being of the obligations, though others are but needful to the well-being of the parties in that state. And therefore, though putting away be only the part of the husband, as being the ruler, and usually the owner of the habitation, yet departing may be the liberty of the wife. And I know no reason to blame those countries, whose laws allow the wife to sue out a divorce, as well as the husband.

Quest. x. ' May the husband put away the wife without the magistrate, or the wife depart from the husband without a public legal divorce or licence?'

Ans. Where the laws of the land do take care for the prevention of injuries, and make any determination in the case (not contrary to the law of God,) there it is a Christian's duty to obey those laws: therefore if you live under a law which forbiddeth any putting away or departing, with-

out public sentence or allowance, you may not do it privately upon your own will. For the civil governors are to provide against the private injuries of any of the subjects. And if persons might put away or depart at pleasure, it would introduce both injury and much weakness into the world. But where the laws of men do leave persons to their liberty in this case, they need then to look no further than to the laws of God alone. But usually the sentence of the civil power, is necessary only in case of appeal, or complaint of the party injured: and a separation may be made without such a public divorce, so that each party may make use of the magistrate to right themselves if wronged. As if the adultery be not openly known, and the injuring party desire rather to be put away privily than publicly, (as Joseph purposed to do by Mary) I see not but it is lawful so to do, in case that the law, or the necessity of making the offender an example, require not the contrary, nor scandal or other accidents forbid it not. See Grotius's learned Notes on Matt. v. 31, 32. and on Matt. xix. and 1 Cor. vii. about these questions.

Quest. xi. 'What if both parties commit adultery? may either of them put away the other, or depart; or rather must they forgive each other?'

Ans. If they do it both at once, they do both forfeit the liberty of seeking any compensation for the injury; because the injury is equal (however some would give the advantage to the man): but if one commit adultery first, and the other after; then either the last offender knew of the first, or not. If not, then it seemeth all one as if it had been done at once. But if yea, then they did it either on a supposition of the dissolution of the matrimonial obligation, as being loosed from the first adulterer, or else upon a purpose of continuing in the first relation: in the latter case, it is still all one as if it had been done by them at once, and it is a forfeiture of any satisfaction: but in the former case, though the last adulterer did sin, yet being before set at liberty, it doth not renew the matrimonial obligation: but yet, if the first offender desire the continuance of it, and the return of the first-injured party; shame and conscience of their own sin, will much rebuke them, if they plead that injury for continuance of the separation.

Quest. XII. 'But what if one do purposely commit adultery, to be separated from the other?'

Ans. It is in the other's power and choice, whether to be divorced and depart, or not, as they find the good or evil consequents preponderate.

Quest. XIII. 'Doth not infidelity dissolve the relation or obligation; seeing there is no communion between light and darkness, a believer and an infidel?'

Ans. It maketh it unlawful for a believer to marry an infidel (except in case of true necessity); because they can have no communion in religion. But it nullifieth not a marriage already made, nor maketh it lawful to depart or divorce: because they may have mere conjugal communion still. As the apostle purposely determineth the case, in 1 Cor. vii.

Quest. XIV. 'Doth not the desertion of one party, disoblige the other?'

Ans. 1. It must be considered what is true desertion. 2. Whether it be a desertion of the relation itself for continuance, or only a temporary desertion of co-habitation, or congress. 3. What the temper and state of the deserted party is. It is sometimes easy, and sometimes hard to discern which is the deserting party. If the wife go away from the husband unwarrantably, though she require him to follow her, and say that she doth not desert him, yet it may be taken for a desertion, because it is the man who is to rule and choose the habitation. But if the man go away, and the woman refuse to follow him, it is not he that is therefore the deserter.

Quest. 'But what if the man have not sufficient cause to go away, and the woman hath great and urgent reasons not to go? As suppose that the man will go away in hatred of an able preacher, and good company, and the woman if she follow him, must leave all those helps, and go among ignorant, profane, heretical persons, or infidels; which is the deserter then?'

