

they bring upon themselves! In this one summary instance we may see, how much religion and obedience to God doth tend to our own felicity and delight; and how easy a work it would be, if a wicked heart did not make it difficult; and how great a plague sin is unto the sinner; and how sore a punishment of itself! And by this you may see, what it is that all fallings out, divisions and contentions tend to; and all temptations to the abatement of our love; and who it is that is the greater loser by it, when love to our neighbour is lost; and that backbiters and censurers who speak ill of others, come to us as the greatest enemies and thieves, to rob us of our chiefest jewel, and greatest comfort in this world? and accordingly should they be entertained.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Special Cases and Directions for Love to Godly Persons as such.

Tit. 1. Cases of Conscience about Love to the Godly.

WHOM we must take for godly, I have answered before, Chap. xxiv. Tit. 1. Quest. v.

Quest. 1. 'How can we love the godly, when no man can certainly know who is sincerely godly?'

Ans. Our love is not the love of God which is guided by infallibility, but the love of man, which is guided by the dark and fallible discerning of a man; the fruits of piety and charity we infallibly see in their lives. But the saving truth of that grace which is or ought to be the root, we must judge of according to the probability which those signs discover, and love men accordingly.

Quest. 11. 'Must we love those as godly, who can give no sensible account of their conversion, for the time, or manner, or evidence of it?'

Ans. We must take none for godly, who shew no credible evidence of true conversion, that is, of true faith and repentance; but there is many an one truly godly, who through natural defect of understanding or utterance, are not able in good sense to tell you what conversion is, nor

to describe the manner in which it was wrought upon them, much less to define exactly the time or sermon when it was first wrought, which few of the best Christians are able to do; especially of them who had pious education, and were wrought on in their childhood. But if the covenant of grace be wisely opened to them according to their capacity, and they deliberately, and soberly, and voluntarily profess their present assent and consent thereto, they do thereby give you the credible evidence of a true conversion, till you have sufficient contrary evidence to disprove it. For none but a converted man can truly repent and believe in God, the Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, according to the baptismal covenant.

Quest. III. 'But what if he be so ignorant that he cannot tell what faith, or repentance, or redemption, or sanctification, or the covenant of grace is?'

Ans. If you have sufficient evidence that indeed he doth not at all understand the essentials of the sacramental covenant, you may conclude that he is not truly godly; because he cannot consent to what he knoweth not: 'Ignorantis non est consensus:' and if you have no evidence of such knowledge, you have no evidence of his godliness, but must suspend your judgment. But yet many an one understandeth the essentials of the covenant, who cannot tell another what they are; therefore his mind (in case of great disability of utterance), must be fished out by questions, to which his yea or no, will discover what he understandeth and consenteth to: you would not refuse to do so by one of another language, or a dumb man, who understood you, but could answer you but by broken words or signs; and verily ill education may make a great many of the phrases of Scripture, and religious language as strange to some men, though spoken in their native tongue, as if it were Greek or Latin to them, who yet may possibly understand the matter. A wise teacher by well composed questions may (without fraud or formality) discern what a man understandeth, though he say but yea or no, when an indiscreet, unskilful man, will make his own unskilfulness and uncharitableness, the occasion of contemptuous trampling upon some that are as honest as himself. If a man's desires and endeavours are to that which is good, and he be willing to

be taught and use the means, it must be very gross ignorance indeed, and well proved, that must disprove his confession of faith. If he competently understand what it is to believe in God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, he understandeth all that is absolutely necessary to salvation. And his yea or no may sometimes signify his understanding it.

Quest. iv. 'Must I take the visible members of the church, because such, for truly godly?'

Ans. Yes, except when you have particular sufficient proof of their hypocrisy. Certainly no man doth sincerely enter into the baptismal covenant, but he that is sincerely a penitent believer (if at age). For that covenant giveth actual pardon and adoption to those that sincerely enter into it: the very consenting to it (which is repentance and faith) being the very condition of the present reception of these benefits*. And therefore it is that the ancient writers still affirmed that all the baptized were regenerated, justified and adopted: whether an adult person be truly fit for baptism, or not, the pastor that baptizeth is to judge; and he must see the credible signs of true faith and repentance before he baptize him; which are no other than his understanding, voluntary, sober profession of consent to the baptismal covenant; but when he is baptized and professeth to stand to that covenant once made, he is to be judged a godly person by all the church-members, who have not sufficient proof of the contrary; because if he be sincere in what he did and still professeth, he is certainly godly; and whether he be sincere or not, he himself is the best and regular judge or discerner, so far as to put in his claim to baptism, which the pastor is obliged not to deny him, without disproving him; and the pastor is to judge as to his actual admittance; and therefore the people have nothing necessarily to do, but know whether he be baptized and stand to his baptism; for which they are to take him as sincere; unless by his notorious discovery of the contrary they can disprove him. These are not only the true terms of church-communion, but of love to the godly; and though this goeth hardly down with some good men, who observe

* *Lege quam plurima veterum testimonia in D. Gatakero contra Daventantium de Baptismo.*

how few of the baptized seem to be seriously religious, and therefore they think that a visible church-member as such, is not at all to be counted sincere, that is, to be believed in his profession, and that we owe him not the special love which is due to the godly, but only a common love due only to professors without respect to their sincerity; yet this opinion will not hold true; nor is a profession required without respect to the truth or falsehood of it; the credibility of it being the very reason that it is requisite. Nor is it any other faith or consent to the covenant below that which is sincere and saving, which must be professed by all that will be taken for church-members. And though those that are of the contrary opinion are afraid lest this will occasion too much strictness in the pastors in judging whose profession is credible, and consequently will countenance separation in the people, yet God hath provided a sufficient remedy against that fear, by making every man the opener of his own heart, and tying us by the law of nature and of Scripture, to take every man's profession for credible, which is sober, understanding and voluntary, unless they can disprove it, or prove him a liar, and perfidious, and incredible. And whereas it is a latitude of charity which bringeth them to the contrary opinion, for fear lest the incredible professors of Christianity, should be all excluded from the visible church, yet indeed it is but the image of charity, to bring catechumens into the church, (as to set the boys of the lowest form among them that are in their Greek,) and to deny all special Christian love to all visible members of the church as such; and to think that we are not bound to take any of them (as such) to be sincere or in the favour of God, or justified, for fear of excluding those that are not. But of this I have largely written in a Treatise on this subject^b.

Quest. v. 'Must we take all visible church-members alike to be godly, and love them equally?'

Answer. No: there are as many various degrees of credit due to their profession, as there are various degrees of credibility in it: some manifest their sincerity by such full and excellent evidences in a holy life, that we are next to certain that they are sincere: and some make a profession

^b "Disputations of Right to Sacraments."

so ignorantly, so coldly, and blot it by so many false opinions and vices, that our fear of them may be greater than our hope; of whom we can only say, that we are not altogether hopeless of their sincerity, and therefore must use them as godly men, because we cannot prove the contrary; but yet admonish them of their danger, as having much cause to fear the worst: and there may be many notorious wicked men in some churches, through the pastors' fault, for want of discipline; and these for order sake we must assemble with, but not dissemble with them and our own consciences, so as to take them for godly men, when the contrary is notorious; nor yet to admit them to our familiarity. The pastor hath the keys of the church, but we have the keys of our own houses and hearts.

