

COMPASSIONATE COUNSEL

TO ALL

Y O U N G M E N :

ESPECIALLY,

- I. LONDON-APPRENTICES ;
- II. STUDENTS OF DIVINITY, PHYSIC AND LAW ;
- III. THE SONS OF MAGISTRATES AND RICH MEN.



COMPASSIONATE COUNSEL

TO ALL

YOUNG MEN.

CHAP. I.

Introduction.

THERE IS NO man that ever understood the interest of mankind, of families, cities, kingdoms, churches, and of Jesus Christ the King and Saviour, but he must needs know that the right instruction, education, and sanctification of youth, is of unspeakable consequence to them all. In the place where God most blessed my labours, (at Kidderminster, in Worcestershire,) my first and greatest success was upon the youth. And (which was a marvellous way of Divine mercy,) when God had touched the hearts of young men and girls with a love of goodness, and delightful obedience to the truth, the parents and grandfathers who had grown old in an ignorant worldly state, did many of them fall into a liking and love of piety, induced by the love of their children, whom they perceived to be made by it much wiser and better, and more dutiful to them. And God, by his unexpected disposing providence, having now twenty years placed me in and near London, where, in a variety of places and conditions, (sometimes under restraint by men, and sometimes at more liberty,) I have preached but as to strangers, in other men's pulpits as I could, and not to any special flock of mine, I have been less capable of judging of my success. But by much experience I have been made more sensible of the necessity of warning and instructing youth than I was before. The sad reports of fame have taught it to me : the sad complaints of mournful parents have taught it me ; the sad observation of the wilful impenitence of some

of my acquaintances tells it me: the many score (if not hundred) bills that have been publicly put up to me to pray for wicked and obstinate children, have told it me; and by the grace of God, the penitent confessions, lamentations, and restitutions of many converts have more particularly acquainted me with their case. Which moved me on my Thursday's lecture awhile to design, the first of every month, to speak to youth and those that educate them.

And though I have already loaded the world with books, finding that God seems to be about ending my life and labours, I am urged in my mind by the greatness of the case to add yet this Epistle to the younger sort. Which shall contain I. The important case of youth. II. How it stands with them in matter of fact. III. What are the causes of their sin and dangerous degeneracy. IV. How great a blessing wise and godly youth are to themselves and others. V. How great a plague and calamity the ungodly are. VI. What great reason ungodly, sensual youth have, presently to repent and turn to God. VII. Directions to them how to do it. VIII. And some directions to parents about their education. And all must be with the brevity of an epistle.

CHAP. II.

To begin betimes to live to God, is of unspeakable importance to yourselves.

FOR, I. You were betimes solemnly dedicated to God, as your God, your Father, your Saviour, and your Sanctifier, by your baptismal vow. And as that was a great mercy, it obliged you to great duty: you were capable in infancy of that holy dedication and relation; and your parents were presently obliged, as to dedicate you to God, so to educate you for God: and as soon as you are capable of performance, the vow is upon yourselves to do it. If your childhood is not presently obliged to holiness, according to your natural capacity, no doubt your vow and baptism should have been also delayed. Little think many that talk against Anabaptists, how they condemn themselves by the sacred name of Christians, while they by perfidious sacrilege deny God that which they vowed to him.

2. All your time and life is given you by God, for one end and use; and all is little enough; and will you alienate the very beginning, and be rebels so soon?

3. The youngest have not assurance of life for a day, or an hour. Thousands go out of the world in youth. Alas, the flesh of young men is corruptible, liable to hundreds of diseases, as well as that of old men. How quickly may a vein break, and cold seize on your head and lungs, and turn to an incurable consumption! How quickly may a fever, a pleurisy, an imposthume, or one of a thousand accidents, turn your bodies to corruption! And O that I knew how to make you sensible how dreadful a thing it is to die in an unholy state, and in the guilt of any unpardoned sin! An unsanctified soul, that hath lived here but to the flesh and the world, will be but fuel for the fire of hell, and the wrathful justice of the most holy God. And though in the course of undisturbed nature, young men may live longer than the old, yet nature hath so many disturbances and crosses, that our lives are still like a candle in a broken lantern, which a blast of wind may soon blow out. To tell you that you are not certain in an unsanctified state to be one day or hour more out of hell, will, I expect, not move you so much as the weight of the case deserveth, because mere *possibility* of the greatest hurt doth not affect men when they think there is no *probability* of it. You have long been well, and long you hope to be so: but did you think how many hundred veins, arteries and nerves, must be kept constantly in order, and all the blood and humours in due temper; and how the stopping of one vein, or distemper of the blood, may quickly end you; it would rather teach you to admire the merciful providence of God, that such a body should be kept alive one year.

4. But were you sure to live to maturity of age, alas, how quickly will it come! What haste makes time! How fast do days and years roll on. Methinks it is but as a few days, since I was playing with my schoolfellows, who am now in the sixty-sixth year of my age: had I no service done for God that I could now look back upon, I should seem as if I had not lived. A thousand years, and one hour, are all one (that is, nothing) when they are past. And every year, day and hour of your lives, hath its proper work: And how will you answer for it? Every day offereth you

more and more mercies ; and will you despise and lose them ? If you were heirs to land, or had an annuity, which amounted but to a hundred pounds a year, and you were every day to receive a proportionable part of it, or lose it ; would you lose it through neglect, and say, ‘ I will begin to receive it when I am old ? ’ Poor labourers will work hard all the day, that at night they may have their wages : and will you contemptuously lose your every-day mercies, your communion with God, your daily blessings and his grace, which you should daily beg and may daily receive ?

5. Either you will repent and live to God, or not ; if not you are undone for ever. O how much less miserable is a dog, or a toad, than such a sinner ! But if God will shew you so great mercy, O how will it grieve you to think of the precious time of youth which you madly cast away in sin ! Then you will think, ‘ O what knowledge, what holiness might I then have gotten ! What a comfortable life might I have lived ! O what days and years of mercy did I cast away for nothing ! ’ Yea, when God hath given you the pardon of your sin, the taste of his love, and the hopes of heaven, it will wound your hearts to think that you should so long, so unthankfully, so heinously offend so good a God, neglect so merciful a Saviour, and trample upon Infinite Divine love, for the love of so base a fleshly pleasure,—that ever you should be so bad, as to find more pleasure in sinning than in living unto God.

6. And be it known to you, if God in mercy convert and save you, yet the bitter fruit of your youthful folly may follow you in this world to the grave. God may forgive the pains of hell to a penitent sinner, and not forgive the temporal chastisement to his flesh. If you waste your estate in youth, you may be poor at age. If you marry a wicked wife, you may feel it till death, notwithstanding your repentance. If by drinking, gluttony, idleness, or filthy lust, you contract any incurable diseases in youth, repentance may not cure them till death. All this might have been easily prevented, if you had but had foreseeing wisdom. Beggary, prisons, shame, consumptions, dropsies, stone, gout, &c., which make the lives of many miserable, are usually caused by youthful sins.

7. If ever you think to be men of any great wisdom, and usefulness in the world to yourselves or others, your prepa-

rations must be made in youth. Great wisdom is not gotten in a little time. Who ever was an able lawyer, physician, or philosopher, without long and hard study? If you will not learn in the grammar-schools in your childhood, you will be unfit for the University at riper age; and if, when you should be doctors, you are to learn to spell and read, your shame will tell you that you should have sooner begun. O that you well knew how much of the safety, fruitfulness and comfort of all your after-life, dependeth on the preparations of your youth, on the wisdom and the grace which you should then obtain! as men's after-trading doth depend on their apprenticeship.

8. O what a dreadful danger is it, lest your youthful sin become remediless, and custom harden you, and deceivers blind you, and God forsake you for your wilful resistance of his grace! God may convert old hardened sinners: but how ordinarily do we find, that age doth but answer the preparations of youth, and the vessel ever after savoureth of the liquor which first thoroughly tainted it! And men are but such as they learned to be and to do at first. If you will be perfidious breakers of your baptismal vows, it is just with God to leave you to yourselves, to a deluded understanding, to think evil good, and good evil, to a seared conscience, and a hardened heart, and, as "past feeling, to work uncleanness with greediness," (Ephes. iv. 19,) and to fight against grace and your own salvation, till death and hell convince you of your madness. O sport not with the justice of a sin-hating God! Play not with sin, and with the unquenchable fire! To forsake God, is the way to be forsaken of him. And what is a forsaken soul, but a miserable slave of Satan!

9. Yea, did you but know of what moment it is to prevent all the heinous sins that else you will commit, you would make haste to repent, though you were sure to be forgiven. Forgiveness maketh not sin to be no sin, or to be no evil, no shame or grief to the soul that hath committed it. You will cry out, 'O that I had never known it!' To look back on such an ill-spent life, will be no pleasant thought. Repentance, though a healing work, is bitter; yea, oftentimes exceedingly bitter: make not work for it, if you love your peace.

10. Is it a small thing to you, that you are all this while doing hurt to others, by drawing them to sin, and plunging

them into that dangerous guilt which can no way be pardoned but by the blood of Christ, upon true conversion? When they have joined with you in lust and fleshly pleasure, it is not in your power to turn them, that they may join with you in sound repentance; and if not, they must lie in hell for ever. Can you, then, make a sport of your own and other men's damnation?

But this leadeth me to the second point. I have shewed you of what vast concernment it is TO YOURSELVES to begin betimes a holy life. I will next shew you of what concernment it is TO OTHERS.

CHAP. III.

Of what public concernment the quality of youth is.

1. THE welfare of the world is of far greater worth than that of any single person; and he hath put off humanity who doth not more earnestly desire it. If this world consisted but of one generation, then to make that generation wise and good would be enough to make it a happy world. But it is not so. In heaven, and in the future glorious kingdom, "there is neither marrying, nor giving in marriage, but they are as the angels," in a fixed everlasting state, and one continued generation maketh up the New Jerusalem: being once holy and happy, they are so for ever. But here it is not so: one generation cometh, and another goeth: if the father be as wise as Solomon, the son may be as foolish as Rehoboam. O what a great work it is to make a man truly wise and good! How many years' study doth it usually require! What wisdom and diligence in teachers! What teachableness and diligence in learners; and especially the grace of God! And when all is done, the man quickly dieth, and obtaineth his ends in another world. But his children are born as ignorant, and perhaps as bad, as he was born: he can neither leave them his knowledge, nor his grace. They must have all the same teaching, and labour, and blessing as he had, to bring them to the same attainments. The mercy and covenant of God taketh them into his church, where they have great advantages and helps, and promiseth them more for their relation to a faithful parent, if he or they do make no

forfeiture of it. But as their nature is the same with others, so their actual wisdom must come by God's blessing on the use of the same means, which are necessary to the children of the worst men. A Christian's child is born with no more knowledge than a heathen's, and must have as much labour and study to make him wise.

2. It is certain then, that the welfare of this world lieth on a good succession of the several generations; and that all the endeavours of one generation, with God's greatest blessing on them, will not serve for the ages following. All must begin anew, and be done over again, or all will be as though undone to the next age. And it is not the least blessing on the faithful, that their faith and godliness dispose them to have a care for posterity, and to devote their children wholly to God, as well as themselves, and to educate them in his fear. If nature had not taught birds and beasts to feed their young, as well as to generate them, their kind would be soon extinct. O what a blessed world were it, if the blessings of men famous for wisdom and godliness were entailed on all that should spring from them! and if this were the common case!

3. But the doleful miseries of the world have come from the degenerating of good men's posterity. Adam hath his Cain, and Noah his Ham, and David his Absalom; Solomon, Hezekiah, and Josiah, left not their like behind them. The present state of the Eastern churches, is a dreadful instance. What places on earth were more honourable for faith and piety, than Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Constantinople, Ephesus, Philadelphia, and the rest of those great and noble countries? and these also strengthened with the most powerful Christian empire that ever was on earth. And now they are places of barbarism, tyranny, and foolish Mahometanism, where the name of Christ is made a scorn, and the few that keep up that sacred profession, are, by tyranny, kept in so great ignorance, that (alas!) the vices of most of them dishonour their profession, as much as the persecutions of their enemies do. O what a doleful difference is there between that great part of the world now, and what it was fourteen hundred or one thousand years ago!

And alas! were it not for the name of a pompous Christian church, how plain an instance would Rome be of the

same degeneracy! and some countries that received the blessing of Reformation, have revolted into the darkness of popery. What a change was in England by Queen Mary's reign! And how many particular cities and towns are grown ignorant and malignant, which in former times were famous for religion! The Lord grant it may never be the case of London! Yea, how many persons of honourable and great families have so far degenerated from the famous wisdom and piety of their grandfathers, yea, and fathers, as to hate that which their parents loved, and persecute those their ancestors honoured! The names of many great men stand honoured in history for their holiness to God, and for their service to their several countries, whose posterity are the men from whom we are in danger. Alas! in how few such houses hath piety kept any long succession! Yea, some take their fathers' virtues to be so much their dishonour, that they turn malignant persecutors, to free themselves from the supposed reproach of their relations. Yea, some preachers of the Gospel, devoted to God by pious parents, become revilers of their own parents, and despisers of their piety, as the effect of factious ignorance.

4. And on the other side, when piety hath successively, as a river, kept its course, what a blessing hath it proved! (But how rare is that!) And when children have proved better than their parents, it hath been the beginning of welfare to the places where they lived. How marvellously did the Reformation prevail in Germany in Luther's time, when God brought out of Popish monasteries many excellent instruments of his service; and princes became wise and pious, whose parents had been blind or impious! Godliness or wickedness, welfare or calamity, follow the changes and quality of posterity.

Men live so short a time, that the work of educating youth aright is one half of the great business of man's life. He that hath a plantation of oaks, may work at other employment for twenty generations: but he that planteth gardens and orchards with plants that live but a little time, must be still planting, watering, and defending them.

5. Among the ancient sages of the world, the Greeks and Romans, and much more among the Israelites, the care of posterity and of the public welfare was the great thing which

differenced the virtuous and laudable, from those of a base, selfish, and sensual disposition. He was the bravest citizen of Rome that did most love, and best serve his country. And he was the saint among the Jews, who most loved Sion, and the security and succession of its holy and peaceable posterity. And the Christian faith, hope, and interest, do lead us in this respect to a much higher pitch, and to a greater zeal for public good, in following HIM that whipped out profaners from the temple,—even a zeal of God’s house which eateth us up. It teacheth us, by the cross, most effectually to deny ourselves, and to think nothing too dear to part with to edify the church of God; nor any labour or suffering too great for the common good. It teacheth us to pray for the ‘hallowing of God’s name, the coming of his kingdom, and the doing of his will on earth, as it is done in heaven,’ before we pray for our daily bread, or any other personal interest of our own. Therefore the families of Christians should be as so many schools or churches, to train up a succession of persons meet for the great communicative works to which God calleth all believers, in their several measures: it is eminently teachers, but it is also all others in their several ranks, who must be “the salt of the earth, and the lights of the world.” Indeed the Spirit of Holiness is so eminently the Spirit of love to God and man, that it inclineth every sanctified person to a communicative zeal, to make others wise and good and happy.

6. God in great mercy hath planted, yet more deeply and fixedly, the natural love of parents to their children, that it might be in them a spring of all this duty; so that though fleshly vice may make men mistake their children’s good, as most ungodly men do their own, and think it consisteth in that in which it doth not; yet still the general desire of their children’s welfare, as well as of their own, is deeply rooted, and will work for their welfare, as soon as they well know wherein it doth consist. And God hath not given them this love, only for the good of the individual children, but much more for the commonwealth and church; that, as many sticks make one fire, and many exercised soldiers one army, so many well-educated children may make up one peaceable and holy society.

7. And accordingly it is much to be observed, that God hath not given children a natural love and submissiveness to

parents, only for the personal benefit of their provision, and other helps; but especially that hereby they may be teachable and obedient to those instructions of their parents by which they may become blessings to their generations, and may conjunctly make up wise and holy societies, families, churches and commonwealths. For these ends it is, that God hath bound you, as to reverence your masters, tutors and pastors, so especially both to reverence and love your parents, that you may be the more capable of their necessary instruction and advice.

8. Yea, the great strictness of God, in condemning polygamy, adultery and fornication, seemeth to be especially for the securing of the good education of children, for their souls and for the public good. For it is notorious, that confusion in marriages and generation would many ways tend to the depraving of human education, while mothers had not the necessary encouragement to perform their part. The younger would be awhile esteemed, and afterwards be cast off and made most miserable, and families would be like wandering beggars, or like exposed orphans; disorder and confusion would deprive children of much of their necessary helps, and barbarousness and brutishness would corrupt mankind.

By all this it is most evident, that the great means of the welfare of the world must be the faithful and holy endeavours of parents, and the willing teachableness and obedience of children, that they may escape the snares of folly and fleshly lusts, and may betimes get that wisdom and love of goodness which make them fit to be blessings to the places where they live.

CHAP. IV.

How the case standeth with our Youth in matter of fact.

1. THROUGH the great mercy of God, many families are sacred nurseries for the church and the kingdom; and many parents have great comfort in the grace of God appearing in their children. From their early childhood many are of humble, obedient dispositions, and have a love to knowledge, and a love to the Word of God and to those that are good

and virtuous persons. They have inward convictions of the evil of sin, and a fear of sinning, and a great dislike of wicked persons, and a great love and reverend obedience to their parents; and when they grow up, they diligently learn in private and in public: they increase in their love to the Scriptures and good books, and to godly teachers and godly company; and God saveth them from temptations, worldly deceits, and fleshly lusts; and they live to God, are blessings to the land, the joy of their friends, and exemplary and useful to those with whom they converse.

2. But all, even religious parents, have not the like blessing in their children. (1.) Some of them, though religious otherwise, are lamentably careless of the duty which at baptism they promised to perform in the education of their children, and do but superficially and formally instruct them, are too faulty as to the example which they should give them, and seem to think that God must bless them because they are theirs, and because they are baptized, while they neglect their promised endeavours. (2.) And some children when they grow up, and are bound to resist temptations, and to use God's appointed means for their own good, do wilfully resist God's grace, and run into temptations and neglect, wretchedly betray themselves, and forfeit the mercies which they needed.

3. In all my observation, God hath most blessed the children of those parents who have educated them as followeth: (1.) Those that have been particularly sensible what they promised for them in the baptismal vow, and made conscience of performing it. (2.) Those that have had more care of their souls than of their outward wealth. (3.) Those that have been most careful to teach them the depravity of corrupted nature by original sin, and to humble them and teach them the need of a Saviour, and of his renewing as well as his pardoning grace, and to tell them about the work of the Spirit of sanctification, and teach them above all to look to the inward state of their souls. (4.) Those that have most seriously reminded them of death, judgment, and the life to come. (5.) Those that have always spoken of God with the greatest reverence, affection and delight. (6.) Those that have most wisely laboured to make all the knowledge and practice of religion pleasant unto them, by the suitableness of doctrines and duties to their capacity. (7.) Those that

have most disgraced sin to them, especially base and fleshly pleasures. (8.) Those that have kept them from the baits of sensuality, not gratifying their appetites in meats and drink, to bring them to an unruly habit; but used them to a habit of temperance, and neglect of appetite. (9.) Those that have most disgraced worldliness and pride to them, used them to low things in apparel and possession, told them how the proud are hateful to God, set before them the example of a crucified Christ, and opened to them the doctrine of mortification, and self-denial, and the great necessity of true humility. (10.) Those have been most watchful to know their children's particular inclinations and temptations, and to apply answerable remedies, and not carelessly leave them to themselves. (11.) Those that have been most careful to keep them from ill company, especially,—of wicked youths, of their own growth and neighbourhood,—and of tempting women. (12.) Those that have most wisely used them to the meetest public teachers, and have helped them to remember and understand what they hear, especially the fundamental truths in the catechism. (13.) Those that have most wisely engaged them into the familiarity and frequent converse of some suitable, godly, exemplary companions. (14.) Those that have most conscionably spent the Lord's-days in public and in their families. (15.) Those that have done all this, as with reverend gravity, so especially with tender endearing love to their children; convincing them that it is all done for their own good; and that do not by imprudent weaknesses, ignorance, passions, or scandal, frustrate their own endeavours. (16.) Those that use not their children as mere patients, only to hear what their parents say; but to engage them to constant endeavours of their own, for their own good; especially in the reading of Scripture, and the most suitable books, and meditating on them, and daily personal prayer to God. (17.) Lastly, those that pray most heartily and believingly for God's grace and his blessing on their endeavours.—Such men's children are usually blessed.

4. But it is no wonder, where such means are neglected, (much more when parents are ungodly, fleshly, worldly persons, and perhaps enemies to a holy life,) if the children of such are ignorant, deluded, ungodly, and drowned in fleshly Insts. And alas! it is the multitude of such, and their sad conditions, which is the occasion of my writing this Epistle.

5. (1.) We see to our grief, that many children are of a stupid and unteachable disposition, and almost incapable of instruction, who yet can as quickly learn to talk of common matters as other persons, and can as easily learn a trade, or how to do any ordinary business. And though some inconsiderate persons overlook the causality of the more immediate parents' sins, in such judgments on their children, as if it were only Adam's sin that hurt them, I have elsewhere proved, that this is their great and dangerous mistake. As David's child died for the father's sin, the children of gluttons, drunkards, fornicators, oft contract such bodily distempers as greatly tend to stupify or further vitiate the mind. And their souls may have sad additions to the common human depravity.

(2.) Accordingly many children have more violent passions, and carnal desires, than others, which run them into wicked ways impetuously, as if they were almost brutes that had no reason or power to resist. And all words and corrections are to them of little force, but they are as blocks, that, when you have said and done what you can, go away as if they had not heard you.

(3.) And some have cross and crooked natures, addicted to that which is naught, and the more, by how much the more you contradict them: Froward and obstinate, as if it were a desirable victory to them to overcome their parents, and escape all that would make them wise and good: dogged, sour, proud, self-willed, and utterly disobedient.