Ans. If she be one that is either like to do good to the infidels, heretics, or bad persons whom they must converse with, she may suppose that God calleth her to receive good by doing good: or if she be a confirmed, well-settled Christian, and not very like, either by infection, or by want of

helps, to be unsettled and miscarry, it seemeth to me to be the safest way to follow her husband. She must lose indeed God's public ordinances by following him : but it is not imputable to her, as being out of her choice ; and she must lose the benefits, and neglect the duties of the conjugal ordinance, if she do not follow him. But if she be a person under such weaknesses, as make her remove apparently dangerous as to her perseverance and salvation, and her husband will by no means be prevailed with to change his mind, the case then is very difficult what is her duty, and who is the deserter. Nay, if he but lead her into a country where her life were like to be taken away, (as under the Spanish Inquisition,) unless her suffering were like to be as serviceable to Christ as her life. Indeed these cases are so difficult, that I will not decide them : the inconveniences, (or mischiefs rather) are great, which way soever she take : but I most incline to judge as followeth : viz. It is considerable first, what marriage obligeth her to, simply of its own nature ; and what it may do next, by any superadded contract, or by the law or custom of the land, or any other accident. As to the first, it seemeth to me, that every one's obligation is so much first to God, and then to their own souls and lives ; that marriage as such, which is for mutual help, as a means to higher ends, doth not oblige her to forsake all the communion of saints, and the place or country where God is lawfully worshipped, and to lose all the helps of public worship, and to expose her soul both to spiritual famine and infection, to the apparent hazard of her salvation (and perhaps bring her children into the same misery) ; nor hath God given her husband any power to do her so much wrong, nor is the marriage-covenant to be interpreted to intend it. But what any human law or contract, or other accident which is of greater public consequence, may do more than marriage of itself, is a distinct case, which must have a particular discussion.

Quest. ' But what if the husband would only have her follow him, to the forsaking of her estate, and undoing herself and children in the world, (as in the case of Galeacius Caracciolus, Marquis of Vicum ;) yea, and if it were without just cause ?'

Ans. If it be for greater spiritual gain, (as in his case,)

she is bound to follow him : but if it be apparently foolish, to the undoing of her and her children without any cause, I see not that marriage simply obligeth a woman so to follow a fool in beggary, or out of a calling, or to her ruin. But if it be at all a controvertible case, whether the cause be just or not, then the husband being governor must be judge. The laws of the land are supposed to be just, which allow a woman by trustees to secure some part of her former estate from her husband's disposal : much more may she beforehand secure herself and children from being ruined by his wilful folly : but she can by no contract except herself from his true government.

Yet still she must consider, whether she can live contently in his absence : otherwise the greatest sufferings must be endured, to avoid incontinency.

2. Moreover, in all these cases, a temporary removal may be further followed, than a perpetual transmigration, because it hath fewer evil consequents.

And if either party renounce the relation itself, it is a fuller desertion, and clearer discharge of the other party, than a mere removal is.

Quest. xv. 'What if a man or wife know that the other in hatred doth really intend by poison or other murder, to take away their life? May they not then depart?'

Answ. They may not do it upon a groundless or rash surmise; nor upon a danger which by other lawful means may be avoided; (as by vigilancy, or the magistrate, or especially by love and duty.) But in plain danger, which is not otherwise like to be avoided, I doubt not, but it may be done and ought. For it is a duty to preserve our own lives as well as our neighbours. And when marriage is contracted for mutual help, it is naturally implied that they shall have no power to deprive one another of life : (however some barbarous nations have given men power of the lives of their wives.) And killing is the grossest kind of desertion, and a greater injury and violation of the marriage-covenant than adultery; and may be prevented by avoiding the murderer's presence; if that way be necessary. None of the ends of marriage can be attained, where the hatred is so great.

Quest. xvi. 'If there be but fixed hatred of each other,

is it inconsistent with the ends of marriage? And is parting lawful in such a case?

Ans. The injuring party is bound to love and not to separate; and can have no liberty by his or her sin. And to say, I cannot love, or my wife or husband is not amiable, is no sufficient excuse; because every person hath somewhat that is amiable, if it be but human nature; and that should have been foreseen before your choice. And as it is no excuse to a drunkard to say, I cannot leave my drink; so it is none to an adulterer, or hater of another, to say, I cannot love them: for that is but to say, I am so wicked, that my heart or will is against my duty. But the innocent party's case is harder (though commonly both parties are faulty, and therefore both are obliged to return to love, and not to separate). But if hatred proceed not to adultery, or murder, or intolerable injuries, you must remember that marriage is not a contract for years, but for life, and that it is possible that hatred may be cured (how unlikely soever it may be). And therefore you must do your duty, and wait, and pray, and strive by love and goodness to recover love, and then stay to see what God will do; for mistakes in your choice will not warrant a separation.