Quest. vi. 'Must we love all equally that seem truly godly, the strong and the weak?'

Answ. No: he that loveth men for their holiness, will love them according to the degrees of their holiness, as far as he can discern it.

Quest. vii. 'Must we love him more who hath much grace (or holiness) and is little useful for want of gifts, or him that hath less grace and eminent useful gifts?'

Answ. They must both be loved according to the diversity of their goodness. He that hath most grace is best, and therefore most to be loved in himself; but as a means to the conversion of souls and the honour of God in the good of others, the man that hath the most eminent gifts, must be most loved. The first is more loved in and for his own goodness: the second is more lovely 'propter aliud' as a means to that which is more loved than either of them.

Quest. viii. 'Must we love him as a godly man, who liveth in any great or mortal sin?'

Answ. Every man must be loved as he is: if by a mortal sin, be meant a sin inconsistent with the love of God, and a state of grace, then the question is no question; it being a contradiction which is in question. But if by a great and mortal sin, be meant only this or that act of sinning, and the question be, Whether that act be mortal, that is, inconsistent with true grace or not? Then the particular act, with the circumstances must be considered, before that question can be answered. Murder is one of the most hei-

nous sins; and one man may be guilty of it, out of deliberate, habitual malice; and another through a sudden passion; and another through mere inadvertency, carelessness and negligence. Stealing may be done by one man presumptuously, and by another merely to save the life of himself or his children: these will not equally prove a man in a state of death, and without true grace. And which is a mortal sin inconsistent with the life of grace, and which not, is before spoken to, and belongeth not to this place. Only I shall say, that the sin (be it great or small as to the outward act or matter) which certainly excludeth the habitual devotedness of the soul to God, by resignation, obedience and love, is mortal or a mark of spiritual death; and so is all sin, which consisteth not with habitual repentance, and a predominant hatred of sin as sin, and of a disobedient, unholy heart and life; and therefore all sin, which is not repented of, as soon as it is known, and the sinner hath time and opportunity of deliberation; because in such a case, the habit of repentance will produce the act.

Quest. IX. 'Must an excommunicated person be loved as godly or not?'

Ans. You must distinguish, 1. Of excommunication. 2. Of the person that is to judge. 1. There is an excommunication which censureth not the state of the sinner, but only suspendeth him from church-communion as at the present actually unfit for it: and there is an excommunication which habitually or statedly excludeth the sinner from his church-relation, as an habituate, impenitent, obstinate person. 2. Some persons have no opportunity to try the cause themselves, being strangers, or not called to it; but must take it upon the pastor's judgment: and some have no opportunity to know the person and the cause, whether he be justly excommunicated or not. Now 1. Those that know by notoriety or proof that the person is justly excommunicated with the second sort of excommunication, must not, nor cannot love him as a godly man. 2. Those that know by notoriety or proof that the person is unjustly excommunicated, are not therefore to deny him the estimation and love which is due to a godly man: though for order sake they may sometimes be obliged to avoid external church-communion with him. 3. Those that know nothing

of the cause themselves, must judge as the pastor judgeth who is the legal judge; yet so, as to take it to be but a human, fallible, and no final judgment.

Quest. x. 'Can an unsanctified hypocrite unfeignedly love a godly man?'

Ans. There is no doubt but he may materially love him, on some other consideration; as because he is a kinsman, friend, benefactor, or is witty, learned, fair, &c.

Quest. xi. 'But can he love a godly man because he is godly?'

Ans. He may love a godly man (at least) as he may love God: an unholy person cannot love God in all his perfections respectively to himself, as a God who is most holy and just in his government, forbidding all sin, and condemning the ungodly; for the love of his sins is inconsistent with this love. But he may love him as he is most great, and wise, and good in the general, and as he is the Maker and Benefactor of the world and of the sinner; yea, and in general as his Governor: and so he may verily think that he loveth God as God, because he loveth him for his essentialities; but indeed he doth not (speaking strictly), because he leaveth out some one or more of these essentialities; even as he that loveth man as rational, but not as a voluntary free agent, loveth not man as man: and as a heretic is no Christian, because he denieth some one essential part of Christianity, even so as to the love of godly men, an ungodly man may believe that they are better than others, and therefore love them; but not as godliness is the consent to that holiness and justice of God, which would restrain him from his beloved sins, and condemn him for them. So far as they are simply godly to themselves, without respect to him and his sins, he may love them.

Quest. xii. 'May he love a godly man as he would make him godly, and convert him?'

Ans. He may love him as a better man than others, and in general he may wish himself as good, and may love him because he wisheth him well; but as he cannot be (or rather is not) willing himself to leave his sins and live in holiness, so another is not grateful to him, who urgently persuadeth him to this.

Quest. XIII. 'Doth any ungodly person love the godly comparatively more than others?'

Ans. So far as he doth love them as godly, so far he may love them more than those that are not such: many a bad father loveth a religious child better than the rest; because they think that wisdom and godliness are good; and they are glad to see their children do well, as long as they do not grate upon them with troublesome censures: for another man's godliness costeth a bad man little or nothing; he may behold it without the parting with his sins.

Quest. XIV. 'Doth every sincere Christian love all the godly with a special love? even those that oppose their opinions, or that they think do greatly wrong them?'

Ans. 1. Every true Christian loveth a godly man as such, and therefore loveth all such, if he take them to be such. 2. No godly man doth habitually and impenitently live in such malice or enmity, as will not suffer him to see the godliness of a dissenter or adversary, when it hath sufficient evidence. 3. But ill education and company, and want of opportunity, may keep a true Christian from discerning the godliness of another, and so from loving him as a godly man. 4. And error, and faction, and passion may in a temptation so far prevail as at present to pervert his judgment, and make him misjudge godly men to be ungodly, though when he hath opportunity to deliberate and come to himself, he will repent of it.

Quest. XV. 'What is that love to the godly which proveth a man's sincerity, and which no hypocrite or unregenerate person doth attain to?'

Ans. It hath in it these essential parts: 1. He loveth God best, and his servants for his sake. 2. He loveth godliness, and the person as godly, and therefore would fain be such himself; or loveth it for himself as well as in others. 3. He loveth not one only, but all the essential parts of godliness (our absolute resignation to God our Owner, our absolute obedience to God our Ruler, and our highest gratitude and love to God our Benefactor and our End). 4. He loveth godliness and godly men, above his carnal worldly interest, his honour, wealth or pleasure; and therefore will part with these in works of charity, when he can understand that God requireth it. These four set together make

up that love which will prove your sincerity, and which no hypocrite doth perform. Hypocrites either love the godly only as their benefactors with a self-love; or they love them as godly to themselves, but would not be like them, and love not godliness itself to make them godly; or they love them for some parts of godliness, and not for all; or they love them but in subjection to their worldly love; with such a dry and barren love as James rejecteth, James ii., as will not be at any great cost upon them, to feed, or clothe, or visit, or relieve them.

Tit. 2. Directions for Loving the Children of God.

Direct. i. 'Once get the love of God, and you cannot choose but love his children.' Therefore first set your hearts to that, and study the Directions for it, Part i. God must be first loved as God, before the godly can be loved as such; though perhaps this effect may sometimes be more manifest than the cause: fortify the cause and the effect will follow.