(4.) And too many have so great an enmity and averseness to all that is holy, spiritual and heavenly, that they are weary to hear you talk of it; and you persuade them to learn, to read, to pray, to meditate or consider, as you persuade a sick man to the meat which he doth loathe, or a man to dwell with those that he hateth. They have no appetite to such things, no pleasure in them; when you have said all of God, and Christ, and glory, they believe it not, or they savour it not: they are things above their reach and love, yea, things against their carnal minds. You tire them worse than if you talked in a strange language to them,—such enmity is in the heart of corrupted man to God and Heaven, till the Grace of the Great Reconciler overcome it by a new Life, and Light, and Love.

(5.) And when custom is added to all these vicious dis-

positions, alas, what slaves and drudges of Satan doth it make them! For instance,

(1.) Some are so corrupted with the love of sport, that gaming or stage-plays, or one such foolery or another, becometh so pleasant to them, that they can understand or believe nothing that is said against it by God or man; their diseased fantasy hath so conquered reason, that they cannot restrain themselves; but in their callings and in religious exercises they are weary, and long to be at their sports, and must be gone; neither God, nor Holiness, nor the joys of heaven are half so sweet to their thoughts as these are. For they have that mark of misery,—(2 Tim. iii. 4.) “They are lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God.”

The same I say of sinful mirth, and the company which doth cherish it. Little do they believe Solomon: (Eccles. vii. 2—4.) “It is better to go to the House of Mourning, than to go to the House of Feasting: for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth. It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools: for as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of fools.”

It is true, that mirth is very desirable to nature: and God is not against it, but much more for it than sinners will believe. But it is a rational mirth which beseemeth a rational creature, and such as he can justify, and as will make him better, and tends to felicity and everlasting mirth; and not the causeless mirth of madmen, who set their house on fire and then laugh and sing over it; nor like the mirth of a drunken man, whose shame exposeth him to pity or derision; nor any such mirth as leadeth a man from God to sin, and keepeth him from the way of manlike and everlasting joy, and prepareth for the greatest sorrows.

(2.) There are some so enslaved to their appetites, that their reason hath no power to rule them; but, like brutes, they must needs have what the belly and throat desire. And if they be the children of the rich, (who have always full and pleasant food,) constant fleshpleasing or true gluttony is taken for no sin: and, like swine, they do but live to eat, whereas they should but eat to live, and cheerfully serve God.

But it is never so dangerous as when it turneth to the love of drink. The pleasing of the throat, and the pleasing of the brain by mirth, going together, do so much corrupt the appetite and fantasy, that their thoughts run after it, and reason hath no power to shut their mouths, nor keep them from the house of sin. Some sin against an accusing conscience, and under their convictions and terrors do drink on; which yet they could forbear, if they knew there were poison in the cup. Some are more miserable, and have sinned themselves into searedness of conscience and past feeling, and perhaps into infidelity and a blinded mind, persuading them that there is no great harm or danger in the sin, and that it is but some precise people that make so great a matter of it. And some, that have purposes to forsake the sin when the appetite stirs, forget it all; and when company enticeth, and when they see the cup, they have no power to forbear. O what a pitiful sight it is to see men in the flower of youth and strength, when they should most rejoice in God and holiness, to be still thirsty after a forbidden pleasure, and hasting to the tavern or alehouse, as a bird to the snare of the fowler, and sweetly and greedily swallowing the poisonous cup which God forbiddeth! And that false repentance to which conscience and experience force them sometimes, is forgotten next day when the temptation is renewed: yea, the throat-madness, and the merry and belly-devils are within them a continual temptation, which the miserable slaves cannot resist.

(3.) And these beastly, fleshly sins do usually make them weary of their callings, and of any honest labour: the devil hath by this time got possession of their thoughts, by the bias of delight and sinful lust; and they are thinking of meat or drink, or play, or merry company, when they should be diligently at work: and so idleness becomes the nursery of temptation, and of all other vices, as well as a constant sin of omission and loss of hasty, precious time. And custom increaseth the habit, and maketh them good for nothing, and like dead men to all for which life is given them, and only alive to prepare by sin for endless misery.

(4.) And usually pride also takes its part, to make the sin of Sodom in them complete. (Ezek. xvi. 49.) "Pride, fulness, and idleness." They that must be in their jovial company, must not seem despicable among them, but must

be in the mode and fashion, whatever it cost. When they make themselves odious in the sight of God, and the pity of all wise men, and a terror to themselves, yet they must be somebody to their sottish companions, especially of the female sex; lest the image of the devil, and his victory over them should not be perfect, if pride were left out, how unreasonable soever.

(5.) And by this time they have (usually here amongst the rich and idle,) a further step towards hell to go, and yet a deep gulf to fall into; fleshly lust next entangleth them in converse with women, and thence into filthy fornication. The devil will seldom lose a soul for want of a temptation: either he will provide them one abroad, among their lewd companions, or at home some daughter or servant of the house, where they can oft get opportunity. And if they have sinned once, they are usually like the bird that is fast in the lime-twigs: conscience may struggle, but lust holds them fast, and the devil saith, ‘If once may be pardoned, why not twice, and if twice, why not thrice?’ (Prov. xii. 21—23.) “And so they go on as the ox to the slaughter, and a fool to the correction of the stocks, and know not that it is for their lives.” (Prov. v. 12—14.) “Till they mourn at last (perhaps) when flesh and body are consumed, and say, how have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined my ears to them that instructed me! I was almost in all evil,” &c. And it is well for the wretches if this repentance be true and in time, that though the flesh be destroyed, the spirit may be saved: for Solomon saith, (Prov. ii. 18, 19.) “Her house inclineth to death, and her paths to the dead: none that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the path of life.”

God, I doubt not, recovereth some, but the case is dangerous. For though age and sickness cure lust, usually before that time the conscience is seared and debauched, and “they being past feeling, work uncleanness with greediness,” and, forsaking God, are so forsaken by him that all other sin, sensuality, and enmity against a holy life, prevail against them, and the unclean devil lets in many more. Most debauched drunkards, gluttons, and fornicators, are so enslaved to Satan, that they think, say, and do what he would have them, and become the enemies and persecutors of

those that are against their sin ; and the blinded Sodomites go on to grope for the door of Lot, as one that reproveth them, till the flames of justice stop the rage.

(6.) And when all these sins have enslaved sensual youths, they must have money to maintain them ; and if they have it not of their own, and be not the sons of great men, who will maintain them in the service of the flesh, they must steal to get it, which usually is either by thievish borrowing which they cannot pay, or by robbing their parents or masters. If all the masters in London knew what thieves the vices of their apprentices are, for their own sakes they would take greater care to watch over them, and keep them from ill company, drunkenness and plays, and would teach them to seek pleasure in good books, good company, and serving God. I had not known it myself if the confessions and restitution of many penitent converts had not made me know it. I thank God that he recovereth any, yea, so many ; but I must tell foolish youth, that repentance itself, especially when it must have restitution, is so bitter, that they would prevent that need of it, if they had but the use of reason and foresight. O what heart-tearing confessions and sad letters have I had from many young apprentices in this city ! Much ado to escape utter despair they had, when conscience was awakened to remember all their sin and danger ! And when they knew that they must restore (if possible) all that ever they had obtained by deceiving or robbing their masters or any others, O what difficulties hath it put them to, both as to the shame of confession and the actual restitution ! Some have not money ; and to go and confess the sin and debt, and promise to pay it if ever they are able, seemeth hard, but must be done. Some have rough masters, that will disgrace them when they confess it. Some have parents that paid dear to put them out as apprentices, and would be inclined to cast them off if they knew their case. Some marry after, and it will grieve their wives to know what they have been, and how much they must restore. Wisdom might have prevented this ; but if the thorn be got into the conscience it must come out, and if the poison be swallowed it must come up, what gripes soever the vomit cost. There is no playing with hell-fire, nor jesting with the justice of the most holy God. One penitent review of fleshly lust and sinful pleasure, of falsehood and deceit, (though wholesome, if true

and timely,) will turn it all into gall and wormwood: 'For the end of sinful mirth is sorrow.'

(7.) And too many there be who escape the gross and disgraceful part of the foresaid sensuality and unrighteousness, that yet do but choose another idol, and set themselves wholly to rise in the world; and riches, preferment, and honour have almost all their hearts and care. They have no delight in God and holiness; nor doth the state of their souls, or the thought of their everlasting state, affect them in any measure according to its unspeakable weight, nor so much as these shadows which they pursue. When great travellers that have seen much of the world, and old and dying men that have had all that it can do, are forced by experience to call all vanity and vexation, unexperienced youth that are taken up with the hopes of long prosperity, and provision for all that the flesh desireth, have other thoughts of it, and will not know that it is deceitful vanity till it hath deceived them of their chief hope and treasure. And when they have overtaken the shadow which they pursue so greedily, they find it (what others have done before them,) the sweeter the more dangerous, and the parting will be the more bitter. Whereas had they sought first God's kingdom and its righteousness, and had six days laboured in obedience to God, and referred all corporal blessings to spiritual uses and everlasting ends, taking them as from God to serve him by them, they might then have had enough as an overplus to their satisfying treasure.

CHAP. V.

How sad a Case it is that I have described.

I HAVE told you the very lamentable case of too many young men, especially rich men's sons, and apprentices in this city: I told you before of what concern the state of youth is to themselves and others. From thence (and, alas! from sad experience,) it is easy to gather the dolefulness of the case of those that are drowned in fleshly lust, and have sinned themselves into the guilt and danger which I have

described. But I will name some parts of the misery more particularly again.

Review the second chapter, and think what a doleful case this is to yourselves.

1. Do you not know that you are not beasts, but men who have reason given them to know, and love, and serve their Maker? And how sad is it to see a man forget all this, and wilfully brutify himself! Were the poets' fictions true of men turned into trees, and birds, and beasts, how small were the misery in comparison of yours! It is no sin in brutes to lust, or to eat and drink too much. They have not reason to restrain and rule them; but lest they should kill themselves by excess, God hath made reasonable man their governor, and moderateth their appetite in the temper of their natures. But for a reasonable creature to subject himself to fleshly appetite, and wilfully degrade his soul to the rank of brutes, is worse than if he had been made with the body and the unreasonableness of brutes. Are you capable of no better things than these?

2. And what an odious thing is it,—when God hath chosen you out of the world to be members of his visible church, and given you the great privilege of early entrance into his holy covenant, and washed you in the laver of visible regeneration, and you are vowed to Christ, renouncing the lusts of the flesh, of the world and the devil, that you might follow a crucified Christ in the way of holiness to everlasting life,—that you should so soon prove false, perfidious traitors and rebels against him that is your only hope, and, by wickedness and covenant-breaking, make your sin greater than that of Infidels, Turks and Heathens, who never were taken into the church and covenant of Christ, nor ever broke the vows which you have broken, nor so cast away the mercies which you had received!

3. And what a doleful case is it, that so much of your minds, of your love and delight, which were all made for God, should be so misemployed, even in your strength, when they should be most vigorous; and all worse than cast away on filth and folly! If your souls be more worth than your money, it is more folly and loss to misemploy and abuse your souls, your reason, love, and your delight, than to abuse or cast away your money. And what a traitor or murderer deserveth, that would give his money to hire one

to kill the king, or his neighbour, I suppose you know; and what deserveth he that will use, not only his money, but himself, his soul, his thoughts, his love, his desire and pleasure against the most glorious God that made him? That you cannot hurt him, is no thanks to you while you break his laws, and deny him your love and duty, and love more that one thing which alone he hateth, and to which he will never be reconciled.

4. And how doleful a case is it, that all the care, and love, and labour of your parents, masters, and teachers should be lost upon you! God hath made all this their great duty for your good; and will you despise God and them, and wilfully for nothing reject them all? Shall all the pain of a child-bearing mother, and all her trouble to breed you up, and all the care of your parents to provide for you, be but to breed up a slave for the flesh, the world, and the devil, and a firebrand for hell? Shall the prayers of godly parents for you, and their teaching and counselling of you, and all their desire and care for your salvation, be despised by you, and all forgotten and cast away for a swinish lust?

5. And how doleful a case is it, that so much of so short a life should be lost, and a thousand times worse than lost, —even turned into sin, to prepare for misery, when (alas!) the longest life is little enough for our important work and quickly gone, and the reckoning and Judge are hard at hand! All the wealth, wit, or power in the world, cannot bring or buy you back one hour of all that precious time which you now so basely cast away. O how glad would you be ere long of a little of it, on the terms on which you now have it, when you lie dying, and perceive that your souls are unready to appear before a righteous God! Then ‘O for one year more of precious time!’ O that you knew how to call again the time which you cast away on sin! You will then perceive with a terrified conscience, that time was not so little worth as you once thought it, nor was it given you for so base a work. Yea, if God in mercy bring you hereafter to true conversion, O how will it wound your hearts to think how much of your youth was madly cast away, while your God, your souls, and your everlasting hopes, were all neglected and despised!

6. And, alas, if you should be cut off in that unholy, miserable state, no heart on earth can sufficiently bewail

your case! How many thousands die young, that promised themselves longer pleasure in sin, and repentance after it! O foolish sinners! Cannot you so long borrow the use of your reason, as to think seriously whither you must go next? Do you never think when the small-pox or a fever hath taken away one of your companions, whither it is that his soul is gone? Have you your wit for nothing but to taste the sweetness of drink or lust, which is as pleasant to a dog or swine as to you? O, little do you know what it is to die! what it is for a soul to leave the body, and enter into an endless world, to come to judgment for all his sin, and all his ill-spent days and hours, and for choosing the pleasures of a swine before heaven and the pleasures of a saint! Little know you what it is for devils presently to take away to hell a wretched soul which they have long deceived. I tell you, the thought of appearing before God, and Christ, and angels in another world, and entering on an endless state, is so dreadful, even to many that have spent their lives in holy preparation, and are indeed in a safe condition, that they have much ado to overcome the terror of death. Even some of God's own faithful servants are almost overwhelmed, when they think of so great a change: and though the belief of God's love and the heavenly glory do support them, and should make them long to be with Christ, yet, (alas!) faith is weak, and the change is great beyond our comprehension, and therefore feared. O then in what a case is a wicked, unpardoned, unprepared wretch, when his guilty soul must be torn from his body, and dragged in terror to hear its doom, and so to the dreadful execution! Sinners! is this a light matter to you? Doth it not concern you? Are you not here mortal? Do you not know what flesh is, and what a grave is? And are not your abused souls immortal? Are you so mad as to forget this, or so bad as not to believe it? Will your not believing it, make void the justice and the law of God, and save you from that hell from which only believing could have saved you? Will not the fire burn you, or the sea drown you, if you can but run into it drunk or winking? Is feeling, remediless feeling easier than believing God in time? Alas! what should your believing friends do to save you? They see by faith whither you are posting. They foresee your terror and your undone case; and fain, if possible, they would prevent it:

but they cannot do it without you. If you will not consent and help yourselves, it is not the holiest or wisest friends in the world that can help you. They would pull you out of the fire in fear, and out of the mouth of the roaring lion, but you will not be delivered! They call and cry to you, 'O fear God, and turn to him while there is hope;' and you will not let conscience and reason be awakened. But those that go asleep to hell, will be past sleeping there for ever. O run not madly into the everlasting fire!

7. And indeed your sleepy security and presumption do make your case more dangerous in itself, and more pitiful to all that know it. O what a sight is it to see a man go merry and laughing towards damnation, and make a jest of his own undoing! to see him at the brink of hell, and will not believe it! like a madman boasting of his wit, or a drunken man of his sobriety; or as the swine is delighted, when the butcher is shaving his throat to cut it; or as the fatted lambs are skipping in the pasture, that to-morrow must be killed and eaten; or as the bird sits singing when the gun is levelled to kill him; or as the greedy fish run striving which shall catch the bait, that must presently be snatched out of their element, and lie dying on the bank!

But because I touched much of this in the second chapter, I will pass by the rest of your own concerns, and a little further consider how sad the case of such wretched youths is also unto others.

8. And if parents be wise and godly, and understand such children's case, what a grief must it needs be to their hearts to think that they have begotten and bred up a child for sin and hell, and cannot make him willing to prevent it! to see their counsel set at naught, their teaching lost, their tears despised, and an obstinate lad seem wiser to himself than all his teachers, even when he is swallowing the devil's bait, and cruelly murdering his own soul! 'Ah!' thinks a believing father and mother, 'have I brought thee into the world for this? Hath all my tender, natural love so sad an issue? Is this the fruit of all my sorrows, my care and kindness, to see the child of my bowels, whom I dedicated in baptism to Christ,—to make himself the child of the devil, the slave of the flesh and the world, the enemy of God and holiness, and his own destroyer? and all this wilfully, obstinately, and against all the counsel and means that I

can use! Alas! must I breed up a child to become an enemy to the Church of God into which he was baptized, and a soldier for Satan against Christ? Must I breed up a child for hell, and see him miserable for ever, and cannot persuade him to be willing to be saved? O what a heart-breaking must this be to those whom nature and grace have taught to love them with tenderness, even as themselves!

9. But if they be wicked parents, and as bad as themselves, the misery is far greater, though they yet feel it not: for,

(1.) As the thief on the cross said to his companion, "Thou art in the same condemnation, and we suffer justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds," (Luke xxiii. 40, 41,) wicked parents, and wicked children are in the same gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. They sinned together, and they must suffer for ever together, if true faith and conversion do not prevent it.

(2.) It is their wickedness which was much of the cause of their children's sin and misery; and their own deep guilt will be more to them than their children's suffering. God and conscience will say to them ere long, 'O cruel parents, that had no mercy on your children or yourselves! What did nature teach you to love more than yourselves and your children? and would you wilfully and obstinately be the ruin of both? You would not have done as the mad idolaters, that offered their children in fire to Moloch: And will you offer them by sin to Satan and hell? Had a serpent stung them, or a bear devoured them, they had done but according to their nature: but was it natural in you to further their damnation? This was work too bloody for a cannibal, too cruel for an enemy, fitter for a devil than for a father or mother. As your child had from you his vicious nature, it was your part to have endeavoured to effect his sanctification and recovery. You should have taught him betimes to know the corruption of his nature, and to seek and beg the grace of Christ; to know his God, his duty, the evil of sin, the danger of temptations, and his everlasting hopes and fears. You should have taught him to know what man hath done against himself, by disobeying and departing from his God, and what Jesus Christ hath done for his redemption, and what he himself must do to be saved. You should

have taught him early how to live and how to die, what to seek and what to shun. You should have given him the example of a holy and heavenly mind and life. You should have watched over him for his safety, and unweariedly instructed him for his salvation. But you led him the way to despise God's word, to set light by Christ, and holiness, and heaven, to hate instruction and reproof, to spend the Lord's-day in idleness or worldly vanity, to seek first the world and the prosperity of the body, and to glut the flesh with sinful pleasure. What wonder if a serpent breed a serpent, and quickly teach him to hiss and sting, and if swine teach their young to feed on dung and wallow in the mire? This is part of the fruit of your worldliness, fleshliness, ungodliness, and neglect of your own salvation and your child's. Now he is as you are, a slave of sin and an heir of hell. Was it this for which you vowed him to God in baptism? was it to serve the flesh, the world, and the devil, against our God, our Saviour, and our Sanctifier? or did the mistake of the liturgy deceive you, to think that it was not you, but the godfathers, that were bound by charge and vow to bring him up in the faith and fear of God, and teach him all that a Christian should know for his soul's health? Was it not you whom God bound to do all this? The sin and misery of your child now is so far your curse, as you are guilty of it, and will add to your misery for ever.—Such are the sorrows that wicked parents and wicked children do prepare and heap on one another. Such miseries will come; but woe to those by whom they come! it had been good for that man that he had never been born.

10. And it is no small grief to faithful ministers, to see their labour so much lost: and to see so much evil among their flocks, and such sad prognostics of worse to come. He is no true minister of Christ (as to his own acceptance and salvation,) whose heart is not set on the winning, and sanctifying, and saving of souls. For what else do we study, preach, live, long, or suffer in our work? All faithful teachers can say with Paul, that they "are willing to spend and be spent for them," and "now we live if ye stand fast in the Lord." (2 Cor. xii. 15; 1 Thess. iii. 8.) He told them, "weeping, of those that were enemies to the cross of Christ, whose God was their belly, who gloried in their shame, and

mind ed earthly things," instead of a conversation in heaven. (Phil. iii. 18, 19.) When God hath blessed us with the comfortable enjoyment of many ancient, holy Christians, who are the beauty and honour of the assemblies, and death calls home one of them after another to Christ, and the rest are ready to depart, alas! must a seed of serpents come after them? Must those take their places to our grief and shame, who are bred up to the world and flesh, in drunkenness, fornication, and enmity to God and to a holy life? O what a woful change is this!

If any be likely to be the stain and plague of the church, it is such as these: If we preach holy truth to them, lust cannot love it. If we tell them of God's word, the fleshly mind doth not savour it, nor can be subject to it. (Rom. viii. 5—7.) If we reprove them sharply, they smart and hate us. If we call them to confession and repentance, their pride and carnality cannot bear it. If we excommunicate them for impenitency, as Christ requireth, or but deny them the sacrament as unmeet, they rage against us as our fiercest enemies. If we neglect discipline, and admit swine to the communion of saints, we harden and deceive them, and flatter them in their sin, pollute the church, and endanger our souls by displeasing the Chief Pastor. What then shall we do with these self-murdering, ungodly men?

Many of them have so much reverence of a sacrament, or so little regard of it, that they never seek it, but keep away themselves. Perhaps they are afraid lest they eat and drink damnation to themselves, by the profanation of holy things. But do they think that it is safe to be out of the church and communion of saints, because it is dangerous to abuse it? Are infidels safe because false-hearted Christians perish? What! if breaking your vows and covenant be damnable, is it not so to be out of the holy covenant? What! if God be a consuming fire to those that draw near him in unrepented heinous sin, is it therefore wise or safe to avoid him? Neither those that come not to him, nor those that come in their hypocrisy and reigning sin, shall be saved.