Quest. xvii. 'What if a woman have a husband that will not suffer her to read the Scriptures, nor go to God's worship public or private, or that so beateth or abuseth her, as that it cannot be expected that human nature should be in such a case kept fit for any holy action; or if a man have a wife that will scold at him when he is praying or instructing his family, and make it impossible to him to serve God with freedom, or peace, and comfort?'

Ans. The woman must (at necessary seasons, though not when she would) both read the Scriptures, and worship God, and suffer patiently what is inflicted on her. Martyrdom may be as comfortably suffered from a husband, as from a prince. But yet if neither her own love, and duty, and patience, nor friend's persuasion, nor the magistrate's justice, can free her from such inhuman cruelty, as quite disableth her for her duty to God and man, I see not but she may depart from such a tyrant. But the man hath mote means to restrain his wife from beating him, or doing such intolerable things; either by the magistrate, or by denying

her what else she might have, or by his own violent restraining her, as belongeth to a conjugal ruler, and as circumstances shall direct a prudent man. But yet in case that unsuitableness or sin be so great, that after long trial, there is no likelihood of any other co-habitation, but what will tend to their spiritual hurt and calamity, it is their lesser sin to live asunder by mutual consent.

Quest. XVIII. 'Who be they that may or may not marry again when they are parted?'

Ans. 1. They that are released by divorce upon the other's adultery, &c. may marry again. 2. The case of all the rest is harder. They that part by consent, to avoid mutual hurt, may not marry again: nor the party that departeth for self-preservation, or for the preservation of estate, or children, or comforts, or for liberty of worship, as aforesaid: because it is but an intermission of conjugal fruition, and not a total dissolution of the relation: and the innocent party must wait to see whether there be any hope of a return. Yea, Christ seemeth to resolve it, Matt. v. 31, 32., that he is an adulterer that marrieth the innocent party that is put away; because the other living in adultery, their first contracted relation seemeth to be still in being. But Grotius and some others think, that Christ meaneth this only of the man that over-hastily marrieth the innocent divorced woman, before it be seen whether he will repent and re-assume her. But how can that hold, if the husband after adultery free her? May it not therefore be meant, that the woman must stay unmarried in hope of his reconciliation, till such time as his adultery with his next married wife doth disoblige her. But then it must be taken as a law for Christians: for the Jew that might have many wives, disoblige not one by taking another.

A short desertion must be endured in hope: but in case of a very long, or total desertion or rejection, if the injured party should have an untameable lust, the case is difficult. I think there are few but by just means may abstain. But if there be any that cannot, (after all means,) without such trouble as overthroweth their peace, and plainly hazardeth their continence, I dare not say that marriage in that case is unlawful to the innocent.

Quest. 1 'Is it lawful to suffer or tolerate, yea, or contri-

bute to the matter of known sin in a family, ordinarily, in wife, child or servant : and consequently in any other relations. ?

Answ. In this some lukewarm men are apt to run into the extreme of remissness ; and some unexperienced young men, that never had families, into the extreme of censorious rigour, as not knowing what they talk of.

1. It is not lawful either in family, commonwealth, church or any where, to allow of sin, nor to tolerate it, or leave it uncured, when it is truly in our power to cure it.
2. So that all the question is, when it is, or is not in our power? Concerning which, I shall answer by some instances.

I. It is not in our power to do that which we are naturally unable to do. No law of God bindeth us to impossibilities. And natural impotency here is found in these several cases. 1. When we are overmatched in strength ; when wife, children, or servants are too strong for the master of the house, so that he cannot correct them, nor remove them. A king is not bound to punish rebellious or offending subjects, when they are too strong for him, and he is unable : either by their numbers or other advantages. If a pastor censure an offender, and all the church be against the censure, he cannot procure it executed, but must acquiesce in having done his part, and leave their guilt upon themselves.

2. When the thing to be done is an impossibility, at least moral. As to hinder all the persons of a family, church or kingdom from ever sinning : it is not in their own power so far to reform themselves ; much less in a ruler so far to reform them : even as to ourselves, perfection is but desired in this life, but not attained ; much less for others.