Direct. ii. 'Get Christ to dwell in your hearts by faith.' And then you will love his members for his sake. The study of the love of God in Christ, and the belief of all the benefits of his love and sufferings, will be the bellows continually to kindle your love to your Redeemer, and to all those that are like him and beloved by him.

Direct. iii. 'Cherish the motions of God's Spirit in yourselves.' For he is a Spirit of love; and it is the same Spirit which is in all the saints; therefore the more you have of the Spirit, the more unity and the more love you will have to all that are truly spiritual. The decays of your own holiness, containeth a decay of your love to the holy.

Direct. iv. 'Observe their graces more than their infirmities.' You cannot love them unless you take notice of that goodness which is their loveliness. Overlooking and extenuating the good that is in others, doth shew your want of love to goodness, and then no wonder if you want love to those that are good.

Direct. v. 'Be not tempters and provokers of them to any sin.' For that is but to stir up the worser part which

^c Eph. iii. 17.

is in them, and to make it more apparent ; and so to hide their amiableness, and hinder your own love. They that will be abusing them, and stirring up their passions, or oppressing wise men to try if they can make them mad, or increasing their burdens and persecutions to see whether there be any impatience left in them, are but like the horseman who was still spurring his horse, and then sold him because he was skittish and unquiet : or like the gentleman that must needs come as a suitor to a beautiful lady, just when she had taken a vomit and purge, and then disdained her for being unsavoury and loathsome.

Direct. vi. 'Stir up their graces, and converse much with them in the exercises of grace.' If Aristotle or Socrates, Demosthenes or Cicero, stood silent by you among other persons, you will perceive no difference between them and a fool or a vulgar wit : but when once they open their lips and pour out the streams of wisdom and eloquence, you will quickly perceive how far they excel the common world, and will admire, love and honour them. So when you converse with godly men about matters of trading or common employments only, you will see no more but their blamelessness and justice ; but if you will join with them in holy conference or prayer, or observe them in good works, you will see that the Spirit of Christ is in them. When you hear the longings of their souls after God, and their heavenly desires, and hopes, and joys, and their love to piety, charity and justice, express themselves in their holy discourse and prayers, and see the fruits of them in their lives, you will see that they are more than common men.

Direct. vii. 'Foresee the perfection of their graces in their beginnings.' No man will love a seed or stock of those plants or trees which bear the most beautiful flowers and fruits, unless, in the seed he foresee the fruit or flower which it tendeth to. No man loveth the egg aright, who doth not foreknow what a bird it will bring forth. Aristotle or Cicero were no more amiable in their infancy than others, except to him that could foretel what men they were like to prove. Think oft of heaven, and what a thing a saint will be in glory, when he shall shine as the stars, and be equal

to the angels; and then you will quickly see cause to love them.

Direct. v. 111. 'Frequently think of the everlasting union and sweet agreement which you must have with them in heaven for ever.' How perfectly you will love each other in the love of God! How joyfully you will consent in the love and praises of your Creator and Redeemer? The more believingly you foresee that state, and the more you contemplate thereon, and the more your conversation is in heaven, the more will you love your fellow soldiers and travellers, with whom you must live in blessedness for ever.

Tit. 3. Motives or Meditative Helps to the Godly.

Mot. i. 'Consider what relation all the regenerate have to God.' They are not only his creatures, but his adopted children^d: and are they not honourable and amiable who are so near to God?

Mot. ii. 'Think of their near relation to Jesus Christ:' they are his members, and his brethren, and the purchase of his sufferings, and co-heirs of everlasting life^e.

Mot. iii. 'Think of the excellency of that Spirit and holy nature which is in them.' Regeneration hath made them partakers of the Divine nature, and hath indued them with the Spirit of Christ, and hath by the incorruptible seed made them new creatures, of a holy and heavenly mind and life; and hath renewed them after the image of God! And what besides God himself can be so amiable as his image?

Mot. iv. 'Think of the precious price which was paid for their redemption:' if you will estimate things by their price, (if the purchaser be wise,) how highly must you value them?

Mot. v. 'Remember how dearly they are beloved of God, their Creator and Redeemer.' Read and observe God's tender language towards them, and his tender dealings with them. He calleth them his children, his beloved, yea, dearly beloved, his jewels, the apple of his eye^f. Christ

^d Gal. iv. 6.

^e Rom. viii. 16, 17. Ephes. v. 26, 27.

^f Deut. xxxiii. 12. Psal. lx. 5. cxxvii. 2. Col. iii. 12. Jer. xii. 7. Mal. iii. 17. Zech. ii. 8. Deut. xxxii. 10.

callesth the least of them his brethren ^s. Judge of his love to them by his incarnation, life, and sufferings! Judge of it by that one heart-melting message after his resurrection, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God ^h." And should we not love them dearly who are so dearly beloved of God?

Mot. vi. 'They are our brethren begotten by the same Father and Spirit, of the same holy seed,' the Word of God; and have the same nature and disposition: and this unity of nature and nearness of relation, is such a suitableness as must needs cause love.

Mot. vii. 'They are our companions in labour and tribulation, in our duty and sufferings:' they are our fellow soldiers and travellers, with whom only we can have sweet and holy converse, and a heavenly conversation; when the carnal savour not the things of God.

Mot. viii. 'Consider how serviceable their graces render them, for the pleasing of God and the good of men.' They are the work of God, created to good works. They are fitted by grace to love and praise their Maker and Redeemer, and to obey his laws, and to honour him in their works, as shining lights in a dark generation. They are the blessings of the place where God hath planted them; they pray for sinners, and exhort them, and give them good examples, and call them from their sins, and lovingly draw them on to conversion and salvation. For their sakes God useth others the better where they live. Ten righteous persons might have saved Sodom. They are lovely therefore for the service which they do.

Mot. ix. 'All their graces will be shortly perfected, and all their infirmities done away.' They are already pardoned and justified by Christ; and every remaining spot and wrinkle will be shortly taken away ⁱ, and they shall be presented perfect unto God. And they that shall be so perfect then, are amiable now.

Mot. x. 'They shall see the glory of God, and live for ever in his presence:' they shall be employed in his perfect love and praise, and we shall be their companions therein: and those that must sing hallelujahs to God in perfect amity

^s Matt. xxv.

^h John xi. 17.

ⁱ Eph. v. 26, 27.

and concord, such an harmonious, blessed choir, should live in great endearedness in the way.

Tit. 4. Hindrances and Enemies of Christian Love.

Enemy I. The first enemy of Christian love is the inward unregeneracy and carnality of the mind: "for the carnal mind is enmity to God, and neither is nor can be subject to his law^k." And therefore it is at enmity with holiness, and with those that are seriously holy. The excellency of a Christian is seen only by faith, believing what God speaketh of them, and by spiritual discerning of their spiritual worth: but the "natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit, but they are as foolishness to him, because they must be spiritually discerned^l." There must be a suitability of nature before there can be true love: and he that will love them as holy, must first love holiness himself.