And yet, what to do with these self-suspenders, we know not. Are they still members of the churches, or are they not? If they are, we are bound to call them to repentance for forsaking the communion of saints in Christ's commanded ordinance. If they are not, we should make it

known, that Christians and no Christians may not be confounded, and they themselves may understand their case. And neither of these can they endure ; but for dwelling in the parish, and hearing the liturgy and sermons, they must still pass for church-members, lest discipline should exasperate and further lose them. This is that discipline which is thought worthy the honour of episcopal dignity and revenues, and is supposed to make the Church of England the best in the world, by the same men that would rage, were discipline exercised on them ; and they must either be admitted to the sacrament in a life of fornication, drunkenness, sensuality and profaneness, without any open confession, repentance and reformation, or else must pass for church-members without any exercise of discipline, while they shun the sacramental communion of the church. Such work doth wickedness make among us !

11. Indeed these are the men that are the trouble of families, neighbours, and of good magistrates, the shame of bad ones, and the great danger of the land. All the foreign enemies against whom we talk so much, and whom we fear, are not so hurtful and dangerous to us as these,—these that spring out of your own bowels ; these that are bred up with care, and tenderness, and cost in your houses ; these that should succeed godly ancestors in wisdom and well-doing, and be their glory. Who plot against us but homebred sinners ? Who shew greater hatred to the good, and persecute them more ? Who are more malignant enemies of godliness, scorers of a holy life, hinderers of the word of God, and patrons of profaneness, and of ministers and people that are of the same mind ? If England be undone, (as the Eastern churches, and many of the Western are undone,) it will be by your own carnal, ungodly posterity.

He that is once a slave to Satan and his fleshly lust, is ready, for preferment or reward, to be a slave to the lust of any other. He that is false to his God and Saviour, after his baptismal vows, is not likely to be true to his country or his king, if he have but the bait of a strong temptation : and he that will sell his soul, his God and heaven, for any forbidden gratifications of his appetite, will not stick to betray church or state, or his dearest friend, for provision to satisfy these lusts. Can you expect that he should love any man better than himself ? A wicked, fleshly, worldly man is a soil in

which Satan may sow the seeds of any sort of actual sin, and is fuel dried or tinder for the sparks of hell to kindle in. Will he suffer much for God or his country, who will sell heaven for nothing? An evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit. If he hath the heart of an Achan, a Gehazi, an Ahithophel, no wonder if he hath their actions and their reward. If he be a thief and bear the bag, no wonder if Judas sell his master.

12. And these wretches, if they live, are likely to be a plague to their own posterity: woe to the woman that hath such a husband! And how are the children likely to be bred, that have such a father? Doth not God threaten punishment to the third and fourth generation of them that hate him, and to visit the iniquity of the fathers on the children? Were not the children of the old world drowned, and those of Sodom and Gomorrah burned, and Achan's stoned, and Dathan's and Abiram's swallowed up, and Gehazi's struck with leprosy, &c. for their fathers' sins? And were not the children of the Amalekites all destroyed, and the posterity of the infidel Jews forsaken, the curse coming on them and on their children? And as their children are likely to speed the worse for the sins of such parents, so are such parents likely to be requited by their children. As you shamed and grieved the hearts of your parents, so may your children do by you. And by that time, it is probable, if grace convert you not, though you have no hatred to your own sins, worldly interest may make you dislike those of your children. Their lust and appetite do not tempt and deceive you, as your own did. Perhaps when they shame your family, debauch themselves with drink and other crimes, and consume the estates for which you sold your souls, you may perceive that sin is an evil and destructive thing; especially when they proceed to despise and abuse your persons, to desire your death, and to be weary of you. Sooner or later you shall know much better what sin is.

CHAP. VI.

The joyful State and Blessing of good Children, to themselves and others.

FROM what is said in the second and fifth chapters, it is easy to gather how joyful a case to themselves, and what a blessing to parents and others, it is when children betimes are sober, wise, godly and obedient. The difference doth most appear when they arrive at mature age, and when they come to bring forth to themselves and others the fruits of their dispositions. Their end, and the life to come, will shew the greatest difference : but yet, even here, and that betimes, the difference is very great.

1. *First*, As to themselves : How blessed a state is it to be quickly delivered from the danger of damnation, and God's displeasure, that they need not lie down and rise in fear lest they be in hell whenever death removeth them from the body ! Can one too soon be out of so dreadful a state ? Can one who is in a house on fire, or who has fallen into the sea, make too much haste to be delivered ? If a man deep in debt be restless till it be paid, and glad when it is discharged ; if a man in danger of sickness, or of a condemning sentence from the judge, be glad when the fear of death is over ; how glad should you be to be safe from the great danger of damnation ? And till you are sanctified by grace, you are far from safety.

2. And if a man's sickness, pain or distraction be a calamity, the cure of which brings ease and joy ; how much more ease and joy may it bring, to be cured of all the grievous maladies of reigning sin ? Sanctification will cure your minds of spiritual blindness and madness, that is, of damnable ignorance, unbelief and error. It will cure your affections of idolatrous, distracting and carnal love ; of the itch of fleshly desires or lusts, of the fever of revengeful passions, and malignant hatred to goodness and good men, of self-vexing envy and malice against others, of the greedy worm of covetousness, and the drunken desire of ambitious and imperious minds. It will cure your wills of their fleshly servitude and bias, and of that mortal backwardness to God and holy things, and that sluggish dulness and loathness to

choose and do what you are convinced must be done. It will make good things easy and pleasant to you ; so that you will no more think you have need to beg mirth from the devil or to steal it from sin,—as if God, grace and glory had none for you. But it will be so easy to you to love and to find pleasure in the Bible and good books, in good company and good discourse, in spiritual meditations and thoughts, in holy sermons, prayers, and church-communion and sacraments, even in Christ, in God, and the forethoughts of heaven, that you will be sorry and ashamed to think that ever you forsook such joys for fleshly pleasure, and defiled your souls with filthy and forbidden things. Is not the feverish and dropsical thirst after drink, wealth and honour, better cured, than pleased to the sinner's death? And is not a lazy backwardness to duty, better cured by spiritual health, than pleased with idleness and sleep?

3. You certainly cannot too soon attain the delights of faith, hope and love, of holy knowledge and communion with God and saints. You cannot too soon have the great blessing of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and live night and day in peace of conscience,—in assurance that all your sins are pardoned, and that you are the adopted sons of God and heirs of heaven, sealed by his Spirit, accepted in your prayers, welcome to God through Christ, and that when you die you shall be with him. Can you make too great haste from the folly and filth of sin, and the danger of hell, into so safe and good a state as this?

4. It will be a great comfort to you thus to find, on arriving at age and the use of your reason, that your baptismal blessings ceased not with your infancy by your own rejection, but that you are now by your own consent in the bond of God's covenant, and have a right to all the blessings of it, which the sacrament of Christ's body and blood will confirm; as you had your entrance by your parents' consent and accepted dedication: for the covenant of grace is our certain charter for grace and glory.

5. Is it not a joy to you to be the joy of your parents, and to find them love you not only as their children, but as God's? Love maketh it sweet to us to please, and to be beloved by those whom we love. If it be not your grief to grieve your parents, and your pleasure to please them, you love them not, but are void of natural affection.

6. O what a mercy will you find it, when you come to age and business in the world! (1.) That you come with a clear conscience, not clogged, terrified and shamed with the sins of your youth. (2.) And that you come not utterly unfurnished with the knowledge, righteousness and virtue, of which you must make use in every condition, all your lives; when others are like those lads who will go to the Universities before they can so much as read or write. To live in a family of your own, and to trade and converse in the world, and especially to go to church, to hear, to pray, to communicate, to pray in private, to meditate, in a word, to live or die like a Christian or a man, and yet without the furniture of wisdom, faith, and serious godliness,—is more impossible and unwise than to go to sea without provision, or to war without arms, or to become a priest without book or understanding.

7. *Secondly.* And you that are young men, can scarcely conceive what a joy a wise and godly child is to his wise and godly parents! Read but Prov. x. 1; xiii. 1; xvii. 2. 25; xix. 13. 26; xxii. 11; xxiii. 15. 19. 24. &c. The prayers and instructions of your parents are comfortable to them, when they see the happy fruit and answer. They fear not God's judgments upon their houses, as they would do if you were Cains, or Hams, or Absaloms: they labour comfortably, and comfortably leave you their estates at death, when they see that they do not get and leave it for those that will serve the devil with it, and consume it on their lusts; but who will use it for God, for the Gospel, and their salvation. If you fall sick and die before them, they can rejoice that you are gone to Christ; and they need not mourn as David for Absalom, that you go to hell. If you overlive them, they leave the world the more easily, when they leave as it were part of themselves here behind them, who will carry on the work of God for which they lived, and will be blessings to the world when they are gone.

8. *Thirdly.* O what a mercy is it to church and state, to have our posterity to prove better than we have been, and do God more service than we have done, and take warning by our faults to avoid the like! Solomon tells us of one poor wise man that saved a city: and God would have spared Sodom, had there been but ten righteous persons in it. Wherever yet I lived, a few persons have proved the great

blessings of the place,—to be teachers, guides and exemplary to others, as the little leaven that leaveneth the lump, and as the stomach, the liver, and other nutritive parts are to the body. Blessed is that church, that city, that country, that kingdom, which hath a wise, just and holy people! The nearest good and evil are the greatest: our estates are not so near us as wives and children, nor they so near us as our bodies, nor they so much to us as our souls. It is more to a person, house, or country, what they are, than what they have, or what others do for them or against them.

It is these that are God's children as well as ours, who are the blessing so often mentioned in the Scripture, who will, as the Rechabites, obey their father's wholesome counsels, rather than their lusts and carnal companions, and God before all:—"Who walk not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful. But their delight is in the law of the Lord, and in that law they meditate day and night." (Psal. i.) "Lo, such children are an heritage of the Lord; such fruit of the womb is his reward. They are as arrows in the hand of a mighty man. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them. They shall not be ashamed; but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate." (Psal. cxxvii. 3—5.) Were it not for wise and godly children to succeed us, religion, peace, and all public good, would be but as we frail mortals are,—like the grass or flowers of a few days' or years' continuance; and the difference between a church and no church, between a kingdom of Christians and of Infidels, would be but like the difference between our waking and our sleeping time, so short as would make it the less considerable.

CHAP. VII.

Undeniable Reasons for the Repentance and speedy Amendment of those that have lived a fleshly and ungodly Life: by way of Exhortation.

1. AND now the commands of God, the love of my country and the church, the love of piety, true prosperity and peace, and the love of mankind, even of your own souls and bo-

dies, do all command me to become once more an earnest suitor to the youth of this land, especially of London, who have hitherto miscarried, and lived a fleshly, sinful life. Thousands such as you are dead in sin, and past our warning, and past all hope and help for ever. Thousands that laughed at judgment and damnation, are now feeling that which they would not believe. By the great mercy of God it is not yet the case of you who read these words; but how soon it may be, if you are yet un sanctified, you little know. O that you knew what a mercy it is to be yet alive, and, after so many sins and dangers, to have one to warn you, and offer you salvation, and to be yet in possibility, and in a state of hope! In the name of Christ I most earnestly entreat you, a little while try to use your reason, and use it seriously in retired and sober consideration, till you have first well perused the whole course of your lives, and remembered what you have done and how, till you have thought what you have got or lost by sinning, and why you did it, and whether it was justifiable reason which led you to it, and such as you will stand to in your sober thoughts, yea, such as you will stand to before God at last. Consider seriously what comes next, and whither you are going, and whether your life have fitted you for your journey's end, and how your ways will be reviewed ere long, and how they will appear to you, and taste at death, judgment, and in the world to come. Hold on and think soberly a little while, what is in your hearts, and what is their condition, what you most love, and what you hate, and whether God or sinful pleasure be dearer and more delightful to you, and how you stand affected and related to the world to which you are very near. Surely reason would be reason if you would but use it; surely light would come in, if you would not shut the windows, and draw the curtains on you, and rather choose to sleep in darkness. Is there nothing within you that grudgeth at your folly, and threateneth you for being wilfully beside yourselves? If you would but spend one half hour in a day, or a week, in sober thinking whither you are going, what you have done, what you are, and what you must shortly see and be; how could you choose but be deeply offended with yourselves, for living like men quite void of understanding, against your God, against yourselves, against all the ends and obligations of life, and this for nothing?

But, it may be, the distinctness of your consideration may make it the more effectual: and if I put my motives by way of questions, will you consider them till you have well answered them all?

1. Are you not fully convinced, that there is a God of infinite power, knowledge and goodness, who is the perfect governor of all the world? God forbid that any of you should be so bad and so mad, as seriously to doubt of this, which the devils believe, while they would draw you to unbelief. To doubt of a perfect governing God, is to wink and doubt whether there be a sun, to stop your ears against the notorious testimony of heaven and earth, and every creature. You may next doubt whether there be any thing, if you doubt of God. For atoms and shadows are hardly perceived with more certainty, than the earth, the heavens, and sun.

2. If you believe that there is a governing God, do you not believe that he hath governing laws or notifications of his will, and that we owe this God more full, more absolute and exact obedience than can be due to any prince on earth, and greater love than to our dearest friend, He being infinitely good and love itself? Can you owe more to your flesh, or to any, than to your God that made you men, by whom you have life, and health, and time, and all the good that ever you received? Can you give him too much love and obedience? Or can you think that you need to fear being losers by him, and that your faithful duty should be in vain?

3. Is it God that needeth you, or you that need him? Can you give him any thing that he wants, or do you want what he hath to give? Can you live an hour without him? Or be kept without him from pain, misery or death? Is it not for your own need, and your own good, that he requireth your service? Do you know what his service is? It is thankfully to receive his greatest gifts, to take his medicines to save your souls, and to feast on his prepared comforts. He calls you to far better and more needful obedience for yourselves, than when you command your child to take his meat, to wear his clothes, or, when he is sick, to take a necessary remedy. And is such obedience to be refused?

4. Hath not nature taught you to love yourselves? Surely you cannot be willing to be damned, nor be indiffe-

rent whether you go to heaven or hell! And can you believe, that God would set you on that which would do you hurt, and that the devil is your friend and would save you from him? Can you believe that to please your throat and lust, till death snatch away your souls to judgment, is more for your own good than to live here in holiness and the love of God, and hereafter to live for ever in glory? Do you think you have lived as if you truly loved yourselves, or as self-destroyers? All the devils in hell, or enemies on earth, could never have done so much against you, as, by your sensuality, ungodliness and sloth, you have done against yourselves. O poor sinner, as ever thou wouldst have mercy from God in thy extremity, be entreated to shew some mercy on thyself!

5. Hath not nature deeply taught all the world, to make a great difference between virtue and vice, between moral good and evil? If the good and bad do not greatly differ, what makes all mankind, even the sons of pride, to be impatient of being called or accounted bad, and to love to be accounted wise and good? How tenderly do most men bear a reproof, or to hear what they do amiss? To be called 'a wicked man, a liar, a perjured man, a knave,' how ill is it taken by all mankind? This certainly proveth that the conscience of the great difference between the GOOD and the BAD, is a common natural notice. And will not God make a greater difference, who better knoweth it than man?

6. If God had only commanded you duty, even a holy, righteous, and sober life, and forbidden you the contrary, and had only bidden you to seek everlasting happiness, and made you no promise of it, should you not in reason seek it cheerfully in hope? Our folly leadeth us to do much in vain; but God setteth no man on any vain employment. If he do but bid you to resist temptation, mortify lust, learn his word, to pray to him, and to praise him, you may be sure it is not to your loss. Of a reward you may be sure, if you know not what it will be. Yea, if he set you upon the hardest work, or to pass the greatest danger, to serve him at the dearest rate, or lose your estate for him, and life itself, what reason can there be for fear of being losers by obeying God? Yea, the dearest service hath the greatest reward. But when he hath moreover ascertained your reward

by a promise, a covenant sworn and sealed by his miracles, by Christ's blood, by his sacraments, and by his Spirit, if yet you will be ungodly because you cannot trust him, you have no excuse.

7. Do you know the difference between a man and a brute? Brutes have no capacity to think of a God, a Saviour, and a life to come, to know God's law, study obedience, and to fear hell and sin. Brutes have no reason to rule their appetites and lusts, nor any hope or joy in foreseen glory. But man is made capable of all this: and can you think God maketh such noble faculties in vain? Or should we live like the brutes that have no such faculties?

8. Do you not certainly know, that you must die? All the world cannot hinder it: **YOU MUST DIE.** And is it not near, as well as sure? How swift is time! O how quickly shall we all be at the end of our race and warfare! And where then is the pleasure of pride, of appetite and lust? Neither the dismal carcase, nor the dust or bones retain or taste it: and (alas!) the unconverted soul must pay for it for ever. Can you think that so short a brutish pleasure, that hath so sure and sad an end, is worthy of your incurring the grieving of your friends, the offending of God, the hazard of your souls, the loss of heaven, and the suffering of God's justice in hell for ever? O foolish sinners! I beseech you think in time how mad a bargain you are making. O what an exchange! for a filthy lust or fleshly pleasure, to sell a God, a Saviour, a Comforter, a soul, a heaven, and all your hopes!

9. If the devil or deceivers should make you doubt whether there be any judgment and life to come, should not the mere possibility and probability of such a day and such a life be far more regarded by you than all fleshly pleasure, which is certainly short and base? Did you ever hear a man so mad as to say, 'I am sure there is no heaven or hell for souls?' But you are sure that your flesh must rot in a dark grave; you are sure that death will quickly put an end to all that this world can afford you. House and land, and all that now deceive poor worldlings, will be nothing to you, (no more than if you had never seen them,) save the terrible reckoning that the soul must make. Sport and mirth, meat and drink, and filthy lusts, are all ready to leave you to the final sentence of your Judge. And is not even an uncertain

hope of heaven more worth than certain transitory vanity? Is not an uncertain hell to be more feared and avoided, than the forsaking of these certain trifles and deceits? Much more when God hath so certainly revealed to us the life to come!

10. Is it a wise and reasonable expectation, that the righteous God should give that man everlasting glory who will not leave his whores; his drunkenness, or the basest vanity, for all his love and for all his mercies, for the sake of Christ or for the hopes of all this glory? Heaven is the greatest reward of holiness, and of the diligent and patient seekers of it: heaven is the greatest gift of the great love of God: and can you believe that he will give it to the slaves of the devil, and to contemning wilful rebels? May not you next think, that the devils may be saved? If you say that "God is merciful," it is most true; and this will be the unconverted man's damnation,—that he would for a base lust offend so MERCIFUL a GOD, and sell everlasting mercy for nothing, and abuse so much MERCY all his life. Abused and refused mercy will be the fuel to feed the flames of hell, and torment the conscience of the impenitent for ever. Doth not God know his own mercy better than you do? Can he not be merciful, and yet be holy and just? Is the king unmerciful, if he make use of jails and gallows for malefactors? It is mercy to the land to destroy such as would destroy others. The bosom of Eternal Love is not a place for any but the holy. The heavenly paradise is not like Mahomet's, —a place of lust and sensual delights. You blaspheme the most just and holy God, if you make him seem indifferent to the holy and the unholy, to his faithful servants and to the despisers of his grace.

11. If there were any possibility, that unsanctified souls should be sanctified and saved in another world, is it not a madness to cast everlasting life on so great an uncertainty or improbability, when we have life, and time, and helps to make our salvation sure? God hath called you to "give all diligence to make it sure." (2 Peter i. 10.) He hath made infallible promises of it to sanctified believers: he calleth you to examine and judge yourselves. (2 Cor. xiii. 5.) And do you know the difference between CERTAINTY and UNCERTAINTY in so great a case? O none can now sufficiently conceive what a difference there is, between a soul that is

going out of the body with a joyful assurance that Christ will presently receive him, and a soul that, in the guilt of sin, must say, 'I am going to an endless life, and know not but it may be an endless misery! I am here now, and know not but I may be presently with devils that here deceived me.' Just fear of passing presently to hell-fire, is a dreadful case, to be avoided above all earthly sufferings. (Luke xii. 4; xiv. 33.) Much more when God's threatenings to the impenitent are most sure.

12. Do you think in your hearts that you have more pleasure, sound content and peace, with your whores, and in your sports, drink, or riches, than true believers have in God and Christ, in a holy life and the hopes of everlasting glory? Judge but by the cause; is not the love of that God who is the Lord of life, and death, and all things; and is not the pleasure of pleasing him, and the sense of pardon and mercy through Christ, and the firm expectation of endless joy by a promise of God sealed by his Son, by his sacraments, and Spirit;—I say, is not all this, matter more worthy to rejoice a soul, than money, and meat, and drink, and lust? Have not you those secret gripes of conscience, when you think how short the sport will be, and that for all these things you must come to judgment,—which much abateth the pleasure of your sin? Had you spent that time in seeking first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and in honest, obedient labouring in your callings, you need not have looked back on it with the gripes of an accusing conscience. If you see a true believer sorrowful, it is not for serving and obeying God, or for being holy and hating sin; but for serving God no better, and hating sin no more.

13. Have you not often secret wishes in your hearts, that you were in the case of those persons whom you judge to be of the most holy and heavenly hearts and conversations? Do you not think they are in a far safer and better case than you? Unless you are forsaken to blindness of mind, it is certainly so. Doth not this shew that you choose and follow that which is worse, when your consciences tell you it is worse, and refuse that which your consciences tell you is best? But it is not such sluggish wishes that will serve: to lie still and live idle, and to wish yourselves as rich as the industrious, is not the way to make you so.

14. At least, if you have no such wishes now, do you not

think that you shall wish it at death or judgment? Do not your consciences now tell you that you shall shortly wish, 'O that I had hated sinful pleasure! O that I had spent my short life in obeying and trusting God!' Will you not say with Balaam, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his?" O that I were in the case of those that mortified the flesh, and lived to God, and laid not up their treasure on earth, but in heaven? And why do you not now choose what you know you shall hereafter deeply wish that you had chosen?