3. When the principal causes co-operate not with us, and we are but subservient moral causes ; we can but persuade men to repent, believe, and love God and goodness. We cannot save men without and against themselves. Their hearts are out of our reach ; therefore in all these cases we are naturally unable to hinder sin !

II. It is not in our power to do any thing which God forbiddeth us. That which is sinful is to be accounted out of our power in this sense. To cure the sin of a wife, by

such cruelty or harshness as is contrary to our conjugal relation and to the office of necessary love, is out of our power, because forbidden, as contrary to our duty; and so of other.

III. Those actions are out of our power, which are acts of higher authority than we have. A subject cannot reform by such actions as are proper to the sovereign, nor a layman by actions proper to the pastor, for want of authority. So a schoolmaster cannot do that which is proper to a patient; nor the master of a family that which is proper to the magistrate (as to punish with death, &c.)

IV. We have not power to do that which a superior power forbiddeth us (unless it be that which God indispensably commandeth us.) The wife may not correct a child or servant, or turn him away, when the husband forbiddeth it. Nor the master of a family so punish a sin, as the king and laws forbid on the account of public interest.

V. We have not power to do that for the power of sin, which is like to do more hurt than good; yea, perhaps to prove a pernicious mischief. If my correcting a servant, would make him kill me, or set my house on fire, I may not do it. If my sharp reproof is like to do more hurt, or less good than milder dealing; if I have reason to believe that correction will make a servant worse, I am not to use it; because we have our power to edification, and not to destruction. God hath not tied us just to speak such and such words, or to use this or that correction, but to use reproofs and corrections only in that time, measure and manner as true reason telleth us, is likeliest to attain their end. To do it, if it would do never so much hurt with a 'fiat justitia etsi pereat mundus,' is to be righteous overmuch.

Yea, great and heinous sins may be endured in families sometimes, to avoid a greater hurt, and because there is no other means to cure them. For instance, a wife may be guilty of notorious pride, and of malignant deriding the exercises of religion, and of railing, lying, slandering, backbiting, covetousness, swearing, cursing, &c. and the husband be necessitated to bear it; not so far as not to reprove it, but so far as not to correct her, much less cure her; divines use to say, that it is unlawful for a man to beat his wife: but the reason is not, that he wanteth authority to do

it; but, 1. Because he is by his relation obliged to a life of love with her; and therefore must so rule, as tendeth not to destroy love: and 2. Because it may often do otherwise more hurt to herself and the family, than good. It may make her furious and desperate, and make her contemptible in the family, and diminish the reverence of inferiors, both to wife and husband, for living so uncomely a life.

Quest. 'But is there any case in which a man may silently bear the sins of a wife, or other inferior without reproof, or urging them to amend?'

Answ. Yes: in case, 1. That reproof hath been tried to the utmost: 2. And it is most evident by full experience, that it is like to do a great deal more hurt than good.

The rule given by Christ, extendeth as well to families, as to others; not to cast pearls before swine, nor to give that which is holy to dogs: because it is more to the discomposure of a man's own peace, to have a wife turn again, and all to rend him, than a stranger. As the church may cease admonishing a sinner, after a certain time of obstinacy, when experience hath ended their present hopes of bringing the person to repentance, and thereupon may excommunicate him: so a husband may be brought to the same despair with a wife, and may be disobliged from ordinary reproof, though the nearness of the relation forbid him to eject her. And in such a case where the family and neighbourhood know the intractableness and obstinacy of the wife, it no scandal, nor sign of approbation, or neglect of duty, for a man to be silent at her sin^m; because they look upon her at present as incorrigible by that means: and it is the sharpest reproof to such a one, to be unreprieved, and to be let alone in her sin; as it is God's greatest judgment on a sinner, to leave him to himself, and say, 'be filthy still.'

And there are some women whose fantasies and passions are naturally so strong, as that it seemeth to me that in many cases they have not so much as natural free-will or power to restrain them: but if in all other cases they acted as in some, I should take them for mere brutes, that had no true reason: they seem naturally necessitated to do

^l Matt. vii. 6.