Enemy II. Another enemy to Christian love is selfishness or inordinate self-love: for this will make men love no one heartily, but as they serve, or love, or honour them, and according to the measures of their selfish interest: if a godly man will not flatter such persons, and serve their proud or covetous humours, they cannot love him. A selfish person maketh so great a matter of every infirmity that crosseth his interest, or every mistake which crosseth his opinion, or every little injury that is done him, that he crieth out presently, 'O what wicked and unconscionable people are these! What hypocrites are they! Is this their religion? Is this justice or charity?' All virtues and vices are estimated by them, according to their own ends and interests chiefly: they can think better of a common whoremonger, or swearer, or atheist, or infidel that loveth, and honoureth, and serveth them, than of the most holy and upright servant of God, who thinketh meanly or hardly of them, and standeth in their way, and seemeth to be (against their interest: it is no commendation to him in this man's account, that he loveth God, and all that are godly, if he seem to injure or cross a selfish man. A carnal self-lover can love none but himself and for himself; and maketh all faults which

^k Rom. vi. 7.

^l 1 Cor. ii. 14.

are against himself to be the characters of an odious person, rather than those which are committed against God.

Enemy III. Christian love is often diminished and marred by degenerating into a carnal sort of love, through the prevalence of some carnal vice. Thus they that loved a man for godliness, turn it into a selfish love, for some honour, or favour, or benefits to themselves. And young persons of different sexes, begin to love each other for piety, and by indiscreet, and unwary, and sinful familiarities, are drawn before they are aware, to carnal, fond, and sinful love, and these persons think that their holy love is stronger than before; when it is stifled, consumed, and languishing, as natural heat by a burning fever, and is overcome and turned into another thing.

Enemy IV. Passion and impatency are great enemies to Christian love. It is stirring up displeasing words and carriage, and then cannot bear them: it meeteth every where with matter of displeasure and offence, and is still casting water on this sacred fire, and feigning or finding faults in all.

Enemy V. Self-ignorance and partiality is a great enemy to love; when it maketh men overlook their own corruptions, and extenuate all those faults in themselves, which in others they take for heinous crimes; and so they want that compassion to others which would bear with infirmities, because they know not how bad they are themselves, and what need they have of the forbearance of others.

Enemy VI. Censoriousness is an enemy to brotherly love, (as is aforesaid;) a censorious person will tell you how dearly he loveth all the godly; but he can allow so few the acknowledgment of their godliness, that few are beholden to him for his love. His sinful humour blindeth his mind, that he cannot see another's godliness: he will love them for their sincerity when he can see it, but that will not be till he hath better eyes. Timon was a great lover of wisdom, but a-hater of all men, because he took no man to be wise.

Enemy VII. Faction and parties, or siding in religion, is one of the greatest enemies of Christian love. For this causeth censoriousness, and maketh men so overvalue the opinions which they have chosen, and the interest of their party, that they hardly see goodness in any that are not of

their mind, and quickly find faults (or devise them) in those that are against them.

Enemy VIII. Conversing with malicious, wicked, or censorious persons, is a great hindrance of the love of godly men; for he that heareth them daily slandered, and represented as brainsick, seditious, self-conceited, humorous, hypocritical people, will easily take them as odious, but hardly as amiable, unless he come nearer them, and know them better than by a liar's words.

Enemy IX. Too high expectations are great enemies to love. When men either look, that saints on earth should be like saints in heaven, who have no infirmity; or look for greater parts of nature or art, ingenuity or excellency of speech, than is in other persons, or when selfishness, and covetousness or pride doth make men look for great respect, and observance, and esteem, or gifts, or commodity from others; when sin and error raiseth these unreasonable expectations, and the imperfect graces of Christians do not answer them, such persons think contemptibly of good men, and call them hypocrites, and as bad as others, because they are not such as they expected.

Enemy X. The placing of men's goodness in lesser matters in which it doth not consist, is also a common enemy of love. When a man is himself so carnal as not to know what spiritual excellency is, but prefers some common gifts before it, such an one can never be satisfied in the ordinary sort of upright men. Thus some make a great matter of compliment, and courtship, and handsome deportment, when some holy persons are so taken up with the great matters of God and their salvation, and so retired from the company of complimenters, that they have neither time, nor mind, nor skill, nor will for such impertinencies. Some place so much in some particular opinions, or ceremonies, or forms of church-government and worship, that they can think well of no man that is against them: whereas good men on earth are so imperfect, that they are, and will be, of several opinions about such things: and so these persons oblige themselves by their own opinionativeness, to be always against one part of the sincerest servants of Christ. One man can think well of none that is not for his church-party, or way of government and worship; and another cau

think well of none that is not for his way. One can think well of none that prayeth not by his book, and doth not turn, and bend, and look just in the same manner, garb, and posture with himself; and that useth not all the ceremonies which he affecteth; or at least, if his weakness make him guilty of any unhandsome tone or gesture, or of any in-compt and unapt expressions, or needless repetitions, or displeasing stile; (all which we wish that all good men were free from). Another can think well of no man, that is for pomp and force in church-government, or for ceremonies, forms, and books in prayer, and for prescribed words in worshipping God. And thus placing religion where they should not, causeth too many to take up with a mistaken religion for themselves, and to dislike all that are not of their mind, and certainly destroyeth Christian love in one part of Christians towards the other.

Enemy xi. Pride also is a pestilent extinguisher of love. For a proud man is so much overwise in his own eyes, that he can without remorse stigmatize all that dissent from him with the names of ignorant and erroneous, schismatical, heretical, or what other name the humour or advantage of the times shall offer him: and he is so good in his own eyes, that he measureth men's goodness and godliness by their agreement with him, or compliance with his will. And he is so great in his own eyes, that he thinketh himself and his complices only fit to make laws for others, and to rule them in their opinions, and in the worship of God; and no man fit to say any thing publicly to God, but what he putteth into their mouths. He can think well of none that will not obey him: like the pope of Rome, that saith no man on earth hath church communion with him, that is not subject to him. A humble Christian thinketh that himself and the Gospel have great and unusual prosperity in the world, when they have but liberty; but proud men think that religion is ruined, and they are persecuted, when they have not their will upon their brethren, and when their brethren will be but brethren, and deny them obedience. Subjects they can think well of and command, but brethren they cannot love nor tolerate.

Enemy xii. Lastly, the counterfeits of Christian love deceive abundance, and keep them from that which is love

indeed. They might be brought to it, if they had not thought that they had it already, when they have it not.

Tit. 5. The Counterfeits of Christian Love.

Count. i. It is but counterfeit love to Christians, when they are loved only for being of the common religion of the country, and the same that you say you are of yourselves : as one Mahometan loveth another.

Count. ii. Or to love one only sect or party of Christians, which you espouse as the only party or church ; and not to love a Christian as a Christian, and so to love all true Christians whom you can discern to be such.

Count. iii. To love only those Christians who are your kindred or relations, or those that have been some way benefactors to you.

Count. iv. To love Christians only for their familiarity, or kind and loving conversation, and civil, obliging deportment among men.

Count. v. To love them only because they are learned, or have better wits and abilities of speech, in preaching, prayer, or conference than others.

Count. vi. To love them only upon the praise which common commendations may sometimes give them, and for being magnified by fame, and well spoken of by all men. Thus many wicked men do love the saints departed, when they hate those that are alive among them.

Count. vii. To love them only for being godly in themselves at a distance, so they will not trouble them with their godliness ; while they love not those that reprove them, and would draw them to be as godly.

Count. viii. To love them only for suffering with them in the same cause. Thus a profane person taken by the Turks, may love his fellow captives who refuse to renounce Christ. And thus a sufferer for an ill cause, or in an erroneous sect, may love those that suffer with him above others.