15. I take it for granted, that your merry, sensual, and worldly tempters and companions deride all this, and persuade you to despise it, as if it were but needless, melancholy, and troublesome talk. But tell me, do you think in conscience that what they give you is sound reason, and such as should satisfy a sober man, who careth what becomes of his soul for ever? If it be, I make a motion to you. Bring any of them to me, or to any such man, and in your hearing let the case be soberly debated. I will hear all that they can say against a holy, sober life, and for the world and their fleshly pleasure, and you shall hear what I can say on the contrary: and then do but use the reason of a man and judge as you shall see the cause. As Elias said to the Israelites, "Why halt you between two opinions? If the Lord be God follow him; if Baal be God, follow him." If money, preferment, drink, or lust be best, take it: But if God, heaven, Christ, faith, hope, and holiness be best, at your peril refuse them not, and halt no longer. I suppose you sometimes think of the case, or else you are dead in sin: [I pray you, then, tell me, or tell yourselves, Which cause seemeth best upon the deepest thoughts and consideration? But if you will take the laughter or scorns of ignorant sots, instead of reason, and instead of sober consideration, you are well worthy of the damnation which you so wilfully choose.

16. But if you think highly of their wit or learning, who sin as you, and who encourage and deceive you, I pray you answer these two questions.

(1.) On which side is Christ, and his prophets and apostles? For which side doth the Scripture speak? Which way went all the saints whose names are now honoured? Were they for the fleshly or the spiritual life? Were they

for the love of pleasures more than for the love of God? Doth Christ from heaven teach you an earthly or a heavenly choice and life? Did he come to cherish sin, or to destroy it and save us from it? You can make no doubt of this, if ever you read or heard the Bible. And

(2.) Which do you think were the wiser and better men, and worthy to be believed and followed—Christ, and all his apostles and saints, that ever were in the world, to this day, —or the drunkards, whoremongers and worldlings, who deride the doctrine sent from heaven? If there be a heaven, is drunkenness or sobriety more likely to be the way to it? But if indeed you will take the mocks of a swinish sot to be wiser than God, than Christ, than prophets and apostles, and all that ever went to heaven, and their jeers to be more credible than all God's word, what can a man say, with any hope, to convince such wretches?

17. I further ask you, Have you not some secret purposes hereafter to repent? If not, (alas!) how far are you from it, and how forlorn is your case! But if you have, conscience is a witness against you, that you choose and live in that case and course which you know is worst. Were it not worst, you need not purpose to repent of it. And will you wilfully choose known evil, when the very nature of man's will is to love good?

18. If you believe that the faithful are in a happier case than you, tell me, What hindereth yet but that you may be like them, and may yet be happy as well as they? Hath God put any exception against you in his Word? Are not mercy and salvation proclaimed and offered to you, as freely as to them? Did any thing make you so bad as you are, but your own choice and doing? And can any thing yet hinder you from pardon and salvation, if you yourselves were but truly willing? What, if your parents were bad, and bred you up amiss! God hath told you, in Ezek. xviii. and xxxiii, that if you will but do your own part yet, and take warning and avoid the sin of your parents and give up yourselves unfeignedly to him, he will save you, whatever your parents were. What, if princes, or lords, or learned men should be your tempters, by words or example! None of them can force you to one sin. God is greater and wiser than they, and more to be believed and obeyed; and

yoursalvation is not in the power of any of them. What, if your old companions tempt you! They can but TEMPT you; they cannot CONSTRAIN you to any evil. All the devils in hell, or men on earth, cannot damn you; no, nor make you sinners, if you do it not your ownelves. Refuse not Christ, and he will not refuse you. And when he is willing, if you be but willing,—truly willing to be saved from sin and misery, and to have Christ, grace, and glory in the use of the means which God hath appointed you,—neither earth nor hell can hinder your salvation. Who, but yourselves, now keep you from forsaking the company, the house, or the baits which have deceived you? Who, but yourselves, keep you from lamenting your sin and flying to Christ, from begging mercy and giving yourselves to God? If you think that serious Christians are the happiest persons in the world, refuse not to be such yourselves. It will be your own doing, your own wilful obstinacy, if you perish. But of this I have already said more in my “Call to the Unconverted.”

19. Dare you deliberately resolve or bargain to take your fleshly pleasures for your part, instead of all your hopes of heaven? I hope none of you are yet so mad. I think it is but few (if any) of the witches that make so express a bargain with the devil. If they did, O how they would tremble when they see their glass almost run out, and death at hand! If you dare not make such a bargain in plain words, O do not do the same in the choice of your hearts, and in the practice of your lives, deceiving yourselves by thinking that you do it not, when you do. It is God (and not you) that maketh the conditions of salvation and damnation. If you choose that life which, God hath told us, is the condition of damnation, and if you finally refuse that life which God hath made the condition of salvation, it will in effect be all the same as to choose damnation and to refuse salvation. He that chooseth deadly poison, or refuseth his necessary food, in effect chooseth death, and refuseth life. God hath said, “If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if, by the Spirit, ye mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.” (Rom. viii.) Christ tells you, that, unless you are born again and converted, you cannot enter into his kingdom; (John iii. 3, 5; Matt. xviii. 3;) and that “without holiness none shall see

God." Refuse these and choose the world and sinful pleasures, and you refuse salvation, and shall have no better than you choose. What you judge best, choose resolutely; and do not cheat yourselves.

20. Have you no natural love to your parents, or your country? O what inhuman cruelty it is, to break the hearts of those from whom you had your being, and who were tender of you when you could not help yourselves! Doubtless, one reason why God hath put so strong a love in parents to their children, and made your birth and breeding so costly to your mother, and made the milk which is formed in her own body to be the first nourishment of your lives, is, to oblige you to answerable love and obedience. And if, after all this, you prove worse than brutes, and become the grief of the souls of those who thus bred, and loved, and nourished you, do you think God will not at last make this far sadder to YOU, than ever it was to THEM? If cruelty to an enemy (much more to a stranger, to a neighbour, to a friend!) be so hateful to the God of love that it goeth not unrevengeed, O what will unnatural cruelty to parents bring upon you! Yea, even in this life, as honouring father and mother hath a special promise of prosperity and long life, so dishonouring and grieving parents is usually punished with some notable calamity, as a forerunner of the GREAT REVENGE hereafter.

You cannot but perceive that such as live in sensuality, lust, and wickedness, are the great troublers of church and state. God himself hath said it, "There is no peace to the wicked." (Isa. xlvi. 22.) "For the wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt: there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked. The way of peace they knew not; there is no judgment in their goings; they have made them crooked paths; whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace." (Isa. lix. 8.) They give no peace to others, and God will deny peace to themselves. Yea, the nature of their own sin denieth it to them, as broken bones and griping sickness deny ease to the body. And can you think that you shall become the shame of the church and the troublers of the land, and that God will not trouble you for it? If you will be enemies of God and of your country, you will prove the sorest enemies to yourselves.

Who is the gainer by all this? No one in the world; unless you will call it the 'devil's gain,' to have his malicious,

cruel will fulfilled. And surely to please the devil and a fleshly lust, fancy or appetite, can never compensate all your losses, nor comfort you under the sufferings which you wilfully bring upon yourselves.

Young men, the reason I thus deal with you by way of question is, that I may, if possible, engage your own thoughts in answering them. For I find most are aptest to learn of themselves: and indeed, without yourselves and your own serious thoughts, we cannot help you to true understanding. He that readeth the wisest lecture to boys or men who take no heed to what is said, yea, or who will not make it their own study to understand and remember, doth but cast away his labour. It is a hard thing to save any man from himself; but there is no saving any man without himself; without his own consent and labour. If you will but now take these twenty questions into your serious thoughts in secret, and consider them till you can give them such an answer as reason should allow, and as you will stand to before God when the mouth of all iniquity shall be stopped, I should not doubt but you will reap the benefit.

O what should a man do, who pitieth blind and wilful sinners, to make them willing and desirous of their own recovery! At this point all stops. And must it stop at this? Are you not willing? And will you not so much as consider the reasons that should make you willing, when heaven or hell must be the consequence? O what a thing is a blind mind, and a dead and hardened heart! What a befooling thing is fleshly lust! O what need had mankind of a Saviour! And what need have all of a Sanctifier, and of his holy word, and of all the holy means of grace!

Poor sinners! O let not the counsel and tears of your teachers be brought in as witnesses against you to your condemnation! O add not this to all their griefs, that their counsel and their sorrows must sink you the more deeply into hell! Alas, it were sadness enough to them to see that it is all vain! Let not this counsel of mine to you be rejected to the increase of your guilt and misery: if it do you no good, it will leave you worse. Were I present with you, I should not think it too much, would that prevail, to kneel down to you, and beg that you would but well consider your own case and ways, and think before of what will follow, and that you would study a wise and satisfactory answer to

the questions put to you till you are resolved. Your case is not desperate; mercy is yet offered to you; the day of grace is not yet past; God is not unwilling to receive you; Christ is not unwilling to be your Saviour, if you consent. No difficulty in the world maketh us afraid of your damnation, but your own foolish choice and your wicked wills. Our care is neither to make God merciful, to make Christ's merits and sacrifice sufficient, nor to get God to promise you pardon if you repent and come to him by Christ: all this is done already. But that which is undone, is, to make you considerate and truly willing, and to live as those that indeed are willing to let go the poisonous pleasures of sin, to take God and heaven for your hope and portion, and to be saved and ruled by Christ and sanctified by his Spirit, and to receive his daily help and mercies to this end, in the use of his appointed means; and, without this, you are undone for ever. And is there any hurt in all this? If there were, is it worse than the filth of sin, and the plagues that follow here and for ever? Worthy is he to hear at last, "Depart from me, thou worker of iniquity," and to be thrust away from the hopes of heaven, who, after all that can be said and done, chooseth sin as more desirable than this God, this Saviour, this Sanctifier, and this glory.

CHAP. VIII.

General Directions to the willing.

THOUGH the blindness and obstinacy of fleshly sinners too often frustrate great endeavours, yet we may well hope that the prayers and tears of parents, and the calls of God, may prevail with many; and I may hope, that some that have read what is before written, will say, 'We are willing to hear and learn that we may be saved: tell us what it is that we must do.' And on that hope, I shall give such miscarrying youth some general advice, as well as some counsel about their particular cases, and all as briefly as I am able. O that the Lord would make you who read this, to be truly willing to practise these ten directions following! How happy may you yet be!

1. Set your understandings seriously and diligently to

the work for which they are made, and consider well what is your interest and your duty, till you come to a fixed resolution as to what is for your good, and what is for your hurt, and what that good or hurt will be.

Should it be a hard thing to persuade a man in his wits to love himself, and to think what is good or hurtful to himself, especially for everlasting? Why are you men, if you will live like dogs? What do you with understandings, if you will not use them? For what will you use them, if not for your own good and to avoid misery? What good will you desire, if not everlasting joy and glory? And what hurt will you avoid, if not hell-fire? Have you reason, and can you live as if these were not worth the thinking on? Will you bestow your thoughts all the day and year upon you know not what nor why, and not one hour soberly think of such important things as these? O sirs! will you go out of the world before you well think whither you must go? Will you appear before the Judge of souls, to give up your great account before you think of it, and how it must be done? Is he worthy of the help of GRACE, that will not use his natural REASON? I beg it of you, as ever you care what becomes of you for ever, that you will some time alone set yourselves for one hour seriously to think, who made you, and why; what you owe him; how much you depend on him; what you have done against him; how you have spent your time; in what case your souls are; what Christ hath done for you; and what he is or would be to you; whether you are sanctified and forgiven; what God's Spirit must do for you; and what you must be and do, if you will be saved; and if it be otherwise, whither it is that you must go.

2. Therefore I next advise and entreat you, that you live not as at a great distance from eternity, foolishly flattering yourselves with the deceitful promises of long life: and were it sure to be an hundred years, remember how quickly and certainly they will end. Oh! time is nothing! therefore think of nothing in this world as separated from the world to come. Whatever you are doing, or saying, or thinking, the boat is hastening to the gulf. You are posting to death and judgment: which way soever you go, by wealth or poverty, health or sickness, busy or idle, single or married, you are going still to the grave and to eternity. Judge then of every thing as it tendeth to that end: and

think of nothing as not related, as a means, to the near and everlasting end. O choose and do what reason and conscience tell you, that you will at last earnestly wish you had chosen and done! When you are tempted to be prayerless and averse to good, or to run to lust or sinful pleasure, ask yourselves seriously, 'How will this look in the final review? What shall I think of this at last? Will it be my comfort, or my torment?' O judge now as you will judge at last.

3. My third counsel is, If your consciences tell you that you have foolishly sinned against God and your salvation, make not light of it; but, presently and openly, go to your parents or masters and penitently confess your sinful life generally, and your known and open sins in particular. But such secret sins as wronged not them and will blast your reputation, you are not bound to confess openly, unless the ease or future direction of your doubtful and troubled consciences require it. But when your vicious fleshly life is known, excuse it not, hide not the evil by lies or extenuation. When you have wronged your parents or masters by disobedience, and by robbing them of part of your time and service, if not also of their money or goods, go to them with sorrow and shame, and confess how foolishly you have served the flesh, to the injury of them, and to the offending of God, and to the unspeakable hurt of your own souls. Lament your sin, ask them forgiveness, entreat their prayers, and their careful government of you for the time to come, and sincerely promise reformation and obedience.

Yea, if you have had familiar companions in your sin, go to them, and tell them, 'God and reason have convinced me of my sinful folly, who have for brutish and fleshly pleasure wilfully broken the laws of my Creator and Redeemer, and, for nothing, undone and lost my soul, if Christ do not recover me by sound repentance. O how madly have we despised our salvation! How easily might we have known, had we but searched and considered the word of God, that we were displeasing God, undoing ourselves, and making work for future sorrows! Should I, when I know this and when I know that I am going to death and judgment, yet obstinately go on and be a hardened rebel against Christ and grace, what can I expect but to be forsaken of God and lost for ever? O therefore, as we have sinned together, let us repent together! You have been a snare to me, and I to

you. We have been agents of the devil, to draw each other to sin and misery: certainly all this must sooner or later be repented of. O let us join together in sorrow, reformation, and a holy and obedient life. If you will not consent, I here declare to you before God, (for I know that he seeth and heareth me,) that I will be your companion in sin no more. I beg pardon for tempting you. I resolve by God's grace to prefer my salvation, and my obedience to God, before a base and beastly pleasure. Whatever you say against it, I will never more forsake my salvation to follow you, nor ever take you to be wiser than God, or better friends to me than my Saviour; neither will I consider your words more to be regarded than God's word, nor a merry cup or vanity, to be better than heaven, nor temperance and holiness to be worse than hell. If you will not be undeceived with me, I will pray for you; but I renounce your sinful company, and my warning will be a witness against you to your confusion.'

Hesitate not at the scorn of fools, nor at the shame of such repentance and confession: it may profit others. But, however, it is no more than, in hope, you owe them whom you have wronged and endangered by sin. And it will lay some new obligation on yourselves to amend, by doing what you have so professed: and surely conscience and shame will somewhat the more hinder you from ever more joining with them in the sin which you have so bewailed and renounced. Think not this too much, for there is no jesting with God, and with everlasting joy or misery.

4. My next counsel is, Presently, understandingly, and considerately, renew the covenant which you made in baptism with God your Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.

Consider whether to be a Christian is not necessary to your salvation; and then consider what it is to be a Christian, and whether it be not a far higher thing, than merely to take that name upon you, be of that party, to join with the right church, and to have the bare words and picture of believers; and then consider whether God will be mocked with shows and ceremonies, dead formalities, and false professions; and whether the lifeless carcase or image of Christianity will be taken by God instead of the life and power of it, and will ever save a soul. Yea, consider whether a false, counterfeit Christian, bred up under Christian instructions and examples, does not make your guilt far greater,

and your case more miserable than Americans or Indians who never heard what you have heard. When perhaps you have spoken against hypocrites yourselves, consider whether there be any more notorious hypocrites than such as you, who say you are Christians, and yet live to the flesh in the odious sins which Christ abhorreth. Think what a dreadful thing it is, to profess a religion which condemneth you, and to repeat that creed which you believe not, and those petitions in the Lord's-prayer which you desire not, and those commandments which you break and which will condemn you!—To rebel against God, while you say you believe in him; to despise Christ's government, while you say you trust him for salvation; to ask for his grace, when you would not have it to sanctify you and to save you from sin; to beg mercy of God, and to reject this mercy, and to have no mercy on yourselves! O think what a doleful case it is to see distracted sinners such hypocrites, playing with such contradictions so near God's bar and in his sight; and to make no better use of prayers and the name of Christians, and the profession of the truth, than to give the devil more matter to accuse you, and conscience to torment you, and a righteous God to say to you at last, 'Out of thy own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked rebel! Didst thou not confess, that Jesus was the Christ, and that thou didst believe the Gospel and the life to come? and yet thou didst live in the wilful disobeying of Christ and the Gospel, and the base contempt of God and thy salvation.'

And who have considered the sad case of hypocrites, that call themselves CHRISTIANS to their own condemnation when they are none such, then think seriously what the covenant was which was made for you in your baptism, and which you have taken on you to own. Think what it is devotedly to trust to God as your reconciled Father, and devotedly to trust to Christ as your Saviour, your great Teacher, Governor, and Mediator with the Father; what it is devotedly to trust the Holy Spirit to illuminate, sanctify and quicken you in a holy life, and to strengthen and comfort you against all your trials and while you are under them. Consider what it is to take the flesh, the world, and the devil, (as they are against this holy life and heavenly hope,) for your enemies, and to enlist yourselves under Christ, in avowed war to the death against them. Think how you

have perfidiously broken this covenant, on which all the hope of your salvation lieth. And then, if you dare not utterly renounce all that hope, presently and resolvedly renew this covenant. Lament your violation of it to God: do it, not only in a passion, but upon serious consideration make that choice and resolution which you dare stand to at a dying hour, and on which you may believe that God for Christ's sake, will accept you, and forgive you. O think what a mercy it is to have a Saviour, who, after all your heinous sins, will bring you reconciled as sons to God, for the merits of his sacrifice and righteousness, and by his powerful intercession; and will send from heaven the Spirit of God into your hearts, to renew those blind, dead, carnal minds to God's holy image; and will dwell in you and carry on your sanctification to the end! Thankfully and joyfully accept this covenant and grace, and again give up yourselves to God, your Father, Saviour, and Sanctifier! but be sure that you do it absolutely, without deceitful exceptions and reserves; and that you do it resolvedly, and not only in a frightened mood; and yet that you do it as in the strength of the grace of Christ, not trusting the steadfastness of your own deceitful, mutable hearts. When you can truly say, that you unfeignedly consent, and renew this covenant in your hearts, then go the next opportunity to the sacrament of the Lord's-supper, and there penitently and faithfully renew it openly in the solemn way that Christ hath appointed you; thankfully profess your trust in Christ, and receive a sealed pardon of your sins, and a title to everlasting life; and settle your conversation in the communion of saints, as you hope to live with such for ever.

5. Henceforward set yourselves, as the true scholars of Christ, to learn his doctrine; as his true subjects, to know his laws; as those that trust their souls into his hand, to understand and firmly believe his promises for this life and for that which is to come; and as the blessed man, "to delight in the law of the Lord, and meditate in it day and night." (Psal. i. 2, 3.) As you were wont to steal some hours from God and your masters, to go to the house of sin and death, so now get such hours as you lawfully can from your other employments and diversions, but especially on the Lord's-day; get alone, beg mercy and grace from God, and set yourselves to read the Bible, and with it some cate-

chisms, and some sound and serious treatises of divinity which are the most suitable to your state.

It is young men who have miscarried, and who, being convinced, are willing to turn to God, whom I am now directing. And therefore supposing that you will ask me what books I would recommend to you, I will answer you accordingly, supposing still that you prefer the Bible.

(1.) For the full resolving of your hearts to a sound repentance and a holy life, read Joseph Alleine's book of "Conversion," Richard Alleine's "Vindication of Godliness," and their book of "Covenanting with God," and "The Believer's Victory over the World," Mr. Whately's "New Birth;" and some of the old sermons of Repentance, such as Mr. Stock's, Mr. Perkins', Mr. Dikes's, and Mr. Marbury's; Bunny's "Correction of Parson's Book for Resolution," John Rogers's "Doctrine of Faith," and William Fenner's books; Samuel Smith "On the first and the fifty-first Psalms," and his "Great Assize," and on "The Eunuch's Conversion;" Bifield's "Marrow," Mr. Howe's "Blessedness of the Righteous," and of "Delighting in God."

And if you would have any of mine, read the "Call to the Unconverted," or the "Treatise of Conversion," and the "Directions for a Sound Conversion," and "Now or Never," and "A Saint or a Brute," or which of all these God's providence shall afford you.

(2.) If you would have help to try your hearts lest they be deceived, read Alleine's foresaid "Book of the Covenant," and Pinkes's "Trial of Sincere Love to Christ." Many books of marks are extant, Bifield's, Rogers's, Harsnet's, Berris's, &c., and Mr. Chishull and Mr. Mead of being "Almost Christians." If you would have any of mine, read the "Right Method for Peace of Conscience," and "Directions for Weak Christians," in which are to be found the characters of the false, the weak, and the strong.

(3.) For the daily government of heart and life, read the "Practice of Piety," Scudder's "Daily Walk," Mr. Reyner's "Directions," (three excellent books,) and Mr. Corbet's small "Private Thoughts." And if you would have any of mine, read my "Family Book," and "The Divine Life, the Life of Faith, or the Saint's Rest," and, for those that can great ones, "Christian Directory."

(4.) And it will not be unuseful to read some profitable history, especially the Lives of exemplary persons, and the funeral sermons which characterize them. I have prefaced to two, which are eminently worth your reading, and most true,—both young men,—that is, “John Janeway’s Life,” and “Joseph Alleine’s Life and Christian Letters;” and I have given you the true exemplary characters (in their funeral sermons) of Mr. Ashhurst, (an excellent pattern for apprentices and tradesmen,) Mr. Stubs, Mr. Corbet, Mr. Wadsworth, and of Mrs. Baker. Read Mr. Samuel Clark’s “Lives,” his “Martyrology,” and his “Mirror,” Dr. Beard’s “Examples,” or “Fox’s Book of Martyrs.” Some Church-history, the History of the Reformation from Popery, and the history of our own country, will be useful.

(5.) As you grow up to more judgment, you may read methodical sums of divinity, especially Ames’s “Marrow,” and his “Cases of Conscience,” (which are translated into English,) and Commentaries on the Scriptures by various excellent authors.

Great store of all sorts of good books (through the great mercy of God) are common among us: he that cannot buy, may borrow.

