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EXTRACTED FROM DR. CAVE.

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Primitive Christianity:
OR,
THE RELIGION
OF
THE ANCIENT CHRISTIANS.

EXTRACTED FROM DR. CAVE.

Ὁὐκ ἐν λόγοις, ἀλλ' ἐν ἔργοις τὰ τοῦ ἡμετέρας θεοσεβείας πράγματα.

Just. Mart. Parænes. ad Græc. p. 33.

Nos non habitu Sapientiam, sed mente præferimus ;

Non eloquimur magna, sed vivimus.

Min. Fel. Dial. p. 31.

Primitive Christianity :

OR, THE

RELIGION OF THE ANCIENT CHRISTIANS.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

Things charged upon the Primitive Christians, respecting their Religion.

1. No sooner did the SON of GOD appear in the world, to establish the most excellent religion that ever was, but he met with the most fierce and vigorous opposition ; persecuted and devoted to death as soon as he was born, followed all his life with fresh assaults of malice and cruelty, his credit traduced and slandered, his doctrine despised and slighted, and himself at last put to death with the most exquisite arts of torture and disgrace. And “ if they thus served the master of the house, how much more them of the household ? The disciple not being above his, master, nor the servant above his lord.” Therefore when he gave commission to his Apostles, to publish this Religion to the world, he told them beforehand what reception they must look to meet with : That he “ sent them forth as sheep in the midst of wolves ; ” “ that they should be delivered up to the councils, and scourged in the synagogues, and be brought before kings and governors, and be hated of all men for his name’s sake.” Nay, so high should the quarrel arise upon the account of religion, that men should violate some of the nearest laws of nature ; “ betray their friends and kinsfolk ;

the brother delivering up the brother to death, and the father the child; the children rising up against their parents, and causing them to be put to death." This he well foresaw would be the fate of its first appearing in the world. And indeed, it could not reasonably be expected, that ~~the~~ Christian Religion should meet with a better entertainment; for the nature of its doctrine was such, as was almost impossible to escape the frowns and displeasure of men. A doctrine it was, that called men off from their pleasures, and offered violence to their inclinations; that required the greatest strictness of life; obliged men "to deny themselves, to take up their cross," and to follow the steps of a poor crucified SAVIOUR. It introduced new rites and ceremonies; it revealed and brought to light such truths, as were not only contrary to the principles of men's education, but many of them above the reach of natural comprehension: too deep for the line of human reason to fathom.

2. Upon these accounts, Christianity was sure to encounter with mighty prejudices and potent opposition; and so it did: for no sooner did it appear in the world, but it was every where spoken against. Princes and Potentates, and the greatest powers and polities of the world, did for some ages combine together, to extirpate and banish it out of the world. And certainly, if strength and subtilty, if malice and cruelty, could have stifled it, it had been smothered in its infancy. But notwithstanding all these oppositions, it still lifted up its head, and outbraved the fiercest storms of persecution; and, as TERTULLIAN told their enemies, "By every exquisite act of cruelty, they did but tempt others to come over to the party: the oftener they were mowed down, the faster they sprang up again, the blood of Christians making the church's soil more fat and fertile." Hereupon the great enemy of mankind betook himself to other counsels, and sought to undermine what he saw he could not carry by open assault and battery. He studied to leaven the minds of men with prejudices against Christianity, and to burden

it with whole loads of reproaches and defamations; knowing no speedier way to hinder its reception. For this purpose all the arts of malice were mustered up, and Christians confidently charged with all those crimes that could render them and their religion vile and infamous. The things charged upon them, were either such as respected their religion, their outward state and condition, or their moral carriage and behaviour, with some things relating to the matter or manner of their worship. We shall consider them in order, and how the Christians of those times vindicated themselves from these imputations.

3. The Christian Religion, at its first coming abroad in the world, was mainly charged with Impiety and Novelty. For the first, it was commonly cried out against as a grand piece of Atheism and impiety. The Christians were every where accounted as Atheists, and their Religion as Atheism; and seldom is it that JULIAN the Emperor calls Christianity by any other name.

4. In answer to this charge, the Christians pleaded,

First, That the Gentiles were, for the most part, incompetent judges of such cases as these, as being almost wholly ignorant of the true state of the Christian doctrine. Thus when CRESCENS the philosopher had traduced the Christians as Atheistical and irreligious, JUSTIN MARTYR answers, That he talked about things which he did not understand; that in reproaching the doctrine of CHRIST, when he did not understand it, he discovered a wicked and malignant temper: or if he did understand it, then he showed himself much more disingenuous, in charging upon it what he knew to be false. But JUSTIN well knew, that he was miserably unskilful in matters of Christianity, having formerly had conferences and disputations with him about these things; and therefore offered the senate of Rome, (to whom he then presented his Apology,) if they had not heard the sum of it, to hold another conference with him, even before the senate itself: or if they had heard it, then he did not doubt

but they clearly apprehended how little he understood these things.

5. *Secondly*, They did in some sort confess the charge, that according to the vulgar notion which the Heathens had of their deities, they were Atheists; *i. e.*, strangers and enemies to them; that the gods of the Gentiles were at best but demons, unclean spirits, who had long imposed upon mankind; and by their villanies, sophistries, and arts of terror, had so affrighted the common people, who judge of things more by appearance than by reason, that they called them gods, and gave to every one of them that name, which the demon was willing to take to himself: and that they really were but devils, the Christians evidently manifested at every turn, forcing them to confess it, while by prayer to the true God, they drove them out of possessed persons.

6. *Thirdly*, In the proper notion of Atheism, they denied the charge, and appealed to their severest adversaries, whether those who owned such principles as they did, could reasonably be styled Atheists? None ever pleaded better for the existence of a supreme infinite Being, who made and governs all things by infinite wisdom and almighty power; none more ready to produce a clear and candid confession of their faith, as to this grand article of Religion, than they. Although we profess ourselves Atheists, with respect to those whom you esteem gods, (so their apologist tells the senate,) yet not in respect of the true God; the Parent and Fountain of wisdom and righteousness, and all other excellencies and perfections, who is infinitely free from the least contagion of evil: Him, and his only begotten Son, who instructed us and the whole society of good angels in these divine mysteries, and the SPIRIT of Prophecy, we worship and adore; honouring them in truth, and with the highest reason. Can we then be Atheists, who worship the great Creator of this world, not with blood, incense, and offerings, (which we are sufficiently taught he stands in no need of,) but with prayers and praises, in all the addresses we

make to him ; believing this to be the only honour that is worthy of Him, not to consume the creatures which he has given us ; but to sing and celebrate rational hymns and sacrifices, pouring out our prayers to him as a grateful return for those many good things which we have received, and do yet expect from him.

7. ' We are accused (says ARNOBIUS) for introducing profane rites, and an impious religion. But tell me, O ye men of reason, how dare you make so rash a charge ? To adore the mighty God, the Sovereign of the whole creation, the Governor of the highest powers, to pray to him with the most obsequious reverence ; under an afflicted state to lay hold of him with all our powers, to love him, and to look up to him ; is this a dismal and detestable Religion, a Religion full of sacrilege and impiety ? Is this that bold and prodigious crime, for which you so rage against us, confiscating our estates, banishing our persons, burning, tearing, and racking us to death with such exquisite tortures ? We Christians are nothing else but the worshippers of the supreme King and Governor of the world, according as we are taught by CHRIST our Master. Search, and you will find nothing else in our Religion : this is the end and design of our divine offices ; before Him it is that we are wont to prostrate ourselves ; Him we worship with common devotions ; from Him we beg those things which are just and honest, and such as are not unworthy of Him to hear and grant.' So little reason had the enemies of Christianity to brand it with the note of Atheism and irreligion !



CHAPTER II.

Of the Novelty that was charged upon Christianity.

1. THE next charge was its Novelty, that it was an upstart sect, and but of yesterday standing ; whereas the

Religion of the Gentiles had obtained from ages and generations. This charge began betimes. When St. PAUL preached at Athens, we find this the first thing charged upon him, That he was "a setter forth of strange gods; because he preached to them JESUS and the resurrection;" and it was followed with a loud cry in succeeding times. 'You are wont to object to us, (says ARNOBIUS,) that our Religion is novel, started up not many days ago; and that you ought not to desert your ancient way, and the religion of your country.' And EUSEBIUS tells us, the Heathens were wont to reason thus: 'What strange profession of religion is this? What new way of life, wherein we can neither discern the rites amongst us used in Greece, nor amongst any sect of the Barbarians? Who can deny them to be impious, who have forsaken the customs of their fathers, observed before in all cities and countries; revolting from a way of worship which had been universally received from all ages, both by Greeks and Barbarians?'

2. Nay, after Christianity had been settled for some hundreds of years, and was become the prevailing religion, and had in a manner banished all others, and driven them into corners; yet this charge still continued. Thus JULIAN the Emperor, writing to the people of Alexandria concerning the Galileans, (so he was wont in scorn to call the Christians,) calls Christianity, the new doctrine that had been preached to the world; the very title which LUCIAN had long since bestowed upon it; where speaking of our SAVIOUR, he calls him the great man that was crucified in Palestine, who introduced that new religion into the world.

3. This was a mighty prejudice against the Christian Religion at its first coming into the world; for all men, as they have a natural reverence for religion, so they have a great veneration for antiquity, the customs and traditions of their fathers, which they entertain as a most inestimable *depositum*; and for which they look upon themselves as obliged to contend, as for that which is most solemn and sacred.

4. Two pleas especially, the Christians made to this indictment.

First, That the charge was not true : for besides that many principles of Christianity were the same with the law of nature ; the Christian Religion was for substance the same with that of the ancient Jews, whose Religion claimed the precedency of all others in the world. That the Religion was in substance and effect the same, is expressly asserted and proved by EUSEBIUS. The ancient Patriarchs were the Christians of the old world, who had the same faith, Religion, and worship, common with us. And how far superior in age they were to any thing recorded of the most ancient Gentiles, to their oldest writers, ORPHEUS, HOMER, HESIOD, nay, to their very gods themselves, is sufficiently made good by many of the ancient Fathers ; there being, at the easiest computation, between MOSES and HOMER, above six hundred years. Nay, CADMUS (the first inventor of letters among the Grecians) was some ages junior to MOSES. Nay, whatever useful and excellent notions the great masters of religion amongst the Heathens had amongst them, it is plain they borrowed, or, more truly, stole them from the writings of the ancient Jews, as is abundantly demonstrated by EUSEBIUS, and by TERTULLIAN before ; who shows, that all their poets and philosophers had drunk deep of the fountain of the Prophets, and had forced their best doctrines and opinions from thence, though subtilly altering and disguising them. So that upon this consideration, the accusation was false, and Christianity appears the oldest Religion in the world.

5. *Secondly*, Admit the Christian Religion, in a limited sense, to be of a later standing than the religion of the Gentiles ; yet they pleaded, it was infinitely reasonable, that they should change for the better ; that novel truth was better than ancient error ; and that they ought not to be bound up in old customs and principles, when those which were abundantly more reasonable were presented to them.

6. 'If you object to us the novelty of our Religion, (says ARNOBIUS,) may we not charge the same fault upon the most ancient ages of the world, who at first lived in a very mean state; but by little and little changed it into a more liberal course of life? Was it any crime that they changed their beasts' skins into more comely and convenient garments, or that they no longer chose to dwell like wild beasts in rocks and caverns, when they had learned to build better habitations? It is natural to all mankind to prefer better before what is worse. Therefore when you charge us with apostasy from the religion of the ancients, you should rather consider the cause than the action, and not so much upbraid us with what we have left, as examine what it is we have entertained. For if merely to change our opinion, and to pass from ancient institutions to what is more new, be a crime, then none so guilty of the charge as yourselves, who have so oft changed your manners and course of life, and by embracing new rites and customs, have condemned those that went before.' The same answer ST. AMBROSE gives: 'Our Religion,' you say, 'is new, and yours ancient: And what does this either hurt our cause, or help yours? If ours be new, it will in time become old. Is yours old? There was a time when it was new. The goodness and authority of religion is not to be valued by length of time, but by the excellency of its worship; nor does it become us to consider so much when it began, as what it is we worship.'



CHAPTER III.

Things charged upon the Christians respecting their outward condition.

1. THE second sort of arts which the enemies of Christianity made use of, to render Christians vile and despicable, related to the circumstances of their external state and

condition in the world; where two things were laid to their charge: That they, generally, were a very mean and inconsiderable sort of men; and, That they were a useless and unserviceable people, nay, pernicious and mischievous to the world. They were looked upon as the lowest and meanest rank of men, persons neither considerable for their parts and learning, nor for their estates and quality.

Thus CELSUS objected: 'Let no man come that is learned, wise, and prudent; for these things they account evil and unlawful; but if any be unlearned, or an idiot, let him come and welcome;' openly declaring, that none but fools, and such as are devoid of sense and reason, slaves, and silly women, are fit disciples for the God they worship. 'We may observe,' says he, 'these mountebank impostors, bragging great things to the vulgar, not in the presence of wise men, (for that they dare not,) but wherever they espy a flock of weak, simple people, there they presently crowd in. You shall see (as he goes on) weavers, tailors, and the most illiterate fellows, when they can get a few silly women by themselves, then who so wise, and so able to teach and instruct as they?'

ORIGEN answers, 'That the Christian Doctrine invites to wisdom; that ST. PAUL reckons wisdom and knowledge in the first ranks of the gifts of God; and that if he any where seem to reflect severely upon wisdom or human learning, (which probably may be the first rise of this charge,) he only censures the abuse, never intending to blame the thing itself; that when he prescribes the property of a true Bishop, or governor of the Church, he requires this as one necessary qualification; That he be "apt to teach, and able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers:" That we do not prohibit the wise, learned, and prudent, provided the rude, simple, and unlearned, be not excluded; for to them also the Gospel does promise and provide a remedy, making them meet for God. That no man but must confess it is an excellent thing to study the best arts and discipline, and that learning, and the study of arts and prudence, are

so far from being a hinderance to the knowledge of God, that they mightily advance it: That it is a calumny to compare us to wandering impostors, who by our expounding the divine Oracles, exhort the people to piety towards the great God, and to the rest of those virtues which are its companions; endeavouring to rescue men from a contempt of the Deity, and all brutish and irregular passions: That Christians are so far from admitting any hastily, that they first examine those that desire to become their auditors; and having privately had trial of them, before they receive them into the congregation, when they perceive them fully resolved to lead a religious life, then they admit them in their distinct orders; some that are newly admitted; others that have given some evidence of their purpose to live as becomes Christians; amongst whom there are governors appointed to inspect and inquire into the life and manners of those who have been admitted, that they may expel those who answer not their profession, and heartily entertain those that do: 'That we desire all men may be trained up in the word of God; the ministers of our Religion, professing themselves to be debtors both to the Greeks and Barbarians, both to the wise and the unwise; that as much as may be, they may outgrow their ignorance, and attain to the best kind of wisdom. And whereas we are accused of seducing silly women: On the contrary, we reclaim women from immodesty, from falling out with their husbands, and parting from them, and from the wild extravagancies of the sports and theatres. We openly (not in corners) promise eternal happiness to those who live according to the rules of the divine law; who set God always before their eyes, and whatever they do, endeavour to approve themselves to Him.'

2. Nor were the Christians of those times more despised for their weakness and ignorance, than they were for their meanness and poverty. They were looked upon as the scum and refuse of the people, scarce a considerable man to be found amongst them. 'See, (says the Heathen in

MINUTIUS FELIX,) you are a poor, beggarly, hunger-starved generation, that have neither riches nor reputation.' This charge was not wholly true: the Christians having amongst them persons of considerable place and quality.

3. But suppose it had, yet this was no real prejudice to their cause, nor any great hurt to them. 'That the most part of us are poor, (says OCTAVIUS to CÆCILIUS,) is not our dishonour but our glory; the mind, as it is dissolved by plenty and luxury, so it is strengthened by indigence and frugality: and yet how can that man be poor, who wants not, who is rich in and towards God? That man is rather poor, who when he has a great deal, desires more. The truth is, no man can be so poor, as he was when he was born. The birds live without any patrimony entailed upon them, and the beasts find pastures every day; and yet these are born for our use; all which we fully enjoy, when we do not covet them. Much lighter and happier does he go to heaven, who is not burdened by the way with an unnecessary load of riches.'

4. But this was not all: They were charged as a Useless people, that contributed nothing to the happiness of the commonwealth; nay, as destructive and pernicious to human society, and the cause of all those calamities that befell the world.

In answer to the first, their being useless; hear what TERTULLIAN says: 'How can this be, when we live amongst you, have the same diet, habit, manner, and way of life? We are no Brachmans or Indian Gymnosophists, who live in woods, and banish themselves from all civil life. We are not unmindful of what we owe to our great Creator, and therefore despise none of his creatures, though careful to use them with temperance and sobriety. Wherefore we live not in the world without the use of your markets, shambles, shops, stables, and other ways of commerce. We go to sea with you, bear arms, till and improve the ground, use merchandise; we undergo trades amongst you, and expose our works to your use. And

how then we can seem unserviceable to your affairs, with which and by which we live, I see not. Certainly if any have cause to complain of our being unprofitable, they are bawds, panders, hectors, and ruffians; sellers of poison, magicians, soothsayers, wizards, and astrologers; and to be unserviceable to these, is the greatest serviceableness.'

5. It cannot be denied, but that some of the primitive Christians were shy of engaging in wars, and not forward to undergo public places of authority and power; but (besides that this was only the opinion of some private persons, and not the common practice or determination of the church) it arose partly from some mistaken passages in the Gospel; but principally, because such offices and employments were usually clogged with such circumstances and conditions, as obliged them to some things repugnant to the christian law. Otherwise, where they could do it without offering violence to their religion, they shunned it not, but frequently bore arms, and discharged public offices; as cannot be unknown to any that are versed in the history of the first ages.

6. Besides these, there were several other instances which the Christians pleaded to vindicate themselves from being unserviceable to the good of mankind; amongst which I shall at present take notice only of these two:—

First, That they reclaimed men from vice to a virtuous life; by which means (besides that they provided for men's highest and nearest interest, the interest of their souls, and their eternal happiness in another life) they greatly consulted the peace and welfare of the places where they lived. For vicious men are the pests of human society, that infect others by their bad examples or persuasions, and entail vengeance upon the places of their residence; whilst good men engage the blessing of Heaven, and both by their counsels and examples, bring over others to sobriety and virtue, whereby they establish and strengthen the foundations of government, and the happiness of civil life.

7. Nay, where the Gospel did not wholly reclaim men.

from their vices, and bring them over to the Religion of the crucified SAVIOUR; yet had it this excellent influence upon the world, that it generally taught them better lessons, refined their understandings, and filled their minds with more useful notions of religion than they had before. Hence those philosophers, who lived in the time of Christianity, wrote in a much more divine strain, entertained more honourable and worthy sentiments about God and religion, and the duties of men in their several capacities, than those of their sect that went before them. The spirit of the Gospel began then to fly abroad, and so could not but leave some tincture and savour upon the spirits of men, though its most inveterate enemies. Besides that many of them did more nearly converse with the writings of Christianity, which they read either out of curiosity, or with a design to confute. This sharpened the edge of their understandings, and furnished them with better notions, more useful precepts and rules of life, than are to be met with in any of the old philosophers: witness those excellent and uncommon strains of piety that run through the writings of SENECA, EPICTETUS, ANTONINE, ARRIAN, PLUTARCH, HIEROCLES, PLOTINUS, and the rest that lived in those first ages of the Gospel.

8. And yet notwithstanding the case was thus plain and evident, how much the world was beholden to Christians; yet were they looked upon as the pests of human society; counted and called the common enemies of mankind, as TERTULLIAN complains; that they were the causes of all public calamities; and that for their sakes it was, that vengeance did so often remarkably haunt the Roman Empire. This was the common outcry: ‘If the city be besieged, (says TERTULLIAN,) if any thing happen ill in the fields, in the garrisons, in the islands, presently they cry out, It is because of the Christians. They conspire the ruin of good men, and thirst after the blood of the innocent; patronizing their hatred with this vain pretence, that the Christians are the cause of all public misfortunes and calamities. If the Tiber overflow the walls, if the

Nile do not (as it is wont) overflow the fields, if the heaven do not keep its accustomed course, if an earthquake happen, if a famine, or a plague, presently the cry is, *Away with the Christians to the lions!*' Thus DEMETRIAN, the proconsul of Africa, objected to ST. CYPRIAN, that they might thank the Christians, that wars did oftener arise, that plagues and famines did rage so much, and that immoderate and excessive rains hindered the kindly seasons of the year.

I shall take notice only of two things, which the Christians pleaded in this case.