Count. ix. To love them only for holding strict and right opinions, while they will not endure to live accordingly : thus many love the light that cannot bear the heat and motion : many love an orthodox person, of a sound judgment,

that is against looseness and profaneness in his opinion, and do not like the folly of the licentious, who yet like licentious practice best.

Count. x. To love them for some parts of godliness only, while some other essential part will not be endured (of which before).

Count. xi. To love them in a kind fit only, as Saul with tears professed to do his son David; but to have no habitual constant love.

Count. xii. Lastly, to love godly men a little, and the world and fleshly interest more; to love them only so as will cost them nothing; to wish them fed, but not to feed them, and to wish them clothed, but not to clothe them, and to wish them out of prison, but not to dare to visit them for fear of suffering themselves. He that hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up the bowels of his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him: surely if the love of his brother were in him, the love of God had been in him. But he that hath no true love to his brother, that will only love him on terms that cost him little, and not give and suffer for his love. All these are deceiving counterfeits of love to the children of God.

Tit. 6. Cases and Directions for Intimate, Special Friends.

Quest. 1. 'Is it lawful to have an earnest desire to be loved by others? Especially by some one person above all other?'

Ans. There is a desire of others' love which is lawful, and there is a desire which is unlawful.

I. It is lawful, 1. When we desire it as it is their duty, which God himself obligeth them to perform, and so is part of their integrity, and is their own good, and pleaseth God; so parents must desire their children to love them, and one another, because it is their duty, and else they are unnatural and bad; and husband and wife may desire that each other discharge that duty of love which God requireth, and so may all others. 2. It is lawful also to desire for our own sakes to be loved by others; so be it, it be, (1.) With a calm and sober desire, which is not eager, peremptory, or importu-

nate, nor overvalueth the love of man. (2.) According to the proportion of our own worth ; not desiring to be thought greater, wiser, or better, than indeed we are, nor to be loved erroneously by an overvaluing love. 3. When we desire it for the benefits to which it tendeth, more than to be valued and loved ourselves ; as, (1.) That we may receive that edification and good from a friend, which love disposeth them to communicate. (2.) That we may do that good to our friends, which love disposeth them to receive. (3.) That we may honour and please God, who delighteth in the true love and concord of his children.

II. But the unlawful desire of others' love to us, is much more common, and is a sin of a deeper malignity than is commonly observed. This desire of love is sinful, when it is contrary to that before described ; as, 1. When we desire it over eagerly. 2. When we desire it selfishly and proudly, to be set up in the good opinion of others ; and not to make a benefit of it to ourselves or them ; but our own honour is more desired in it, than the honour of God. 3. When we desire to be thought greater, wiser, or better than we are, and to be loved with such an overvaluing love ; and have no desire that the bounds of truth and usefulness should restrain and limit that love to us which we affect. 4. When it is an erroneous, fanciful, carnal, or lustful esteem of some one person, which maketh us desire his love more than others. As because he is higher, richer, fairer, &c.

This eager desire to be overloved by others, hath in it all these aggravations. 1. It is the very sin of pride, which God hath declared so great a detestation of. For pride is an overvaluing ourselves, for greatness, wisdom, or goodness, and a desire to be so overvalued of others. And he that would be overloved, would be overvalued.

2. It is self-idolizing ; when we would be loved as better than we are, we rob God of that love which men should render to him, who can never be overloved, and we would fain seem a kind of petty deities to the world, and draw men's eyes and hearts unto ourselves. When we should be jealous of God's interest and honour, lest we or any creature should have his due, this proud disposition maketh people set up themselves in the estimation of others, and

they scarce care how good or wise they are esteemed; nor how much they are lifted up in the hearts of others.

3. It is an injurious insnaring the minds of others, and tempting them to erroneous opinions of us, and affections to us; which will be their sin, and may bring them into many inconveniencies. It is an ordinary thing to do greater hurt to a friend whom we value, by insnaring him in an inordinate love, than ever he did or can do to an enemy by hating him.

Quest. 11. 'Is it lawful, meet or desirable to entertain that extraordinary affection to any one, which is called special friendship, or to have an endeared, intimate friend, whom we love far above all others?'

Ans. Intimate, special friendship is a thing that hath been so much pleaded for by all sorts of men, and so much of the felicity of man's life hath been placed in it, that it beseemeth not me to speak against it. But yet I think it meet to tell you with what cautions and limits it must be received, and how far it is good, and how far sinful; (for there are perils here to be avoided, which neither Cicero, nor his Scipio and Lælius were acquainted with).

I. 1. It is lawful to choose some one well qualified person, who is fittest for that use, and to make him the chief companion of our lives; our chiefest counsellor and comforter, and to confine our intimacy and converse to him in a special manner above all others. 2. And it is lawful to love him not only according to his personal worth, but according to his special suitableness to us, and to desire his felicity accordingly, and to exercise our love to him more frequently and sensibly (because of his nearness and presence) than towards some better men that are further off.

The reasons of such an intimate friendship are these, I. No man is sufficient for himself, and therefore nature teacheth them to desire an helper. And there is so wonderful a diversity of temperaments and conditions, and so great a disparity and incongruity among good and wise men, towards each other, that one that is more suitable and congruous to us than all the rest, may on that account be much preferred.

2. It is not many that can be so near us as to be ordinary helpers to us: and a wiser man at a distance or out of

reach, may be less useful to us, than one of inferior worth at hand.

3. The very exercise of friendly love and kindness to another is pleasant: and so it is to have one to whom we may confidently reveal our secrets, to bear part of our burden, and to confirm us in our right apprehensions, and to cure us of wrong ones.

4. And it is no small benefit of a present bosom friend, to be instead of all the world to us; that is, of common, unprofitable company: for man is a sociable creature, and abhorreth utter solitude. And among the common sort, we shall meet with so much evil, and so little that is truly wise or good, as will tempt a man to think that he is best when he is least conversant with mankind. But a selected friend is to us for usefulness instead of many, without these common incumbrances and snares.

5. And it is a great part of the commodity of a faithful friend, to be assisted in the true knowledge of ourselves: to have one that will watch over us, and faithfully tell us of the sin, and danger, and duty, which we cannot easily see without help, and which other men will not faithfully acquaint us with.

II. But yet it is rare to choose and use this friendship rightly; and there are many evils here to be carefully avoided. The instances shall be mentioned anon in the Directions, and therefore now passed by.

Quest. III. 'Is it meet to have more such bosom friends than one?'

Answ. 1. Usually one only is meetest: 1. Because love diffused is often weak, and contracted is more strong. 2. Because secrets are seldom safe in the hands of many. 3. Because suitable persons are rare. 4. And though two or three may be suitable to you, yet perhaps they may be unsuitable among themselves. And the calamities of their own disparities will redound to you; and their fallings out may turn to the betraying of your secrets, or to some other greater wrong.

2. But yet sometimes two or three such friends may be better than one alone. 1. In case they be all near and of an approved suitableness and fidelity. 2. In case they be all suitable and endeared to one another. 3. If a man live

'per vices' in several places, and his friends cannot remove with him, he may have one friend in one place, and another in another, and so many will be but as one that is constant.

4. And in case that many may add to our help, our counsel and comfort, more than to our danger, hurt, or trouble. In all these cases many are better than one.