But take heed that you lose not your time in reading romances, play-books, vain jests, seducing or reviling disputes, or needless controversies.

This course of reading Scripture and good books will be many ways to your great advantage.

(1.) It will, above all other ways, increase your knowledge.

(2.) It will help your resolutions and holy affections, and direct your lives.

(3.) It will make your lives pleasant. The knowledge, the usefulness, and the variety to be found in these works, will be a continual recreation to you, unless you are utterly besotted or debauched.

(4.) The pleasure of this will turn you from your filthy, fleshly pleasure. You will have no need to go for delight to a play-house, a drinking-house, or to beastly lusts.

(5.) It will keep you from the sinful loss of time, by idleness or unprofitable employment or pastimes. You will cast away cards and dice, when you find the sweetness of useful learning.

But be sure that you choose the most useful and necessary subjects, and that you seek knowledge for the love of holiness and obedience.

6. The sixth part of my advice is, forsake ill company; and converse with such as will be helps to your knowledge, holiness, and obedience, and not such as will draw you to sin and misery.

You have found by sad experience what power ill company hath on fools; with such persons a merry tale, a laugh, a jest, a scorn, a merry cup, and a bad example and persuasion, do more than reason, or God's authority, or the love of their souls. A physician may go among the sick and mad to cure them; and a wise man that seeth these will pity them, and hate sin the more. But what do you do there, where you have already caught the infection of their disease? The mind of a man is known much by the company which he chooseth; and if you choose ill, no wonder if you speed ill. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." (Prov. xiii. 20.) "Who-so keepeth the law is a wise son, but he that is a companion of riotous men shall shame his father." (Prov. xxviii. 7.) David saith "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts." (Psalm cxix. 63.) "I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers, I have hated the congregation of evil-doers, and will not sit with the wicked." (Psalm xxvi. 4, 5.) "Depart from me, ye evil-doers, for I will keep the commandments of my God." (Psalm cxix. 115.)

7. Especially be sure that you run not wilfully upon temptation, but keep as far from every tempting bait and object as you can. Fire and gunpowder, or fire and straw must be kept at a sufficient distance. No man is long safe at the very brink of danger, especially if it be his own choice, and more especially if it be a sin to which his nature is much inclined. No wise man will trust corrupted nature very far, especially where he hath often fallen already. The best man that is, should live in fear when an enticing bait of sin is near him. If David, who prayed, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity," had better practised it, O what a heinous sin had he escaped! Had he "made a covenant with his eyes," as Job did, what wounds had he prevented! The feast that you see not, the cup that is a mile off, the person

that is far distant, the words which you hear not, are not those of which you are most in danger. But when tempting meat and drink are before you, and the tempting person hath secret familiarity with you, and tempting or provoking words are at your ears, then (alas!) many have need of more grace, resolution, and mortification than they have.

If you knew well what sin is, and what is the consequence, you would be more watchful and resolved against temptations than against thieves, fire, or the places infected by the plague.

8. Make it the chief study of your lives to understand what man's everlasting hope is, to get a lively well-settled belief of it, to bring your souls to take it joyfully for your true felicity and end, and thence daily to fetch the powerful motives of your duty and your patience, and your contenting comfort in life and at your death.

(1.) The end is the life of all the means. If heavenly blessedness be not the chief end for which you live, hope, and labour in the world, your whole lives will be but carnal, vain, and the way to misery: for the means can be no better than the end. God, that is the BEGINNING, is also our END; we are made and governed by him and for him. Heavenly glory is the sight of his glory, and the everlasting perfection and pleasure of joyful mutual love.

But we are not the noblest creatures, next to God in excellency and desert, yea, we are sinners who have deserved to be cast out from his love. And therefore, as in the way we must come to him by a Saviour, so as the blessed end we must enjoy him by a Mediator. And to see God's glory in Christ, and the heavenly Jerusalem, the blessed society of saints and angels, continually flaming in love, joy and praises to the most holy God,—this, this is the felicity for which we labour, suffer, and hope.

(2.) And O how great and how needful a work it is, to search, study, and pray for so firm a belief of this unseen glory, as may so resolve, engage, and comfort us in some good measure, as if we had seen it with these eyes! O what men would one hour's being in heaven make us, or one clear sight of it! Faith hath a greater work to do than a dreaming or dead opinion can perform. If it be first not well-grounded and well-exercised upon God's love, promise and glory from day to day, you will find cause sadly to lament

the weakness of it. For this use you have great need of the help of such books, as open clearly the evident proofs of the Christian verity, which I have briefly done in the beginning of the second part of my "Life of Faith," and more largely in two other books, viz. "The Unreasonableness of Infidelity," and "The Reasons of the Christian Religion." A firm belief of the world to come, is that which must make us serious Christians, and overcome the snares of worldly vanity.

Your faith being well settled, set yourselves daily to use it, and live by it: dwell in the joyful hopes of the heavenly glory. What is a man that liveth not in the use of reason? And you must know that you have as daily use for your FAITH, as for your REASON. Without reason, you can neither safely eat nor drink; nor converse with men as a man, but as a bedlamite; nor do any business that concerneth you; and therefore you must live by your reason. And without faith you can neither please God, nor obtain salvation,—no, nor use your reason for any thing higher than to serve your appetites and purvey for the flesh; and therefore must "live by faith," or live like beasts and worse than beasts, and cannot otherwise live to God, or in the hopes of blessedness hereafter. O consider that the difference between living chiefly upon and for an earthly and fleshly felicity, or a heavenly one, is the great difference between the holy and the unholy, and is the foregoer of the difference between those in heaven and those in hell.

9. Still remember that the GREAT MEANS of all the good that here or hereafter you can expect, is the GREAT MEDIATOR, the GREAT TEACHER, RULER, and INTERCESSOR for his people; and therefore, out of him you can do nothing. All duty that you offer to God, must be by his mediation; and so must all mercy which you receive from God. "To come to God by him, who is the way, the truth and the life," must be your daily work of faith. His blood must wash you from all past sin, and from the guilt of daily failings and infirmities. None but he can effectually teach you to know God and yourselves, your duty and your everlasting hopes. None but he can render your persons, praises and actions acceptable to God; because you are sinners, and unmeet for God's acceptance without a Mediator. "All power in heaven and earth is given to him," and your lives and souls are at his will. It is he that must judge you, and with whom

you hope to live in glory. Therefore you must so “live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved you and given himself for you,” that you may say it is he that liveth in you. (Gal. ii. 20, 21.) This is the fountain from whence you must daily fetch your strength and comfort.

10. And still remember that it is by the operation of the HOLY SPIRIT that the Father and the Son do sanctify souls, and regenerate and breed them up for glory. It is by the Holy Ghost that God dwelleth in us by love, and Christ dwelleth in us by faith. Therefore see that you rest not in corrupted nature, and trust not to yourselves or to the flesh. Your souls are dead to God and holiness, and your duties dead, till the Spirit of Christ do quicken them. You are blind to God and mad in sin, till the Spirit illuminate you, and give you understanding. You are like enemies, out of love with God, with heaven and holiness, till this Spirit reconcile and sanctify your wills. You will have no manlike, spiritual and holy pleasure, till the Holy Spirit renew your hearts, and make them fit to delight in God. O that men knew the great necessity of the illuminating, quickening, sanctifying and comforting influence of the Spirit of God, how far would they be from deriding it, as some profane ones do! By this Holy Spirit the sacred records were written; and by the miracles of Christ and his apostles, and by the evangelists and prophets, they were sealed and delivered to the churches. By this Spirit, the orders and government of the church were settled; and by Him we are enlightened to understand the Scriptures and are inclined to love them, and delightfully to believe and obey them. Study therefore obediently these writings of the Holy Ghost, and confidently trust them. O be not found among the resisters or the neglecters of the Spirit’s help and motions, when proud self-confidence or fleshly lust do rise against them.

Christ’s bodily presence is taken from the earth; he promised, instead of it, (which was but in one place at once,) to send his Spirit, which is to the soul more than the sun’s light to the eye, and can shine in all the world at once. This is his agent on earth, by whom (in teachers and learners) he carrieth on his saving work. This is his advocate, who pleadeth his cause effectually against unbelief, fleshly lusts, and worldly wisdom. This is the “well of living

water, springing up in us to everlasting life;" the name, the mark of God on souls; the Divine regenerator, the author of God's holy image; and the Divine nature, even Divine life, and light and love; the conqueror of the world and flesh, the strengthener of the weak, the confirmer of the wavering, the comforter of the sad, and the pledge, earnest and first-fruits of everlasting life. O therefore pray earnestly for the Spirit of grace, carefully obey him, and joyfully praise God, in the sense of his holy encouragement and help!

CHAP. IX.

Additional Counsel to Young Men, who are bred up to Learning, and public work, especially to the Sacred Ministry, in the Universities and Schools.

1. IT was the case of the London apprentices, who are nearest me, and with whom I have oft to do, which first provoked me to this work; it was their case therefore which was chief in my intention. But had I as near an opportunity to be a counsellor to others, there are three sorts whom I should have preferred, for the sake of the church and kingdom, to which they are of greater signification:—

(1.) Those in the schools and universities, who are bred up for the sacred ministry.

(2.) Those in schools, colleges, and in the inns of court, who are bred up the knowledge of the law.

(3.) The sons of noblemen, knights and others, that are bred up for some places in the government of the kingdom, according to their several ranks. And of these it is first to whom I shall most freely speak.

2. And *first* I shall mention the importance of their case, and *secondly* the danger that they are in of miscarrying, and what they should do to escape it.

3. And indeed their condition, as they prove good or bad, is of unspeakable importance.

(1.) To the church and to the souls of men.

(2.) To the peace of the kingdom.

(3.) To themselves. And,

(4.) To their parents, above the common case of others.

4. (1.) Of how great importance the quality of the clergy is to the church and to men's salvation, many thousands have found to their joy and happiness; and, I fear, many more thousands have found to their sorrow and destruction. And then of what importance the quality of scholars and young candidates is to the soundness of the clergy, I need not many words to make men of reason and experience know.

5. (2.) God who hath instituted the sacred office, and by his Spirit qualifyeth men for the work, doth usually work according to the fitness of their work and their qualifications. As he doth the works of nature according to the fitness of natural second causes, (giving more light by the sun, than by a star or candle, &c.) so he doth the works of morality, according to the fitness of moral causes. Holiness is the true morality, and usually wrought by holy means. And though it be so supernatural in several respects, (as it is wrought by the supernatural revelation or doctrine, or a supernatural teacher Christ, by the operation of the Holy Ghost a supernatural agent, commonly called 'infusion,' and 'raising the soul to God'—a supernatural object, and to a better state than that of corrupted nature,) though holiness be thus supernatural, yet we are natural recipients and agents, and it is our natural faculties which grace reneweth, and, when thus renewed, they learn to exercise the acts of holiness. God worketh on us according to our nature, and by causes suited to our capacities and to the work. As he useth not to give men the knowledge of languages, philosophy or any art, by the teaching of the ignorant and unskilful, so much as by learned and skilful teachers, we must say the same of our teachers of sacred truth; and though grace be the gift of the Holy Ghost, experience constraineth all sorts of Christians almost to acknowledge what I here assert. Why else do they so earnestly contend, that they may live under the teachers which they count the best? Will heretics teach men the truth as well as the orthodox? Why then is there such a stir made against heretics in the world? And why are the clergy so eager to silence such as preach down that which they approve? Will Papists choose Protestant teachers, or will Protestants choose Papists?

And as men are unfit to teach others that which they

know not themselves, so unbelieving and unholy men are far less fit to persuade the hearers to faith and holiness, than believing, holy teachers are. Though some of them may be furnished with the same notions and words which serious, godly teachers use, yet usually, even in that, they are greatly wanting; because they have not so thoroughly studied saving truth, nor perceived its evidence, nor set their hearts upon it, nor deeply received and retained it. For serious affection quickeneth the mind to serious consideration, and causeth men speedily and deeply to receive that truth which others receive but slowly, superficially, or not at all. How eagerly and prosperously do men study that which they strongly love! And how hardly do they learn that in which they have no delight, much more that which they hate, and against which their very natures rise in opposition!

But if a hypocrite should have good notions and words, yet he will be usually greatly wanting in that serious delivery which is ordinarily needful to make the hearers serious Christians. That which cometh not from the heart of the speaker, seldom reacheth the heart of the hearer. As light causeth light, so heat causeth heat; and the dead are unfit to generate life. The arrow will not go far or deep, if both the bow and arm that shoot it be not strong; constant experience telleth us undeniably of the different success of the reading or saying of a pulpit-lesson, as of a dull or a mere affected speech, and of the judicious and serious explication and application of well-chosen matter which the experienced speaker well understandeth, and which he uttereth from the feeling of his soul. Neither the love of a benefice nor the love of applause will make a man preach in that manner, as the love of God, the lively belief of heaven and hell, and the desire of saving souls will do. The means will be chosen and used, and the work done, agreeably to the principle and the end.

But if a stage hypocrite should learn the knack or art of preaching, with affected fervency and seeming zeal, yet art and paint will not reach the power and beauty of nature. Usually affectation bewrayeth itself; and, when it is discerned, the hypocrisy is loathed. And it faileth ordinarily, in point of constancy: "Will the hypocrite pray always?"

(Job xxvii. 10.) Art will not hold out like nature: when the motives of gain (which is their godliness) cease, the pleasures of applause, which are the means, will likewise cease. Yea, it usually turneth to a malignant reviling of the serious piety which they counterfeited before, or of the persons whose applause they did affect. For where the hypocrisy of the preacher is discovered by his contradictory and self-condemning words or life, and the people accordingly judge of him as he is, his proud heart cannot bear it, but he turneth a malicious reproacher of these whose applause he sought,—thinking, by disgracing them, to defend his own esteem, by making their censure of him to seem incredible or contemptible.

And if the hypocrite should hold on his stage-affectation with plausible art, yet it will not reach to an answerable discharge of the rest of his ministerial work. It is from MEN that he expecteth his reward; and it is in the sight of men, on the public stage, that he appeareth in his borrowed glory. But in his family, his conversation, or in his ministerial duty to men in private, he answereth not his public show. He will not set himself to instruct and win the ignorant and impenitent, zealously to save men from their sins, and to raise men's earthly minds to heaven, by praying with them, by heavenly discourse, and by a holy conversation; nor will such a person be at much cost or labour to do good.

6. But (alas!) the far greatest part of bad, unexperienced clergymen do prove so hurtful to the church, that they have not so much as the hypocrite's seeming zeal and holiness with which to cloak their sin or to profit their people. The sad case of the Christian world proclaimeth this; not only in the Southern and Eastern churches, Abassia, Egypt, Syria, Armenia, the Greeks, Muscovites, &c.; nor only the Papist priests in the West; but too great a number in the Reformed churches. And it is more lamentable than wonderful: for there goeth so much to the general planting of a worthy, faithful ministry, that it is the great mercy of God that such are not more rare.

(1.) If they have not natural capacity, there is not matter for art and ordinary grace to elevate.

(2.) If this capacity be not improved by diligent and long study, (which most of them will not undergo,) it is no wonder if it be useless, or much worse.

(3.) If it be not directed by a sound and skilful teacher, but fall into the hands of an erroneous or bad guide, you may conjecture what the fruits will be.

(4.) If good parts and studies be not kept from the mischievous enmity of a worldly mind and fleshly lusts, how easily are they corrupted, and turned against their use and end, to the great hurt of the church, and of themselves !

(5.) If those that choose prelates or church-governors, should be either of corrupted judgments, wicked hearts, or vicious lives, how probable is it that they will choose such as themselves, or, at least, such as will not much cross their lusts !

(6.) If such worldly and wicked prelates be the ordainers, examiners, judges, and institutors of the inferior clergy, or be their rulers, it is easy to know what sort of men they will introduce and countenance, and what sort they will silence and discourage.

(7.) If lay-patrons have the choice of parish pastors, and if most or many of them should be such as Christ tells us the rich most usually are,—a worldly and sensual sort of men, or such as have no lively sense of heavenly things,—we may easily conjecture what men such patrons are likely to present.

(8.) If the people, as anciently, have any where the choice, when most of them are bad, what men will they choose ? Or if they have not the choice, yet they are so considerable that their consent or dissent, their love or hatred, will sway much with those that live much among them. But I must afterwards say more concerning these impediments.

7. And as all these impediments are likely to make worthy pastors to be rare, so it is certain that the naughtiness of such as are here described is likely to make them exceedingly hurtful, which is easily gathered from

(1.) What they will be.

(2.) What they will do.

(3.) In what manner they will do it.—In all which, the effects may be probably foreseen.

And, FIRST, It is supposed (1.) that they will be worldly-minded men, who will take gain for godliness, accounting that to be the better cause ; and they will judge those to be the best persons who most befriend their worldly interest. They will love the fleece, more than the safety of the flock ;

and their benefices, more than the benefit of the people's souls; they will serve their bellies more than Christ; (Phil. iii. 18; Rom. xvi. 17;) and being lovers of the world, they will be real enemies to God. "The love of money (in them) will be the root of all evil." As Achan and Gehazi, they will think they have reason for what they do; and, if tempted, will with Judas betray their Master.

(II.) And their fleshly desires will have little restraints, except what one sin doth put upon another, or what God's controlling providence may give them. Their reputation may make them avoid that which would be their disgrace. But, secretly, they will serve their appetites, and fleshly lusts. For they will neither have God's effectual grace, nor much tenderness of conscience to restrain them.

(III.) And pride will be their very nature. Esteem and applause will be taken for their due, and will seem almost as necessary to them as the air, and as water to a fish. Ambition will be their complexion, and will actuate their thoughts.—All these vices will so corrupt their judgments, that there will want little more than worldly interest and temptations to turn them to any heresy or ill design.

(IV.) It is much to be feared, that their profanation of holy things will make them worse and more impenitent than other men; partly by the righteous judgment of God in forsaking them; and partly, by the hardening of their own hearts, by their long abuse of that truth which should have sanctified them. For when they have imprisoned it in unrighteousness, and long played, as hypocrites, with that which they preached and professed to believe, custom will so harden them that their knowledge will have little power on their hearts.

SECONDLY. And no wonder if the fruit be like the tree. These vices will not be idle; neither will they bring forth holy or just effects.

(1.) It is likely, such persons will make it the chief care of their minds to get that which they most love; and that they will study preferment, which is the clergyman's nearest way to wealth.

(2.) And then they must be flatterers of those that can prefer them; or, at least, must not seriously call them to repentance, or tell them of their sin.

(3.) In all differences, of what consequence soever, they

will usually pass their judgment on the side of such as can prefer or can hurt them.

(4.) In religious controversies they will usually be on the side that is for their worldly interest, be it right or wrong.

(5.) They will harden great men in their sins, by flattering them.

(6.) They will harden the profane, by pleasing them in their ignorance and ungodliness, to get them on their side.

(7.) They will be enemies to serious and religious people, because they discern the vice and hypocrisy which these worldly men would conceal; and because they honour such as fear the Lord, while vile persons are contemned in their eyes. (Psal. xv. 4.)

(8.) They will turn their preaching against such, partly to vent their malignant spleen, and partly to overcome them as their enemies. With this view, they will describe their serious piety as 'faction, self-opinion and hypocrisy,' will raise jealousies against them in the minds of rulers, will increase the rage and malignity of the rabble, and will extenuate the sin and danger of the most ungodly sort who take their own part.

(9.) They will shame their office and profession by base mutability, turning with the time and tide as temptations from their worldly interest lead them.

(10.) They will, by their making light of godliness, and by the scandal or unholiness of their own conversation, make the vulgar believe that godliness is either a cheat, or a matter of mere words and outward observances; that it only signifies to be of the religion of their rulers, and that it is a thing to keep men in some awe and order in a worldly life.

(11.) Their ignorance often makes them unfit for hard controversies; and yet their pride and malignity will make them forward to talk of what they do not understand, and from thence to take an occasion to revile those whom they dislike; and, speaking evil of what they never knew, they will make up their want of knowledge with outward titles, pretended authority, confident affirmation, censorious reproach, and violently oppressing by power the gainsayers.

(12.) If any man's conscience be awakened, loudly calling him to true repentance, they will either tell him 'it is needless, melancholy trouble,' and give him an opiate of

some flattering, false comfort, or they will preach him asleep again with unsuitable things, or by a cold, dull and formal method of managing holy things.

9. THIRDLY. Such are too often the plagues of the church and state, as well as injurious to individual souls.

(1.) Their ignorance or scandalous ambition, their covetousness and other sins, do render them so contemptible in the eyes of many, that it tends likewise to bring into contempt the church and all religion. When nobles, gentlemen, and the common people think basely of the ministry, the church, and religion for their sakes, how sad is the case of such a people! The Gospel is half taken away from a nation when it is taken out of their esteem and brought under their reproach and scorn. A scorned clergy will prepare for the scorning of religion; and an ignorant, a worldly, ambitious, fleshly, and scandalous clergy, will be a scorned clergy with too many. Erasmus much disgraced the German Protestants, when he described some of them as having a bottle of wine at their girdle, and his translation of the New Testament in their hands, ready to dispute for it with blows. So do several others, that tell the world how many of the Lutheran ministers are given to excess of drink, and to unpeaceable reviling of Dissenters. And the same Erasmus much depreciated either bishops or Scotists, when, speaking of the Scotist bishop of London who was Dr. Collet's adversary, he said, 'I have known some such whom I would not call *knaves*, but I never knew one whom I could call a *Christian*.' Not only drunkenness and brutish sins, but factiousness, envy, unpeaceableness, contentiousness, and especially a proud and worldly mind, will be, in most men's eyes, more ugly in a minister than in others. For where there is a double dedication to God, that which is common will seem unclean; and when there should be a double holiness, sin will appear to be double sin.

(2.) And indeed a carnal, worldly clergy are oft the most powerful and obstinate hinderers of the peace and quietness of church and state.

(1.) By fitting themselves to the humours of those in whose power their preferments are, be it never so much to the injury of men's souls, bodies or estates, or against the public good and safety! Or else, leading the people into error, for popular applause.