First, That the Gentiles should do well to seek the true causes of these things nearer home, and to inquire, Whether it was not for their own sakes, that the divine providence was thus offended with them, there being very just reasons to think so.

9. *Secondly*, As to the thing itself, as it was charged upon them, they denied it to be true, and that for two reasons especially.

(1.) Because the world had been pestered with such evils and miseries long before the Christian Religion appeared in it. 'I pray,' says TERTULLIAN, 'what miseries did overwhelm all the world, and even Rome itself, before the times of TIBERIUS, *i. e.*, before the coming of CHRIST? Have we not read of Hierapolis, and the islands of Delos, and Rhodes, and Cos, destroyed, with many thousands of men? Does not PLATO speak of the greatest part of Asia and Africa swallowed up by the Atlantic Sea? An earthquake drank up the Corinthian Sea, and the force of the ocean rent off Sicily from Italy. Not to ask, Where were the Christians, the great contemners of your gods? But where were your gods themselves when the flood overran the world? Palestine had not yet received the Jewish nation out of Egypt, much less had the Christians sat down there, when Sodom and Gomorrah, and the adjacent parts, were burned up by a shower of fire and brimstone.'

(2.) Because since the coming of Christianity, the

world had been in a better and more prosperous state than it was before; especially whenever the Christian Religion met with any favour and encouragement. The reason of it TERTULLIAN gives: 'Although we should compare present with former miseries, yet they are much lighter now, since GOD sent Christians into the world; for since innocency has balanced the iniquities of the age, and there have been many who have interceded with Heaven.'

Hence EUSEBIUS notes once and again, that the affairs of the empire commonly flourished while Christianity was protected; but when it was persecuted, things began to go to rack, and their ancient peace and prosperity could not be retrieved, till peace and tranquillity were restored to the Christians: therefore CYPRIAN tells the Proconsul, that their cruelty to the Christians was one of those crying sins that had provoked GOD to inflict so many heavy miseries upon them, not only refusing to worship GOD themselves, but unjustly persecuting those innocent persons that did. So little hand had the Christians in entailing vengeance upon the world, that their enemies rather wilfully pulled it down upon their own heads.



CHAPTER IV.

The Charges brought against them respecting their Life and Manners.

1. ALL the attempts that had been hitherto made against the honour and reputation of Christians, seemed but like the first skirmishings of an army, in respect of the main battalia that was yet behind; The charge that was made against their moral Carriage and Behaviour. And here they were accused at every turn of no less than sacrilege, sedition, and high treason; of incest, and promiscuous mixtures; of murder, and eating the flesh of infants at their sacramental feasts.

The particular answers to these charges shall be considered hereafter. I shall only at present take notice of the general vindication which the Christians made of themselves from these indictments; and the sum of what they pleaded lies especially in these three things.

2. *First*, They did openly assert their innocency, and show by their lives, as well as their apologies, that they were men of quite another temper than their enemies did represent them. Their religion and way of life was admired by all.

CLEMENS of Alexandria gives us this short account of them: "As the fairest possession, we give ourselves to God, entirely loving him, and reckoning this the business of our lives. No man is with us a Christian, or accounted truly rich, temperate, and generous, but he that is pious and religious; nor does any farther bear the image of God, than he speaks and believes what is just and holy. So that this, in short, is the state of us who follow God: such as are our desires, such are our discourses; such as are our discourses, such are our actions; such as are our actions, such is our life: so universally good is the whole life of Christians." * Certainly none were ever greater enemies to a naked profession, and the covering of a bad life under the title of Christianity. Do any live otherwise than CHRIST hath commanded? It is a most certain argument they are no Christians, though with their tongues they never so smoothly profess the christian doctrine; for it is not mere professors, but those who live according to their profession, that shall be saved, as JUSTIN MARTYR declares before the Emperors.

3. *Secondly*, They were willing to put themselves upon the strictest trial, and to undergo the severest penalties, if found guilty of those crimes that were charged upon them. So their Apologist bespeaks the Emperors: 'We beseech you (says he) that those things that are charged upon the Christians may be inquired into; and if they be found to be so, let them have their deserved punishment; nay, let them be more severely punished than other men; but if

not guilty, then it is not reasonable that innocent persons should suffer merely upon report and clamour.

4. But alas ! so clear was their innocency, that their bitterest adversaries durst not suffer them to come to a fair open trial. ‘ If you be so certain that we are guilty, (says TERTULLIAN to the Heathens,) why then are we not treated in the same nature with all malefactors, who have leave, both by themselves and their advocates, to defend their innocency, to answer and put in pleas ; it being unlawful to condemn any before they be heard, and have liberty to defend themselves ? Whereas Christians only are not permitted to speak any thing that might clear their cause, maintain the truth, and make the judge able to pronounce a righteous sentence. It is enough to justify the public odium, if we do but confess ourselves Christians, without ever examining the crime ; contrary to the manner of procedure against all other delinquents, whom it is not enough barely to charge to be murderers, sacrilegious, or incestuous, or enemies to the public, (the titles you are pleased to bestow upon us,) unless they also take the quality of the fact, the place, manner, time, partners, and accessories under examination. But no such favour is shown to us, but we are condemned without any inquisition passed upon us.’ And good reason there was that they should take this course, seeing they could really find nothing to condemn them for, but for being Christians ; it was the innocent name that was hated in them ; all the quarrel was about this title ; and when a Christian was guilty of nothing else, it was this that made him guilty.

5. *Thirdly*, They appealed for their vindication to the judgment and conscience of their more sober and impartial enemies, and were accordingly acquitted by them, as guiltless of any heinous crimes. PLINY the Younger, being commanded by the emperor TRAJAN, to give him an account of the Christians, tells him, ‘ That after the best estimate that he could take, and the strictest inquisition that he could make by tortures, he found no worse of them than this ; That they were wont to meet early for the

performance of their solemn devotions, and to bind themselves under the most sacred obligations to commit no vice or wickedness; and that their religion was nothing else but untoward and immoderate superstition.' This is the testimony which that great man (who being Proconsul of Bithynia, was capable to satisfy himself, and who was no less diligent to search into the matter) gives concerning them. Next after him, SERENUS GRANIANUS (the Proconsul of Asia) writes to the Emperor ADRIAN, TRAJAN'S successor, to represent to him how unjust it was to put Christians to death, when no crime was duly laid to their charge, merely to gratify the tumultuous clamours of the people: to whom the Emperor answers, 'That they should not be unjustly troubled; that if any thing was proved against them, he should punish them according to the nature of the fault; but if done out of malice or spite, he should then accordingly punish the accuser as a calumniator.' Next to ADRIAN, ANTONINUS PIUS, in his Epistle to the Commons of Asia, tells them, 'That they had traduced the Christians, and had objected those crimes to them which they could not prove; that they were more firm and undaunted in their profession than themselves, and had a greater freedom and confidence towards God; and that therefore he resolved to ratify and follow the determination of his fathers.'

6. From all which it appears, how innocent the Christians were of those things which the Gentiles charged upon them, and how strict and unblameable in their lives. ORIGEN tells CELSUS, 'That the churches of God which had taken upon them the discipline of CHRIST, if compared to the common societies of men, were amongst them like lights in the world. For who, says he, is here, but he must needs confess that the worse part of our church is much better than the popular assemblies? We Christians do not measure wisdom by men's habits, but by their minds and tempers, and do not speak great things, but live them; having this to boast of, that we really attain to those things which they earnestly sought, but

could not find.' Thus LACTANTIUS, having excellently discoursed of the prodigious debaucheries and wickednesses of the Heathens; 'But which of these things,' says he, 'can be objected to our people, whose whole religion is to live without spot or blemish? From whence they might easily gather, had they any understanding, that piety is on our side, and that they themselves are vile and impious.' And EUSEBIUS tells us, that in his time the christian faith had by gravity, sincerity, modesty, and holiness of life, so conquered all opposition, that none durst charge it with any of those calumnies which the ancient enemies of our religion used to fasten upon it. 'What religion,' says ARNOBIUS, 'can be truer, more useful, powerful, and just than this?' Which, as he elsewhere notes, renders men meek, speakers of truth, modest, chaste, charitable, kind, and helpful to all, as if most nearly related to us. And indeed, this is the genuine and natural tendency of the christian doctrine, and which it cannot but effect wherever it is entertained. So true is that which ATHENAGORAS told the Emperors, that no Christian could be a bad man. And TERTULLIAN openly declares, that when men depart from the discipline of the Gospel, they cease amongst us to be accounted Christians.



CHAPTER V.

Of the positive parts of their Religion; and first, of their Piety towards God.

HAVING thus seen with how much clearness the ancient Christians vindicated themselves from those unjust aspersions, which their adversaries had cast upon them; we come now to take a more direct view of their religion, which, according to ST. PAUL's division, we shall consider as to their piety towards God, those virtues which

more immediately concerned themselves, and those which respected others. Their piety towards God appeared in those two main instances of it; A serious and hearty detestation of idolatry; And, religious care about the concerns of divine worship.

2. Idolatry in those times was the prevailing sin of the world, the principal crime of mankind; a crime of the first rank; a sin that undermined the very being of the Deity, and ravished the honour of his crown. Before we proceed we shall first inquire what was the notion they had of idolatry: And they then accounted a man was guilty of idolatry, when he gave divine adoration to any thing that was not God: not only when he worshipped a material idol, but when he vested any creature with that religious respect that was only due to God. Accordingly we find them infinitely zealous to assert adoration as the proper and incommunicable prerogative of God alone; and absolutely refusing to impart religious worship to any, though the best of creatures. Hear what ORIGEN says to this: 'We adore,' says he, 'our LORD GOD; and serve him alone; following the example of CHRIST, who when tempted by the Devil to fall down and worship him, answered, "Thou shalt worship the LORD thy God, and him only shalt thou serve;" which is the reason why we refuse to give honours to those spirits that preside over human affairs, because we "cannot serve two masters; to wit, God and Mammon:" as for angels that have the government of fruits and seasons, and the productions of animals committed to them; we indeed speak well of them, and think them happy that they are entrusted by God to manage the conveniences of man's life; but yet do not give them the honour that is only due to God: for this neither does God allow of; neither do they desire it; but equally love and regard us when we do not, as if we did sacrifice to them.' And when CELSUS, a little before, had smartly pressed him to do honour to demons, he rejects the motion with great contempt: 'Away,' says he, 'with this counsel of CELSUS, who in this is not in the least to be hearkened to; for the

Great God only is to be adored, and prayers to be delivered up by none but his only begotten SON, the first-born of every creature, that, as our High Priest, he may carry them to his FATHER, and to our FATHER ; to his God, and to our God.' It is true the worship of angels did creep into some parts of the christian church, but was always disowned, and at last publicly and solemnly condemned by the Laodicean Council : " It is not lawful (says the 35th Canon of that Council) for Christians to leave the church of God, and to go and invoke angels. If therefore any should be found devoting himself to this private idolatry, let him be accursed ; forasmuch as he has forsaken the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the SON of GOD, and has delivered up himself to idolatry." From which nothing can be more clear, than that it was the sense of these Fathers, that the worshipping of angels was not only downright idolatry, but a plain apostasy from the Christian Faith.

3. Nor were they more peremptory in denying divine honour to angels, than they were to martyrs or departed saints : for though they had a mighty respect for martyrs, as those that had maintained the truth of their religion, and sealed it with their blood, yet were they far from placing any thing of religion or divine adoration in it : Whereof it shall be enough to quote one famous instance. The church of Smyrna, writing to the churches of Pontus, to give them an account of the martyrdom of POLYCARPUS, their Bishop, tells them, ' That after he was dead, many of the Christians were desirous to have gotten the remains of his body, to have given them decent burial, but were prevented by some Jews, who importuned the Proconsul to the contrary ; suggesting, that the Christians, leaving their crucified Master, might henceforth worship POLYCARPUS ;' whereupon they add, ' that this suggestion must proceed from ignorance of the true state of Christians :' ' This they did,' say they, ' not considering how impossible it is, that ever we should either forsake CHRIST, who died for the salvation of mankind, or that we should worship any other. We adore him as the SON of GOD ; but the martyrs

as the disciples and followers of our LORD; we deservedly love them for their eminent kindness to their own Prince and Master, whose companions and fellow-disciples we also by all means desire to be.'

4. This was the doctrine and practice of Christians then, and it held so for some ages after, even down to the times of ST. AUGUSTINE, who does no less frequently than expressly assert, 'That though the honour of love, respect, and imitation, yet no religious adoration is due either to angels, martyrs, or departed saints.'

5. Being imbued with such principles, and trained up under such a discipline as this, it is no wonder if they would do and suffer any thing rather than comply with the least symptom of idolatry. They willingly underwent banishment and confiscation; amongst several of which sort, CALDONIUS tells CYPRIAN of one BONA, who being violently drawn by her husband to sacrifice, they by force guiding her hand to do it, cried out and protested against it, that it was not she, but they that did it, and was thereupon sent into banishment. They freely laid down their greatest honours and dignities, rather than by an idolatrous act to offer violence to their consciences.

6. Yea, how cheerfully did they choose rather to shed their blood, than to defile their consciences with idolatry; of which EUSEBIUS gives us many instances. And indeed this was the common test in those times; Either sacrifice or die. PHILEAS, Bishop of Thumus, in a letter to his people, giving them an account of the martyrdoms that happened at Alexandria, tells them, 'That many, after having endured strange and unheard of torments, were put to their choice, whether they would sacrifice and be set at liberty, or refuse and lose their heads; whereupon all of them, without any hesitation, readily went to embrace death.' And EUSEBIUS tells us of a whole city of Christians in Phrygia, which, together with all the men, women, and children, was burned to ashes, for no other reason, but because they universally refused to obey those that commanded them to worship idols.

7. By this we may see how unjustly the Christians were traduced and accused for idolaters. For their worshipping the sun, TERTULLIAN answers, 'That the mistake arose from a double cause, partly that the Christians of those times did generally pray towards the east and the sun-rising; and partly because they performed the solemnities of their religion upon the day that was dedicated to the sun, which made the Gentiles suspect that they worshipped the sun itself.' They were next charged with worshipping crosses; a charge directly false. 'As for crosses,' says OCTAVIUS, 'we neither desire nor worship them; it is you who consecrate wooden gods.' The occasion of it, no doubt, was, the Christians talking of and magnifying so much their crucified Master. But paying adoration to a material cross, was a thing to which those times were the greatest strangers.



CHAPTER VI.

Of Churches and Places of Public Worship.

1. THE primitive Christians were not more zealous against the idolatrous worship of the heathen gods, than they were observant of whatever concerned the worship of the true, as to all the material parts of it; as will easily appear, if we consider what care they had about the place, time, persons, and both the matter and the manner of that worship that they performed to God.

2. In the sacred story, we find some more than probable footsteps of some determinate places for their solemn conventions, and peculiar to that use. Of this nature was that upper room, into which the apostles and disciples (after the ascension of our SAVIOUR) went up, as into a place commonly known and separate to that use, there, by fasting and prayer, to make choice of a new Apostle; and

this supposed by a very ancient tradition to have been the same room wherein our SAVIOUR, the night before his death, celebrated the Passover with his disciples, and instituted the LORD'S Supper. Such a one, if not the same, was that one place, wherein they were all assembled with one accord upon the day of Pentecost, when the HOLY GHOST visibly came down upon them. The multitude (and they too, strangers of every nation under heaven) came readily to the place upon the first rumour of so strange an accident; which could hardly have been, had it not been commonly known to be the place where the Christians used to meet together. And this, very learned men take to be the meaning of that: (*Acts ii. 46:*) "They continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread," κατ' οἶκον, (not as we render it, *from house to house*, but *at home*, as it is in the margin, or,) "in the house; they eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart;" *i. e.*, when they had performed their daily devotions at the temple, at the accustomed hours of prayer, they used to return home to this upper room, there to celebrate the holy Eucharist, and then go to their ordinary meals.

3. Thus stood the case during the Apostles' times. For the ages after them, we find the Christians had their fixed places of worship, especially in the second century; as, had we no other evidence, might be made good from the testimony of LUCIAN, who lived under the reign of TRAJAN, and who expressly mentions that house, or room, wherein the Christians were wont to assemble together. And CLEMENS, in his famous Epistle to the Corinthians, assures us that CHRIST did not only appoint the times when, the persons by whom, but the places where he would be solemnly served and worshipped. And JUSTIN MARTYR expressly affirms, that upon Sunday, all Christians (whether in town or country) used to assemble together in one place; which could hardly be done, had not that place been fixed and settled.

4. Their Churches began to rise apace, as they met with

more quiet and favourable times ; especially under VALERIAN, GALLIENUS, CLAUDIUS, AURELIAN, and some other Emperors : of which times EUSEBIUS tells us, that the Bishops met with the highest respect and kindness, both from people and governors. And adds, ‘ But who shall be able to reckon up the innumerable multitudes that daily flocked to the faith of CHRIST, the number of congregations in every city, those famous meetings of theirs in their oratories or sacred places ; so great, that not being content with those old buildings which they had before, they erected, from the very foundations, more fair and spacious churches in every city?’ This was several years before the times of CONSTANTINE ; and yet even they had their churches of ancient date.

5. Thus we have seen, that from the very infancy of the Gospel, the Christians always had their settled places of divine worship. For the form of their churches, it was for the most part, oblong ; to keep (say some) the better correspondence with the fashion of a ship : the common metaphor by which the church was wont to be represented ; and to put us in mind that we are tossed up and down in the world as upon a stormy and tempestuous sea ; and that out of the church there is no safe passage to heaven, the country we all hope to arrive at.

6. I shall not undertake to describe at large the exact form, and the several parts and dimensions of their churches ; (which varied somewhat according to different times and ages ;) but briefly reflect upon such as were most common and remarkable. At the entrance of their churches was the porch, in greater churches of somewhat larger capacity. Here stood the lowest order of penitents, begging the prayers of the faithful as they went in. For the church itself, it usually consisted of three parts : The first was the narthex : that part of the church that lay next to the great door by which they entered : in the first part of it stood the Catechumens, or first learners of Christianity ; in the middle the Euergumeni, or those who were possessed by Satan ; and in this part also stood the font : and towards

the upper end was the place of hearers, who were one of the ranks of penitents. The second part contained the middle or main body of the church, (called by the Latins, *Navis*, from whence our term, the Nave of the church, comes,) where the faithful assembled for the celebration of divine service; where the men and the women had their distinct apartments. In this part of the church, next to the entering into it, stood the class of the penitents, who were called *ὑποπίπτοντες*, because at their going out they fell down upon their knees before the bishop, who laid his hands upon them. Next to them was the reading desk, whence the Scriptures were read and preached to the people. Above that were the faithful, the highest order of the people, and who alone communicated at the Lord's table. The third part was separated from the rest of the church by rails, called *Cancelli*; whence our English word Chancel: into this part none might come, but such as were in holy orders. At the upper end of the chancel, was the chair or throne of the bishop, on both sides whereof were the seats of the presbyters. The bishop's throne was raised up somewhat higher from the ground, and from thence he usually delivered his sermons to the people. Adjoining to the chancel, on the north side, probably, was the *Diaconicon*; so called because peculiarly committed to the deacon of the place. It was in the nature of our vestries, wherein the plate, vessels, and vestments, belonging to the church, and other things dedicated to holy uses, were laid up. On the other side of the chancel was the *Prothesis*; or place where things were prepared in order to the Sacrament; where the offerings were laid, and what remained of the sacramental elements, till they were decently disposed of.

7. The first use of statues and pictures in public churches was merely historical, which after ages improved into superstition and idolatry. The first that we meet with upon good authority is no older than the times of *EPIPHANIUS*, and then too met with no very welcome entertainment, as may appear from *EPIPHANIUS*'s own Epistle, translated:

by S. HIEROM : “ Coming,” says he, “ to Anablatha, a village in Palestine, and going into a church to pray, I espied a curtain hanging over a door, whereon was painted the image of CHRIST, or of some saint ; which when I looked upon, and saw the image of a man hanging up in the church, contrary to the authority of the holy Scriptures, I presently rent it, and advised the guardians of the church rather to make use of it as a winding-sheet for some poor man’s burying. Whereat when they were a little troubled, and said, It was but just that since I had rent that curtain, I should change it, and give them another ; I promised them I would, and have now sent the best I could get ; and pray entreat them to accept it, and give command, that, for the time to come, no such curtains, being contrary to our Religion, may be hung up in the church of CHRIST ; it more becoming your place solicitously to remove whatever is offensive to, and unworthy of, the church of CHRIST, and the people committed to your charge.” This was written to JOHN, Bishop of Jerusalem, in whose diocese the thing had been done ; and the case is so much the more weighty, by how much the greater esteem, EPIPHANIUS, (then Bishop of Salamine, in Cyprus,) for his great age and excellent learning, had in the church of GOD.