Quest. iv. 'Is it fit for him to take another bosom friend who hath a pious wife? And is any other so fit to be a friend, as he and she that are as one flesh?'

Answ. When a wife hath the understanding, and virtue and fidelity fit for this sort of friendship, then no one else is so fit, because of nearness and united interests. The same I say of a husband to a wife. But because that it seldom falls out that there is such a fitness for this office, especially in the wife, in that case it is lawful and meet to choose a friend that is fit indeed, and to commit those secrets to him which we commit not to a wife: for secrets are not to be committed to the untrusty, nor wise counsel to be expected from the unwise, how near soever. And the great writers about this special friendship, do think that no woman is fit for it, but men only; but that conclusion is too injurious to that sex.

Quest. v. 'Is it agreeable to the nature of true friendship to love our friend not only for himself, but for our own commodity? And whether must he or I be the chief end of my love and friendship?'

Answ. 1. Indeed in our love to God, he that is the object is also our chief and ultimate end, and we must love him more for himself than for ourselves. And yet here it is lawful subordinately to intend ourselves.

2. And our love to the commonwealth, should be greater than our love to ourselves, and therefore we may not love it chiefly for ourselves.

3. And if our bosom friend be notoriously better than we are, and more serviceable to God and to the common good, we should love him also above ourselves, and therefore not chiefly for ourselves.

4. But in case of an equality of goodness and usefulness, we are not bound to love our most intimate friend more than ourselves; and therefore may at least equally love him for ourselves, as for himself. And if we are really and no-

toriously better and more useful, we may love him chiefly for ourselves, and ourselves above him. But still we must love God and the public good, above both ourselves and him, and must love both ourselves and him in order to God, who is the beginning and end of all.

Quest. vi. 'Is it contrary to the nature of true friendship to keep any secret from such a bosom friend, or to retain any suspicion of him, or to suppose that he may possibly prove unfaithful to us and forsake us?'

Ans. Cicero and the old doctors say of friendship, that all this is inconsistent with true friendship: and it is true that it is contrary to perfect friendship: but it is as true, that perfect friendship cannot be, and must not be among imperfect men: and that the nature of mankind is so much depraved, that the best are unmeet for perfect friendship: and certainly few men, if any in the world, are fit for every secret of our hearts. Besides that we are so bad, that if all our secret thoughts were known to one another, it might do much to abate our friendship and love to each other. And it is certain that man is so corrupt a creature, and good men so imperfectly cured of their corruption, that there is selfishness, uncertainty and mutability in the best. And therefore it is not a duty to judge falsely of men, but contrarily to judge of them as they are. And therefore to suppose that it is possible the closest friend may reveal our secrets, one time or other, and that the most stedfast friend may possibly become our enemy. To think that possible, which is possible (and more), is injurious to none.

Quest. vii. 'Is it lawful to change a bosom friend, and to prefer a new one whom we perceive to be more worthy before an old one?'

Ans. An old friend 'cæteris paribus' is to be preferred before a new one, and is not to be cast off without desert and necessity. But for all that, 1. If an old friend prove false, or notably unfit. 2. Or if we meet with another that is far more able, fit and worthy, no doubt but we may prefer the latter; and may value, love, and use men as they are for goodness, worth and usefulness.

Quest. viii. 'What love is due to a minister that hath been the means of our conversion? And can such an one be loved too much?'

Answer. 1. There is a special love due to such an one, as the hand by which God did reach out to us his invaluable mercies : and ingratitude, and sectarian, proud contempt of such as have been our fathers in Christ, is no small sin.

2. But yet another that never did us good, who is much wiser, and better, and more serviceable to the church, must be better loved, than he by whom we were converted. Because we are to love men more for the sake of God and his image and service, than for ourselves.

3. And it is a very common thing, for passionate women and young people, when they are newly converted, to think that they can never too much value, and honour, and love those that converted them ; and to think that all such love is holy and from God ; whereas the same love may be of God as to the principle, motives and ends, in the main, and yet may have great mixtures of passionate weakness, and sinful excess, which may tend to their great affliction in the end. Some that have been converted by the writings of a minister a hundred or a thousand miles off, must needs go see the author : some must needs remove from their lawful dwellings and callings, to live under the ministry of such an one ; yea, if it may be, in the house with him : some have affections so violent, as proveth a torment to them when they cannot live with those whom they so affect : some by that affection are ready to follow those that they so value, into any error. And all this is a sinful love by this mixture of passionate weakness, though pious in the main.

Quest. ix, ' Why should we restrain our love to a bosom friend (contrary to Cicero's doctrine) ? And what sin or danger is in loving him too much ?'

Answer. All these following : 1. It is an error of judgment and of will, to suppose any one better than he is, (yea, perhaps than any creature on earth is,) and so to love him.

2. It is an irrational act, and therefore not fit for a rational creature, to love any one farther than reason will allow us, and beyond the true causes of regular love.

3. It is usually a fruit of sinful selfishness : for this excess of love doth come from a selfish cause, either some strong conceit that the person greatly loveth us, or for some great kindness which he hath shewed us, or for some need we have of him, and fitness appearing in him to be useful to us,

&c. Otherwise it would be purely for amiable worth, and then it would be proportioned to the nature and measure of that worth.

4. It very often taketh up men's minds, so as to hinder their love to God, and their desires and delights in holy things: while satan (perhaps upon religious pretences) turneth our affections too violently to some person, it diverteth them from higher and better things: for the weak mind of man can hardly think earnestly of one thing, without being alienated in his thoughts from others; nor can hardly love two things or persons fervently at once, that stand not in pure subordination one to the other: and we seldom love any fervently in a pure subordination to God; for then we should love God still more fervently.

5. It oft maketh men ill members of the church and commonwealth. For it contracteth that love to our over-valued person, which should be diffused abroad among many; and the common good which should be loved above any single person is by this means neglected (as God himself): which maketh wives, and children, and bosom friends become those gulfs that swallow up the estates of most rich men; so that they do little good with them to the public state, which should be preferred.

6. Overmuch friendship engageth us in more duty than we are well able to perform, without neglecting our duty to God, the commonwealth and our own souls. There is some special duty followeth all special acquaintance; but a bosom friend will expect a great deal. You must allow him much of your time in conference, upon all occasions; and he looketh that you should be many ways friendly and useful to him, as he is or would be to you. When, alas, frail man can do but little: our time is short; our strength is small; our estates and faculties are narrow and low. And that time which you must spend with your bosom friend, where friendship is not moderated and wisely managed, is perhaps taken from God and the public good, to which you first owed it. Especially if you are magistrates, ministers, physicians, schoolmasters, or such other as are of public usefulness. Indeed if you have a sober, prudent friend, that will look but for your vacant hours, and rather help you in

your public service, you are happy in such a friend. But that is not the excess of love that I am reprehending.