(II.) By a domineering humour in matters of religion; taking themselves to be lawgivers to others; and taking their wits and wills to be uncontrollable; laying heaven and hell upon their own inventions or conceits, and on the controversies which they endlessly make, but do not understand; and hereticating or anathematizing such as take them not for oracles, or Rabbies that must not be gainsayed.

(III.) By corrupting the Christian religion and the church, in departing from the Christian simplicity and purity; and forming their doctrine, worship, and government, according to their own carnal minds and worldly interest.

(IV.) And then militating against the best men that contradict them or stoop not to them, though it be to the distraction and division of the churches. And usually they are the hardest to be brought to peace and reconciliation, and do most against whenever it is attempted by peace-makers, who pity the woful case of such a self-disturbing people.

10. All this hath been so long manifested to the sad experience of mankind, in most ages of the Christian world, that it is not to be denied or concealed. And should we use the honour of the church and clergy as a pretence for the denying or the hiding of such grievous sins, it would but make us partakers of their guilt, displease the most holy God, who will have sin shamed, in whomsoever it may be found, and will harden others who are ready to imitate them. The Holy Scriptures open and shame the sins even of Adam, Noah, Lot, David, Solomon, Peter, and of God's chosen people the Jews: and this was not a faulty uncovering of their nakedness, but a necessary disgrace of sin, a manifestation of the holiness and justice of God, and a warning to others that we should not sin with such examples before our eyes. (1 Cor. x. 6—8.)

I have written the History of the Bishops and Councils of former ages, in which, with their virtues, I have opened their miscarriages. Some blame it, as if it were uncovering their nakedness. Yet I have said nothing but what is openly proclaimed of them long ago, by their own greatest flatterers; and it was Christ himself that said, "Remember Lot's wife." The pit into which so many have fallen must be uncovered; and God and holiness must be honoured, rather than those that dishonour them by sin. Sin, confessed and forsaken, is not so dangerous, as sin denied and extenuated. He that

hideth it, shall not prosper. "Sin is a reproach to any people." (Prov. xiv. 34; vi. 33.) Even God that forgiveth it to the penitent, will shame it,—to keep others from committing it. He that minceth or hideth it, tempteth others to imitate it.

Alas! what work have a worldly, proud, and ignorant clergy made in most Christian nations, these thirteen hundred years! Athanasius, Chrysostom, Isidore-Pelusiota, &c. but especially, excellent Gregory Nazianzene have told it us, even of their flourishing times, more plainly than I now intend to do:—They have loved this present world; some set themselves, by venting new and odd opinions, to draw disciples after them for applause; some furiously hereticating those that differed from them by ambiguous words, and making themselves lords of the faith of others, and their ignorant dictates the oracles of the church; striving who should be thought wisest and best, but especially who should be greatest, as if Christ had never judged in that controversy; flattering emperors and princes, till they got wealth and power by them, and then overtopping them, and troubling the world by rebellious and bloody wars; tearing the churches in pieces, on pretence of union, killing and burning men on pretence of faith and charity, and cursing from Christ his faithful servants, on pretence of using the keys of Christ's kingdom; setting up themselves and a worldly kingdom, on pretence of the spiritual government of Christ; making merchandise of souls, on pretence of feeding and ruling them; cherishing the people in ignorance, sloth, and carnality, that they might be more obedient to their tyranny, and less capable of opposing it; hating and destroying the most conscionable Christians, as heretics, or schismatics, because they are the greatest enemies to their sin, and desirous of reformation; provoking princes to become the bloody persecutors of such, for the upholding of their worldly state and dignity; yea, making them their licitors or executioners, to destroy such as they condemn.

Such work as this hath destroyed the Greek or Eastern churches, and set up Turkish tyranny by dividing Christians, weakening, and ruining the emperors, making religion a mere image of lifeless formality and ceremony, and a powerless dying thing. Such a clergy have darkened and lamentably brought low the Christian churches in Muscovy, Armenia,

Georgia, Mongrelia, Syria, and Abassia, have extirpated them in Nubia, and brought them to what they are in Italy, Poland, Hungary, Spain France, and most of Germany : such a clergy have brought Ireland from the laudable state in which it was in the days of Malachias, as Bernard described it, into the barbarous and brutish ignorance and bloody inhumanity at which it is now arrived ; they had the chief hand in the murder of two hundred thousand persons in the late rebellious insurrection. Such a clergy had a chief hand in the civil wars in England in the reign of William Rufus, King Stephen, Henry the Third, King John, &c., —the subject of Pryn's History of the Treasons of Prelates. And (alas !) such a corrupt sort of ministers keep up the division of the German Protestants, under the name of Lutherans and Calvinists, about consubstantiation, church-images, and doctrines of predestination not understood. And had the Low Countries ever had the stirs between Remonstrants and Contra-remonstrants, or England and Scotland ever had the miserable contentions, wars and cruelties between the former episcopal parties and the Laudians, or between them and the Presbyterians and Independents, and all the silencings, and woful contentions and schisms that have thence followed, if the vices of the clergy had not been the cause ? And had we continued in this case these last twenty years, silencing, reviling, and prosecuting about two thousand conscionable preachers, and writing and preaching still for the purpose of executing the laws against them, the prosecuted people flying from such a clergy as from ravening wolves, and some censuring the innocent with the guilty,—could all this have been done by a wise, holy, and peaceable clergy, that served God in self-denial, and knew what it was to seek the good of the church and of souls ? When we yet continue under the same distractions and convulsions, and all cry out that a flood of misery is breaking in on the land and likely to overwhelm us all, still it is the clergy who cannot or will not be reconciled, but animate rulers and people against each other, and cannot or will not find the way of peace. Yea, every thing would soon be healed, in all probability, could the nation but procure the clergy to consent. Certainly there is some grievous disease in ourselves, which is likely to prove mortal to such a kingdom, and that while so many pray and strive for peace.

Those men that have no more skill or will to heal the wounds and to stop the blood of a fainting church and state, nor will by any reason or humble importunity be entreated to consent to the cheap and necessary cure, no, nor to hold their hands from continued tearing of us, do tell all the world that they are sadly wanting in fitness for their sacred office, and that this unfitness is likely to cost an endangered nation dear.

Woe, woe, woe, to that church that hath hypocrites, ungodly, unexperienced, proud, worldly, fleshly, unskilful, unfaithful and malignant pastors, and that hath wolves instead of shepherds! Woe to the land that hath such! Woe to the prince and states that have and follow such counsellors, and to the souls that are subverted by them! Alas! from a bad clergy have sprung the greatest calamities of the churches, in all places to this very day.

11. But will such men's sins prove less woful to themselves than others?

No. (1.) It is the sin and guilt itself which is the greatest evil.

(2.) They aggravate their sin and guilt by a perfidious violating of a double vow,—their baptismal vow of Christianity,—and their ordination vow to be faithful ministers of Christ.

(3.) They aggravate their guilt by their nearness to God in their office and works, as Aaron's two sons that were struck dead. (Lev. x. 2, 3.) "For God will be sanctified in them that come nigh him, and before all the people will he be glorified." The examples of the Bethshemites, Uzza, and Uzziah, the bad priests and false prophets of old, are terrible.

(4.) And it greatly addeth to the guilt, to do all this or much of it as in the name of God, or by his commission. This is a dreadful taking of God's name in vain, for which he will not hold them guiltless. To pretend, that it is by God's command that they set up that which he abhorreth; that they corrupt his doctrine, worship, or church-order, that they set up their own wills and sinful laws instead of and against his laws, that they tear his church by proud impositions and wicked anathemas, and interdicts of whole kingdoms, excommunicating and deposing kings, absolving men from their oaths of allegiance, tormenting and murdering godly men as heretics, silencing faithful ministers, smiting the

shepherds and scattering the flocks, and then reviling them as schismatics,—and all this to uphold a worldly kingdom of their own, and keep up their pride, domination and self-will, and to have riches as provision for their fleshly lusts ; —I say, to do all this as in the name of Christ, with a ‘ sic dicit Dominus’, (“ thus saith the Lord,”) and as for the church, for truth, and for souls, is a most heinous aggravation.

(5.) Indeed, while a poor blind clergyman, has his trade, for applause and gain, doth study and preach that word of God, which is against him, how dreadful is it to think how all that he doth and saith is self-condemnation, that out of his own mouth he must be judged, and that all the woes which he pronounceth against hypocrites and impenitent, carnal and worldly men, his own tongue pronounceth against himself.

12. And when Satan hath once got such instruments, how great an advantage hath he for success against themselves, against the flock, and against the church and cause of Christ, above what he might expect by other servants !

(1.) They are far more hardly brought to repentance than others.

(I.) Because they have, by wit and study, bended that doctrine to defend their sin which should be used to bring them to repentance.

(II.) Because their aggravated sin against light doth most forfeit that help of grace which should work repentance in them.

(III.) And because, being taken for wise and learned men, for preachers of truth, teachers of others, and reprovers of errors, their reputation is much concerned in it, and their unhumbled souls, which look that all others should assent and consent to their prescripts, will hardly be brought to confess sin and error ; but will sooner (as Papists,) plead infallibility, or will conclude, as some councils have done, that a layman must not accuse a clergyman, be he never so bad. Repentance is hard to all men of carnal interest, but to few more than to an unhumbled clergyman.

And (2.) Whoever accuseth or reproveth them of sin, will be represented as an enemy to the church, a dishonourer of his ghostly fathers, and one that openeth their nakedness which he should cover. And so their ulcers are as a ‘ noli

me tangere,' ("touch me not,") and fret as a gangrene unremedied.

(3.) Their place, office, titles, and learning, with many, will give to sin great reputation and advantage. If a drunkard in the alehouse deride godly men as heretics, schismatics, hypocrites, or Puritans, sober men will not much regard it; but they think they owe more belief and reverence to a learned and reverend preacher in the pulpit, even when he preacheth against preaching and against those that practise what he teacheth them at other times. O how much of this work hath Satan done in the world by corrupting sacred offices, and by getting HIS SERVANTS INTO RULE AND MINISTRY, TO DO HIS WORK AS FOR CHRIST and his church, and by his authority and in his name! The natural enmity between us and the serpent dissuadeth him from speaking or sending to us in his own name. Should one say in the pulpit, Thus saith the devil, Hate Christ's servants; silence his ministers, call serious godliness hypocrisy, (which is the contrary to hypocrisy,) I should not much fear his success with any. But if he be a lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets, and can get a prophet to smite Micaiah for pretending to more of the Spirit than he had; or if he can get men in the sacred office to say, "Thus saith the Lord," when they speak for sin or against the Lord, this is the devil's prosperous way.

13. I have told you what plagues bad clergymen will be, and still have been, to themselves, to the souls of men, and to the public state of churches and kingdoms; and, were it not lest my writing should be too large, I should tell you what blessings on the contrary able and faithful ministers are.

Briefly, (1.) Christ maketh them the chief instruments for the propagating of his truth and kingdom in the world, for the gathering of churches, and for preserving and defending contradicted truth. "They are the lights of the world, and the salt of the earth." All Christians are bound to teach or help each other in charity; but Christ's ministers are set in his church, (as parent's in families,) to do it by office. They must therefore be qualified above others for it, must be wholly dedicated to it, and attend continually on it; as a physician differeth from all neighbours, who may help you in your sores or sickness as they can, so do the pastors of the church differ from private helpers of your souls. The

Scripture is preserved and delivered down by the private means of all the faithful, but, eminently, by the public office of the pastors. It may be expounded and applied privately by any able Christian, but the pastors do it, eminently, by office; and to them especially (though to all Christians commonly,) are committed the oracles of God. "The priest's lips must preserve knowledge, and men should inquire of the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts." (Mal. ii. 7.) Never yet was the Gospel well propagated or continued in any country in the world, but by the means of the ministers of Christ. O what difference hath there been in their successes, as they differed in ability, piety and diligence! How great an honour is it to be such blessed instruments of building up the house of God, and propagating the Gospel and the kingdom of Christ, and the Christian faith and godliness in the world!

(2.) Thus God useth them as his special instruments for the convincing, and converting, for the edifying, comforting and saving of souls. Others may be blest herein; but the special blessing goeth along with those that are specially obliged to the work,—who are parents in families, and pastors in the church. O how many thousand souls in heaven will for ever rejoice in the effects of the labours of faithful ministers, and will bless God for them. And what an honour, what a comfort is it to have a hand in such a work! "He that converteth a sinner from the error of his way, doth save a soul from death and covereth a multitude of sins." (James v. 20.)

(3.) And in this they are co-workers with Jesus Christ, the great Saviour of souls; and with the Holy Spirit, the Regenerator and Sanctifier. Yea, Christ doth very much of the work of his salvation by them: When he ascended on high he gave gifts to men, for the edifying of his body, till they all come to a perfect man; (Eph. iv. 6—16.) and "when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, they shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away;" (1 Pet. v. 4;) and shall hear "Well done, good and faithful servants." Hence are the streams of consolation that make glad the city of God, and that daily refresh many thousands of precious souls. For "how shall men believe without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they be sent," (qualified, obliged and authorised by Christ)? (Rom. x.)

(4.) In a word, churches, states and Christian kingdoms are chiefly blessed and preserved by the labour of the faithful part of the ministry : For, (i.) If we have the rare blessing of a wise, holy and loving magistracy, it is usually by the success of the labours of the ministry. (ii.) There is no better means to bring the subjects to the conscionable performance of their duty to superiors. (iii.) And, by the blessing of their labour, the sins of a nation are prevented or healed, which would else bring down God's heavy judgments. (iv.) They teach people to live in love and peace with one another ; to abhor contention, cruelty, oppression, injury and revenge ; and all of them to do their several duties to promote the common good. (v.) When the ignorant, slothful and scandalous sort of bad ministers betray souls and would bring the ministry and religion into contempt, it is a wise and holy ministry that counter-worketh them by labouring while others are idle, by doing that wisely which others do foolishly, and shewing in their lives the power of that truth which others disgrace, and the reality of that holiness, love, justice, peace and concord, which others would banish out of the world by making it seem but a name or image. (vi.) When proud men tear the church by the engines of their domineering wits and wills, these humble pastors, as the servants of all, will labour to heal it, by Christian meekness and condescension. When malignant priests seek to strengthen themselves by the multitude of the ungodly, and to bring serious piety (which doth molest them,) into contempt, these faithful pastors open the just disgrace of sin, and the great necessity and honour of holiness, endeavouring that vile persons may be contemned, and that those may be honoured that fear the Lord, (Psal. xv. 14,) and distinguishing the precious from the vile, the righteous from the wicked, him that sweareth from him that feareth an oath, and him that serveth God from him that serveth him not, God saith, They are as his mouth. (Jer. xv. 19 ; Mal. iii. 17, 18 ; Eccles. ix. 2.)

To be short, as an ignorant, worldly, carnal, proud, unholy sort of prelates and priests, are and have been the great plague of the churches these thirteen hundred years at least, so the skilful, holy, humble, faithful, laborious, patient ministers of Christ, have been and still are the great blessings of the world ;—for saving souls ; promoting knowledge,

faith, holiness, love and peace; opposing error, pride, oppression, worldliness, sensuality and contention; diverting God's judgments by faith and prayer; forsaking all for Christ; patiently suffering for well-doing; by doctrine and example teaching men to difference the Creator from the creature, holiness from sin, heaven from earth, the soul from the body, the spirit from the flesh, and helping men to prepare, by a mortified heart and a heavenly life, for a comfortable death and endless happiness. Of such vast importance is it to the world whether the clergy be good or bad, skilful or unskilful, holy or worldly; and he is not a true Christian that is insensible of the difference, or that thinks it small.

Now, do I need to say any more, to shew young men designed for the ministry of what importance it is that they be well prepared and qualified for it? God can and sometimes doth turn wolves into faithful shepherds, can convert those who, being unconverted, undertake the work that should convert others, and can give wisdom and grace to ignorant and graceless preachers of wisdom and grace. But this is not ordinarily to be expected. For as youth are trained up and disposed, they commonly prove when they come to age. Their first notions lie deepest, and make way for their like, and resist all that is contrary, be it never so true and good and necessary. Experience tells this to all the world,—those who in youth are trained in heathenism, Mahometanism, Popery, or any distinct sect of Christians, commonly continue such; especially if they live among those who are for it, and who make it their interest in reputation or wealth. If the rulers and times should be but erroneous, heretical or malignant in enmity to truth and to serious holiness, (alas!) how hard is it for ill-taught youth, to resist the stream! How hard is it to unteach them the errors which they first learned! A vomit may easily bring up that which was but lately eaten; but the yellow and the green humours that lie deep, must cost heart-gripes before they will be cast up. False opinions, as well as truths, are usually linked together; and the chain is neither easily cast off nor broken. They that have received errors, have received the defensatives of those errors: these are like the shell-fish that carry their house about them. They have studied what to say for their errors, but not what can be said against

them; or, which is worse, by a slight and false consideration of the arguments for the truth, they have disabled those arguments from doing them any good.

And if they had ever such true notions in their memories, if they come not in power on their hearts, and do not make them new, spiritual and holy men, these will not master fleshly lusts, overcome ambitious and worldly inclinations, nor make men fit to propagate that faith and holiness which they never possessed.

It is now that you must get those eminent qualifications of knowledge and holiness which you must hereafter use. And how will you use that which you have not?

Yet proud hearts, how empty soever, will be desirous of esteem and reputation, and will hardly bear vilifying, contempt or disregard. Though some few prudent hearers will encourage such young men as they think are hopeful, yet most men will judge of things and persons as they find them. The ignorant, dry and lifeless orations of inexperienced and carnal preachers, will not be magnified by such as know what judgment and holy seriousness that place and sacred work require. Few will much praise or feed on unsavoury or insipid food, merely to flatter and please the cook. And then when you find that you are slighted for your slight and unskilful work, your stomachs will rise against those that slight you, and so by selfishness you will turn malignant, and will become enemies to those that you consider enemies to you, because they are not contented with your unholy trifling. All your enmity will turn against yourself, and will be like that of Satan against the members of Christ,—which is but his own self-tormenting.

15. *Secondly*.—The case being so important, I shall briefly conjoin your *danger* and your *remedy*, beseeching you (as you have any care for your souls, your country, the church of God, or any thing which faith or reason should regard,) that you will soberly weigh the counsel that I give you.

The first of your dangers which I shall mention, lieth in a too hasty resolving for the sacred ministry. Pious and prudent desires and purposes I would not discourage. But two sorts of parents in this prove greatly injurious to the church: *First*. Worldly men, that send their sons to the

universities in order to their worldly maintenance and preferment, looking at the ministry merely as a profession or trade by which they may be able to live: *Secondly*. Many honest and godly parents ignorantly think it a good work to design their children to the ministry, and call it ‘devoting them to God,’ without duly considering whether they are likely to be fit for it or not. And when they have been some years at the university, they think a parsonage or vicarage is their due, ordained they must be,—what else have they studied for? It is too late now to change their purposes, when they have been at seven years’ cost and labour to prepare for the ministry. They are too old and too proud to go apprentices or servants. Husbandmen they cannot be. They are used to an idler kind of life than that. To be lawyers will cost them more time and study than they can now afford, having lost so much; and there are more already than can have practice. Physicians are already so many that the younger sort know not how to live, though they would, for money, venture on their neighbours’ lives, to their greater danger than I am willing to express. So that there is no way left but for a benefice, to become church-mountebanks and quacks, and undertake the pastoral care of souls, before they well know what souls are, what they are made for, whither they are going, or how they must be conducted and prepared for their endless state. And it seems to some to be the glory of a nation, to have many thousand such lads at the universities, (more than there be cures or churches in the land,) all expecting that their friends should procure them benefices. They must be very ignorant and wicked indeed that cannot find some ministers so bad as to certify, that they are sober and of good lives, and some patrons so bad as to like such as they are, and, for favour or somewhat worse, to present them; and some bishop’s chaplain bad enough to be favourable in examining them, and then some bishop bad enough to ordain and institute them. And by the time nine thousand such youths have got benefices, alas! in what a case will the churches and the poor people’s souls be!

16. (1.) And what remedy is there for this? That which I have now to propose is, first to tell you, ‘Who they be that should be devoted to the ministry;’ and, next, ‘What both your parents and you should do.’

The work is so high, and requireth such qualifications, and miscarrying in it is of such dreadful consequence, that no youth should be resolutely devoted to the ministry, who hath not all these following endowments :

(1.) He must have a good natural wit and capacity. It should be somewhat above the ordinary degree ; but it must be of the better rank of ordinary wits, for grace supposeth nature, and, by sanctifying it, turns it the right way ; but grace doth not use to make wise teachers of natural drones or weak-headed lads, who have not wit enough to learn. How many and how great things have they to learn and teach !

(11.) They must have some competent readiness of speech, to utter the knowledge which they have got. One that cannot readily speak his mind in common things, is not likely to come to that ready utterance which will be necessary to a preacher.

(111.) He must be one that is so far hopeful for godliness, as to be captivated by no gross sin ; and as to have a love, not only to learning, but to religion, to the word of God, to good company, prayer, and good books ; and a settled dislike of the things, words and persons, that are against these.

(2.) He must also shew some sense of the concerns of his soul, and some regard for the life to come, and that his conscience is under some effectual convictions of the evil of sin, and the goodness and necessity of a godly life. The youth that hath not these three qualifications, should not be intended or devoted to the ministry. To devote an incapable or an ungodly person to such a holy state and work, is worse than of old to have offered to God the unclean, which he abhorred, for a sacrifice. To design a graceless lad for the ministry, on pretence of hoping that he may have grace hereafter, is a presumptuous profanation, and worse than to design a coward to be a soldier, a wicked, unsuitable person to be a husband or wife, in hopes that they may be fit hereafter.

17. Therefore if your parents have been so unwise as to devote that to God which was unfit for his acceptance, it concerneth you quickly to look better to yourselves, and not to run into the consuming fire. You should be conscious of your own condition. If you may know, that you want, (1.) A competency of natural capacity and ingenuity ;

(2.) Or of ready speech; (3.) Or of serious piety, love to godliness, and heart-devotedness to God,—do not meddle with that calling which requireth all these.