8. For a great while they had no other public incomes, than either what arose out of those common contributions which they made at their usual assemblies, every one giving according to his ability, which was put into a common stock ; or what proceeded from the offerings which they made out of the improvement of their lands, the apostolic canons providing that their first-fruits should be partly offered at the church, partly sent home to the Bishops and Presbyters. The care of all which was committed to the President or Bishop of the church ; (for who, says the author of the fore-cited canons, is fitter to be trusted with the revenues of the church, than he who is entrusted with the precious souls of men ?) and by him disposed of for the maintenance of the clergy, the relief of the poor, or what-

ever necessities of the church. As Christianity increased, and times grew better, they obtained fixed revenues, houses and lands being settled upon them ; for such it is certain they had, even during the times of persecution : for so we find in a law of CONSTANTINE and LICINIUS, where giving liberty of religion to Christians, and restoring them to the churches which had been taken from them ; they add, and because the Christians had not only places wherein they were wont to assemble, but are also known to have had other possessions, which were not the propriety of any single person, but belonged to the whole body and community : all these we command to be immediately restored to every society or community of them.



CHAPTER VII.

Of the LORD's Day, and the Fasts and Festivals of the ancient Church.

1. In all ages and nations, men have been guided by the very dictates of nature, to pitch upon some certain seasons wherein to assemble and meet together, to perform the public offices of religion. What were the public festivals, observed amongst Jews or Gentiles, I am not concerned to take notice of. For the ancient Christians, they ever had their solemn and stated times of meeting together to perform divine worship. The LORD's day challenges the precedency of all the rest ; sometimes (especially by JUSTIN MARTYR and TERTULLIAN) called Sunday ; because it happened upon that day of the week, which by the heathens was dedicated to the sun ; and therefore, as being best known to them, the Fathers commonly made use of it in their apologies to the heathen governors. But the more proper name was the LORD's Day, as it is called by ST. JOHN himself ; as being that day of the week,

whereon our **LORD** made his triumphant return from the dead. This, **JUSTIN MARTYR** assures us, was the true original of the title: 'upon Sunday,' says he, 'we all assemble together, being the day set apart for religious uses, as the solemn memorial of **CHRIST**'s resting from the work of our redemption in this world, completed upon the day of his resurrection.'

2. Therefore we may observe all along in the sacred story, that after **CHRIST**'s resurrection, the Apostles and primitive Christians did especially assemble upon the first day of the week. Whatever they might do at other times, the first day of the week was their more solemn time of meeting. On this day it was, that they were met together, when our **SAVIOUR** first appeared to them, and so again the week after. On this day they were assembled, when the **HOLY GHOST** visibly came down upon them, when **PETER** preached that excellent sermon, converted and baptized three thousand souls. Thus when **ST. PAUL** was taking his leave at Troas, upon the "first day of the week," when the disciples came together to "break bread," i. e., to celebrate the holy Sacrament; he preached to them, sufficiently intimating, that upon that day it was their usual custom to meet in that manner. And elsewhere giving directions to the church of Corinth, (as he had done in the like cases to other churches,) concerning their contributions to the poor suffering brethren, he bids them lay it aside upon the first day of the week, which seems plainly to respect their religious assemblies upon that day; for then it was that every one, according to his ability, deposited something to the relief of the poor, and the uses of the church.

3. After the Apostles, the Christians constantly observed this day, meeting together for prayer, expounding and hearing of the Scriptures, celebration of the Sacrament, and other public duties of religion. 'Upon the day called Sunday,' says **JUSTIN MARTYR**, 'all of us that live either in city or country, meet together in one place.' This, doubtless, **PLINY** meant, when giving **TRAJAN** an

account of the Christians, he tells him, That they were wont to meet together to worship CHRIST, *stato die*, upon a set day; by which he can be reasonably understood to design no other but the LORD's Day; for though they probably met at other times, yet he takes notice of this only; either because the Christians, whom he had examined, had not told him of their meeting at other times, or because this was their most public and solemn convention.

4. The ancient Christians had two sorts of solemn fasts; Weekly and annual. Their weekly fasts were kept on Wednesdays and Fridays, appointed because on Wednesday our LORD was betrayed by JUDAS, on Friday crucified by the Jews. This custom EPIPHANIUS refers to the Apostles; and tells us, that those days were observed as fasts through the whole world. These fasts they called their stations, by an allusion to the military stations, and keeping their guard, as TERTULLIAN observes; and they usually lasted till the ninth hour; *i. e.*, till three of the clock in the afternoon; at which time, having ended their fast-devotions, they received the Eucharist, and went home; whence it is, that TERTULLIAN calls them, *stationum semijejunia*, the 'half fasts of stations.' The remains of these primitive stations are yet observed in our church, which by her fifteenth canon, has ordained, 'That though Wednesdays and Fridays be not holy days, yet weekly upon those times, Minister and people shall resort to church, at the accustomed hours of prayer.'

5. Their annual fast was that of Lent, by way of preparation to the feast of our SAVIOUR's resurrection: this was very ancient. From the very first age of the Christian Church, it was customary to fast before Easter; but for how long, it was variously observed according to different times and places; some fasting so many days, others so many weeks, and some so many days in each week: and it is most probably thought that it was at first styled *Quadragesima*, not because it was a fast of forty days,

but of forty hours, begun about twelve on Friday, (the time of our SAVIOUR's falling under the power of death,) and continued till Sunday morning, the time of his rising from the dead. Afterwards it was enlarged to a longer time, drawn out into more days, and then weeks, till it came to three, and at last to six or seven weeks.

6. But with what care soever they kept the preceding parts, it is certain they kept the close of it with a mighty strictness and austerity : I mean the week that immediately preceded Easter ; this they consecrated to more peculiar acts of prayer, abstinence, and devotion ; and whereas in the other parts of Lent they ended their fast in the evening, in this they extended it to the cock-crowing, or first glimpse of the morning. This was the great (or holy) week ; so called, says CHRYSOSTOM, because this is the week in which truly great and ineffable good things were purchased for us ; within this time death was conquered, the curse destroyed, the Devil's tyranny dissolved, his instruments broken, heaven opened, angels rejoiced, the partition wall broken down, and GOD and man reconciled. For this cause we call it the great week ; for this cause men fast, and watch, and do alms, to do the greater honour to it : The Emperors themselves, to show what veneration they have for this time, commanding all suits and processes at law to cease, tribunal-doors to be shut up, and prisoners to be set free ; imitating herein their great LORD and Master, who by his death at this time delivered us from the prison and the chains of sin.

7. That in and from the times of the Apostles, (besides the weekly return of the LORD's Day,) there has been always observed an anniversary festival in memory of CHRIST's resurrection, no man can doubt, that has an insight into the affairs of the ancient Church.

NAZIANZEN calls it the holy and famous passover, a day which is the queen of days, the festival of festivals, and which as far excels all others, as the sun goes beyond the other stars. A time it was, famous for works of mercy and charity, every one striving to contribute liberally to

the poor; a duty (as one of the ancients observes) very suitable to that happy season; for what more fit, than that such as beg relief should be enabled to rejoice at that time, when we remember the common fountain of our mercies? Therefore no sooner did the morning of this day appear, but CONSTANTINE used to arise, and, in imitation of the love and kindness of our blessed SAVIOUR, to bestow the richest and most noble gifts, and to diffuse the influences of his bounty over all parts of his empire.

8. The next feast considerable in those primitive times, was that of Whit-Sunday, or Pentecost; a feast of great eminency amongst the Jews, in memory of the law delivered on mount Sinai at that time, and for the gathering and bringing in of their harvest; and of no less note amongst Christians, for the HOLY GHOST's descending upon the Apostles and other Christians, in the visible appearance of fiery cloven tongues, upon that day, and those miraculous powers that were conferred upon them. It was observed with the same respect to Easter, that the Jews did with respect to their Passover, *viz.*, (as the word imports,) just fifty days after it; reckoning from the second day of that festival. It seems to some to have commenced from the first rise of Christianity, not only because the Apostles and the Church were assembled upon that day, but because ST. PAUL made so much haste to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost, which they understand of his great desire to keep it there as a christian feast. This feast is styled Whit-Sunday, because this (as also Easter) being the stated time for baptism in the ancient Church, those who were baptized put on white garments, in token of that pure and innocent course of life they had now engaged in. We may observe, that in the writers of those times, the whole space of fifty days between Easter and Whit-Sunday goes often under the name of Pentecost, and was in a manner accounted festival. During this whole time baptism was conferred, all fasts were counted unlawful; they prayed standing, as they did every LORD'S Day.

9. Epiphany succeeds: this word was of old promiscuously used, either for the feast of CHRIST's nativity, or for that which we now properly call by that name. Afterwards the titles became distinct; that of CHRIST's birth was called Nativity, and appearance of GOD in the flesh. For the antiquity of it, the first footsteps I find of it are in the second century, mentioned by THEOPHILUS, Bishop of Cæsarea, about the time of the Emperor COMMODUS. That it was kept before the times of CONSTANTINE, we have this sad instance: When the persecution raged under DIOCLESIAN, who then kept his court at Nicomedia, amongst other acts of barbarous cruelty done there, finding multitudes of Christians, young and old, met together, in the temple, upon the day of CHRIST's Nativity, to celebrate that festival, he commanded the church doors to be shut up, and fire to be put to it; which, in a short time, reduced them and the church to ashes.

10. There was another sort of festivals in the primitive Church, kept in commemoration of Martyrs. They were wont once a year to meet at the graves of martyrs, there solemnly to recite their sufferings and their triumphs, to praise their virtues, and to bless GOD for their pious examples, for their holy lives, and their happy deaths. These anniversary solemnities were called *Memoriæ Martyrum*, 'the memories of the martyrs:' a title mentioned by CYPRIAN, but certainly much older than his time; and indeed when they were first taken up in the Church, is not so exactly known. The first that I remember to have met with, is that of POLYCARP, (whose martyrdom is placed by EUSEBIUS, Ann. 168, under the third persecution,) concerning whose death and sufferings the church of Smyrna, (of which he was Bishop,) giving an account to the church of Philomelium, profess that they would assemble in that place, and celebrate the birth-day of his martyrdom with joy and gladness. Where we may observe, that this solemnity is styled his birth-day; and

indeed so the primitive Christians used to call the days of their death, looking upon these as the true days of their nativity, wherein they were freed from this valley of tears, these regions of death, and born again unto the joys and happiness of an endless life.



CHAPTER VIII.

Of the Persons constituting the body of the Church, both People and Ministers.

1. THE persons that made up their religious assemblies, were either the body of the people, or those who were peculiarly consecrated and set apart for the public ministrations of religion. For the body of the people, as Christianity at first generally gained admission in great towns and cities, so all the believers of that place met together, the Christians also of the neighbouring villages resorting thither at times of public worship. But religion increasing, the public assembly began to be too numerous to be managed with any conveniency; and therefore they were forced to divide the body into particular congregations, who had their pastors set over them, but still were under the superintendency and care of him that was their president or bishop. And according as the Church could form and establish its discipline, the people began to be distinguished into several ranks and classes, which had their distinct places in the church, and their gradual admissions to the several parts of the public worship. The first were the Catechumens; and of these were two sorts, such as had been Catechumens of some standing, and were ripe for Baptism; these might stay not only the reading of the Scriptures, but to the very last part of the first service. The others were the more rude, who stood

only amongst the hearers, and were to depart from the congregation as soon as the lessons were read : These were as yet accounted Heathens, who were instructed in the grounds of religion. These principles were gradually delivered to them, according as they became capable to receive them ; first the more plain, and then the more difficult.

2. Next were the Penitents, such as were under the censures of the Church, and were gradually to obtain absolution from it. Of these there were several degrees ; five especially mentioned by ST. GREGORY of Neocæsarea, who lived about the year 250. The first were such as wept and lamented, and were rather candidates to be received into the orders of penitents, than penitents properly so called. These usually stood in a mournful habit at the church-porch, with tears and great importunity begging of the faithful as they went in, to pray for them.

The second were the hearers, who were admitted to hear the Holy Scriptures read and expounded to the people. Their station was at the upper end of the narthex, to depart from the congregation at the same time with the Catechumens. The third class of penitents was that of the prostrate, because sermon being ended, they fell down before the bishop ; who, together with the congregation, falling down and making confession in their behalf, after raised them up and laid his hands upon them. These stood within the body of the church, next the reading pew, and were to depart together with the catechumens. The fourth were the consistentes, such as stayed with the rest of the congregation, and did not depart with the catechumens ; but after they and the other penitents were gone out, stayed and joined in prayer and singing, (but not in receiving the sacrament,) with the faithful. These, after some time, were advanced into the fifth and last order of the communicantes, and were admitted to the participation of the holy Sacrament.

3. Persons having fully passed through the state of the Catechumenate, became then candidates of baptism, presented their names to the bishop, and humbly prostrating

themselves, begged that they might be entered into the Church. These were called Competentes, because they did sue for the grace of CHRIST conferred in baptism. The last rank was that of the *πιστοί*, or the faithful, who having been baptized and confirmed, were then admitted to the participation of the LORD'S Supper : the highest and most venerable mystery of the Christian Religion.

This, in short, was the state of the people. But because it is not possible any body or community of men should be regularly managed without some particular persons to superintend, direct, and govern the affairs of the whole society, therefore we are next to inquire what persons there were in the primitive Church, that were peculiarly set apart to steer its affairs, and to attend upon the public offices and ministrations of it. That GOD always had a peculiar people, whom he selected for himself out of the rest of mankind, is too evident to need any proof: such were the Patriarchs, and the holy seed of old ; such the Jews, chosen by him above all other nations in the world. This was His particular lot and portion, comprehending the body of the people in general. But afterwards this title was confined to narrower bounds, and became appropriate to that tribe which GOD had made choice of. The clergy of the ancient Church (taking it within the compass of its first four hundred years) consisted of two sorts of persons, who were peculiarly consecrated to the more immediate acts of the worship of GOD : and such as were set apart only for the more mean and common services of the Church. Of the first sort were Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons.

4. The principal officer of the Church, was the President, or Bishop, usually chosen out of the Presbyters. The office of a Bishop was to instruct the people, to administer the Sacraments, to absolve penitents, to excommunicate incorrigible offenders, to preside in the assemblies of the clergy, to ordain inferior officers in the Church, to call them to account, and to deal with them according to the nature of the offence ; to urge the observance of eccle-

siastical laws, and to appoint such indifferent rites as were for the decent administration of his church. In short, according to the notation of his name, he was a watchman and centinel, and therefore obliged diligently and carefully to inspect and observe, to superintend and provide for those that were under his charge. Upon the multiplying of country churches, it was thought fit to take in a subordinate sort of Bishops, called Chorepiscopi; whose business it was to superintend the churches in the country, that lay more remote from the city, wherein the episcopal See was, and which the Bishop could not always inspect and oversee in his own person. These were the bishops' deputies, chosen out of the fittest and gravest persons. They were to be assistant to the bishop, might be present at Synods and Councils, (to many whereof we find their Subscriptions,) and had power to give Letters of Peace, *i. e.*, such letters whereby the bishop of one diocese was wont to recommend any of his clergy to the bishop of another, that so a fair understanding and correspondence might be maintained between them.

5. The next office to bishops was that of Presbyters, to whom it belonged to preach to the people, to administer baptism, consecrate the eucharist, and to be assistant to the bishop both in public ministrations, and despatching the affairs of the Church. The truth is, the Presbyters of every great city were a kind of ecclesiastical senate, whose counsel and assistance he made use of in ruling those societies of Christians that were under his charge. But though Presbyters by their ordination had a power conferred upon them to administer holy things, yet after the Church was settled, they did not usually exercise this power within any diocese without leave and authority from the bishop, much less take upon them to preach in his presence. This was constantly observed in the churches of Africa, until the time of VALERIUS, ST. AUGUSTINE's predecessor: who being a Greek, and by reason of his little skill in the Latin tongue, unable to preach to the edification of the people, admitted St.

AUGUSTINE (whom he had lately ordained presbyter) to preach before him.

6. After these came Deacons : What the duty of their place was, appears from their primitive election ; the Apostles setting them apart to *serve*, or *minister to the tables* ; i. e., to attend upon and take charge of those daily provisions that were made for poor indigent Christians : but certainly it implies also their being destinated to a peculiar attendance at the service of the LORD's table. And both these may be very well meant in that place, it being the custom of Christians then to meet every day at the LORD's Table, where they made their offerings for the poor, and when poor and rich had their meals together. And hence it was ever an accounted part of the deacon's office, as to take care of the poor, so to wait upon the celebration of the eucharist, which being consecrated by the bishop or presbyter, the deacon delivered the sacramental elements to the people. Besides this they were wont also to preach and baptize, and were employed in many parts of the public service, especially in guiding and directing of the people.

7. Sub-Deacons were to be assistant to the deacon, as the deacon to the presbyter, and he to the bishop. One great part of his work was, to wait at the church-doors in the time of public worship, to usher in and bring out the several orders of the catechumens and penitents, that none might mistake their proper stations, and that no confusion or disorder might arise. When he was at first taken in, I cannot find, but he is mentioned in an Epistle of the Roman clergy to them at Carthage, about ST. CYPRIAN's retirement, and elsewhere very often in CYPRIAN's epistles : Where he also speaks of the Acolythus. What his proper business was, is not so certain : by some his office is said to have been this : To follow, (as the word implies,) or to go along with the bishop in the quality of an honourable attendant, to be ready at hand to administer to him, and to be a companion and witness of his honest and unblameable conversation. But by others he is said

to have been a taper-bearer, to carry the lights which were set up at reading of the Gospel. By CYPRIAN also is mentioned the office of the Exorcist, whose business was to attend the Catechumens and Energumeni, or such as were possessed of the Devil ; to pray over them with such prayers as were peculiarly composed for those occasions ; and this he did in the name of the whole Church, the people also at the same time praying within ; by which means the possessed person was delivered from the tyranny of the evil spirit.

8. Next to the exorcist was the Lector or Reader ; (mentioned frequently by ST. CYPRIAN ;) whose business was to read those portions of holy Scripture which were appointed to be read as parts of the divine service. This office JULIAN, (who was afterwards Emperor,) when a young student at Nicomedia, took upon him, which he did only to blind his cousin CONSTANTIUS, who began to suspect him as inclining to Paganism ; to which he openly revolted afterwards, and became a bitter enemy to Christians ; making ill use of those Scriptures, which he had once privately studied, and publicly read to the people. I know not whether it may be worth the while to take notice of the Ostiarii, or Door-Keepers, answerable to the Nethinims in the Jewish Church ; who were to attend the church-doors at times of public assemblies.

9. To these offices they were set apart by solemn rites, of prayer and imposition of hands ; a ceremony commonly used at Athens, and some of the states of Greece, in the designing and electing persons to be public magistrates. But more particularly in use among the Jews, and from them transferred into the Christian Church, and there constantly used both as to the lifting up and laying on the hands, as the rite of conferring ordination upon the ministers of CHRIST. Only it is here to be remembered, that there was a double imposition of hands, in setting apart ecclesiastical officers : the one was by way of consecration ; and this was the proper way of ordaining bishops, presbyters, and deacons ; the other by way of

blessing ; hands being laid upon them only, as in the absolution of penitents, by way of solemn benediction : And thus the inferior officers, sub-deacons, readers, &c., and deaconesses, were set apart. All orders under bishops were ordained by the bishop, the bishop himself by all the bishops of that province, who used to meet together, if conveniences would allow ; otherwise two might do it, the rest testifying their consent in writing.

10. At all ordinations, especially of superior officers, the people of the place were always present, and ratified the action with their approbation and consent. To this end the bishop was wont, before every ordination, to publish the names of those who were to have holy orders conferred upon them ; that so the people might interpose if they had any thing material to object against it. By which means the unworthy were discovered ; the ordination became legitimate and satisfactory, having passed the common vote and suffrage without an exception made against it.