^m Psal. lxxxii. 14, &c. Rev. xxii. 10, 11. Prov. i. 24, 25.

as they do. I have known the long profession of piety, which in other respects hath seemed sincere, to consist in a wife, with such unmastered, furious passion, that she could not before strangers forbear throwing what was in her hand in her husband's face, or thrusting the burning candle into his face; and slandering him of the filthiest sins; and when the passion was over, confess all to be false, and her rage to be the reason of her speech and actions: and the man though a minister, of more than ordinary wit and strength, yet fain to endure all without returns of violence till her death. They that never knew such a case by trial, can tell how all might be cured easily; but so cannot they that are put upon the cure.

And there are some other women of the same incurable strength of imagination and passion, who in other respects are very pious and prudent too, and too wise and conscionable to wrong their husbands with their hands or tongues, who yet are utterly unable to forbear an injury of the highest nature to themselves; but are so utterly impatient of being crossed of their wills, that it would in all likelihood cast them into melancholy or madness, or some mortal sickness: and no reason signifieth any thing to abate such passions. In case of pride, or some sinful custom, they are not able to bear reproof, and to be hindered in the sin, without apparent danger of distraction or death. I suppose these cases are but few; but what to do in such cases when they come, is the present question.

Nay, the question is still harder, 'Whether to avoid such inconvenience, one may contribute towards another's sin, by affording them the means of committing it?'

Answ. 1. No man may contribute to sin as sin, formally considered. 2. No man may contribute to another's sin, for sinful ends, nor in a manner forbidden or sinful in himself. 3. No man may contribute to another's sin, when he is not naturally or morally necessitated to it, but might forbear it.

But as it is consistent with the holiness of God to contribute those natural and providential mercies, which he knoweth men will abuse to sin, so is it in some cases with us his creatures to one another. God giveth all men their lives and time, their reason and free-will, which he know-

eth they will abuse to sin : he giveth them that meat, and drink, and riches, and health, and vigour of senses, which are the usual means of the sin and undoing of the world.

Object. ' But God is not under any law or obligation as we are.'

Answ. His own perfection is above all law, and will not consist with a consent or acting of any thing that is contrary to holiness and perfection. But this I confess, that many things are contrary to the order and duty of the creature, which are not contrary to the place and perfection of the Creator.

1. When man doth generate man, he knowingly contributeth to a sinful nature and life : for he knoweth it is unavoidable, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh^a. And yet he sinneth not by so doing, because he is not bound to prevent sin by the forbearance of generation.

2. When one advanceth another to the office of magistracy, ministry, &c. knowing that he will sin in it, he contributeth accidentally to his sin ; but so as he is not culpable for so doing.

3. A physician hath to do with a froward and intemperate patient, who will please his appetite, or else if he be denied his passion, will increase his disease and kill him. In this case he may lawfully say, let him take a little, rather than kill him ; though by so doing he contribute to his sin. Because it is but a not-hindering that which he cannot hinder without a greater evil. The sin is only his that chooseth it.

And it is specially to be noted, that that which physically is a positive act and contributing to the matter of the sin, yet morally is but a not-hindering the sin by such a withholding of materials as we are not obliged to withhold (which is the case also of God's contributing to the matter of sin). If the physician in such a case, or the parent of a sick and froward child, do-actually give them that which they sin in desiring, that giving is indeed such a furthering of the sin as cannot be lawfully forborne, lest we do hurt, and therefore is morally but a not-hindering it, when we cannot hinder it.

4. If a man have a wife so proud that she will go mad,

^a John iii. 6. Ephes. ii. 2, 3.

or disturb him and his family by rage, if her pride be not gratified by some sinful fashions, curiosities, or excesses, if he give her money or materials to do it with, to prevent her distraction, it is but like the foresaid case of the physician, or parents of a sick child.

In these cases I will give you a rule to walk by for yourselves, and a caution how to judge of others.

1. Be sure that you leave nothing undone that you can lawfully do, for the cure and prevention of others' sins; and that it be not for want of zeal against sin, through indifference or slothfulness, that you forbear to hinder it, but merely through disability. 2. See that in comparing the evil that is like to follow the impediton, you do not mistake, but be sure that it be indeed a greater evil which you avoid by not hindering that particular sin. 3. See therefore that your own carnal interest weigh not with you more than there is cause; and that you account not mere fleshly suffering a greater evil than sin. 4. But yet that dishonour which may be cast upon religion, and the good of souls which may be hindered by a bodily suffering, may come into the comparison. 5. And your own duties to men's bodies (as to save men's lives, or health, or peace) are to be numbered with spiritual things, and the materials of a sin may in some cases be administered for the discharge of such a duty. If you knew a man would die if you give him not hot water, and he will be drunk if you do give it him; in this case you do but your duty, and he commits the sin: you do that which is good, and are not bound to forbear it, because he will turn it to sin, unless you see that the hurt by that sin is like to be so great (besides the sin itself) as to discharge you from the duty of doing good.