18. ‘But,’ you may say, ‘What shall we do? We have gone so far in this calling that we are fit for nothing else.’

You are less fit for the ministry than for any thing. That which requireth the highest qualifications, will most shame and condemn you if you possess them not. If you are not fit for physic or law, be some great man’s servant; if not that, it is better that you turn to the basest trade or the most laborious employment, than that you run into the sad case of Hophni and Phinehas, or that of Nadab and Abihu, to the utter undoing of yourselves and the loss and danger of many others! But if your unfitness be not in your DISABILITY but in your UNGODLINESS, whether you be ministers or not, you will be for ever miserable unless you consider well the great things that should change your hearts and lives, and unless you turn unfeignedly to God; and when that is done, I am no discourager of you. But I believe it is far better to be a cobbler or a chimney-sweeper, or even to beg your bread, than to be an ungodly clergyman, with the greatest preferments, riches and applause.

19. ‘But,’ parents may say, ‘If we devote none to the ministry till godliness appear in them, how few will be so devoted! Children seldom show much savour of religion, and some that seem young saints prove old devils.’

(1.) At the present time we have so many supernumeraries, that we need not fear a want of number.

(2.) Children cannot be expected to show that understanding in religion which men must have. But if they show not a love to it, a conscience regardful of God’s authority and of the life to come, and a dislike of ungodliness and sin, you have no reason to presume that they will be fit for the ministry. If they had never been baptized, you ought not to baptize them in such a state. They must credibly profess faith and repentance before they can be adult Christians, and so dedicated to God in baptism, much more before they are dedicated to him as the guides of the Christian churches.

(3.) And as you can judge but according to probabilities, if they prove bad after a probable profession, it will not

be charged upon you. But we all know that a hopeful youth is a great preparation to an honest age.

20. (2.) My next advice to you is, abhor sloth and idleness. When you are at country schools, your masters drive you on by fear. But when you are in the universities and at a riper age, you are more trusted with yourselves; then all the diligence which fear constrained, will be laid aside, and if you be not carried on with constant pleasure and love of knowledge, the flesh will prefer its ease, and unwillingness and weariness will proceed with so slow a pace, as will bring you to no high degree of wisdom. And when you have spent your appointed time, and are void of that which you should have attained, your emptiness and ignorance will presently appear when you are called out to the use of that knowledge which you have not. It is not your canonical habit, nor seven or seventeen years spent in the university, nor the title of Master of Arts, Bachelor of Divinity, or Doctor, no, nor that of Bishop, which will pass with men in their right wits, instead of knowledge, diligence, humility, patience and charity; nor which, without these, will do the work to which you are devoted. And then when you find that other men discern that weakness and badness which you are loath to know yourselves, it will be likely to exasperate you into diabolical malignity. Believe it, the high and needful accomplishments of a true divine are not easily or speedily attained.

21. (3.) My next warning is, fear and fly from sensuality, from fleshly lusts, and all the baits and temptations that may endanger you by drawing you into them.

Sense and appetite are born with us; they are inordinate in our corrupted nature, and the reason and will, which should resist and rule them, are weakened and depraved. Poor labouring countrymen are not in such danger in this as you are. Your bodies are not tired and tamed with labours, nor your thoughts taken up with wants and cares. While your bodies are at ease, and your studies are arbitrary, fleshly lust and appetite have time and room to solicit your fantasies, and incline you to interrupt your studies, and to think of the matters of sensual delight, either with what to please your appetite in eating, or of strong drinks or wine that also exhilarate, or of some needless or hurtful pastime called *re-*

creation such as cards, dice, gaming, &c. or to think of women and filthy lusts, or to read romances, play-books or other corrupting vanities. Far more idle scholars are strongly haunted with temptations to self-pollution and other filthy lusts, than the poor and afflicted sort of men.

If these should prevail, (alas!) you are undone; they will offend God, expel his grace, will either wound or sear your conscience, destroy all spiritual affections and delights, and turn down your hearts from heaven and holiness to filth and folly;—and beasts will be unfit for the pleasures or for the work of saints.

22. Away therefore from idleness! Pamper not the flesh with fulness or delights, and abhor all time-wasting and needless recreations. Away from the baits of fleshly lust! Be no more indifferent and unresolved about this, than you would be about drinking poison, leaping into a coal-pit, or wilfully going among murderers or thieves. Presume not on your own strength: he is safest that is furthest from the danger. Gunpowder must not stand near the fire.

23. (4.) Be sure to make a prudent choice of your companions, especially of your bosom friends.

It is supposed that a man loveth the company which he chooseth, though not that upon which he is cast through constraint. Love and familiarity will give them great advantage over you. If they be wise, they will teach you wisdom; if they be holy and spiritual, they will be drawing you towards God, and settling you in the resolved hatred of sin and love of holiness. But if they be worldly and ambitious, they will be filling your heads with ambitious and worldly projects; if they be ungodly hypocrites, that have but the dead image and name of Christians, they will be opposing or deriding serious godliness, and pleading for the carcase and formalities of piety as better than serious and spiritual devotion: and if they be hardened malignants, they will be trying to make you such as they are by lies, revilings, or plausible cavils against the things and persons that are spiritually contrary to their fleshly minds and interests. And while you hear not what can be said on the other side, (if God preserve you not) it will possess your mind with false thoughts of God's servants, and with scorn or contempt of such as you hear falsely described. As Papists think of Protestants as heretics, so you will take serious godliness for

fanatical self-conceit, and will think the best of Christians as you do of Quakers or others—that are mad with fear or pride.

Wise and religious companions and bosom friends are an unspeakable blessing; but the merciful providence of God doth usually choose them for us, yet so as that we must usually be also faithful choosers for ourselves. Ill company is a dangerous snare; and God often trieth us, by casting us into places where such company is. But if we do not choose or love it, God will provide us with an antidote; and we may converse with him, even in the presence of the ungodly; and he will teach us, by the experience of their folly and sin, to dislike it more than if we had never seen it.

24. (5.) Especially be most careful in the choice of your tutors and instructors.

Though it be first the part of your parents to choose them for you, it is yours to do your best in this matter to save yourselves, if your parents by ignorance or malignity do choose amiss. And the rulers that allow not men to choose their own pastors, yet hitherto allow the parents or the sons to choose their own tutors and domestic instructors.

But this is the grand danger and misery of mankind, that the ignorant know not what teachers to choose. Yea, the more they need the help of the best, the less they know who those are; but I will tell you as far as you are capable of discerning.

(1.) Usually the common report of men that are sober and impartial, commendeth worthy men above others; for knowledge and goodness are like light, which is a self-discovering thing.

(11.) Choose not a teacher that preferreth human wisdom before divine, but one that maketh it his business to expound the Scripture, and teach you what is the will of God, and how to please him and be saved.

(111.) Choose not one that is of a worldly and ambitious mind, and will teach you that which conduceth to get preferment and worldly wealth, and not that which best helpeth you to heaven.

(1v.) Choose not one that is factious and uncharitable, violent for a party, either because it is uppermost, or because it standeth for some odd opinion or causeless singularity; but one that is of a Christian, catholic charity, that loveth a godly man as such, even as he loveth himself, and is for

wronging no one, but doing good to all, and maintaining unity and peace.

25. (6.) Watch, with great fear, against pride, ambition, and worldly ends, in your own hearts and lives.

The roots of these mortal sins are born in us, and lie very deep; and they not only live, but damnably reign, where they are little discerned, bewailed, or suspected; but woe to him that is conquered by them! "Ye cannot serve God and mammon. The love of the world is enmity to God. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Paul spake, weeping, of some persons "whose God was their belly, who gloried in their shame, who minded earthly things, being enemies to the cross of Christ, when their conversation should have been in heaven." (Phil. iii. 18—20.) A surprise in passion, even of an ugly sin, is less dangerous than such a habit of worldliness and pride. And (alas!) how many that have escaped the temptations of sloth and sensuality, have been flattered and overcome by this! Those who have had better wits than others, and acquired more learning, have thought now that preferment is their due. And if they fall into times (which have not been rare,) when the malignity of church or state-governors hath made it the way to preferment to declaim against some truth, or against the most religious men who are opposed to a carnal, sinful interest, to revile God's best servants, to cry up some notion or error of their own, and to magnify the worst men that promote their worldly ends and hopes, (alas!) how doth this stream usually carry down the most pregnant wits into the gulf of perdition!

Yea, some, that seemed very humble and mortified while they had no great temptation, when wealth and honour have been set before them, have lost virtue and wit before they were well aware. Worldly interest hath secretly bribed and biased the understandings of such people, to take the greatest truth for error, duty for sin, and error for truth, and sin for duty. They have talked, preached, and written for it, and seem to believe that they are indeed in the right; and cannot discern that they are perverted by interest, when an impartial stander-by may easily see the bias by the current of their course. If you be servants of the flesh and of the world, woe to you when your masters turn you off, and you must receive your wages!

26. (7.) Above all, therefore, choose like real Christians, and take God and heaven for your hope, your all.

If you do not so, you are not real Christians, nor stand to your baptismal covenant; and if you be here fixed, by the grace of God, and by your sober consideration and belief, you will then know what to choose and what to do. You will be taught to refer all worldly things to spiritual and heavenly ends and uses, to count all things as loss and dung for Christ, and "to choose the one thing needful, which shall never be taken from you," even that which will guide you in just and safe ways, saving you from the greatest evil, and giving your minds continual peace, even that which passeth understanding, and which will be best at last when sinners are forsaken.

27. (8.) My next counsel, therefore, is for the order of your studies; begin with your catechism and practical divinity, to settle your own souls in a safe condition for life or death. Deal not so foolishly as to waste many years in inferior arts and sciences, before you have studied how to please God and to be saved. I unfeignedly thank God, that, by sickness and his grace, he called me early to learn how to die, and therefore to learn what I must be and how to live, and that he thereby drew me to study the sacred Scriptures, and abundance of practical, spiritual books in English, till I had somewhat settled the resolution and the peace of my own soul, before I had gone far in human learning. I then found more leisure and capacity to take in subservient knowledge in its proper time and place. And, indeed, I had lost most of my studies of philosophy and of difficult controversies in theology, if I had fallen on them too young, before I came to due capacity; and so I should have been prepossessed with crude or unsound notions, for they would have kept out that which required a riper judgment to receive it. Such books as I before commended to the apprentices, contain the essentials of religion, plainly, affectionately, and practically delivered, in a manner tending to deep impression, renovation of the soul and spiritual experience, without which you will be but "like sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." The art of theology without the POWER, (which consists in a holy life, and light and love,) is the art of forming a hypocrite.

Yet before you come to lay exact systems of theology in

due method in your minds, much help of subservient arts and sciences is necessary. However, a council of ancient bishops once forbade the reading of Gentile books.

28. (9.) I next advise you, thoroughly to study the evidences and nature of the Christian faith, but not to hasten too soon and over-confidently on hard controversies, as if your judgment of them at maturity must have no change; but still suppose, that greater light, by longer study, may cause in you much different thoughts of such difficulties.

29. (10.) And lastly, I advise you, that you begin not the exercise of your ministry too boldly, before public, great, or judicious auditories. Overmuch confidence signifieth pride and ignorance of your imperfection, of the greatness of the work, and of the dreadfulness of the Most Holy Majesty. But (if you can) at first settle a competent time in the house with some ancient experienced pastor, who hath some small country chapel, and who needs your help. And,

(1.) There you may learn as well as teach, and learn by his practice that which you must practise; which, in a great house as a chaplain, you will hardly do, but must in that case cast yourself into a far different mould.

(11.) By preaching some years to a small, ignorant people where you fear not critical judgments, you will get boldness of speech, and freedom of utterance, without that servile study of words, and without learning your written notes without book, which will be tiresome, time-wasting, and lifeless. When freedom and use have brought you to a habit of ready speaking about great and necessary things, and when acquaintance with ignorant country people has taught you to understand their case, you will have a better preparation for more public places, (when you are clearly called to them,) than you were ever likely to get either in universities, among scholars, or in great men's houses.

Compassion to the church that is plagued with bad ministers, and that undergoes exceedingly great loss by weak ministers, and the sense of the grand importance of the qualifications of pastors in reference to the happiness or misery of souls and kingdoms, have drawn me to say more than I first intended to young students who have determined to enter into the ministry. With the other two sorts, therefore, I shall be very brief.

Yet I add one earnest warning to you, and to all young

men,—know that one of the most common and pernicious maladies of mankind, is, AN UNHUMBLED UNDERSTANDING, rashly confident of its own apprehensions, through false and hasty judging and previdence,—the brat of ignorance and pride. Of a multitude of persons differing, how few are not obstinately confident that they are in the right!—even lads that are past twenty years of age! O dread this vice, and suspect your understanding. Be humble; take time, and try, and hear, before you judge. Labour for knowledge; but take not upon you to be sure where you are not, but doubt and continue to try till you are sure.

CHAP. X.

Counsel to young Students in Physic.

SUPPOSING what is said to others equally to concern you, I briefly add,

1. Make not the getting of money, and your own worldly prosperity, so much your end, as the doing good in the world, by the preservation of men's health and lives, and the pleasing of God thereby. Selfish, low ends shew a selfish mind, that liveth not to God or for the public good.

2. Undertake not the practice of physic without all these qualifications.

(1.) A special sagacity, or a naturally searching and conjecturing judgment. For almost all your work lieth in the dark, and is chiefly managed by conjecture.

(2.) Much reading, especially of such of your predecessors as have been great observers, that you may know what hath been the experience of all ages and of those eminent men who lived before you.

(3.) The experience of other men's practice. If possible, therefore, stay some time first in the house with some eminent practitioner, whose practice you may see, whose counsel you may hear, and from whose experience you may derive instruction.

3. Begin with plain and easy cases, and meddle only with the safe and harmless remedies. Think not yourselves physicians indeed, till you have yourselves got considerable

experience : there is no satisfactory trusting to other men's experience alone.

4. In cases too hard for you, send your patients to abler physicians, and prefer not your own reputation or gain before their lives.

5. Study simples thoroughly, especially the most powerful ; and affect not such compositions, as, by the mixture of the less powerful, do frustrate the ingredients which would else be more effectual.

6. Forget not the poverty of many patients, who have not money to pay large and chargeable bills to an apothecary, nor to give large fees to a physician. Multitudes neglect physic and venture without it, because physicians require so much, and are so much for the gain of their apothecaries that they have it not to pay.

7. Take heed of self-conceitedness, rash confidence, and too hasty judging. Most of your work is hard ; many things, about which you do not think, may occasion your mistake. Causes and diseases have marvellous diversities. Most that are quick judges, and suddenly confident that all their first apprehensions are true, do prove but proud, self-ignorant fools, and kill more by ignorance and temerity, than highway robbers or designing murderers do. Though the grave may hide your mistakes, they are known to God.

8. Give not too much physic ; nor give it too often or without need ; neither venture on things dangerous. Man's life is precious ; and nature is the chief physician, which art must but help. The body is tender and easily distempered ; therefore, rather do too little than too much. Frequent tampering usually kills at last ; as he that daily washeth a glass, at last breaketh it ; and as seamen are bold, because they have often escaped ; (but many, if not most, are drowned at last ;) and as soldiers that have often escaped are bold to venture, but are killed at last :—It is usually so with them that often take physic, except from a very cautious and skilful man. Therefore, were I a woman, I would not marry a physician, lest his nearness of relation to me and his kindness should cause him to be often tampering with me, till a mistake should kill me. All your neighbours may mistake your disease without your hurt, but the mistake of your physician may be present death to you.

9. Direct men first as faithful friends, to the things which may prevent the need of physic, such as,

(1.) A temperate and wholesome diet, avoiding fulness and hurtful things.

(2.) Sufficient labour to suscite natural heat, keep pure the humours, and expel excrements; teaching them likewise to avoid idleness.

(3.) To keep warm, and avoid occasions of cold, especially cold drink, cold places, and cold clothing, either when persons are hot, or when nature needeth help in winter.

(4.) Content and quietness of mind, and cheerful conversation.

(5.) Direct them to such familiar remedies at home, in their drinks and diet, as are suitable to their distempers, and for their preservation, and to such as are safe and harmless. Put them not to a needless dependance on your frequent help; neither play upon the fears of weak women in making them miserable by administering needless medicines, and thus making them like tenants to you, to pay you a constant rent for keeping them quiet.

10. Give them that need it, good counsel for their souls; and flatter them not with false hopes of life, when it tendeth to hinder their preparations for death. They and you are hasting to such a great change as requireth great and careful forethoughts. It is sad for them to go out of the world, and not at all to know whither they are going, or what will be their next habitation; but much more dreadful is it, to be in a state of certain misery in this life, and liable to all the untried and indescribable wrath of God in the world of spirits. Those who will not send for a divine, will frequently hear a physician; and to warn poor sinners of their danger, exhorting them to flee from the wrath to come,—is not a work unbeseeming your profession, but such as Christian faith and charity bespeak.

CHAP. XI.

Counsel to Young Students of the Law in London.

GOD hath made much use of honest lawyers, as the instruments of our safety and of the just and orderly government of the land.

They are not bred up in mere idleness and luxury, (as too many are of higher birth,) but in such diligent study as improveth their understandings, and keepeth them from that debauchery which idleness and fulness cherish.

Their studies and callings make it their interest as to know, so also to maintain the laws; and that is, to maintain propriety, just liberty and order, and so to preserve justice and the common peace except in countries that have pernicious laws. Injustice in judges and lawyers is like heresy, ungodliness and persecution in pastors of the church—directly contrary to their very calling and profession; but it is more easily and commonly seen and hated, because it is against the well-known interest of mankind. Shame, therefore, and the common hatred of the unjust, are in this case great restraints of evil.

But notwithstanding all this, bad men will do badly, and turn even the rules of justice to oppression, to serve the wills and lusts of those who can promote them, that by them they may serve their own. On this account, therefore, it is of great importance to the common good, as well as for their own benefit, that young men who study the law, may prove wise and honest.

1. And here, *first*, I warn all such youths, to take heed of the sins of sensuality. Alas! London doth so abound with temptations, that, without grace and wise resolution, you are unsafe. There are so many sensual, proud, and ungodly young men ready to entice you; so many play-houses, taverns and filthy houses to entertain you; that if you go without grace and wit, the flesh and the devil will soon precipitate you into the slavery of brutish flesh. Then you forfeit God's favour and protection; and he may leave you to more sin and misery, or to grow up to be the servants of oppression, the enemies of piety, and the plagues of the commonwealth.

2. Study hard; for idleness never yet made good lawyers, nor very useful men.

3. Abhor and avoid ill company, especially of two sorts:

(1.) Those who would entice you to the aforesaid places and practices of voluptuousness, &c.

(2.) Those that being themselves deceived would deceive you, against religion and your salvation. It is too well known that such persons in London are not rare, though the danger by them is not known enough. Even those that are so unchristian and inhuman as to prate against the Christian faith, against the truth, authority or sufficiency of the sacred Scriptures, the life to come, and against the immortality of the soul, if not also against the government and providence of God, will yet talk as confidently as if they were in their wits, yea, and as though they were the greatest wits among us. For my part, I could never yet get one man of them soberly to join with me in a fair disquisition of the truth, and to follow it on till we came to see the just conclusion. Most commonly they will fly from me, and refuse disputes, or will turn all to some rambling rant or jest, or, when the truths of religion are stated, they are gone, and will proceed no further and come no more.

Young unfurnished heads are unfit to dispute with the devil, or with any such of his messengers. A pest-house is not more dangerous to you than companions of this description. But if they have perplexed you, desire some well-studied minister of Christ either to meet them, or to resolve your doubts. If you will read what I have written on that subject, you may find enough to resolve your mind, if it be justly received, viz. in my "Reasons for the Christian Religion," my "Unreasonableness of Infidelity," in my "Life of Faith," and in "More Reasons for the Christian Religion."

Avoid also the snares of those that would draw you into uncharitable factions, and, on a pretence of right religion, to hate, censure, or fly from all that are not just of their sect and way; especially the proud faction of church-tyrants, who, under a pretence of order and piety, would set up a lifeless image of formality, and would burn, banish, silence, or persecute all that are not for domination, usurpation and worldly interest.

4. Let not rising and riches be the chief end of your stu-

dies, but to serve God in the just service of your king and country, to promote justice, and to do good in the world.

5. Live in the familiarity of the most useful men of your profession, that is, the wisest and the most conscionable; and choose those pastors, for your best helpers in religion, who keep the most closely to God's word, and warp not after any dangerous singularities, worldly preferments, or unpeaceable and teasing impositions on their brethren; and who live as they preach,—in love, peace and holiness,—as men that set their hearts and hopes on future blessedness, and that labour for the edification and concord of the church, and the saving of men's souls.

CHAP. XII.

Counsel to the Sons of the Nobility and of Magistrates.

THOUGH men of your rank are furthest out of the hearing of such persons as me, and are usually the greatest contemners of our counsel, yet that will not excuse us from due compassion to the land of our nativity, from love and pity to yourselves, nor from any probable ministerial attempt to do you good.

Your dangers are much greater than those of other men; or else Christ had never so often told us, how hard it is for rich men to be saved; and how few such escape the idolatrous damning love of the world, and become sincere believers and followers of a crucified Saviour. Luke xii; xvi. &c.

1. One part of your great danger is, that you are commonly bred up among the baits of sensuality. It is not for nothing that "fulness of bread" is made one of the sins of Sodom, (Ezek. xvi. 49,) and that he who afterwards lay in the flames of hell, is described as being "richly clothed and faring sumptuously every day." Not that all rich clothes, or sumptuous, seasonable feasting, is a sin; but that both these usually signify sensuality and cherish it. It is the sure brand of the ungodly, to be "lovers of pleasure more than of God." They that but seldom come where tempting plenty is of delicious meats and drinks, are too often overcome. But they that are bred up where plenty of both these

is daily before them, are in greater danger lest their table and their drink become a snare.

Feast not therefore without fear, remember that flesh-pleasing sensuality is as damnable in the rich as in the poor; and that the greatest wealth will not allow you to take any more for quantity or quality, than is consistent with temperance, and than truly tendeth to fit you for your duty. Your riches are given you in trust as God's stewards, that with them you may be enabled to serve your country, relieve the poor and promote good uses; but not for the purpose of serving your fleshly lusts, nor to be abused to excess or for cherishing sin. To be sober and temperate, is the interest of your own souls and bodies, and, under your great temptations, it is the more laudable.