11. We meet, in the ancient writings of the Church, with very frequent mention of persons of another sex, Deaconesses, who were employed in many offices of religion. Their original was of equal standing with the infancy of the Church ; such was PHEBE in the Church of Cenchris, mentioned by ST. PAUL ; such were those two servant-maids spoken of by PLINY, in his letters to the Emperor, whom he examined upon the rack : such was the famous OLYMPIAS in the Church of Constantinople ; not to mention any more particular instances. They were either widows, and then not to be taken into the service of the Church under threescore years of age, according to ST. PAUL's direction ; or else virgins, who having been educated in order to it, and given testimony of a chaste and sober conversation, were set apart at forty. The proper place and ministry of these deaconesses consisted in such offices as these : To attend upon the women at times of public worship, especially in the administration of baptism. Sometimes they were employed in instructing women

in the principles of Christianity, and in preparing them for baptism; other whiles in visiting and attending upon women that were sick; in conveying messages, counsels, consolations, relief, (especially in times of persecution, when it was dangerous for the officers of the Church,) to the martyrs, and them that were in prison; and these women no doubt it was that LIBANIUS speaks of amongst the Christians, who were so ready to be employed in offices of humanity.

12. Persons being thus set apart for holy offices, the Christians of those days discovered no less piety in that mighty respect and reverence which they paid to them. Bishops and Ministers were then looked upon as the common parents of Christians; whom as such they honoured and obeyed, and to whom they repaired for counsel and direction in all important cases. It is plain, from several passages in TERTULLIAN, that none could lawfully marry, till they had first advised with the bishop and clergy of the Church, and had asked and obtained their leave; which probably they did, to secure the person from marrying with any of them that were without, and from the inconveniences that might ensue upon such a match. No respect was thought great enough, whereby they might do honour to them; they were wont to kiss their hands, to embrace their feet; and at their going from, or returning home, or indeed their coming unto any place, to wait upon them, and either to receive or dismiss them with the universal confluence of the people.



CHAPTER IX.

Of their Worship, both Private and Public.

1. UNDER the notion of worship I here comprehend all those duties of piety that refer to GOD. The duties of

their private worship, were of two sorts : Either such as were more solemn and stated, and concerning the whole family, or such as persons discharged alone, or at least did not tie up themselves to usual times. For the first, which are properly family-duties, they were usually performed in this order : at their first rising in the morning, they were wont to meet together, and to betake themselves to prayer, to praise God for the protection and refreshment of the night, and to beg his grace and blessing for the following day : This was done by the master of the house, unless some Minister were present.

2. That they had their set hours for prayer, the third, sixth, and ninth hour, is plain, both from CYPRIAN, CLEM. ALEXANDRINUS, and others. This they borrowed from the Jews, who divided the day into four greater hours, the first, third, sixth, and ninth hour, the three last whereof were stated hours of prayer ; the first hour began at six in the morning, and held until nine ; the third from nine until twelve ; and at this hour it was that the Apostles and Christians were met together, when the HOLY GHOST descended upon them ; the sixth hour was from twelve to three in the afternoon, and at this time PETER “ went up to the house-top to pray ; ” the ninth was from three until six at night, and now it was that “ PETER and JOHN went up to the temple, it being the ninth hour of prayer. ” This division was observed by the Christians of succeeding times, though whether punctually kept to in their family-devotions, I am not able to affirm. About noon, before their going to dinner, some portions of Scripture were read : and the meat being set upon the table, a blessing was solemnly begged of God, as the fountain of all blessings ; and so religious herein was the good Emperor THEODOSIUS, JUN., that he would never eat any meat, no, not so much as a fig, or any other fruit, before he had first given thanks to the great Sovereign Creator ; a practice which CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS commends, as very suitable to Christians, as a decent way of praising God, while we are partaking of his creatures. CHRYSOSTOM greatly

pleads for it, that men should be careful to teach them their wives and children, and which they shall use even at their ordinary works, but especially at meals, such divine songs being an excellent antidote against temptations : for, (says he,) as the Devil is never more ready to ensnare us than at meals, either by intemperance, ease, or immoderate mirth, therefore both before and at meals, we should fortify ourselves with psalms ; nay, and when we rise from the table, with our wives and children, we should again sing hymns to God. They used also to have the Scriptures read. Dinner being ended, they concluded with prayer, giving thanks to God for their present refreshment, and begging his continued provision of those good things which he had promised to them.

3. But besides these devotions, performed by a joint concurrence of the family, the Christians were careful to spend all the time they could, even when alone, in actions of piety. They were most frequent in prayer. EUSEBIUS reports of ST. JAMES the Just, that he was wont every day to go alone into the Church, and there kneeling upon the pavement so long to pour out his prayers to God, till his knees became as hard as a camel's.

Their next care was, diligently and seriously to read the Scripture, to be mighty in the divine oracles. In the study of this book it was that Christians mainly exercised themselves ; as thinking they could never fully enough understand it, or deeply enough imprint it upon their hearts and memories. The younger THEODOSIUS, rising early every morning, together with his sisters, interchangeably sung psalms of praise to God. The holy Scriptures he could exactly repeat in any part of them, and was wont to discourse out of them with the bishops that were at court, as readily as if he had been an old bishop himself.

4. This was the discipline under which Christians were brought up in those times : Religion was instilled into them betimes, which grew up and mixed itself with their ordinary labours and recreations ; insomuch that the most rude and illiterate persons, instead of profane, wanton

The Catechumens, &c., being departed, and the church doors shut, they proceeded to the LORD'S Supper, at which the faithful only might be present ; wherein they prayed for all states and ranks of men, gave the kiss of charity, prayed for consecration of the Eucharist, then received the sacramental elements, and made their offerings.



CHAPTER X.

Of Baptism.

OUR LORD having instituted Baptism and the LORD'S Supper, as the two great Sacraments of the Christian Law, they have accordingly been ever accounted principal parts of public worship in the Christian Church. We shall treat first of Baptism, as being the door by which persons enter in, the great and solemn rite of our initiation into the faith of CHRIST ; concerning which Four Circumstances are chiefly to be inquired into : The Persons by and upon whom, the Time when, the Place where, the Manner how, this Sacrament was administered in the ancient Church.

1. For the Persons by whom this Sacrament was administered, they were Ministers of the Gospel, the “ stewards of the mysteries of CHRIST ; ” baptizing and preaching the Gospel, being joined together by our SAVIOUR in the same commission : usually it was done by the Bishop, without whose leave and authority neither Presbyters nor Deacons might baptize ; and if they did, it was only in case of necessity. But as Christianity increased, this became a more familiar part of the Presbyter's and the Deacon's office.

Indeed in the Churches of the Heretics, women even in those times took upon them to baptize ; but it was universally condemned and cried out against by the orthodox, and constantly affixed as a note of dishonour and

reproach upon the heretical parties of those times ; as abundantly appears from TERTULLIAN, EPIPHANIUS, and others, who record the heretical doctrines and practices of those first ages of the Church ; however afterwards it crept in, in some places, and is practised in the Church of Rome at this day ; where, in cases of necessity, they give leave that it may be administered by any, and in any language, whether the person administering be a clergyman or a layman, whether a believer or an infidel, a catholic or a heretic, a man or a woman ; only taking care, that (if it may be) a priest be preferred before a deacon, a deacon before a sub-deacon, a clergyman before a laic, and a man before a woman ; together with some other cases which are there wisely provided for.

2. The persons upon whom it was conferred, were of two sorts, Infants and Adult Persons. How far the baptizing of infants is included in our SAVIOUR's institution, is not my work to dispute ; but certainly, if in controverted cases the constant practice of the Church, and those who immediately succeeded the Apostles, be (as no man can deny it is) the best interpreter of the laws of CHRIST, the dispute should be at an end : for it always was the custom to receive the children of christian parents into the Church by baptism.

3. But those who made up the main body of the baptized in those days were adult persons, who flocking over daily in great numbers to the faith of CHRIST, were received in at this door. Usually they were for some considerable time catechized, and trained up in the principles of the Christian faith, till having given testimony of their proficiency in knowledge, (to the Bishop or Presbyter, who were appointed to take their examination, and to whom they were to give an account once a week of what they had learned,) and of a sober and regular conversation, they then became candidates for baptism, and were accordingly taken in : Which brings me to the next circumstance considerable, concerning

4. The Time when baptism was wont to be administered.

At first all times were alike, and persons were baptized as occasion served ; but the discipline of the Church being a little settled, it began to be restrained to two stated times of the year, *viz.*, Easter and Whitsuntide. At Easter, in memory of CHRIST's death and resurrection, correspondent unto which are the two parts of the christian life represented in baptism, " dying unto sin, and rising again unto newness of life ; " in order to which, the parties to be baptized were to prepare themselves by a strict observation of Lent, disposing and fitting themselves for baptism by fasting and prayer. At Whitsuntide, in memory of the HOLY GHOST's being shed upon the Apostles, the same being in some measure represented and conveyed in baptism. When I say that these were the two fixed times of baptism, I do not mean it of the precise days of Easter and Whitsuntide, but also of the whole intermediate space of fifty days that is between them, which was in a manner accounted festival, and baptism administered during the whole time, as well as the circumstances of a sick bed would permit. These were called Clinici, (of whom there is frequent mention in the ancient writers of the Church,) because baptized as they lay in their beds. This was accounted a less solemn kind of baptism, partly because it was not done by immersion, but by sprinkling ; partly because persons were supposed at such a time to desire it, chiefly out of a fear of death.

5. It was very usual in those times, (notwithstanding the fathers did solemnly declaim against it,) for persons to defer their being baptized till they were near their death, out of a kind of novation principle, that if they fell into sin after baptism, there would be no place for repentance. For some such reason we may suppose it was, that CONSTANTINE the Great deferred his baptism till he lay a dying ; the same which SOCRATES relates of his son CONSTANTIUS, baptized a little before his death. To this custom of Clinic baptism, some not improbably think the Apostle has reference in that famous place, where he speaks of those that are " baptized for the dead ; " which

they expound with reference to the state of the dead ; and that it is meant of those who would in danger of death be baptized, that it might fare well with them after death. Others think it may refer to the place of baptism, those who are baptized over *the graves* or *sepulchres* of the dead ; it being an ancient custom to have their religious meetings at the tombs of martyrs ; there being numerous instances in the Acts of the Martyrs, of such as were baptized in the *Cœmeteria*, over the monuments of the dead.

6. For the Place where this solemn action was performed, it was first unlimited, any place where there was water, as JUSTIN MARTYR tells us, in ponds and lakes, at springs and rivers, as TERTULLIAN speaks ; but always as near as might be to the place of their public assemblies, for it was seldom done without the presence of the congregation : and that for good reason, both as it is a principal act of religious worship, and as it is initiating of persons into the Church, which therefore ought to be as public as it could, that so the whole congregation might be spectators and witnesses. For this reason they had afterwards their *Baptisteria*, (or as we call them,) *Fonts*, built at first near the church, then in the church-porch, to represent baptism's being the entrance into the mystical Church ; afterwards they were placed in the church itself. They were usually very large and capacious, not only that they might comport with the general customs of these times, of persons baptized being immersed, or put under water ; but because the stated times of baptism returning so seldom, great multitudes were usually baptized at the same time. In the middle of the font there was a partition, the one part for men, the other for women. Here it was that this great rite was commonly performed, though in cases of necessity they dispensed with private baptism, as in the case of those that were sick, or shut up in prison, of which there were frequent instances in times of persecution.

7. As to the Manner of the celebration of this sacrament in the Apostles' age, baptism was administered with great

nakedness and simplicity, probably without any more formality than a short prayer, and repeating the words of institution: and indeed it could not well be otherwise, considering the vast numbers that many times were then baptized at once. But after-ages added many rites, differing very often according to time and place: I shall not undertake to give an account of all, but only of the most remarkable, and such as did generally obtain in those times. Persons having passed through the state of the Catechumens, and being now ripe for baptism, made it their request to the Bishop that they might be baptized: whereupon, at the solemn times they were brought to the entrance of the Baptistery or Font, and standing with their faces towards the west, (which being directly opposite to the east, the place of light, did symbolically represent the prince of darkness, whom they were to renounce and defy,) were commanded to stretch out their hand as it were in defiance of him. In this posture they were interrogated by the Bishop concerning their breaking off all their former commerce with sin, and the powers of hell, the Bishop asking, "Dost thou renounce the Devil and all his works, powers, and service?" To which the party answered, "I do renounce them." "Dost thou renounce the world, and all its pomps and pleasures?" Answer, "I do renounce them." This renunciation was made twice, once before the congregation, (probably at their obtaining leave to be baptized,) and presently after at the font, or place of baptism, as TERTULLIAN witnesseth. Next, they made an open confession of their faith; the Bishop asking, "Dost thou believe in GOD the FATHER ALMIGHTY, &c., in JESUS CHRIST his only SON, who, &c., dost thou believe in the HOLY GHOST, the Holy Catholic Church, and in one baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, and life everlasting?" To all which the person answered, "I do believe." This form of interrogation seems to have been very ancient in the Church, and the Apostle is justly thought to refer to it, when he styles

baptism, “the answer of a good conscience towards God;” which can reasonably refer to nothing so well as that common custom of answering in baptism.

These answers and actions in the Adult, were done by the persons themselves; in Children by their Sponsors, as **TERTULLIAN** calls them, their sureties and undertakers; for that both infants and adult persons had those that undertook for them at their baptism, is notoriously known.

After this there was a kind of Exorcism and Insufflation, or breathing in the face of the person baptized; (which **ST. AUGUSTINE** calls a most ancient tradition of the Church;) by which they signified the expelling of the evil spirit, and the breathing in the good **SPIRIT** of **GOD**: not that they thought that every one before baptism was possessed by the Devil, but only that “we are by nature children of wrath,” enemies to **GOD**, and slaves to Satan. Nor did they lay any stress upon the bare usage of those rites, but wholly upon the Church’s prayers, which at the same time were made, that **GOD** would deliver those persons from the power of Satan, and by his **SPIRIT** unite them to the Church. This being done, they were brought to the Font, and were first stripped of their garments; intimating thereby their “putting off the old man, which is corrupt, with his deceitful lusts.”

Then followed the **Uction**, a ceremony of early date, by which (says **ST. CYRIL**) they signified that they were now cut off from the wild olive, and were ingrafted into **CHRIST**, the true olive-tree, and made partakers of his fruits and benefits: or rather to denote their being admitted to the great privileges of Christianity, “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation:” (as the Apostle styles Christians:) offices, of which anointing was an ancient symbol, both of being designed to them, and invested in them.

Together with this, we may suppose it was, that the sign of the cross was made upon the forehead. When this ceremony first began to be used, I find not: **ST. BASIL** reckons it amongst those ancient customs of the

Church that had been derived from the times of the Apostles.

The action having proceeded thus far, the party baptized was put under water, which was the almost constant custom of those times, whereby they did more significantly express the three great ends and effects of baptism : for as in immersion there are in a manner three several acts ; The putting the person into water ; His abiding there for a little time ; and, His rising up again ;—so by these were represented CHRIST's death, burial, and resurrection ; and, in conformity thereunto, our dying unto sin, the destruction of its power, and our resurrection to a new course of life : by the persons being *put into water*, was lively represented the putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, and being washed from the filth and pollution of them : *By his abode*, under it, which was a kind of burial in the water, his entering into a state of death or mortification, like as CHRIST remained for some time under the state or power of death ; therefore “ as many as are baptized into CHRIST,” are said to be “ baptized into his death, and to be buried with him by baptism into death, that the old man being crucified with him, the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth he might not serve sin, for that he that is dead is freed from sin,” as the Apostle clearly explains the meaning of this rite : And then by his *Immersion*, or rising up out of the water, was signified his entering upon a new course of life, differing from that which he lived before, “ that like as CHRIST was raised up from the dead by the glory of the FATHER, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” But though, by reason of the more eminent significancy of these things, immersion was the common practice, yet did they not hold sprinkling to be unlawful, especially in cases of necessity, as of weakness, danger of death, or where conveniency of immersing could not be had : in these and such like cases, CYPRIAN does not only allow, but plead for it, and that in a discourse on purpose, when the question concerning it was put to him.

This immersion was performed thrice : a custom which **BAZIL** and **SOZOMEN** will have derived from the Apostles : it is certain that it was very early in the Church, being twice mentioned by **TERTULLIAN** as the common practice. By this trine immersion they signified (say some) their distinct adoring the three persons in the Blessed Trinity ; and therefore the custom was, in repeating the words of institution, at the naming of every person, the **FATHER**, the **SON**, and the **HOLY GHOST**, to plunge the party under water, as **TERTULLIAN** tells us, and **ST. AMBROSE** more expressly.

The person baptized being come out of the water, was anointed the second time, as **ST. CYRIL** tells us ; which being done, he had a white garment put upon him, to denote his having put off the lusts of the flesh, his being washed from the filth and defilement of his former sins, and his resolution to maintain a life of unspotted innocence and purity.

Therefore the white garment was wont to be delivered to them with such a charge as this : “ Receive the white and immaculate garment, and bring it forth without spot before the tribunal of our **LORD JESUS CHRIST**, that thou mayest have eternal life. Amen.”

It was the custom for persons baptized to wear this garment for a week after they were baptized, and then to put it off and lay it up in the Church, that it might be kept as an evidence against them, if they violated or denied that faith which they had owned in baptism.



CHAPTER XI.

Of the LORD's Supper.

1. The Supper of our **LORD**, being a rite so solemnly instituted, and of such great importance to the Christian

Religion, had place accordingly amongst the ancients in their public offices and devotions. In speaking to which I shall observe the same method I did in treating concerning baptism, considering the persons, the time, the place, and the manner of its celebration. The persons administering were the Pastors of the Church. The institution was begun by our Lord himself, and the administration of it by him committed to his Apostles, and to their ordinary successors to the end of the world.

The custom was, when the Bishop had by solemn prayers consecrated the elements, for the deacons to distribute them to the people, as well to those that were absent, as to them that were present, as JUSTIN MARTYR expressly affirms: for the persons communicating, the whole church or body of Christians, within such a space, used constantly to meet together at the Lord's Table. But whoever were found guilty of any scandalous fault, were, according to the nature of the offence, debarred the communion, a shorter or a longer time, and sometimes all their life.

As for those that could not be present, either through distance of place, sickness, or any other just cause, the Eucharist was wont to be sent home to them, some little pieces of the consecrated bread dipped in the sacramental cup, which were usually carried by the Deacon.

I take no notice in this place of their giving the Eucharist to new baptized infants, the case being so commonly known and obvious.

2. For the time, it was in general at their public assemblies, on the Lord's Day always, or the first day of the week, besides other days, and especially Saturday; on which day all the churches in the world (those of Rome only and Alexandria excepted) used to celebrate this sacrament. What time of the day they took to do it, is not so certain. Our blessed SAVIOUR and his Apostles celebrated at night, at the time of the Jewish Passover; but whether the Apostles and their immediate successors punctually observed this circumstance, may be doubted; it is

probable that the holy Eucharist, which ST. PAUL speaks of in the Church of Corinth, was solemnized in the morning, the Apostles calling it a supper, (as CHRYSOSTOM thinks,) not because it was done in the evening, but the more effectually to put them in mind of the time when our LORD did institute those holy mysteries. TERTULLIAN assures us, in his time it was done *in tempore victus*, about supper-time, (as all understand him,) and very often in the morning before day, when they held their religious assemblies.

3. While the spirit of Christianity was yet warm and vigorous, they communicated every day ; or as oft as they came together for public worship ; insomuch that the Canons Apostolical and the Synod of Antioch threaten every one of the faithful with excommunication, who came to church to hear the holy Scriptures, but stayed not to participate of the LORD'S Supper. The eye of their minds was then almost wholly fixed upon the memory of their crucified SAVIOUR ; and the oftener they fed at his table, the stronger and healthier they found themselves, and the more able to encounter with those fierce oppositions that were made against them. This custom of receiving the Sacrament every day continued some considerable time in the Church, though in some places longer than in others, especially in the Western Churches. From CYPRIAN we are fully assured it was so in his time : " We receive the Eucharist every day," says he, " as the food that nourishes us to salvation." The like ST. AMBROSE seems to intimate of Milan, whereof he was Bishop ; nay, and after him ST. HIEROM tells us, it was the custom of the Church of Rome ; and ST. AUGUSTINE seems pretty clearly to intimate, that it was not unusual in his time.

4. Concerning the third circumstance, the Place where this Holy Supper was kept, much need not be said, it being a main part of their public worship, always performed in the place of their religious assemblies. It was instituted by our SAVIOUR in a private house, because the necessity of that time would not otherwise admit. By the Apostles

it was celebrated in the houses of believers, generally in an upper room, set apart by the bounty of some Christian, for the uses of the Church.

Under the severities of great persecutions they were forced to fly to the mountains, or to their Cryptæ, or vaults under ground, and to celebrate the Sacrament at the tombs of martyrs, and over the ashes of the dead. Churches growing up into some regularity, several parts of the divine office began to have several places assigned to them; the communion-service being removed to the upper or east end of the church, and there performed upon a table of wood, which afterwards was changed to stone; and both of them not uncommonly, though metaphorically, by the Fathers styled altars. This place was fenced in with rails, within which the clergy received the Sacrament, as the laity did without.