2. As to others, (1.) Put them on to their duty and spare not. (2.) But censure them not for the sins of their families, till you are acquainted with all the case. It is usual with rash and carnal censurers, to cry out of some godly ministers or gentlemen, that their wives are as proud, and their children and servants as bad as others. But are you sure that it is in their power to remedy it? Malice and rashness judge at a distance of things which men understand not, and sin in speaking against sin.

Quest. 11. 'If a gentleman, e. g. of £500, or £1000, or

£2000, or £3000, per annum, could spare honestly half his yearly rents, for his children and for charitable uses, and his wife be so proud and prodigal, that she will waste it all in housekeeping and excesses, and will rage, be unquiet, or go mad, if she be hindered, what is a man's duty in such a case?"

Ans. It is but an instance of the fore-mentioned case, and must thence be answered. 1. It is supposed that she is incurable by all wise and rational means of persuasion. 2. He is wisely to compare the greatness of the evil that will come by crossing her, with the good that may come by the improvement of his estate, and the forbearance of those excesses. If her rage, or distraction, or unquietness were like by any accident to do more hurt than his estate may do good, he might take himself disabled from hindering the sin; and though he give her the money which she misspendeth, it is not sinning, but only not hindering sin when he is unable. 3. Ordinarily some small or tolerable degree of sinful waste and excess may be tolerated to avoid such mischiefs as else would follow; but not too much. And though no just measure can be assigned, at what rate a man may lawfully purchase his own peace, and consequently his liberty to serve God, or at what rate he may save his wife from madness, or some mortal mischiefs of her discontent, yet the case must be resolved by such considerations; and a prudent man, that knoweth what is like to be the consequent on both sides, may and must accordingly determine it. 4. But ordinarily the life, health, or preservation of so proud, luxurious, and passionate a woman, is not worth the saving at so dear a rate, as the wastling of a considerable estate, which might be used to relieve a multitude of the poor, and perhaps to save the lives of many that are worthier to live. And, (1.) A man's duty to relieve the poor and provide for his family is so great. (2.) And the account that all men must give of the use of their talents is so strict, that it must be a great reason indeed, that must allow him to give way to very great wastefulness. And unless there be somewhat extraordinary in the case, it were better deal with such a woman as a bedlam, and if she will be mad, to use her as the mad are used, than for a steward of God to suffer the devil to be served with his master's goods.

Lastly, I must charge the reader to remember, that both these cases are very rare; and it is but few women that are so liable to so great mischiefs, which may not be prevented at cheaper rates; and therefore that the indulgence given in these decisions, is nothing to the greater part of men, nor is to be extended to ordinary cases. But commonly men every where sin by omission of a stricter government of their families, and by Eli's sinful indulgence and remissness: and though a wife must be governed as a wife, and a child as a child, yet all must be governed as well as servants. And though it may be truly said, that a man cannot hinder that sin, which he cannot hinder but by sin, or by contributing to a greater hurt, yet it is to be concluded, that every man is bound to hinder sin whenever he is able lawfully to hinder it.

And by the same measures, tolerations, or not-hindering errors and sins about religion in church and commonwealth, is to be judged of: None must commit them or approve them; nor forbear any duty of their own to cure them: but that is not a duty which is destructive, which would be a duty when it were a means of edifying.

CHAPTER X.

The Duties of Parents for their Children.

OF how great importance the wise and holy education of children is, to the saving of their souls, and the comfort of the parents, and the good of church and state, and the happiness of the world, I have partly told you before; but no man is able fully to express. And how great that calamity is, which the world is fallen into through the neglect of that duty, no heart can conceive; but they that think what a case the heathen, infidel, and ungodly nations are in, and how rare true piety is grown, and how many millions must lie in hell for ever, will know so much of this inhuman negligence, as to abhor it.

Direct 1. Understand and lament the corrupted and