2. Another of your dangers is, the ill examples of too many persons of your rank. You are apt to think that their wealth, pomp and power make them more imitable than others, as being more honourable. And if they wallow in drunkenness or filthy lust, or talk profanely, you may think that such sins are the less disgraceful.

But can you dream that they are the less dangerous and damnable? Will God fear them or spare them? Must they not die and be judged as well as the lowest? Is it not an aggravation of their sin, that it is done by men who had the greatest mercies, and who were put in trust and honour purposely to suppress sin in the world? As their places signify more than others, so do their sins; and accordingly shall they be punished. Doth the quondam wealth, honour or pleasures of a Dives, a Pharaoh, an Ahab, a Herod, a Pilate, a Nero, ease a lost and tormented soul?

3. Another of your temptations will be pride, and over-valuing of yourselves, on account of wealth and worldly honour. But this is so foolish a sin, and against such notoriously humbling evidence, that, as it is the devil's image, it is nature's shame. Is not your flesh as corruptible as a beggar's? Do you not think what is within that skin; and how a leprosy, or the small-pox would make you look; and how you must shortly leave all your glory, and your bodies become unpleasant spectacles? Do you not think what it is to lie rotting in a grave and to turn to earth? Do you not know how much more loathsome a thing all the vice and un-

holiness of your souls is ; and what it is to have to do with a holy God, and to be near to judgment and an endless state ? He is mad in sin, whom such considerations will not humble.

4. Another of your dangers is from flatterers, who will be pleasing and praising you, but who will never tell you of that which should humble you and awake you to a sense of your everlasting concerns. But in this respect none are so dangerous as a flattering clergy, who, being themselves carnal worldlings, would serve that flesh which is their master, by your favour and beneficence. Ahab had such prophets, who said, "Go and prosper;" in whose mouths the devil was a lying spirit. How many sincere men have been undone by such !

Remember then what it is to be a sinful man, and what need you have of vigilant friends and pastors, that will deal faithfully with you, as if it were on your death-bed : and encourage such, and abhor worldly flatterers. Your souls have need of as strong physic, and as plain dealing as the souls of the poorest men ; bear it, therefore, and thankfully accept it.

5. One of your greatest dangers here will be, that your own fleshly minds and this worldly sort of men (especially if they be of the clergy,) will be drawing you to false and contemptuous thoughts of serious godliness, and of serious godly men. Whereas, if you be not such yourselves, you are undone for ever ; and all your flatterers, your big names, wealth and honour will neither save you, nor ease your pains in hell. As ever you believe that there is a God, believe that you owe him the utmost reverence, obedience and love, which your faculties can perform. And as ever you care what becomes of you for ever, pay him this great due, and hate all that would divert you ; and, much more, all those diabolical suggestions which would draw you to think that to be a needless thing which must be your life and your all.

6. But, above all, I beseech you, fear and watch, lest you be drawn to espouse any thing, as your interest, which is against the interest and command of Christ, and against his kingdom, or the good of his church or of the commonwealth. As the devil first undid the world, by making deceived Eve believe, that God's command was against her interest ; so doth he to this day, but with none so much as with nobles and rich men. God hath commanded you nothing but what is for your own good, nor forbidden you any thing but what

is for your own hurt and that of others. He needs not you, or any one; you must allow him to be God, and, therefore, to be wiser and better than you, and to know better what is best and fittest for you and others. But Satan will slander to you God's laws, ways and servants; for he is in favour of your continued enmity and separation from God, and therefore would draw you to believe that God and his ways are enemies to you, and against your pleasure, honour, domination, commodity, or ease. O how many princes and great men have been utterly undone, by believing the flesh, the devil and his ministers, when they plead that Christianity is against their power, honour or other interests; that the Scripture is too precise, and that conscience, obeying God before them, is against their power and prerogative; and thus have they set themselves as enemies to keep under conscience and serious godliness, lest obedience to their wills should be thereby hindered.

Yea, how many also so dote as to think that the interest of head, heart, stomach and members, of rulers and subjects, stand not in union, but in contrariety and victory against each other! Woe to the land that hath such rulers, and to the poor tenants that have such landlords! But, much more, woe to such selfish oppressors, that had rather be feared than loved, and take it for their honour to be free and able to do mischief, and to destroy those whose common welfare should be more pleasant to them than their own; and to them, especially, that take serious godliness and godly men to be against them, and therefore bend their wit and power to suppress them; as if they said, as those in Luke xix. 27, "We will not have this man to reign over us!" Such persons Christ will destroy as his unthankful enemies, and "will break them with his iron rod, and dash in pieces as a potter's vessel." (Psalm ii.)

7. If you love yourselves and the common good, get good men about you. Read the fifteenth, sixteenth, and one hundred and first Psalms. Especially procure faithful teachers, and godly friends, servants and companions. Read much the histories of the lives of wise and godly men, such as King Edward the Sixth, and Lord Harrington. Young men, imitate such excellent persons as Scripture and other history justly commend to your imitation. It will be profitable to read the lives of worthy men, such as are gathered

by Mr. Clark, Dr. Fuller, Thuanus, Beza, the lives of the Martyrs, and of such Christian princes as Constantine, Theodosius, &c.; the Emperor Maximilian the Second, John Frederick of Saxony, Philip Prince of Hussia, and Louis the Pious of France. Read also the lives of such Heathens as Titus, Trajan, Adrian, but especially Aurelius Antonius and Alexander Severus; of such lawyers, philosophers, physicians, but especially such divines as Melchior Adamus hath recorded in his four volumes; and of such Bishops as Cyprian, Nazianzen, Ambrose, Augustine, Basil, Chrysostom, our Usher, and such others.

8. Live not in idleness,—as the sons of rich men too often do; for that will rust and corrupt your minds, and cherish besotting and damning lusts, and will render you worthless and useless in the world, and consequently the greatest plagues of your country, to which you should be the greatest helps and blessings. Make as much conscience of improving your hours, as if you were the poorest men: you have the highest wages, and ought to do most work for God. Let holy and useful studies take up your time one part of the day, doing good to others another part, and necessary refreshment and exercise another. He in whose hands are all your times, has allowed you no part for any thing unprofitable, much less for any thing that is hurtful.

O what a blessing to the world are wise and godly magistrates; and what a curse are the foolish and ungodly!

9. Remember that the grand design of the devil and of all deceivers, is, to delude and corrupt the rulers of the people, knowing to which ever way they turn how much significance they carry with them by their laws, power and examples. Remember likewise how sad it will be to be judged as a persecutor or a captain of iniquity. You must therefore have a greater self-suspicion than others, and a greater fear of seduction and sin; and you must watch more carefully against wicked counsel and example, but especially against the temptations of your own flesh and corrupted nature, and of your wealth and situation in society.

CHAP. XIII.

Counsel to Parents and Tutors of Youth.

SHOULD I now instruct parents and teachers in what on their parts is necessary to their great duty, and to the good of youth, it would be more than all I have already written. But that is not my intention in the present work; you may see much of it done in my "Christian Directory." Yet because so much labour is required at the hands of parents and teachers, and such responsibility lies upon them, I beseech all such persons that read these lines, to remember,

1. How near their relation to their children is; and that for a parent to betray their souls to sin and hell, by neglect or by ill means, seems more inexcusable cruelty than for the devil, that is a known enemy, to do it.

2. Consider how very much their welfare is entrusted to your care. You have the teaching of them before the ministers, have them always nearer with you, and have greater power over them. O that you knew what holy instructions, heavenly excitations, and good example God requireth of you for their good and how much of the hopes of the church and world lie on the holy skill and fidelity of parents, in the right education of youth!

3. O feed not their sinful desires and lusts; accustom them not to pride, to idleness, to too much fulness or pleasing of the appetite; but teach them the reasons why they ought to exercise the virtues of temperance and mortification, and shew them the sin and mischief of all sensuality.

4. Yet use them with tender and fatherly love, making them perceive that the abstaining from these evils, is for their own good. Cherish their profitable delights; study how to make all good delightful to them, and encourage them by sparing rewards and prudent commendations. Tell them of the wisdom and goodness of God's word, and let them read the lives of holy men.

5. Choose them such callings, habitations and relations as will make most for the common good, and for the advantage of their souls; and not those that will be most subservient to the covetousness, pride or slothfulness of their nature.

6. Know their particular inclinations, corruptions and temptations, and accordingly keep and restrain them with the greatest vigilance, watching against these dangers as you would do against death.

7. Settle them under wise and godly pastors, and in the familiar company of godly persons, especially those of their own age and usual converse.

8. Keep them as much as possible from temptations at home and abroad, especially those that tend to sensuality, and to impiety or corrupting their judgments against religion. Thrust them not beyond sea or elsewhere in an unfortified state of mind among deceivers, as some cruelly do for the sake of a mere ornament.

9. Remember how you dedicated them to Christ in baptism, and what was promised to be done, and what renounced on their parts, and what you bound yourselves to do.

10. Remember likewise how much the happiness or misery of the church of Christ and of the kingdoms of the world, doth lie on the right or wrong education of youth, by the PARENTS, much more than by our UNIVERSITIES or SCHOOLS.

11. Remember that your own comfort or sorrow in them, lieth chiefly on your own duty or neglect. If they prove to be wicked persons and the plagues of the world, and you be the cause, it may tear your own hearts. But what a joy is it to be the means of their salvation, and of their public service in the world!

12. Disgrace sin to them, and commend holiness by word and practice. Be yourselves what you would have them to be; and pray daily for them and for yourselves. The Lord bless this counsel to them and to you!

CHAP. XIV.

What are Men's Duties to each other as Elder and Younger.

1. IT is most clear in Scripture and reason that there are many special duties, which the elder and the younger, as such, owe to each other. The elder are bound,

(1.) To be wiser than the younger, as having had longer

time for acquiring knowledge, and so to be their instructors in their several places.

(2.) Especially, to deliver down to them the Sacred Scriptures which they have received, and the memorials of God's works done for his church in former days, which were committed to them by their fathers.

(3.) And to go before them in the example of a holy and heavenly life. Job xxxii. 4; viii. 8; Heb. v. 14; Tit. ii. 2, 3; 1 John ii. 13, 14; Judges vi. 13; Psalm xlv. 1; lxxviii. 3. 5; Deut. i. 21; Exod. xii. 26; Deut. xi. 19; Jos. iv. 6. 21, 22; Joel i. 3.

2. Nature and Scripture tell us that the younger owe much duty to the elder, which is thus summed up, "Ye Younger, submit yourselves to the Elder." (1 Peter v. 5.) This submission includeth, especially a reverence to their judgments, preferring them before their own; and a reasonable supposition that ordinarily the elder are wiser than they, and therefore living towards their elders in a humble and learning disposition, not proudly setting their own unfurnished wits against the greater experience of their elders, without very evident and extraordinary reasons. For the understanding of which, note,

3. (1.) It is certain that mere age doth not make men wise or good: none are more sottishly and incurably ignorant than those who are both aged and ignorant, and few are so bad as old and obstinate sinners. For they grow worse in deceiving and in being deceived, abuse God's mercy yet more and more, and are going still further from him, as the faithful are growing better and approach nearer to him every day.

(2.) It is also certain that God greatly blesseth some young men's understandings, and maketh them wiser than the aged and their teachers.

(3.) 'A youth of this description is not bound to think that he knoweth not what he doth actually know; nor must he believe that every old man is wiser than he;'—all this we grant.

4. But though, "Better is a poor and a wise child, than an old and foolish king who will no more be admonished," (Eccles. iv. 13,) yet, (1.) It is certain that knowledge cometh much by experience. Long experience is far more powerful than that which is short; and time and converse are neces-

sary to it. Naturally or ordinarily, long learning and use increase knowledge. Do not all take it for granted, that, usually, the boys who have been many years at school, are better scholars than those who are only beginners? It is the same in all other acquisitions. Therefore the elders in former ages were commonly the rulers of the people in the church and the commonwealth; from which circumstance pastors and rulers are called elders: and if they were not ordinarily the wisest, why did not God make the children the ordinary teachers and rulers of their parents, instead of parents being the teachers of their own children? Old men may be ignorant and erroneous, as well as wicked; but young men cannot be ripe in wisdom without a miracle. We are not, therefore, now to suppose unusual things to be usual. Ordinarily, youth is ignorant and raw; their conceptions undigested, not well fixed or improved: it is but few things that they know; and their ignorance of the rest, maketh them liable to many errors. "For the time, ye ought to have been teachers;" (Heb. v. 11, 12. ;) fitness to teach supposeth time; the young cannot digest strong meats. A novice must not be a bishop; the reason may seem strange,—“Lest he be lifted up with pride, and fall into the condemnation of the devil.” (1 Tim. iii. 6.) One would think youth should be most humble, as being conscious of defectiveness. But because the ignorant know not that more is to be known than ever they attained, therefore they know not their own ignorance.

(2.) And this proud ignorance is so odious a sin, and the nurse of so many more, and so great an enemy to wisdom and all good, that it is no wonder it is the way to “the condemnation of the devil.”

5. Therefore though young men should not receive any falsehood, heresy, or ill example from the aged, yet they should still remember, that, ‘*cæteris paribus,*’ (other circumstances being alike) age hath the great advantage for knowledge, and youth must live in a humble and teachable sense of ignorance; other men’s abuse of time, and aged folly, will not prove them miraculously wise. The aged are always the wisest if their improvement bear any equal proportion to their time, their helps, and opportunities.

6. It is so odious a sin for lads and young students to be

self-conceited and unteachable, and to set up their apprehensions with ungrounded confidence against their elders, that all should be fearful of that guilt, and ought to entertain such humble thoughts of their own understandings, as to be jealous of their conceptions. For all the following vices make up their self-conceited previdence :

(1.) It is both great **IGNORANCE** of the darkness of men's understandings, and great ignorance of themselves,—to be ignorant that they are ignorant,—and to think they are sure of that which they know not.

(2.) It is an odious sort of **PRIDE**, to over-value an ignorant understanding, and to be proudly confident of that which they have not.

(3.) It is **FOLLY**, to think that truth can be known without sufficient time and trial, and contrary to the world's continual experience.

(4.) It is as absurd and inhuman a **SUBVERTING OF THE ORDER OF THE WORLD**, for lads to set up their wits by groundless self-conceitedness against their elders, as for subjects to set their wills against rulers.

(5.) It is a continual **UNRIGHTEOUSNESS**; for there is a justice required in our common private judging, as well as in the public adjudications and awards of judges. All should be heard and tried before we venture peremptorily to judge.

(6.) It is a nest of continual **ERROR** in the mind, which is the soul's deformity, and contrary to nature's love of truth.

7. It hath also abundance of mischievous effects.

(1.) It keepeth out that truth or knowledge which should be received. It obstinately resisteth necessary teaching, whereas the most willing entertainment is little enough to get true knowledge, even by slow degrees. As God giveth birds an instinct to feed their young, so the young ones by instinct hunger and open their mouths. But if they abhorred their meat and were to be crammed, they would commonly perish. The knowledge which such conceited persons get, must be from themselves,—in their own thinking and observation only; whereas their minds are yet unfurnished with those truths that must let in more. Daily objects will occasion error or confusion in their minds that are unprepared to improve them; their own lusts will pervert them, and one error will draw in more; whereas the assist-

ance of those who, by long and successful study, have rightly ordered and digested their conceptions, might be an exceeding great help to willing learners.

(2.) Such young persons by pride do forfeit the grace of God, which he giveth to the humble, while "he resisteth the proud;" and they are often given up to the self-conceitedness which they so strenuously defend, till their own counsels and ways be their utter confusion.

(3.) The devil hath advantage to set upon and even to possess such proud minds, prepared for him by their ignorance. He then becomes their teacher, and leads them to almost whatever he wills, against the truth and the Church, against themselves and against God.

(4.) Self-conceit and hasty confidence make them continual liars, even while they rage for what they say as being actually true: for being themselves usually mistaken for want of patient trial, they say what they think, and are not to be much believed even when speaking in their utmost preference.

8. But some one will say, 'Seeing many old men are ignorant and erroneous, and some young men have sounder understandings than their elders, how shall I know when I am guilty of pride, self-conceit, preference, and refusing to bow to the judgment of others?'

Ans. You will know this by the following marks:

(1.) When you rashly neglect the judgment and counsel of those who have had as good helps and parts as you, and far longer time and experience, without so much as hearing what they have to say, or taking time to try the cause according to its weight, especially if they be those from whom nature or the ties of relationship oblige you to learn.

(2.) When you more easily suspect such persons than your own understandings.

(3.) When your confidence of your understandings is so unproportionable to your time and studies, that you must suppose you know by a miracle, or by some rare capacity and wit,—as if you had acquired more wisdom in a few years than the rest of mankind obtain in many.

(4.) When you judge suddenly before you take time to think, and when you may know that you never heard what may be said against you.

(5.) When you talk the most, in a bold asserting or a

teaching way,—as if you were oracles to be heard and revered; and not in a humble inquiring way, with that necessary doubting which beseemeth learners. “Except ye become as little children” in teachable humility, you are not fit for the school of Christ. (Matt. xviii. 3.) Even he that is a teacher, conscious of his remaining ignorance, must be a learner still, and not think himself above it, nor set himself to dispute against all that he understands not, but must continue humbly to search and try.

(6.) When those reasons of your own seem good and cogent which are sufficiently confuted, (yet you cannot see it,) or which men of the most approved learning and fitness to form a judgment do consider to be but folly; and when other men’s soundest reasons seem light to you, because you judge by a proud and selfish understanding, being confident and tenacious of all that is your own, and contemning that which is against you.

(7.) When you can too easily, without certain and cogent reason, dissent from the judgment, not only of those whose light and integrity have by self manifestation convinced the world, but also from the generality of such as are commonly known to be the wise, the godly and impartial; yea, perhaps, when you proceed so far as to differ from all the Church of Christ.

(8.) When the greatest number of the wisest men that know you, think you not so wise as you think yourselves to be, nor your reason so good; but they pity your self-conceitedness,—and yet this brings you not to suspect and try.

(9.) When you are hardly and rarely brought to a humble confession of your errors, but in all debates, whatever the cause may be, you seem still to be in the right; and when you have once said any thing, you will stand to it, and justify untruths, or extenuate and excuse them.

(10.) When you too much affect the esteem of wisdom, and love to have your judgments made a rule to others, and are unfit for true subjection.

(11.) In a word, when, instead of being “swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath,” you are swift to speak and dictate, slow to hear and learn, and swift to wrathful censure of those who dissent from you.—These are strong signs of pride, self-conceit, great confidence, and unbending stubbornness in judging.

9. So common and hurtful is this sin in mankind, that you should still be duly fearful of it. Error, I fear, taketh up the greater portion of the thoughts of men; most persons are rather deceived than in the right; man's mind in the flesh, is in great darkness; and, therefore, PROUD IGNORANCE is a monstrous and pernicious vice. Most of the confusions and miseries of the world, of kingdoms, churches, and societies, come from it. Yea, though it seems most contrary to scepticism, it tendeth at last to infidelity or atheism. For when experience hath convinced such conceited persons, that their most confident rage was but a mistake, they turn themselves to think that there is nothing certain, and begin to deny the greatest truths. It is by this one sin of proud self-conceitdness in false thoughts, that kingdoms, particular churches, and the world itself, through obstinacy, seem remediless; and the wisest men that would gladly attempt to cure them, can do no good except on themselves and a few others.

10. But this sin is no where more misplaced or unnatural, than in children against the counsel of their parents, and scholars against that of their tutors, and ignorant persons against the common consent of the most able and godly pastors. What an odious thing is it to see an ignorant lad run against all his father's words, and think that he is wiser than his parents, and always in the right! and to hear ignorant persons magisterially judge and despise their wise and faithful teachers, before they are capable to understand them, or the matter about which they talk! O how happily might parents, pastors, and wise men, promote knowledge and goodness in the world, were it not for this selfish confidence, which shuts the door against their necessary helps!

CHAP. XV.

The Conclusion, addressed to Ministers.

THERE is another sort of helpers, on whom the welfare of youth much depends;—even the ministers of Christ. But I presume not here to teach them. In my “REFORMED PASTOR,” I have spoken somewhat freely when I had leave. I cannot expect that those who silence me, should hear me;

nor will I think that able and faithful ministers need my counsel. But all that I will now say, is, humbly to entreat those who take no great pains with the young persons in their parishes, and who will not be admonished by such as me, to read the works of Martin Bucer, who had so great a hand in counselling our Reformers in framing the Liturgy, especially his book "de Regno Dei, his Censure of the Liturgy,"—of Baptism, Confirmation, Ordination and Discipline, and his vehement pressing of the necessity of Congregational Discipline, of denying the sacrament to the unmeet, and of keeping baptized youths among the Catechumens, till at a proper age they come to true understanding of the covenant, which they made and must renew, and till they give credible signs of real godliness by a godly life. He also shews what mischievous effects ensue from confirming them and admitting them to the Lord's-supper, on their barely saying the words of the Catechism, the Creeds, the Lord's-prayer, and the Decalogue, without tried understanding and serious piety;—what a wrong is thus done to the Christian church and religion, by confounding and corrupting our communion for want of parish discipline and distinctions;—and what little good all canons or laws for reformation or religious duty will do, if the ministry be ignorant, worldly and ungodly, and if the churches be not taught and guided by able, godly, humble, self-denying and loving pastors.

Read him diligently, I beseech you, for he was no violent man, and his books here mentioned were purposely written for King Edward, and for the Bishops and the Church of England, and were by them kindly accepted. His burnt bones were honourably vindicated by the public praise, and his memory was by many in Cambridge solemnly commended to posterity. Let, I beseech you, his counsel in these books be revived, and let true reformation be tried by their light. I hope those who will not hear me, or such as I am, will hear that great and moderate reformer. And if you will add the reading of old Salvian, and of Nic. Clemangis, it may do you good, by exciting you to do good to others, and thus effectually promoting the ends of this ADVICE TO YOUTH.