5. We come lastly to consider the Manner how the Eucharist was celebrated in the ancient Church : but before we describe that, we are to take notice, that after the service of the Catechumens, and before the beginning of that of the faithful, at which the Eucharist was administered, the custom was to present their offerings; every one, according to his ability, bringing some gift as the first-fruits of his increase, which was by the Minister laid upon the Altar or Communion-Table, none of them thinking it fit to “appear before the LORD empty.”

These oblations were designed to the uses of the Church, for the maintenance of the ministry, and the relief of the poor; especially out of them were taken the bread and wine for the sacramental elements, the bread being no other than common.

Out of these oblations also they sent to furnish the common feast, which in those days they constantly had at the celebration of the Sacrament, where the rich and the poor feasted together at the same table. These were called Agapæ, or Love-Feasts, (mentioned by ST. JUDE, and plainly enough intimated by ST. PAUL,) because hereat they testified and confirmed their mutual love and kind-

ness; a thing never more proper than at the celebration of the LORD'S Supper; which is not only a seal of our peace with God, but a sign and a pledge of our communion and fellowship one with another. Whether this banquet was before or after the celebration of the Eucharist, is not easy to determine; it is probable, that in the Apostles' time, and the age after them, it was before it, in imitation of our SAVIOUR'S institution, who celebrated the Sacrament after supper: and ST. PAUL taxing the abuses of the Church of Corinth, reproves them, That "when they came together for the LORD'S Supper, they did not one tarry for another, but every one took his own supper," *i. e.*, that provision which he had brought from home for the common feast; which was devoured with great irregularity and excess; some eating and drinking all they brought, others having nothing left, one being hungry, and another drunken.

That which the Apostle reproves, is their indecency and intemperance, commanding both rich and poor to "wait for one another," and to eat this common meal together, that they might the more orderly pass to the celebration of the LORD'S Supper. In after ages, this feast was not till the communion was over, when the congregation feasted together, and so departed.

These feasts continued for some ages, till great inconveniences being found in them, they were prohibited to be kept in the Churches by the Laodicean Synod, and after that by the Council of Carthage; and the custom in a short time dwindled into nothing.

6. The elements prepared, and all things ready, they proceeded to the action itself, which was usually after this manner: *First*, the Deacon brought water to the Bishop and the Presbyters that stood round about the table, to wash their hands; signifying the purity that ought to be in those that draw nigh to God. Then the Deacon cried out aloud, "Kiss one another." This holy kiss was very ancient, commonly used in the Apostles' times, and in the succeeding ages of the Church; but especially at the Sacrament, as a sign of the unfeigned reconciliation of their minds, and that all injuries were blotted out.

This being done, they fell to prayer, the whole congregation praying together with the Minister, for the universal peace and welfare of the Church, for the tranquillity and quietness of the world, for the prosperity of the age, for wholesome weather, and fruitful seasons, for all sorts of persons, for Kings and Emperors, and all in authority, for soldiers and armies, for believers and unbelievers, for friends and companions, for the sick and distressed ; and in short, for all that stood in need of help. This general prayer is frequently mentioned by the ancient Fathers, as that which was at the beginning of the Communion-Service.

After this, followed the mutual salutation of the Minister and people ; the Minister saying, " The LORD be with you ; " to whom the people answered, " And with thy spirit. " The Minister cried, " Lift up your hearts, " the people answered, " We lift them up unto the LORD. " The Minister proceeded, " Let us give thanks unto the LORD ; " to this the people returned, " It is meet and just so to do. " Whereupon the Minister proceeded to the prayer of consecration, wherein he expressed thankfulness to God, for the death, resurrection, and ascension of his SON, for the shedding of his blood for us, and the celebration of it in this Sacrament ; for condescending to admit them to such mighty benefits, and praying for a closer unity to one another in the same mystical body ; concluding usually with the LORD'S Prayer, and the universal acclamation of Amen by all that were present. This done, the Minister cried out, ΤΑ ΑΓΙΑ ΤΟΙΣ ΑΓΙΟΙΣ, " Holy things belong to holy persons ; " the people answering, " There is One holy, one LORD JESUS CHRIST. " Then he exhorted them to a due participation of the holy mysteries.

After this, the Bishop or Presbyter took the sacramental elements, and sanctified them by a solemn benediction. The form of consecration we have in ST. AMBROSE.

" LORD, make this oblation now prepared for us, to become a reasonable and acceptable sacrifice ; this, which is the figure of the body and blood of our LORD JESUS

CHRIST ; who, the day before he suffered, took the bread in his sacred hands, looked up to heaven, giving thanks to thee, O Holy FATHER, Almighty and Everlasting God, blessed it, and having broken it, gave it to his Apostles and Disciples, saying, Take, eat all of it ; for this is my body which is broken for many. Likewise also after supper, he took the cup that very day before he suffered, looking up to heaven, giving thanks to thee, Holy FATHER, Almighty and Everlasting God ; and having blessed it, gave it to his Apostles and Disciples, saying, Take, and drink ye all of it, for this is my blood."

After this, he first brake the bread, and delivering it to the Deacon, he distributed it to the Communicants ; and after that the cup, which was likewise delivered to them : for the custom of communicating under one kind only, as is used in the Church of Rome, was then unknown unto the world, nay, and for above a thousand years after CHRIST.

Their sacramental wine was generally mixed with water, as is evident from JUSTIN MARTYR, IRENÆUS, CYPRIAN, and others. CYPRIAN, in a long epistle, expressly pleads for it, as derived from CHRIST and his Apostles.

The posture wherein they received it, was not always the same : The Apostles, at the institution of it by our SAVIOUR, received it (according to the custom of the Jews) lying along on their sides upon beds round about the table. How long this way of receiving lasted, I find not : in the time of DIONYSIUS ALEXANDRINUS the custom was, to stand at the LORD'S table ; other gestures being taken in, as the prudence and piety of the governors of the Church judged most decent.

During the time of administration, which in populous congregations was no little time, they sung hymns and psalms ; which being done, the whole action was solemnly concluded with prayer and thanksgiving.

PART II.

THE RELIGION OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS AS TO
THOSE VIRTUES THAT RESPECT THEMSELVES.



CHAPTER I.

Of their Humility.

1. Next to piety towards God, succeeds that part of Religion that immediately respects ourselves, expressed by the Apostle under the general name of Sobriety, for which the primitive Christians were no less renowned than for the other. Amongst them I take notice of their Humility, their Contempt of the World, their Temperance and Sobriety, their Courage and Constancy, and their exemplary Patience under Sufferings.

To begin with the first.

Humility is a virtue proper to the Gospel. That this was the excellent spirit of primitive Christianity, will appear, if we consider how earnestly they protested against all ambitious and vain-glorious designs, how cheerfully they condescended to the meanest offices, how studiously they declined all advantages of applause, how ready they were rather to give praise to others, than to take it to themselves; “in honour preferring one another.”

2. When the people had universally chosen ST. CYPRIAN to be Bishop, he privately withdrew, and retired himself, reckoning himself unworthy of so great and honourable an office, and giving way to others, whose age and experience rendered them (as he thought) much fitter for it : but the importunity of the people being heightened,

and having found where he was, they beset the house, and blocked up all passages of escape till they had found him, and forced it upon him. And with no less humility did he behave himself in the discharge of it: when consulted by some of his **Clergy** what they should do in the case of the Lapsed, he answers, that being now alone he could say nothing to it, for that he had determined from his first entering upon his bishoprick, not to judge any thing by his own private order, without the counsel of the clergy, and the consent of the people. So meanly did that wise and excellent man think of himself, and so much did he attribute to the judgment and concurrence of those that were below him.

3. **NAZIANZEN** reports of his father, (a bishop too,) that amongst other virtues he was peculiarly remarkable for Humility; which he did not express in little arts of external carriage, putting on a feigned behaviour, like women, who having no natural beauty of their own, fly to the additional of dresses and paintings. His humility consisted not in his dress, but in the constancy of his mind; not in the hanging down of his head, or the softness of his tone, or the demureness of his look, or the gravity of his beard, or the manner of his gait; but in the frame and temper of his soul, being as humble in his mind, as he was sublime and excellent in his life; and when no man could arrive at the perfection of his virtues, yet every one was admitted to a freedom of converse with him.

How industriously do we find them many times disowning that deserved praise and commendation that was due to them? How modestly does **JUSTIN MARTYR** decline his adversary's commendation of the acuteness and elegance of his reasonings? Resolving all into the grace of God, that enabled him to understand and expound the Scriptures, of which grace he there persuades all men freely and fully to become partakers with him. Of the Confessors in the time of the persecution under **M. AURE-**

LIUS, EUSEBIUS tells us, that although they had often borne witness to the truth at the dearest rate of any thing on this side death, though they had been frequently thrown to wild beasts, exposed to the fire, and the remains of wounds and violence were visible in all parts of their bodies ; yet they would not after all this, (which was common in those days,) either call themselves Martyrs, or suffer others to call them so ; but if any of the brethren, either by letter or discourse, had saluted them by that title, they would severely check them for it ; acknowledging themselves at best but vile and despicable confessors ; and with tears begging of the brethren to be instant with God by prayer, that they might perfect all by a real martyrdom.

4. I shall give but one instance more of the humility of those times, and that is, their ready condescending to any office or employment, though never so mean, about the poorest Christian. They thought it not below them to cook and provide victuals for them, to visit the imprisoned, to kiss their chains, to dress their wounds, to wash their feet. And in this our LORD himself went before them, when a little before his death he rose from table, girt himself, washed and wiped his disciples' feet, and then told them what influence this ought to have upon them ; " That if their LORD and Master had washed their feet, they ought also to wash one another's feet, for that he had given them an example, that they should do as he had done to them : " and good reason : " the servant not being greater than his LORD ; neither he that is sent, greater than he that sent him." Accordingly we find this particular act of christian condescension frequently used in the primitive Church. ST. PAUL expressly requires it as a qualification in a widow, that was to be taken in as a Deaconess into the Church, that she be one that has used to lodge strangers, and to wash the saints' feet. TERTULLIAN assures us, it was usually done by Christians in his time, to go into the prisons to kiss and embrace the martyrs' chains, to harbour

and provide for indigent brethren, and to bring water to wash the saints' feet : no office so low, which they were not content to stoop to.

When PLACILLA the Empress was checked by some of the Court for visiting the Hospitals, and curing the lame and sick with her own hands, preparing and giving them their provisions, as a thing too much below her state and grandeur ; she answered, That to distribute gold became the Emperor, but for her part she thought herself obliged to do this for GOD, who had advanced her to that honour and dignity : often instilling this pious counsel into her husband, ' It becomes you, Sir, always to remember what you once were, and what you now are ; by which means you will show yourself not to be ungrateful to your great Benefactor, and will govern the Empire committed to you justly and lawfully, and to the honour of him that gave it.'



CHAPTER II.

Of their Heavenly-Mindedness, and Contempt of the World.

1. The soul of man being heaven-born, cannot but partake of the nature and disposition of that country, and have a native inclination to that place, from whence it borrows its original : And though it is true, in this corrupt and degenerate state, it is deeply sunk into matter, clogged and over-borne with the earthly and sensual propensions of the lower appetites, the desires and designs of men creeping up and down like shadows upon the surface of the earth ; yet the mind of a good man dwells in the contemplation of the upper regions, tramples upon those little projects of profit or pleasure which ensnare and enslave other men, and makes all its designs subservient to the interests of a better country : a temper of mind never more triumphant in

any, than in the Christians of old, whose conversations were in heaven, and whose spirits breathed in too free an air to be caught with the best enjoyments this world could afford.

2. 'Amongst us,' says TITIAN, 'there is no affectation of vain glory, but separating ourselves from all earthly thoughts and discourses, and having given up ourselves to the commands of God, we abandon whatever seems but a kin to human glory.' They never met with opportunities to advance and enrich themselves, but they declined them with a noble scorn. When ABGARUS, the Toparch of Edessa, offered THADDEUS great sums of gold for the pains he had taken, he refused them with this answer, 'To what purpose should we receive good things from others, who have freely forsaken and renounced our own?' Indeed, in those times, friends and relations, houses and lands, were cheerfully parted with: they could content themselves with the most naked poverty, so it might but consist with the profession of the Gospel.

3. When QUINTIANUS, the President under DECIUS the Emperor, asked AGATHA, the Virgin-Martyr, Why, being descended of such rich and illustrious parents, she would stoop to such low and mean offices as she took upon her? She presently answered him, 'Our glory and nobility lie in this, That we are the servants of CHRIST.' To the same purpose was the answer of QUINTINUS, the martyr under the DIOCLESIAN persecution, when the President asked him, How it came about, that he being a Roman citizen, and the son of a Senator, would worship him for a God, whom the Jews had crucified? The martyr told him, 'That it was the highest honour and nobility to know and serve God, the great Creator of heaven and earth, and his SON JESUS CHRIST our LORD, by whom all things were made, and who is in all things equal to his FATHER.'

4. As to Estate, they were not concerned for more than what would supply the necessities of nature, or the wants of others; not solicitous to get or possess such revenues as might make them the objects either of men's envy, or their fear; as may appear, amongst others, by this instance:—

DOMITIAN, the Emperor, being informed that there were yet remaining some of CHRIST's kindred according to the flesh, (the nephews of JUDAS the brother of our LORD, of the race and posterity of DAVID, which the Emperor sought utterly to extirpate,) he sent for them, and inquired of them, whether they were of the line of DAVID? They answered, they were. He asked what possessions and estate they had? They told him they had between them thirty-nine acres of land, (to the value of about nine thousand pence,) out of the fruits whereof they both paid him tribute, and maintained themselves with their own hard labour, whereto the hardness and callousness of their hands, which they then showed him, bore witness. He then asked them concerning CHRIST, and the state of his kingdom; to which they answered, That His empire was "not of this world," but heavenly and angelical; which should finally take place in the end of the world, when he should come "with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, and to reward men according to their works:" Which when he heard, despising the men upon the account of their meanness, he let them go without any severity against them.

5. Of ORIGEN we read, that he was so great a despiser of the world, that when he might have lived upon the maintenance of others, he would not; but parted with his library of books to one that was to allow him only *four oboli* a day. The day he spent in laborious tasks and exercises, and the greatest part of the night in study: he always remembered that precept of our SAVIOUR, "Not to have two coats, nor anxiously to take care for the morrow;" nor would he accept the kindness of others, when they would freely have given him some part of their estate to live on.

6. Nor were they more studious of pleasures and recreations abroad, than they were of fineness and bravery at home. They went not to public feasts, nor frequented the shows that were made for the entertainment of the people: indeed, they reckoned themselves particularly obliged to

this by what they had vowed at their Baptism, when they solemnly engaged to "renounce the Devil and all his works, pomps and pleasures;" *i. e.*, (says ST. CYRIL,) the sights and sports of the theatre, and such like vanities. They looked upon the public sports and pastimes of those days, as the scenes not only of folly and lewdness, but of great impiety, as places where the Devil eminently ruled, and reckoned all his votaries that came thither. Accordingly TERTULLIAN tells us of a christian woman, who going to the theatre, was there possessed by the Devil; and when the evil spirit, at his casting out, was asked, How he durst set upon a Christian? He presently answered, 'I did but what was fit and just, for I found her upon my own ground.'

7. Being thus affected towards the world, they could very willingly part with any thing that was dearest to them; friends, estate, liberty, or life itself. Memorable it is, what ST. HIEROME reports of MELANIA, a lady of great piety in his time, That her husband lying dead by her, she lost two of her sons at the same time; and when every one expected that she should burst into tears, she stood still, and at last falling down, as it were at the feet of CHRIST, broke out, 'LORD, I shall serve thee more nimbly and readily, by being eased of the weight thou hast taken from me.'

8. Nay, so little kindness had they for this world, that they cared not how little they stayed in it. TERTULLIAN tells his adversaries, That all those plagues which GOD sent upon the world, what damage soever they might do their enemies, could not hurt them, because they had no other concernment in this world, than as soon as they could to get out of it. This the very Gentiles assigned as one reason, why the Christians were trained up in a defiance of all the sports and pleasures of this life, that they might be more willing to die; and that the cords being cut by which they were teddered to this world, they might be more expedite in their passage hence. Being inflamed (says JUSTIN MARTYR) with the desire of a pure and

eternal life, we breathe after an intimate converse with God, the great Parent and Creator of the world, and make haste to seal our confession with our blood. This was the great cordial with which they kept up their spirits in those times of suffering and persecution, the firm belief and expectation which they had of enjoying God in a better life. They knew, that the more haste their enemies made to break open the cage of their bodies, the sooner their souls would be at liberty to fly to the regions of blessedness and immortality. It was their care then continually to keep company with dying thoughts, and to dwell within the prospect of eternity; it being true of all, what ST. HIEROME particularly reports of MARCELLA; ‘That she lived so as always believing that she should immediately die, and never put on her garments, but it put her in mind of her grave, and of the sheet that should wrap her up in the house of silence.’



CHAPTER III.

Of their Sobriety, in respect of their Garb and Apparel.

1. The Primitive Christians being thus eminent for their contempt of the world, it is easy to imagine that they were very temperate and abstemious in the use of all the pleasures and conveniences of human life, which we shall more particularly consider in these three instances: Their Sobriety in respect of Garb and Apparel, their Temperance in regard of Food and Diet, and their Continence or Chastity.

2. They were exceeding careful to avoid all costliness and finery, choosing such apparel as expressed the greatest lowliness and innocency. ‘The garment that we should wear,’ says CLEMENS of Alexandria, ‘ought to be mean and frugal, not curiously wrought with divers colours; (the emblem of craftiness and deceit;) but white, to denote

our embracing and professing simplicity and truth ; our outward clothing is an indication of the temper of our minds. That is true simplicity of habit, which takes away what is vain and superfluous ; that the best and most solid garment, which is furthest from art and curiosity, and most apt to preserve and keep warm the body.' CHRYSOSTOM especially commends OLYMPIAS, (a woman of great birth and estate,) for the modesty and meanness of her attire, not much better than that of the poorest beggar ; having nothing in her garb that was gaudy, nothing elaborate or artificial ; ' which things,' says he, ' were the bright and beautiful representations of her virtue, whereby that wisdom that lay hidden in her mind, was externally shadowed out.'

3. It may not be amiss to consider what the gallants of those times pleaded for themselves, and what was returned in answer to them. Sometimes they pleaded that they were rich, and ought to live like themselves, and to make use of the estates that God had given them. To this CYPRIAN answers, ' That they only are truly rich, that are rich in and towards God ; that the world ought to be despised, the pomps and delights whereof we then renounced when we turned to God ; with the love of whom all that is in the world, " the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life," is not consistent : That the use of riches is to be governed by just and moderate measures ; the Apostle commanding all women, how rich soever, " to adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array ; but (which becomes women professing godliness) with good works : " ST. PETER also requiring of them, not the outward adorning of gold or fine apparel, but the hidden ornament of the heart : That if they thought themselves bound to use the estate that God had given them, God hath shown them a more excellent way ; viz., to relieve the hungry, and feed the poor members of CHRIST ;—that this was the best art of improving riches, and the way to lay them up in safe and unfailing treasures.'

4. The beauty of a Christian, in those days, lay not in external ornaments, but in the goodness and purity of the mind. ‘The beauty of the body,’ says CLEMENS of Alexandria, ‘consists in a good complexion, and in an apt symmetry and proportion of its parts ; but the greatest beauty in the world is that of the soul, when it is adorned with the HOLY SPIRIT, and the excellent graces of it, justice, prudence, fortitude, temperance, the love of goodness and modesty ; which is the brightest and most lovely ornament that the eye of man can behold.’

5. I conclude with the account which ST. GREGORY gives of his sister GORGONIA : ‘That she used no gold, no hair ordered into curls, no lustre of stones and jewels, no affectation of beauty that may be easily bought : All this was far from her ; and though she well understood the several modes amongst women, yet she thought none so honourable as the manner of her life, and that inward brightness that was lodged in her mind. The only redness that pleased her, was that which was the fruit of blushing and modesty ; no other whiteness but what came through fasting and abstinence.’ To which I add that of TERTULLIAN, who after he had condemned the vanity of going in curious, costly dresses, concludes with this counsel to the women of his time, ‘To clothe themselves with the silks of honesty, the fine vestures of piety, the purple of modesty ; and being thus beautified and adorned, (says he,) God himself will be your lover.’



CHAPTER IV.

Of their great Temperance and Abstinence.