7. This inordinate friendship prepareth for disappointments, yea, and for excess of sorrows. Usually experience will tell you that your best friends are but uncertain, and imperfect men, and will not answer your expectation: and perhaps some of them may so grossly fail you, as to set light by you, and prove your adversaries. I have seen the bonds of extraordinary dearness many ways dissolved: one hath been overcome by the flesh, and turned drunkard and sensual, and so proved unfit for intimate friendship (who yet sometime seemed of extraordinary uprightness and zeal). Another hath taken up some singular conceits in religion, and joined to some sect where his bosom friend could not follow him. And so it hath seemed his duty to look with strangeness, contempt or pity on his ancient friend, as one that is dark and low, if not supposed an adversary to the truth, because he espouseth not all his misconceits. Another is suddenly lifted up with some preferment, dignity and success, and so is taken with higher things and higher converse, and thinks it is very fair, to give an embrace to his ancient friend, for what he once was to him, instead of continuing such endearedness. Another hath changed his place and company, and so by degrees grown very indifferent to his ancient friend, when he is out of sight, and converse ceaseth. Another hath himself chosen his friend amiss, in his unexperienced youth, or in a penury of wise and good men, supposing him much better than he was: and afterwards hath had experience of many persons of far greater wisdom, piety and fidelity, whom therefore reason commanded him to prefer. All these are ordinary dissolvers of these bonds of intimate and special friendship.

And if your love continue as hot as ever, its excess is like to be your excessive sorrow. For, 1. You will be the more grieved at every suffering of your friend, as sicknesses, losses, crosses, &c. whereof so many attend mankind, as is like to make your burden great. 2. Upon every removal, his absence will be the more troublesome to you. 3. All incongruities and fallings out will be the more painful to you, especially his jealousies, discontents and passions, which you cannot command. 4. His death, if he die before

you, will be the more grievous, and your own the more unwelcome, because you must part with him. These and abundance of sore afflictions are the ordinary fruits of too strong affections: and it is no rare thing for the best of God's servants to profess, that their sufferings from their friends who have overloved them, have been ten times greater than from all the enemies that ever they had in the world.

And to those that are wavering about this case, 'Whether only a common friendship with all men according to their various worth, or a bosom intimacy with some one man, be more desirable,' I shall premise a free confession of my own case, whatever censures for it I incur. When I was first awakened to the regard of things spiritual and eternal, I was exceedingly inclined to a vehement love to those that I thought the most serious saints, and especially to that intimacy with some one, which is called friendship. By which I found extraordinary benefit, and it became a special mercy to my soul. But it was by more than one or two of the aforementioned ways, that the strict bond of extraordinary friendship hath been relaxed, and my own excessive esteem of my most intimate friends confuted. And since then I have learned, to love all men according to their real worth, and to let out my love more extensively and without respect of persons, acknowledging all that is good in all; but with a double love and honour to the excellently wise and good; and to value men more for their public usefulness, than for their private suitableness to me; and yet to value the ordinary converse of one or a few suitable friends, before a more public and tumultuary life, except when God is publicly worshipped, or when public service inviteth me to deny the quiet of a private life: and though I more difference between man and man than ever, I do it not upon so slight and insufficient grounds as in the time of my unexperienced credulity: nor do I expect to find any without the defects, and blots, and failings of infirm, imperfect, mutable man.

Quest. x. 'What qualifications should direct us in the choice of a special bosom friend?'

Answer. 1. He must be one that is sincere and single-hearted, and not given to affectation, or any thing that is much forced in his deportment; plain, and open-hearted to

you, and not addicted to a hiding, fraudulent, or reserved carriage.

2. He must be one that is of a suitable temper and disposition ; I mean not guilty of all your own infirmities, but not guilty of a crossness or contrariety of disposition. As if one be in love with plainness of apparel, and frugality in diet and course of life, and the other be guilty of curiosity, and ostentation, and prodigality ; if one be for few words, and the other for many ; if one be for labour, and the other for idleness, and frequent interruptions ; if one be for serving the humours of men, and the other for a contempt of human censure, in the way of certain duty ; these disparities make them unfit for this sort of bosom friendship.

3. He must not be a slave to any vice : for that which maketh him false to God, and to betray his own soul, may make him false to man, and to betray his friend.

4. He must not be a selfish person ; that is, corruptly and partially for himself, and for his own carnal ends and interest. For such an one hath no true love to others, but when you seem cross to his own interest, his pleasure, wealth, or honour he will forsake you ; for so he doth by God himself.

5. He must be humble, and not notably proud. For pride will make him quarrelsome, disdainful, impatient, and quite unsuitable to a humble person.

6. He must be one that is thoroughly and resolvedly godly : for you will hardly well centre any where but in God ; nor will he be useful to all the ends of friendship, if he be not one that loveth God, and holy things, and is of a pious conversation : nor can you expect that he that is false to God, and will sell his part in him for the pleasure or gain of sin, should long prove truly faithful unto you.

7. He must be one that is judicious in religion, that is, not of an erroneous, heretical wit ; nor ignorant of those great and excellent truths, which you should oft confer about ; but rather one that excelleth you in solid understanding, and true judgment, and a discerning head, that can teach you somewhat which you know not ; and is not addicted to corrupt you with false opinions of his own.

8. He must be one that is not schismatical and embodied in any dividing sect ; for else he will be no longer true ;

to you, than the interest of his party will allow him; and if you will not follow him in his conceits and singularities, he will withdraw his love, and despise you: and if he do not, yet he may endanger your stedfastness, by the temptation of his love.

9. He must be one that hath no other very intimate friend, unless his friend be also as intimate with you as with him; because else he will be no further secret and trusty to you, than the interest or will of his other friend will allow him.

10. He must be one that is prudent in the management of business, and especially those which your converse is concerned in; else his indiscretion in words or practice, will not suffer your friendship to be long entire.

11. He must be one that is not addicted to loquacity, but can keep your secrets; otherwise he will be so untrusty as to be incapable of doing the true office of a friend.

12. He must have a zeal and activity in religion and in all well-doing; otherwise he will be unfit to warm your affections, and to provoke you to love and good works, and to do the principal works of friendship, but will rather cool and hinder you in your way.

13. He must be one that is not addicted to levity, inconstancy and change; or else you can expect no stability in his friendship.

14. He must not much differ from you in riches, or in poverty, or in quality in the world. For if he be much richer, he will be carried away with higher company and converse than yours, and will think you fitter to be his servant than his friend. And if he be much poorer than you, he will be apt to value your friendship for his own commodity, and you will be still in doubt, whether he be sincere.

15. He must be one that is like to live with you or near you, that you may have the frequent benefit of his converse, counsel, example, and other acts of friendship.

16. He must be one that is not very covetous, or a lover of riches or preferment; for such an one will no longer be true to you, than his mammon will allow him.

17. He must be one that is not peevish, passionate and impatient; but that can both bear with your infirmities, and

also bear much from others for your sake, in the exercise of his friendship.

18. He must be one that hath so good an esteem of your person, and so true and strong a love to you, as will suffice to move him, and hold him to all this.

19. He must be yet of a public spirit, and a lover of good works, that he may put you on to well-doing, and not countenance you in an idle self-pleasing and unprofitable life. And he ought to be one that is skilful in the business of your calling, that he may be fit to censure your work, and amend it, and direct you in it, and confer about it; and it is best for you if he be one that excelleth you herein, that he may add something to you (but then you will not be such to him, and so the friendship will be unequal).

20. Lastly, there must be some suitableness in age and sex. The young want experience to make them meet for the bosom friendship of the aged (though yet they may take delight in instructing them, and doing them good). And the young are hardly reconcilable to all the gravity of the aged. And it must not be a person of a different sex, unless in case of marriage. Not but that they may be helpful to each other as Christians, and in a state of distant friendship; but this bosom intimacy, they are utterly unfit for, because of unsuitableness, temptation and scandal.