1. AMONGST the many temptations that besiege the life of man, there is scarce any into which we are more easily betrayed, than into a vicious curiosity about meats and

drinks, and the excesses of an unruly appetite ; therefore it is, that the Christian Religion does so frequently inculcate upon us the precepts of sobriety and temperance ; to be “ temperate in all things ; ” “ to watch and be sober ; ” to “ cast off the works of darkness ; to walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in excess of wine, revellings and banquetings ; ” to “ take heed that our hearts be not at any time overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness,” and that we be not, as the men of the old world, taken up with “ eating and drinking, when the flood came and swept all away.” The law of CHRIST commands, to “ fast often, to keep under the body,” and to “ make no provision for the flesh : ” If nature, regularly governed, be content with little, religion will be content with less. These rules the first Christians exactly transcribed into their lives, being the greatest instances of real abstinence and mortification, which they both practised themselves and pressed upon others.

2. They knew very well, that God had given men a charter of freedom indifferently to use the creatures, and to enjoy them in some degree ; but yet were afraid to go so far as they might, or to do any thing that might look towards excess, or argue an irregular and unsober mind : They contented themselves with such provisions as were conducive to health and strength, without seeking after those that were more delightful. It is very true what ST. BASIL observes, that by reason of men’s different ages and course of life, their different tempers and constitutions of body, and other circumstances, no one fixed and certain rule can be prescribed in this case : But yet our food and diet ought to be regulated by the general end of it, which is not to please the palate, but to minister to health, and to repair the weakness and decays of nature. ‘ Many,’ says CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS, ‘ like brute beasts, live only that they may eat ; but for us, we are commanded to eat, that we may live : for food and pleasure is not the work and design for which we live in the world, our resi-

dence here being in order to an incorruptible life; and therefore our nourishment ought to be easy and simple, and such as is subservient to the two main ends of life, health and strength.

3. Upon this account ST. CYPRIAN, in an epistle wherein he gives directions about prayer, advises to eat and drink soberly and sparingly, that outward snares might not enfeeble that heavenly vigour and sprightliness that was in their breasts, lest their minds being overcharged with too plentiful meals, might be less watchful unto prayer. The same counsel ST. HIEROME gives to LÆTA about the education of her daughter, that her diet should be thin and mean, and that she should never eat more, than she might arise with some appetite, so as that after her meals she might be presently fit either to read or sing psalms.

When at any time they were invited to public solemnities, as marriages, and the like, the prudence of the Church thought fit to lay restraints upon them, and not only to forbid them light and ludicrous actions, as leaping or dancing, but that they should dine and sup gravely and modestly, as becomes Christians.

The chief care of Christians, then, was to become partakers *τῆς ἄνω τροφῆς τῆς Θεῆας*, as CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS styles it, of that ‘Divine food that is from above;’ and that only is capable to give real satisfaction; little regarding what provisions they had (so they had but any) for that part that dwelt here below.

4. ‘Our feasts,’ says MINUTIUS FELIX, ‘are not only chaste, but sober; we indulge not ourselves in banquets, nor make our feasts with wine, but temper our cheerfulness with gravity and seriousness.’ And indeed their often watchings and fastings, and their constant observance of the strictest parts of devotion, sufficiently showed how little they pampered or indulged the flesh, the signs whereof they every where carried in their faces; and this was so notorious that their very enemies reproached them with their trembling joints, and their pale ghastly looks. And LUCIAN, giving an account of the Christian Assembly, into which

he tells us CRITIAS was brought to be made a proselyte, describes them to be, 'A company of persons with their heads hanging down, and pale faces : ' which certainly did not arise from their fear of suffering ; but from their frequent abstinence and fasting. To which purpose ST. BASIL'S comment is most apposite ; where commending temperance, other virtues (says he) being mainly exercised in secret, are not so visible to the eyes of men ; whereas continence, wherever it is, will at first sight betray itself. For as a good complexion, and an excellent constitution of body, peculiarly design a man to be a champion ; so leanness of body, and that paleness which is the fruit of continence, evidence a Christian to be a real champion.



CHAPTER V.

Of their singular Continence and Chastity.

1. A third and considerable instance of that sobriety and moderation for which the Christians were so renowned of old, was their Continence, in abstaining from all manner of uncleanness ; which is that virtue that we properly call Chastity : a virtue for which how eminent they were, (notwithstanding what their enemies charged upon them to the contrary,) we shall take notice of in some few particulars.

2. *First :* The Christians of those times were so far from breaking in upon any unchaste embraces, that they frequently abstained even from lawful pleasures, and kept themselves even from the honourable and undefiled bed ; never marrying all their life. ' We are,' says OCTAVIUS, ' chaste in our speech, and chaster in our bodies ; and many of us do inviolably preserve a perpetual virginity ; and are so far from any extravagant desire, that many stand at a distance from the most chaste and modest embraces.

Thus JUSTIN MARTYR tells the Emperors, that amongst the Christians there were a great many of either sex, who had from their childhood been educated in the Christian Religion, who for sixty or seventy years had kept themselves single and uncorrupt. To the same purpose another apologist : ‘ It is very easy,’ says he, ‘ to find many amongst us, both men and women, who remain unmarried even in old age ; conceiving that in this state they shall have fitter opportunities of drawing near to GOD.’

3. *Secondly* : When they did marry, they generally professed they did it only to comply with the great end of the institution, viz., the propagation of mankind ; not to gratify brutish desires, but to answer the great end of nature. ‘ Either,’ say they, ‘ we marry not at all, but keep ourselves always continent ; or if we do marry, it is for no other end but the bringing forth, and the bringing up of children. Whoever amongst us takes a wife, according to the laws prescribed us, he reckons he does it only for the begetting of children : Within this, his desires are bounded and limited ; as the husbandman concerns himself no further in tilling his ground and sowing of his corn, than to bring forth the crop at harvest.’

4. *Thirdly* : They were infinitely careful to shun all occasions and appearances of lightness and immodesty ; whatever might tend to inveigle their senses, and to debauch their minds and manners ; nay, whatever might but give a suspicion of wantonness and incontinence. They declined, as much as might be, going to all public meetings ; such as feasts, plays, shows, &c. Therefore CYPRIAN severely chides some virgins for being present at weddings. ST. HIEROME, on the other hand, does as much commend some whom he knew, who always kept at home on festival days, to avoid the crowd and gazes of the people ; and would never go abroad at those times when they could not venture into the public, without the greatest care and custody of themselves.

5. Indeed in the first and purer times, they took all

imaginable care that unmarried persons should not commonly converse together. CYPRIAN writing to POMPONIUS, charges him, ' That men and virgins should not only not sleep near one another, but not dwell together in the same house ; lest the infirmity of their sex, and the slipperiness of their youth, should betray them into the snare of the Devil.

6. *Fourthly* : They valued their innocence above their lives, and therefore chose to undergo the greatest dangers, rather than any violence should be offered to their chastity. As the fairest promises could not tempt them, so neither could the fiercest torments affright them. When MAXIMUS, the Emperor, governed in the Eastern parts, amongst other effects of his wild and brutish extravagance, he filled all places where he came with adulteries and ravishments, abusing women, and deflouring virgins ; which succeeded well enough (says the historian) with all others, except only Christians, who, generously despising death, made light of the rage and fury of the tyrant. The men underwent all sorts of punishments ; the women bore up with a courage no less unconquerable ; and when any were drawn out to be abused, they rather submitted their lives to death, than their bodies to dishonour.



CHAPTER VI.

Of their Readiness and Constancy in Professing their Religion.

WHEN our blessed SAVIOUR sent out his Disciples to preach the Gospel, he acquainted them with the difficulties that were like to attend their message ; but withal, bade them arm themselves with constancy and resolution, and not to regard the scoffs and reproaches, the miseries and

sufferings that might fall upon them : “ not to fear them that could only kill the body,” but to make a free and bold confession of his name before the world, and cheerfully to “ take up their cross and follow him.” And ST. PAUL, though himself then in chains at Rome, exhorts the Christians to “ stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel, being in nothing terrified by their adversaries ;” it being given them on “ the behalf of CHRIST, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.” And certainly, if ever true courage and greatness of mind appeared in any persons in the world, it was in the Christians of those times, who, with such a generous and unterrified mind, defied dangers and torments, owned and glorified in the profession of Christianity against all the threats, reproaches, and persecutions, which the worst of their adversaries could make against them.

2. When MARIS, Bishop of Chalcedon, a man blind with age, met JULIAN the Emperor, he boldly charged him with his Atheism and apostasy from the christian faith : JULIAN reproached him with his blindness, and told him that his Galilean God would never cure him. To which the good old man presently answered, ‘ I thank my God, who has taken away my sight, that I might not behold the face of one that has lapsed into so great impiety.’

3. Were they at any time attempted by arts of flattery and enticement, the charms would not take place upon them. So when JULIAN, both by himself and the officers of his army, set upon the soldiers, and by fair promises of preferments and rewards, sought to fetch them off from Christianity, though he prevailed upon some few weak and unstable minds, yet the far greatest part stood off ; yea, by many of the meanest and most inconsiderable quality, his temptations were as resolutely beaten back, as the blow of an engine is by a wall of marble. Nor were they any more shaken by storms and threatenings. When MODESTUS,

the Governor under VALENS, the Arian Emperor, could not by any means bring over ST. BASIL to the party, he threatened him with severity : ‘ Dost thou not fear this power that I have ? ’ ‘ Why should I fear ? ’ said BASIL : ‘ What canst thou do, or what can I suffer ? ’ The other answered, ‘ The loss of thy estate ; banishment, torment, and death. ’ ‘ But threaten us with something else if thou canst,’ said BASIL, ‘ for none of these things can reach us : confiscation of estate cannot hurt him that has nothing to lose ; unless thou wantest these tattered and threadbare garments, and a few books, wherein all my estate lies. Nor can I be properly banished who am not tied to any place : wherever I am, it will be my country : the whole earth is God’s, in which I am but a pilgrim and a stranger. I fear no torments ; and for death, it will be a kindness to me ; for it will but so much the sooner send me unto God.’

4. When the officers were sent to apprehend ST. POLYCARP, and had found out the place where he was, though he had timely notice to have escaped by going into another house, yet he refused, saying, “ The will of the LORD be done ; ” and coming down out of his chamber, saluted the officers with a cheerful and pleasant countenance. As they were carrying him back, two persons of authority met him in the way, took him up in their chariot, laboured by all means to persuade him to do sacrifice ; which when he absolutely refused, after all their importunities, they turned their kindness into reproaches, and tumbled him with so much violence out of the chariot, that he was sorely bruised with the fall ; but nothing daunted, as if he had received no harm, he cheerfully went on his way. When he came before the tribunal, the Proconsul asked him, whether he was POLYCARP ? Which he presently confessed. Then he attempted by all arts of persuasion to urge him to deny CHRIST, or to do but something that might look like it ; but all in vain. ‘ These fourscore and six years,’ says he, ‘ have I served CHRIST ; and he never

did me any harm; and how then can I blaspheme my Master and my SAVIOUR?' Then the Proconsul told him, he would throw him to the wild beasts: 'Call for them,' answered POLYCARP, 'for we have no mind to change from better to worse; as counting that change only to be honest and laudable, which is from vice to virtue.' 'If thou makest so light of wild beasts,' added the Proconsul, 'I will have a fire that shall tame thee.' To which the old man returned, 'You threaten a fire that will burn for an hour, and presently be extinguished; but know not, that there is a fire of eternal damnation, reserved for the punishment of all wicked men.'

5. Had torments been able to sink their courage, it had been soon trodden under foot: but it was triumphant in the midst of torments, and lift up his head higher, the greater loads that were laid upon it: nay, in this triumph, even the weaker sex bore no inconsiderable part. EUSEBIUS tells us (among others that suffered in the French Persecution under M. AURELIUS) of one BLANDINA, whom the Church was afraid how she should hold out to make a resolute confession, by reason of the weakness of her body, and the tenderness of her education; that when she came to it, she bore up with such invincible magnanimity, that her tormentors, though they took their turns from morning to night, and plied her with all kinds of racks and tortures, were yet forced to give over, and confess themselves overcome; wondering that a body so broken and mangled, should yet be able to draw its breath.

6. So did those noble Martyrs, whom EUSEBIUS saw at Thebais; multitudes having been executed every day with all imaginable cruelties: sentence was no sooner passed against one party of them, but others presented themselves before the tribunal, and confessed that they were Christians, receiving the fatal sentence with all possible expressions of cheerfulness. The same which he also reports of six young men, that suffered in Palestine, spontaneously addressing themselves to the Governor of the Province,

owning that they were Christians, and ready to undergo the severest punishments. In the acts of ST. CYPRIAN'S passion, we are told, that the President having caused a mighty furnace to be filled with burning lime, and fire, with heaps of frankincense round about the brim of it, gave the Christians this choïce; Either to burn the frankincense in sacrifice to JUPITER, or to be thrown into the furnace; whereupon three hundred men, being armed with an unconquerable faith, and confessing CHRIST to be the SON of GOD, leaped into the midst of the fiery furnace, with whose fumes and vapours they were immediately suffocated.



CHAPTER VII.

Of their exemplary Patience under Sufferings.

1. That the Christian Religion, at its first appearing in the world, was likely to engage its followers in miseries and sufferings, could not be unknown to any that considered the nature of its doctrine. The severity of its precepts, so directly opposite to the corrupt inclinations of men; the purity of its worship, so flatly contrary to the loose solemnities of the heathens; its absolute inconsistency with those religions which had obtained for so many ages, which then had such firm possessions of the minds of men, and all the powers of the world to secure them; could not prophesy to it any kind of welcome entertainment. This sect (for so they called it) was every where not only spoken, but fought against: For since men have a natural veneration for antiquity, and especially in matters of religion, they thought themselves concerned to defend that way, which had been conveyed to them from their ancestors, and to set themselves against whatever might oppose it: especially

the great ones of those times; and the Roman Emperors made it their master-design to stifle this infant Religion, and to banish it out of the world.

2. Hence those imperial orders that were daily sent abroad into all parts of the Empire, to command their Governors to destroy the Christians; of which, that we may the better apprehend the form, it may not be amiss to set down one or two of them out of the acts of the Martyrs. This following was agreed upon both by the Emperors, and the whole Senate of Rome:—"DECIVS and VALERIAN, Emperors, Triumphers, Conquerors, August, Pious, together with the whole Senate, have by common consent decreed thus: Whereas we have received the gifts and blessings of the gods, by whom we enjoy victory over our enemies, as also temperate seasons, and fruits in great plenty and abundance; since we have found them our great benefactors, and to supply us with those things that are universally beneficial to all: We therefore universally decree, that all orders of men, as well children as servants, soldiers as private persons, shall offer sacrifices to the gods, doing reverence and supplication to them. And if any shall dare to violate our divine order thus unanimously agreed upon, we command, that he be cast into prison, and afterwards exposed to several kinds of torments. If by this means he be reclaimed, he may expect no mean honours from us. But if he shall persist contumacious, after many tortures, let him be beheaded, or thrown into the sea, or cast out to be devoured by dogs and birds of prey: But especially, if there be any found of the Religion of the Christians. As for those that obey decrees, they shall receive great honours and rewards from us. So happily fare ye well."

3. This course they prosecuted with so much vigour and fierceness, that some of them boasted, they had absolutely effected their design. Witness those trophies and triumphal arches, that were every where erected to perpetuate the memory of their conquest over Christianity; whereof

these two inscriptions, found at Clunia in Spain, are a sufficient evidence :

DIOCLESIANUS JOVIUS ET
 MAXIMIAN. HERCULEUS
 •
 CAES. AUG.
 AMPLIFICATO, PER ORIEN-
 TEM ET OCCIDENTEM,
 IMP. ROM.
 ET
 NOMINE CHRISTIANORUM
 DELETO, QUI REMP. EVER-
 TEBANT.

The other :

DIOCLESIAN. CAES.
 AUG. GALERIO IN ORI-
 ENTE. ADOPT. SUPER-
 STITIONE CHRIST.
 UBIQ. DELETA, ET CUL-
 TU DEOR. PROPAGATO.

The meaning of both which, is, to show, that DIOCLESIAN and his colleague MAXIMIANUS had every where extinguished the wicked superstition of CHRIST, so pernicious to the Commonwealth, and had restored Paganism and the worship of the gods.

4. By all which we may guess what hot service the Christians had under those primitive persecutions. Indeed their sufferings were beyond all imagination great, which yet did but so much the more exercise and advance their patience ; the bitterness of their sufferings, making their patience more eminent and illustrious. Of which, that we may take the truer measure, it will be necessary to consider these two things : The greatness of those sufferings which the Christians underwent ; and, The manner of their carriage under them.

For the first, The greatness of those torments and sufferings they underwent, they were as bad as the wit and malice of either men or devils could invent ; in the consideration whereof we shall first take a view of those punishments which were more ordinary, familiarly used amongst the Greeks and Romans ; and then of such as were extraordinarily made use of towards the Christians. Amongst their ordinary methods of execution, these six were most eminent ; the Cross, the Rack, the Wheel, Burning, Wild Beasts, and condemning to Mines.

5. I. The *Cross* deserves the first place in our account, not only as having been one of the most ancient ways of punishment ; but as being the instrument by which our blessed SAVIOUR himself was put to death. Omitting the various kinds of it, which were all used towards the primitive Christians, I intend here only that which was most common, a straight piece of wood fixed in the ground, having a transverse beam fastened near the top of it, not unlike the letter T, though probably it had also a piece of wood arising from the top of it. And there were two things in the way of punishment, which rendered it very severe ; The Pain and Ignominy of it. Painful it must needs be, because the party suffering was fastened to it with nails driven through his hands and feet, which being the parts where the nerves and sinews meet together, must be most acutely sensible of wounds and violence. And because they were pierced only in these parts so far distant from the vitals, this made their death very lingering, doubling and trebling every pain upon them : Insomuch that some out of a generous compassion, have caused malefactors first to be strangled before they were crucified ; as JULIUS CÆSAR did towards the pirates, whom he had sworn to execute upon the cross. But no such favour was shown to Christians : they were suffered to remain in the midst of all those exquisite pangs, till mere hunger starved them, or the mercy of wild beasts, or birds of prey, dispatched them.

6. II. The *Rack* : The first design of it was to torment

the suspected person, to make him confess the truth. It was an engine framed of several pieces of timber joined together, upon the top whereof, upon a long board, the suffering person being laid upon his back, and fastened to it by his hands and feet, the engine was so contrived with screws, that all his members were distended with the utmost violence, even to a luxation of all the parts; and this more or less, according to the tormentor's pleasure.

This was a punishment which the Christians were very frequently put to. Much of the same nature was that which they called the *Catasta*, being a piece of wood raised up like a little scaffold, upon which Christians were set, that their torments might be more conspicuous. In this, as in that of the rack, there were certain additional torments made by instruments, called *Ungulæ*, which were a kind of iron pincers, made with sharp teeth, with which the flesh was by piece-meal pulled and torn off their backs.

7. III. The *Wheel*: This was a round engine, to which the body of the condemned person being bound, was not only extremely distended, but whirled about with the most violent distortion; the pain whereof was inconceivable, especially as used towards the primitive Christians: The wheel, to which they were bound naked, being sometimes full of iron pricks placed under it; so that every time the body of the martyr came to it, they racked off the flesh with inexpressible torment. Thus were served those three martyrs, *FELIX* the Presbyter, *FORTUNATUS* and *ACHILLEUS*, the Deacons at Valentia, in France, and hundreds more in other places.

8. IV. *Burning*: This was done sometimes by staking them down to a pile of wood, and setting it on fire. Thus suffered *JULIANUS* and others in the persecution at Alexandria. Sometimes by laying them to roast at a slow gentle fire, that they might die with the greater torment. Otherwhiles they were hung up either by the neck, hands, or feet, and a fire made under them, or burning torches held to several parts of their naked bodies. Sometimes

they were placed in an iron chair, or laid upon an iron grate, which was either made red hot, or had a fire continually burning under it. Of all which ways of execution, and some other near akin to them, were it not too tedious, I could give abundant instances.

9. V. *Throwing to wild beasts* : This was a punishment common amongst the Romans, to condemn a man to fight for his life with the most savage beasts, bears, leopards, lions, and was usually the portion of the vilest and most despicable offenders ; under which notion the Gentiles looking upon the Christians, did commonly condemn them to this kind of death ; a thing so familiar, that it became in a manner proverbial, *Christianos ad leones* ; ‘ Away with the Christians to the lions.’ And they were many times tied down to a stake ; sometimes clothed in beasts’ skins, the more eagerly to provoke the rage and fury of the wild beasts against them.

10. VI. *Condemning to the Mines* : To this the Romans adjudged their slaves, and the most infamous malefactors ; and to this too the Christians were often sent. What their treatment was in those places, besides their continual toil and drudgery, CYPRIAN lets us know in a letter to NEMESIAN, and the rest that laboured in the mines, *viz.*, that they were cruelly beat with clubs, bound with chains, forced to lie upon the hard, cold, damp ground ; conflicted with hunger and nakedness, as slaves, and forced to live in the midst of filth and nastiness. Besides which, they were wont to be marked and branded in the face, to have their right eye pulled out, and their left foot disabled by cutting the nerves and sinews of it : not to say, that being once under this condemnation, all their estate was forfeited to the public treasury, and themselves for ever reduced into the condition of slaves. These were some of the more usual ways of punishment amongst the Romans, exercised towards the Christians in their utmost rigour. I omit to speak of Christians being scourged, even to the tiring of their executioners, especially with rods called *Plumbatæ*, which were scourges made of cords or thongs, with leaden

bullets at the end of them ; of their being stoned to death, their being beheaded, their being thrust into stinking and nasty prisons, where they were set in a kind of stocks with five holes, their legs being stretched asunder, to reach from one end unto the other.

11. We shall now consider some few of those unusual torments and punishments, which were inflicted only upon Christians. Such was their being tied to arms of trees, bent by great force, and being suddenly let go, did tear the martyr in pieces ; in which way many were put to death in the persecution at Thebais. Sometimes they were clad with coats of paper, linen, or such like, daubed in the inside with pitch and brimstone ; which being set on fire, they were burnt alive. Otherwhiles they were shut into the belly of a brazen bull, and a fire being kindled under it, were consumed with a torment beyond imagination. Sometimes they were put into a great caldron full of boiling pitch, oil, lead, or wax, or had these fatal liquors, by holes made on purpose, poured into their bowels. Some of them were hung up by one or both hands, with stones of great weight tied to their feet. Others were anointed all over their bodies with honey, and at mid-day fastened to the top of a pole, that they might be a prey to the flies, wasps, and such little cattle, as might by degrees sting and torment them to death.

12. But to what purpose is it any longer to insist upon these things ? Sooner may a man tell the stars, than reckon up all those methods of misery and suffering which the Christians endured. EUSEBIUS, who himself was a sad spectator of some of the later persecutions, professes to give over the account, as a thing beyond all possibility of expression ; the manner of their sufferings, and the persons that suffered, being impossible to be reckoned up. The truth is, (as he there observes,) their enemies did little else but try to find out the most exquisite methods of torture and punishment. They were not content with those old ways of torment which their forefathers had brought in, but by an ingenious cruelty daily invented

new ; striving to excel one another in this piece of hellish art, and accounting those the wittiest persons that could invent the most barbarous engines of execution.

13. Having given this brief specimen of those grievous torments to which the primitive Christians were exposed, we come next to consider what was their behaviour under them. This we shall find to have been most sedate and calm, most constant and resolute ; they neither fainted nor fretted ; neither railed at their enemies, nor sunk under their hands ; but bore up under the heaviest torments, under the bitterest reproaches, with a meekness and patience that was invincible, and such as every way became the mild, and yet generous spirit of the Gospel. So JUSTIN MARTYR tells the Jews, ‘ We patiently bear all the mischiefs which are brought upon us either by men or devils, even to the extremities of death and torments, praying for those that thus treat us, that they may find mercy.’

14. *First*, When they were sought for, in order to their being condemned and executed, they cared not to make use of opportunities to escape. POLYCARP, at his apprehension, refused to fly ; though going but into the next house he might have saved his life. CYPRIAN, writing to the Confessors, commends them, that when they were oft desired to go out of prison, they chose rather to abide there, telling them, they had made as many confessions as they had opportunities to be gone, and had rejected them. Though, it is true, he himself withdrew from Carthage when the officers were sent to take him and carry him to Utica ; yet he did it for this reason, That when he did suffer, he might suffer at Carthage, whereof he was Bishop ; and that those truths which he had preached to them in his life, he might seal before them with his blood : a thing he earnestly and daily begged of God, and which was granted to him. And if they did not run away from suffering, much less did they oppose it, and make tumults and parties to defend themselves : no, they were “ led as lambs to the slaughter, and as sheep before the shearers are dumb, so opened not they their mouth.”

15. *Secondly*, They were so far from being terrified with those miseries which they saw others undergo, that they freely, and in great multitudes, offered themselves to the rage and fury of their enemies: 'They strove' as **SULPITIUS SEVERUS** observes, speaking of the ninth persecution, 'which should rush first upon those glorious conflicts; men in those days much more greedily seeking martyrdom in the cause of **CHRIST**, than in after times they did bishopricks and preferments.' **LUCIAN**, who certainly had very little love to Christians, yet gives this account of them: 'The miserable wretches verily persuade them, that they shall be immortal, and live for ever; upon which account they despise death, and many of them voluntarily offer themselves to it.' Indeed they did ambitiously contend who should be first crowned with martyrdom, and that in such multitudes, that their enemies knew not what to do with them: their very persecutors grew weary. **TIBERIANUS**, the President of Palestine, in his relation to the Emperor **TRAJAN**, gives this account of his proceedings against them: 'I am quite tired out in punishing and destroying the Galileans, (called here by the name of Christians,) according to your commands; and yet they cease not to offer themselves to be slain: nay, though I have laboured, both by fair means and threatenings, to make them conceal themselves from being known to be Christians, yet can I not stave them off from persecution.'

16. They even envied the martyrdom of others, and mourned that any went before, while they were left behind. When **LAURENTIUS** the Deacon espied **SIXTUS**, the Bishop of Rome, going to his martyrdom, he burst into tears, and passionately called out, 'Whither, O my Father, art thou going without thy Son? Whither so fast, O holy Bishop, without thy Deacon? Never didst thou use to offer spiritual sacrifice without thy minister to attend thee. What have I done that might displease thee? Hast thou found me degenerate and fearful? Make trial, at least, whether thou hast chosen a fit minister to wait upon thee.' To this the good Bishop replied; 'Mistake

not, my Son, I do not leave thee, nor forsake thee : greater trials belong to thee : I, like a weak old man, receive only the first skirmishes of the battle ; but thou, being youthful and valiant, hast a more glorious triumph over the enemy reserved for thee : Cease to weep, thy turn will be presently ; for within three days shalt thou follow me.'

17. *Thirdly*, When they were condemned, though it was to a most horrid death, they were so far from repining, that instead of bitter reflections, they gave thanks to their enemies for condemning them. A Christian being condemned (says TERTULLIAN) thanks his judges ; he takes it for a favour to die for so good a cause. That they persecute us, (says CLEMENS of Alexandria,) it is not because they find us to be wicked, but because they think we wrong the world by being Christians, and by teaching and persuading others to be so : As for us, they do us no harm ; death does but the sooner send us to God. If therefore we be wise, we shall thank them that are the occasion of our more speedy passage thither.

18. *Fourthly*, When they were under the bitterest torments, they never discovered the least sign of a furious or impatient mind, but bore up with a quietness and composure which no sufferings could overcome. CYPRIAN, exhorting the martyrs to courage and constancy, tells them this of those that had gone before them ; That in the hottest conflict they never stirred, but maintained their ground with a free confession, an unshaken mind, a divine courage ; in torments, they stood stronger than their tormentors ; their bruised and mangled limbs proved too hard for the instruments wherewith their flesh was racked and pulled from them ; the blows, though never so oft repeated, could not conquer their impregnable faith, although they did not only tear off the flesh, but rake into their very bowels. They could die, but could not be overcome ; yea, therefore unconquerable, because not afraid to die.

Of the Martyrs that suffered together with St. POLYCARP, the Church of Smyrna gives this account; ‘ That all that were present were astonished when they saw them whipped until the cords made way to the inmost veins and arteries, till the bowels and the most hidden parts of the body appeared. They were raked with shells of fishes, laid all along upon sharp pointed stakes driven into the ground, exercised with all sorts of torments, and at last thrown to be devoured of wild beasts; all which they bore with a mighty patience and constancy: nay, so great was their patience and magnanimity, that in all their sufferings, not any of them gave a sigh or a groan.’

PART III.

OF THEIR RELIGION AS RESPECTING OTHER MEN.



CHAPTER I.

Of their Justice and Honesty.

HAVING given some account of the Religion of the ancient Christians, both as it respected their piety towards God, and their carriage towards themselves ; we come, in the last place, to consider it in reference to their carriage towards others ; whereof we shall consider these following instances : their Justice and Integrity in matters of commerce, their Love to one another, their Unity and Peaceableness, and their Submission to Civil Government.

I begin with the first, their just and upright carriage in their outward dealings. One great design of the Christian Law is to establish that great principle, ‘to hurt no man,’ and ‘to render to every one his due.’ It settles that golden rule as the fundamental law of all commerce, ‘That all things whatsoever we would that men should do to us, we should even do so to them ;’ than which, as no rule could have been more equitable in itself, so none could possibly have been contrived more short and plain, and more accommodate to the common cases of human life.

2. The Christians of old looked upon honesty, and an upright carriage, as a considerable part of their religion ; and to speak truth, to keep their words, to act sincerely in

all their dealings, was as dear to them as their lives and beings. They ever used the greatest candour and simplicity in expressing their mind to one another, not pretending what was false, nor concealing what was true : “ Yea, yea, and nay, nay,” was the usual measure of their transactions : a lie they abhorred as bad in all, as monstrous in a Christian, as directly opposite to that truth to which they had consigned and delivered up themselves in baptism ; and therefore would not tell one, though it were to save their lives. When the heathens charged them with folly and madness, that they would so resolutely suffer, when a parcel of fair words might make way for them to escape ; telling them, ‘ It was but saying as they were bid, and that they might secure their consciences by mental reservations ; TERTULLIAN lets them know, that they rejected the motion with scorn, as the plain artifice of the Devil. ‘ When we are most severely examined,’ (says JUSTIN MARTYR,) ‘ we never deny ourselves ; counting it impious in any to dissemble or deny the truth.’

3. This honest and ingenuous simplicity they practised to that exactness, that for a Christian to be put to his oath, was accounted a disparagement to his fidelity. So CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS : ‘ He that approves himself, and is tried in this way of piety, is far from being forward either to lie or swear : for an oath is a determinate assertion, with a calling GOD to witness for the truth of it. But how shall any one that is faithful, so far render himself unfaithful, or unworthy of belief, as to need an oath, and not rather make the course of his life a testimony to him as firm and positive as an oath, and demonstrate the truth of his assertions, by the constant and immutable tenor of his words and actions ?

4. For this and some other reasons, but especially from some mistaken places of Scripture, where it is said, “ Swear not at all,” some of the ancient fathers held all taking of an oath to be unlawful : But besides, that those few that did were not herein constant to themselves, the far greatest part were of another mind, and understood the

prohibition of swearing by creatures, (which was the case of the Jews, and which our SAVIOUR, and ST. JAMES, principally aim at,) or of light, rash, and false swearing : For otherwise, that the primitive Christians did not think it unlawful to take an oath in serious and necessary cases, is most evident. And indeed, though we had no other argument, it would be plain from hence, That they served in the wars, and frequently bore arms under the heathen Emperors; which it is evident they could not do, without first taking a military oath to be true to their General, and to die rather than desert their station.

5. They were exceeding tender of any man's reputation, readier to add to it than detract from it. ST. BASIL commending GREGORY THAUMATURGUS, has this of him amongst the rest : ' Out of regard ' says he ' to the threatening of our LORD, he durst never call his brother, *fool*: No anger, wrath, or bitterness, proceeded out of his mouth; slandering he hated, as a quality greatly opposite to a state of salvation ; pride and envy were strangers to that guiltless soul ; he never approached the altar until first reconciled to his brother. All false and artificial speeches, and such as are contrived for detraction of others, he greatly abominated, well knowing, that every lie is the spawn and issue of the Devil, and that GOD has threatened, " to destroy all those that speak lies." '

6. We have seen how exact the Christians were about their words, that they should be the true conveyances of their minds. Nor were they less careful about their actions; whether of distributive or commutative justice. So far as it concerns a fair hearing and impartial determining of causes, rewarding the good, and punishing the bad, they had little opportunity to show themselves until the empire submitted to Christianity; and then we find them executing their places with the most unbiassed uprightness and integrity. ST. BASIL, speaking of an excellent person, says, ' That he was a most rigid observer of justice, courteous, and easy of access to them that were oppressed; but his presence severe and terrible to the injurious and transgressors of the

law : He was the same to rich and poor, equally at leisure for both.' The same NAZIANZEN reports of his own father, that he so strictly observed justice himself, and so impartially administered it to others, that though he went through very great offices in the State, yet he made not one farthing's addition to his own revenue.

7. In matters of commutative justice, and ordinary transactions between man and man, they observed the rule, 'To deal with others as they would be dealt with themselves : ' They took no advantage of any man's ignorance or unskillfulness. And if they were thus far from craftily overreaching, much more from secretly or openly invading of what was another's right and property. No cheating or cozenage, no acts of dishonesty and deceit, were allowed or practised amongst them ; or if any such were discovered, they were immediately protested against by the whole society of Christians.



CHAPTER II.

Of their admirable Love and Charity.

1. THAT the Christian religion was immediately designed to improve and perfect the principles of human nature, appears as from many other instances of it, so especially from this ; That it so strictly enjoins, cherishes, and promotes that kindness and compassion, which is one of the prime inclinations of mankind. Wherever the Gospel is cordially complied with, it begets such a sweet and gracious temper of mind, as makes us humble, affable, courteous, and charitable ; ready and disposed to every good work ; prompt to all offices of humanity and kindness : It files off the ruggedness of men's natures ; banishes a rude, churlish, and pharisaical temper ; and infuses a more calm

and treatable disposition. It commands us to live and “love as brethren,” “to love without hypocrisy,” to “have fervent charity amongst ourselves,” and to “be kindly affectioned one towards another.” It lays the sum of our duty towards others in this, “To love our neighbour as ourselves.” This our SAVIOUR seems to own as his peculiar law, and has ratified it with his own solemn sanction: “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another: as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” And then makes this the great visible badge of all those who are truly Christians: “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

2. And so it was with those first ages of religion: for no sooner did the Gospel fly abroad into the world, but the love of Christians became notorious, even to a proverb: the heathens taking notice of the Christians of those times with this particular remark; “See how these Christians love one another!” They were then united in the most happy fraternity; they lived as Brethren, and accounted themselves such, not only as being sprung from one common parent, but upon much higher accounts, *viz.*, that they had one and the same God for their Father; drank all of the same Spirit of holiness; were brought out of the same womb of darkness and ignorance, into the same light of truth; that they were partakers of the same faith, and co-heirs of the same hope. They never met but they embraced one another with all the demonstrations of a hearty affection; saluting each other with a holy kiss, not only in their own houses, but at their religious assemblies, as a badge and bond of that Christian fellowship and communion that was maintained amongst them.

3. But the love of those Christians did not lie in a smooth complimentary carriage, or in good words, ‘Depart in peace,’ ‘Be you warmed or filled;’ but in the real exercises of charity and mercy. Now because the two great objects of charity are the good of men’s souls, and their outward welfare and happiness; the primitive Christians were highly eminent and exemplary for both these.

The soul being infinitely more valuable than the body, they were accordingly infinitely careful to save men's souls; "to recover them out of the snare of the Devil," by bringing them over to the "knowledge of the truth:" for this they prayed daily and earnestly. 'We Christians,' (says CYPRIAN to the Proconsul,) 'serve the one and true God that made heaven and earth, and pray to Him night and day, not only for ourselves, but all men, and for the safety of the emperors themselves.' From this, no injuries nor unkindnesses could discourage them. They returned kindness for hatred, and by the miseries they endured, showed to them the way to heaven; that now was the time to make their peace with God, and to secure salvation; that there was "no place for repentance" on the other side the grave, the stations of the other world being fixed and unchangeable; that therefore they should believe and live so, that they might eternally rejoice with them, whom they did now so afflict and persecute.

4. This consideration had a great influence upon the sufferings of the primitive Martyrs; willingly running any hazards, cheerfully enduring any miseries, that they might gain others to the faith, and prevent their eternal ruin. That famous story of ST. JOHN the Apostle, shall serve instead of many; the sum of which is this: Coming to a place near Ephesus, in his visitation of the churches, he espied a youth of a comely shape, and taking hold of him, delivered him to the Bishop of the place with this charge; (which he repeated once and again;) 'I commend this person to thee, to be looked to with all care and diligence, and that in the presence of CHRIST and the Church. The Bishop undertook the charge, received the young man into his house, instructed him, and at last baptized him. Which being done, he thought he might remit a little of the strictness of his care; but the young man making an ill use of his liberty, fell into bad company, by whose arts he was seduced into ways of riot and wickedness; till despairing of all hope of pardon from God, he let loose the reins to all manner of exorbitancy; and agreeing with his con-

federates, they combined themselves into a society of highway-men, and made him their captain, who quickly became as far beyond the rest in fierceness and cruelty, as he was in power and authority. **ST. JOHN** returning some while after to the same place, required from the Bishop the pledge he had left with him ; who not knowing what he meant ; ‘ I mean,’ said **ST. JOHN**, ‘ the young man ; it is the soul of my brother that I require.’ The old man, with a dejected look, and tears in his eyes, answered, ‘ He is dead :’ And being demanded by what kind of death ? answered, ‘ He is dead to **GOD** ; for alas ! he is become a villain, and is fled to the mountains to be a thief and a robber. The Apostle rending his clothes, immediately called for a horse and a guide, and made haste to the mountains ; where being taken by those that stood centinel, he begged to be brought before their captain, who stood ready armed some way off ; but as soon as he perceived it was **ST. JOHN** that was coming towards him, he began to run as fast as he could. The Apostle, not regarding his own age and weakness, followed after with all his might ; and when his legs could not overtake him, he sent these passionate exclamations after him : ‘ Why, O my son, dost thou fly from thy aged and unarmed father ? Take pity of me, and fear not, there is yet hope of salvation for thee. I will undertake with **CHRIST** for thee ; if need be, I will freely undergo death for thee, as our **LORD** did for us, and lay down my own life to ransom thine ; only stay and believe me, for I am sent by **CHRIST**.’ With that he stayed, and with a dejected look, throwing away his arms, he trembled, and dissolved into tears ; he embraced the aged Apostle with all possible expressions of sorrow and lamentation. **ST. JOHN** assured him, he had obtained his pardon of **CHRIST**, and having fasted and prayed with him and for him, and refreshed his shattered and disconsolate mind, brought him into, and restored him to the Church.

5. **ST. AUGUSTINE** tells us, what pains his mother **MONICA** took about the conversion of her husband **PATRICIUS** ; how unweariedly she sought to endear herself to him, by

all the arts of a meek, prudent, and sober carriage ; how submissively she complied with his untoward humours, how diligently she watched the aptest times of insinuation, never leaving, till at last she gained him over to the faith. Nor was her care and solicitude less for her son AUGUSTINE, who was the hourly subject of her prayers and tears. She plied him with daily counsels and entreaties, implored the assistance of good men, and importuned Heaven for the success of all ; not being able to gain any quiet to her mind, till ST. AMBROSE sent her away with this assurance, ‘ That it was not possible that a child of so many tears should perish.’ No sooner was his conversion wrought, but her spirit was at ease, and she now desired no more. Himself tells us, That discoursing with her alone some few days before her death, she at last broke off with this farewell : ‘ For my part, Son, I have now no further hopes in this world ; there was but one thing for which I desired to live, that I might see thee a Christian ; this my good God has abundantly blessed me with ; so that what do I make any longer here ? ’

6. Nay, so great a zeal had they for the good of souls, that many did not stick to engage themselves in temporal slavery, for no other end but to deliver others from spiritual bondage. Thus SERAPION sold himself to a Gentile player, with whom he underwent the meanest offices, till he had converted him, his wife, and whole family to Christianity. Coming afterwards to Lacedæmon, and hearing that a principal person of the city, a very good man otherwise, was infected with the Manichean heresy ; one of the first things he did, was to sell himself to be his slave ; in which condition he remained for two years together, till he had brought his master, and his whole family, off from that pernicious heresy, and restored them to the Church.

7. Having seen what kindness they expressed to men’s souls, we come next to that which respected their bodies. This they showed in several instances. In the first place, they took special care to provide for the poor, and such as

were unable to help themselves. DIONYSIUS testifies of the Church of Rome, That they did not only eminently provide for their own poor, but with great liberality administered to the necessities of other churches, plentifully relieving whatever indigent brethren came to them, or wherever they were, though at the greatest distance. Indeed the bounty of those times was almost incredible. ST. CYPRIAN, upon his turning Christian, sold his estate to relieve the wants of others. NAZIANZEN reports of his father, That he was so kind to the poor, that he did not only bestow the surplusage of his estate upon them, but even part of what was reserved for necessary uses : Of his mother, that an ocean of wealth would not have filled her unsatisfied desire of doing good ; and that he had often heard her say, that if it were lawful, she could willingly have sold herself and children, to have expended the price upon the uses of the poor.