Directions for the Right Use of Special Bosom Friendship.

Direct. 1. 'Engage not yourself to any one, as a bosom friend, without great evidence and proof of his fitness in all the foregoing qualifications.' By which you may see that this is not an ordinary way of duty or benefit, but a very unusual case. For it is a hard thing to meet with one among many thousands, that hath all these qualifications: and when that is done, if you have not all the same qualifications to him, you will be unmeet for his friendship, whatever he be for yours. And where in an age will there be two that will be suited in all those respects? Therefore our ordinary way of duty is, to love all according to their various worth, and to make the best use we oan of every one's grace and gifts, and of those most that are nearest us: but without the partiality of such extraordinary affection to any

one above the rest. For young persons usually make their choice rashly, of one that afterwards proveth utterly unmeet for the office of such a friend, or at least, no better than many other persons; nay, ten to one, but after-experience will acquaint them with many that are much wiser, and better, and fitter for their love. And hasty affections, are guilty of blind partiality, and run men into sin and sorrow, and often end in unpleasant ruptures. Therefore be not too forward in this friendship.

Direct. 11. 'When you do choose a friend, though he must be one that you have no cause to be suspicious of, yet reckon that it is possible that he may be estranged from you, yea, and turn your enemy.' Causeless jealousies are contrary to friendship on your part; and if there be cause, it is inconsistent with friendship on his part. But yet no friendship should make you blind, and not to know that man is a corrupt and mutable creature; especially in such an age as this, wherein we have seen, how personal changes, state-changes, and changes in religion, have alienated many seeming friends. Therefore love them, and use them, and trust them, but as men, that may possibly fail of your expectations, and open all your secrets, and betray you, yea, and turn your enemies. Suspect it not, but judge it possible.

Direct. 111. 'Be open with your approved friend, and commit all your secrets to him, still excepting those, the knowledge of which may be hurtful to himself, or the revealing of them hereafter may be intolerably injurious to yourself, to the honour of religion, to the public good, or to any other.' If you be needlessly close, you are neither friendly, nor can you improve your friend enough to your own advantage. But yet if you open all without exception, you may many ways be injurious to your friend and to yourself; and the day may come which you did not look for, in which his weakness, passion, interest, or alienation, may trouble you by making all public to the world.

Direct. 1v. 'Use as little affectation or ceremony with your friend as may be; but let all your converse with him be with openness of heart, that he may see that you both trust him, and deal with him in plain sincerity.' If dissimulation and forced affectation be but once discovered, it

tendeth to breed a constant diffidence and suspicion. And if it be an infirmity of your own which you think needeth such a cover, the cloak will be of worse effect, than the knowledge of your infirmity.

Direct. v. 'Be ever faithful to your friend, for the cure of all his faults; and never turn friendship into flattery: yet still let all be done in love, though in a friendly freedom, and closeness of admonition.' It is not the least benefit of intimate friendship, that what an enemy speaketh behind our backs, a friend will open plainly to our faces. To watch over one another daily, and be as a glass to shew our faces or faults to one another is the very great benefit of true friendship. "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up!" It is a flatterer and not a friend, that will please you by concealing or extenuating your sin.

Direct. vi. 'Abhor selfishness as most contrary to real friendship.' Let your friend be as yourself, and his interest as your own. If we must love our neighbour as ourselves, much more our dearest bosom friends.

Direct. vii. 'Understand what is most excellent and useful in your friend, and that improve.' Much good is lost by a dead-hearted companion, that will neither broach the vessel and draw out that which is ready for their use; nor yet feed any good discourse, by due questions or answers, but stifle all by barren silence. And a dull, silent hearer, will weary and silence the speaker at the last.

Direct. viii. 'Resolve to bear with each other's infirmities: be not too high in your expectations from each other: look not for exactness and innocence, but for human infirmities, that when they fall out, you may not find yourselves disappointed.' Patience is necessary in all human converse.

Direct. ix. 'Yet do not suffer friendship to blind you, to own or extenuate the faults of your dearest friend.' For that will be sinful partiality, and will be greatly injurious to God, and treachery against the soul and safety of your friend.

¹ Eccles. iv. 9—11.

Direct. x. 'And watch lest the love, estimation or reverence of your friend, should draw you to entertain his errors, or to imitate him in any sinful way.' It is no part of true friendship to prefer men before the truth of Christ, nor to take any heretical, dividing, or sensual infection from our friend, and so to die and perish with him; nor is it friendly to desire it.

Direct. xi. 'Never speak against your friend to a third person; nor open his dishonourable weakness to another.' As no man can serve two masters, so no man can well please two contrary friends: and if you whisper to one the failings of another, it tendeth directly to the dissolution of your friendship.

Direct. xii. 'Think not that love will warrant your partial, erroneous estimation of your friend.' You may judge him fittest for your intimacy: but you must not judge him better than all other men, unless you have special evidence of it, as the reason of such a judgment.

Direct. xiii. 'Let not the love of your friend draw you to love all, or any others the less, and below their worth.' Let not friendship make you narrow-hearted, and confine your charity to one: but give all their due, in your valuation and your conversation, and exercise as large a charity and benignity as possibly you can: especially to societies, churches and commonwealth, and to all the world. It is a sinful friendship, which robbeth others of your charity; especially those to whom much more is due than to your friend.

Direct. xiv. 'Exercise your friendship in holiness and well-doing:' kindle in each other the love of God and goodness, and provoke each other to a heavenly conversation. The more of God and heaven is in your friendship, the more holy, safe, and sweet, and durable it will prove. It will not wither, when an everlasting subject is the fuel that maintaineth it. If it will not help you the better to holiness and to heaven, it is worth nothing. "If two lie together, then they have heat; but how can one be warm alone^m." See that your friendship degenerate not into common carnal love, and evaporate not in a barren converse, instead of pray-

^m Eccles. iv. 11.

er and heavenly discourse, and faithful watchfulness and reproof.

Direct. xv. 'Prepare each other for suffering and death, and dwell together in the house of mourning, where you may remember your nearer everlasting friendship: and not only in the house of mirth, as if it were your work, to make each other forget your latter end.'

CHAPTER XXIX.

Cases and Directions for Loving and Doing Good to Enemies.

MOST which belongeth to this subject is said before, Chap. ix. about Forgiving Enemies, and therefore thither I refer the reader.

Tit. 1. Cases about Loving and Doing Good to Enemies.

Quest. 1. 'Whom must I account an enemy, and love under that name?'

Ans. 1. Not every one that is angry with you, or that giveth you foul words, or that undervalueth you, or that speaketh against you, or that doth you wrong: but he that hateth you, and seeketh or desireth your destruction or your hurt as such designedly. 2. And no man must be taken for such, that doth not manifest it, or by whom you cannot prove it. 3. But if you have reasonable suspicion you may carry yourself the more warily for your own preservation, lest he should prove your enemy, and his designs should take you unprovided.

Quest. 11. 'With what kind of love must an enemy be loved, and on what accounts?'

Ans. Primarily with a love of complacence, for all the good which is in him, natural and moral: he must be loved as a man for the goodness of his nature; and his understanding and virtues must be acknowledged as freely, and loved as fully, as if he were no enemy of ours: enmity must not blind and pervert our judgment of him, and hinder us from discerning all that is amiable in him; nor must it cor-