8. They gave not only according to, but beyond their ability ; trusting to the goodness of Heaven to supply what they wanted, which many times made the return, with overplus, by ways uncommon and extraordinary. SOZOMEN relates of EPIPHANIUS, Bishop of Salamine in Cyprus, ‘ That having spent all his own estate in charitable uses, in relieving the needy, and such as were by shipwreck cast upon the coast ; he freely distributed the goods and treasures of his church, and that with so liberal a hand, that the steward of the Church, finding its stock begin to grow very low, with some resentment told him of it : All which notwithstanding, he remitted nothing of his accustomed bounty to the poor. At length, all being spent, a stranger on a sudden comes into the steward’s lodgings, and delivers into his hands a great purse of gold, without any discovery either who it was that brought it, or who it was that sent it.’

9. The truth is, they then looked upon the poor as the treasure and ornament of the Church, by whom, as by bills of exchange, they returned their estates into the other world. When DECIUS, the Emperor, demanded of LAU-

RENTIUS, the Deacon of the Church of Rome, the Church's treasures, he promised, after three days, to produce them ; in which time, having gathered together the blind and the lame, the infirm and the maimed, at the time appointed, he brought them into the palace ; and when the Emperor asked for the treasures he had promised to bring with him, he shows him his company : ' Behold ! ' said he, ' these are the treasures of the Church, those eternal treasures which are never diminished, but increase ; which are dispersed to every one, and yet found in all. '

10. Next to this, their charity appeared in visiting and assisting of the sick ; contributing to their necessities, refreshing their tired bodies, curing their wounds or sores with their own hands. ST. HIEROME tells us of **FABIOLA**, a Roman lady, a woman of considerable birth and fortunes, that she sold her estate, and dedicated the money to the uses of the poor : She built an hospital, (and was the first that did so,) wherein she maintained the infirm and miserable, or any sick that she met with in the streets : Here was a whole rendezvous of cripples, hundreds of diseases met together, and herself at hand to attend them ; sometimes carrying the diseased in her arms, or bearing them on her shoulders ; sometimes washing and dressing those noisome sores, from which another would have turned his eyes with horror ; otherwhile preparing them food, or giving them physic with her own hand. The like we read of **PLACILLA** the Empress, wife to the younger **THEODOSIUS**, that she was wont to take all possible care for the lame or wounded, to go home to their houses, carry them all necessary conveniences, and to assist them, not by the ministry of her servants and followers, but with her own hands. She constantly visited the common hospitals, attended at sick beds, tasted their broths, prepared their bread, reached them their provisions, washed their cups with her own hands, and underwent all other offices, which the very meanest of the servants were to undergo.

11. Nay, how often did they venture to relieve their

brethren, when labouring under such distempers as seemed immediately to breathe death in their faces? Thus in that sad and terrible plague at Alexandria, which, though it principally raged amongst the Gentiles, yet seized also many among the Christians: Many of the brethren, (says the historian,) out of the excessive abundance of their kindness and charity, without any regard to their own health and life, boldly ventured into the thickest dangers; daily visiting, attending, instructing, and comforting their sick and infected brethren, till themselves expired with them. Nay, many of them whom they thus attended, recovered and lived, while they who had looked to them, died themselves; as if by a strange charity they had willingly taken their diseases upon them, and died themselves to save them from death. Thus it was with Christians, while the Gentiles, in the mean time, put off all sense of humanity: When any began to fall sick amongst them, they presently cast them out, shunned their dearest friends and relations, left them half dead in the highways, and took no care of them, either alive or dead.

12. A third instance of their love, (and which St. AMBROSE calls the highest piece of liberality,) was their care of those that were in captivity, groaning under the merciless tyranny and oppression of their enemies, to relieve them under, and redeem them out of their slavery. Of ACASIUS, Bishop of Amida, we read in SOCRATES, That when the Roman army had taken seven thousand Persians captive, and would neither release them without a ransom, nor yet give them food to keep them alive; this good Bishop, with the consent of the clergy of his Church, caused all the gold and silver plate, and vessels, that belonged to their church, to be melted down; ransomed the wretches, fed them, and then freely sent them home to their own prince: With which generous charity, the King of Persia (as he well might) was strangely amazed, finding that the Romans knew how to conquer an enemy by kindness, no less than by force of arms.

13. This was very great, but yet we meet with a stranger

charity than this in the primitive Church; some that have parted with their own liberty to purchase freedom unto others. So **ST. CLEMENT** assures us, in his famous Epistle to the Corinthians: 'We have known many amongst ourselves,' says he, 'who have delivered themselves into bonds and slavery, that they might restore others to their liberty; many who have hired out themselves servants unto others, that by their wages they might feed and sustain them that wanted.' Of which this one strange instance shall suffice. Under the Vandalick persecution, many Christians were carried slaves out of Italy into Africa, for whose redemption **PAULINUS**, then Bishop of Nola, had expended his whole estate; at last a widow comes to him, entreats him to give her as much as would ransom her only son, then slave to the King of the Vandals' son-in-law. He told her he had not one penny left, nothing but his own person, and that he would freely give her to make her best of, and to procure her son's ransom. This the woman looked upon, from a person of his quality, as rather a deriding her calamity, than a pitying of her case: But he assured her he was in earnest, and at last induced her to believe him; whereupon they both took shipping for Africa, whither they were no sooner come, but the good Bishop addressed himself to the Prince, begged the release of the widow's son, and offered himself in his room. The issue was, the woman had her son restored her, and **PAULINUS** became the Prince's slave, who employed him in keeping his garden. He afterwards ingratiated himself into the favour of his master, and discovered to him who he was; the Prince set him at liberty, and gave him leave to ask what he would, which he made no farther use of than to beg the release of all his countrymen then in bondage, which was accordingly granted, and all joyfully sent home with their ships laden with corn and provisions.

14. There is one circumstance yet behind, concerning the love and charity of those times, very worthy to be taken notice of; and that is, the universal extent of it: They did good to all, though more "especially to them of the

household of faith," *i. e.*, to Christians. They did not confine their bounty merely within the narrow limits of a party, this or that sect of men, but embraced an object of love and pity, wherever they met it. They were kind to all men, yea, to their bitterest enemies, and that with a charity as large as the circles of the sun, that visits all parts of the world, and shines as well upon a stinking dunghill, as upon a pleasant garden. It is certainly the doctrine of our SAVIOUR, "You have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy : But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." This, indeed, is the proper goodness of Christianity ; it being common to all men to love their friends, but peculiar to Christians to love their enemies. We read of one PACHOMIUS, an heathen soldier, in the first times of CONSTANTINE, That the army being well near starved for want of provisions, and coming to a city that was mostly inhabited by Christians, they freely gave them whatever they wanted. Amazed with this strange and wonted charity, and being told, that the people that had done it were Christians, whom they generally preyed upon, and whose profession it was to hurt no man, and to do good to every man ; he threw away his arms, and gave up himself to the strictest severities of religion.

15. Of this, I shall only add one instance or two more. EUSEBIUS, speaking of that dreadful plague and famine that happened in the Eastern parts, under the Emperor MAXIMINIUS, wherein so many whole families were swept away at once ; adds, That at this time the care of the Christians towards all, evidently approved itself to all the Gentiles that were about them ; they being the only persons that, during this calamitous state of things, performed the real offices of mercy and humanity ; partly in ordering and burying of the dead, (thousands dying every day, of whom no care was taken,) partly in gathering together all the

poor that were ready to starve, and distributing bread to every one of them: The fame whereof filled the ears and mouths of all men, who extolled the God of the Christians, and confessed that they had showed themselves to be the only truly pious and religious persons. And indeed the charity was the more remarkable, in that the Christians, at this very time, were under a most heavy persecution. Thus in the terrible plague that, in the times of GALLUS and VOLUSIAN, raged so much through the whole world, (and that more or less for fifteen years together,) especially at Carthage, when innumerable multitudes were swept away every day, and the streets filled with the carcases of the dead, which seemed to implore the help of the living, and to challenge it as their right by the common laws of human nature; but all in vain, every one trembling, flying, and shifting for themselves, deserting their nearest friends and kindred, none staying, unless it were to make a prey. In this sad and miserable case, CYPRIAN, (then Bishop of the place,) calls the Christians together, instructs them in the duties of mercy and charity, puts them in mind, that it was no wonder if their charity extended to their own party; the way to be perfect, was to do more than heathens and publicans; “to overcome evil with good.” Immediately they agreed to assist their common enemies, every one lending help according to his rank and quality. Those who by reason of their poverty could contribute nothing to the charge, did what was more; they personally laboured, an assistance beyond all other contributions. By which large and abundant charity, great advantage redounded not to themselves only, but universally unto all.

CHAPTER III.

Of their Unity and Peaceableness.

1. WHEN our blessed SAVIOUR came to establish his religion in the world, he gave a law suitable to his nature, and to the design of his coming into the world, and to the exercise of his government, as He is “ Prince of Peace ; ” a law of mildness and gentleness, of submission and forbearance towards one another. We are commanded to “ follow peace with all men ; ” “ to follow after the things that make for peace ; ” “ as much as in us lies, to live peaceably with all men.” We are forbidden all feuds and quarrels ; enjoined “ not to revenge ourselves, but to give place unto wrath ; to let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from us, with all malice ; to be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as GOD for CHRIST’S sake forgives us.

2. Before CHRIST’S coming, the world was over-run with feuds and quarrels, implacable animosities and divisions reigning amongst Jews and Gentiles ; the Jews looked upon the Gentiles as dogs and outcasts, refused all dealings with them, even to the denial of common charity and civility, such as to tell a man the way, or to give him a draught of water ; they reproached them as the vilest and most profligate part of mankind, ‘ sinners of the Gentiles,’ according to the usual style. Nor did the Gentiles less scorn and deride the Jews, as a contemptible generation, stopping their noses, and abhorring the very sight of them, if by chance they met them ; they looked upon them as the enemies of all nations, that did not so much as wish well to any ; nay, as haters of mankind ; as TACITUS and their enemies in JOSEPHUS represent them. The effect of which was, that they oppressed and persecuted them in every

place, trod them as dirt under their feet, till at the last the Romans came, and finally took away both their place and nation. Thus stood the case between them till the arrival of "the Prince of Peace;" who partly by his death, whereby he "broke down the partition-wall" between Jew and Gentile; partly by the healing tendency of his doctrine; partly by the quiet and peaceable carriage of his followers, did quickly extirpate and remove those mutual feuds and animosities, and silence those passionate divisions, that were amongst them.

3. How much their religion contributed to the public tranquillity, by forbidding pride, passion, covetousness, and such sins as are the great springs of confusion and disturbance, JUSTIN MARTYR tells the Emperors: 'As for peace,' says he, 'we, above all other men in the world, promote it; forasmuch as we teach, That no wicked man, no covetous or treacherous person, no good or virtuous man, can be hid from the eye of God; but that every man is travelling either towards an eternal happiness or misery, according to his works. And did all men believe this, no man would dare for a few moments to deliver up himself to vice and wickedness, knowing it would lead him on to the condemnation of everlasting fire; but would by all means restrain himself, and keep within the bounds of virtue, obtain the rewards that are dispensed by God, and avoid the punishments that are inflicted by him.'

4. Such was the temper, such the carriage, of Christians towards their enemies, and them that were without: Within themselves they maintained the most admirable peace and harmony, and were of one heart and soul. They lived in the strictest amity, and abhorred all division as a plague and firebrand. But because men's understandings not being all of one size, nor all truths alike plain and evident, differences in men's judgments and opinions must needs arise; no schism ever arose in the Church about any of the more considerable principles of religion, but it was presently bewailed of all pious and good men, and the breach

endeavoured to be made up; no ways left unattempted, no methods of persuasion omitted, that might contribute to it.

When NOVATUS (or rather NOVATIAN) had made some disturbance in the Church of Rome, concerning the receiving the lapsed into communion DIONYSIUS (the good Bishop of Alexandria) writes to him to extinguish the schism; telling him, it is better to suffer any thing than that the Church of God should be rent in pieces: That it is more illustrious to suffer martyrdom to keep divisions out of the Church, than to die for not sacrificing to idols; for in the one case a man suffers martyrdom only upon his own account, but in the other he suffers for the advantage and benefit of the whole Church.

5. How severely they branded all schism and division, how industriously they laboured to take up all controversies amongst Christians, and to reconcile dissenting brethren, to maintain concord and agreement among themselves, and to prevent all occasions of quarrel and dissension, might easily be made appear out of the writers of those times. Hence those canonical epistles, (as they called them,) wherewith persons were wont to be furnished, when going from one place to another; of which there were especially three sorts. First, *Συστατικαὶ*, or *commendatory epistles*, mentioned by ST. PAUL. They were granted by clergymen going into another diocese, by the Bishop that ordained them, testifying their ordination, their soundness and orthodoxy in the faith, the innocency and unblameableness of their lives. They were granted to all, whether clergy or laity, that were to travel, as tickets of hospitality, that wherever they came, upon producing these letters, they might be received and entertained. A piece to prudence which JULIAN the Apostate admired in the Christian constitution, the like whereunto he endeavoured to establish in his Pagan reformation. The second sort were, *Ἀπολυτικαὶ*, *letters dimissory*, whereby leave was given to persons going into another diocese, either to be ordained by the Bishop of that place, or if ordained

already, to be incorporated into the clergy of that Church. The third were, *Ἐπιστολαὶ, letters of peace*, granted by the Bishop to the poor that were oppressed, and such as fled to the Church for its protection and assistance. By these arts the prudence of those times sought to secure the peace of the Church, and prevent all dissensions : And where matters of greater moment fell out, how quickly did they flock together to compose and heal them ?

6. Nor did there want meek and peaceable minded men, who valued the public welfare before any private and personal advantage.* When great contests were raised by some unquiet persons about the See of Constantinople, (then possessed by GREGORY NAZIANZEN,) he himself stood up in the midst of the assembly, and told the Bishops, how unfit it was, that they who were preachers of peace to others, should fall out amongst themselves ; begged of them to manage their affairs calmly and peaceably : And, ‘ If I,’ says he, ‘ be the JONAS that raises the storm, throw me into the sea, and let these storms and tempests cease : I am willing to undergo whatever you have a mind to ; and though innocent and unblameable, yet for your peace and quiet sake, am content to be banished out of the city : Only, according to the Prophet’s counsel, be careful to love truth and peace.’ And therewith freely resigned his bishopric, though settled in it by the express command of the Emperor, and the universal desires and acclamations of the people.

7. Nay, when good men were most zealous about the main articles of faith ; yet in matters of indifferency, and such as only concerned the rituals of religion, they bore with one another, without any violation of that charity which is the great law of Christianity. Thus in that famous controversy about the keeping of Easter, so much agitated between the Eastern and Western Churches, IRENÆUS, in a letter to Pope VICTOR, tells him, That Bishops in former times, however they differed about the observation of it, yet always maintained an entire concord and fellowship with one another : The Churches being

careful to maintain a peaceable communion, though differing in some particular rites and ceremonies. Thus when POLYCARP came to Rome from the Churches of the East, to treat with Pope ANICETUS about this, though they could not satisfy each other to yield the controversy, yet they kissed and embraced one another, received the Holy Communion together; and ANICETUS (to do the greater honour to POLYCARP) gave him leave to consecrate the Eucharist in his church; and at last they parted in great peace and friendship: the difference of the observation not at all hindering the agreement and harmony of the Church.

8. The Christians of those times had too deeply imbibed that precept of our SAVIOUR, "Love one another as I have loved you," to fall out about every nice and trifling circumstance; no, when highest provoked and affronted, they could forbear and forgive their enemies, much more their brethren. In short, Christians were careful not to offend either God or man, but to keep and maintain peace with both: Thence that excellent saying of EPHREM SYRUS, the famous Deacon of Edessa, when he came to die: 'In my whole life I never reproached my Lord and Master, nor suffered any foolish talk to come out of my lips; nor did I ever curse or revile any man, or maintain the least difference or controversy with any Christian in all my life.'



CHAPTER IV.

Of their Obedience and Subjection to Civil Government.

1. How much Christian Religion, transcribed into the lives of its professors, contributes to the happiness of men, not only in their private capacities, but as to the public welfare of human societies, we have already discovered in several

instances. Now, because government is the great support of external peace and happiness, we shall in the last place consider, how eminent the first Christians were for their 'submission to civil government.' And certainly, there is scarce any instance wherein primitive Christianity did more triumph in the world, than in their exemplary obedience to the powers and magistrates under which they lived; honouring their persons, revering their power, paying their tribute, obeying their laws, where they were not evidently contrary to the laws of CHRIST; and when they were, submitting to the most cruel penalties they laid upon them, with the greatest calmness and serenity of soul.

2. The truth is, one great design of the Christian law is, to secure the interests of civil authority: our SAVIOUR having expressly taught us, That we are to "give unto CÆSAR the things that are CÆSAR's, as well as unto GOD the things that are GOD's." And his Apostles spoke as plainly as words could speak, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power but of GOD: The powers that be, are ordained of GOD. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of GOD; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." Wherefore you must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For, for this cause pay you tribute also; for they are GOD's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour." Where we may take notice both of the strictness and universality of the charge, and (what is material to observe) this charge given the Romans, at that time when NERO was their Emperor; a man so prodigiously brutish and tyrannical, that the world scarce ever brought forth such a monster, 'a beast in the shape of a man.'

Nor did this excellent spirit die with the Apostles: we find the same temper ruling in the succeeding ages of Christianity. The Christians (says one of the ancients)

obey the laws that are made, and by the exactness of their lives, go beyond that accuracy, which the law requires of them ; they love all men, though all men study to afflict and persecute them. ‘Are there any (as ATHEANGORAS concludes his address to the Emperors) more devoted to you than we? Who pray for the happiness of your government, that, according to right and equity, the son may succeed his father in the empire, that your dominions may be enlarged, and that all things may prosper that you take in hand : And this we do, as that which turns both to yours and our own advantage, that so under you leading a quiet and peaceable life, we may cheerfully obey all those commands which you lay upon us.’ ST. POLYCARP, a little before his martyrdom, wrote to the Christians at Philippi, earnestly exhorting them to obey their rulers, and to exercise all patience and long-suffering towards them. And when he stood before the Proconsul, he told him, ‘That this was the great law of Christianity, that we are commanded by God to give all due honour and obedience to princes and potentates ; such as is not prejudicial to us ; *i. e.*, (for so doubtless he means,) such as is not contrary to the principles of our religion.’

3. TERTULLIAN tells us, It was a solemn part of the Church Service in his time, to pray for the happiness of the princes under whom they lived : ‘We pray,’ says he, ‘for the Emperors, for the Ministers of State, for the quietness of affairs, for the continuance of their lives and government ; that God would give them a long life, a secure reign, an undisturbed house, powerful armies, faithful senators, honest subjects, a quiet people, and indeed whatever they can wish for, either as men or emperors.’ ‘They that think (says he) that we are not solicitous about the safety of princes, let them look into the commands of God recorded in our Scriptures, which we freely expose to the view of all ; there they will find that we are enjoined to pray for the happiness of our very enemies and persecutors : And who are so much such as they? And yet we are plainly

and particularly commanded to "pray for kings, for princes, and all that are in authority, that the state of things may be quiet and peaceable." "

4. For all customs and tributes, none ever paid them more freely than they. 'For your taxes and tributes, (says JUSTIN MARTYR to the Emperor,) we are, above all other men, every where ready to bring them in; being taught so to do by our great Master, who bade those that asked the question, Whether they might pay tribute unto CÆSAR? "To give unto CÆSAR the things that are CÆSAR's, and unto GOD the things that are GOD's." For which reason, we worship none but GOD: And as for you, in all other things we cheerfully serve you, acknowledging you to be governors of men, and praying that, together with your imperial power, you may have a wise and discerning judgment and understanding.'

5. Nor were they thus only in prosperous times, but under the heaviest persecutions. CYPRIAN tells the Proconsul, That as badly as they were used, yet they ceased not to pray for the expulsion of the common enemies, for seasonable showers, and either for the removing or mitigating public evils. Nor were they thus kind and good-natured, thus submissive and patient, for want of power, and because they knew not how to help it: TERTULLIAN answers in this case, That if they thought it lawful to return evil for evil, they could in one night, with a few firebrands, plentifully revenge themselves; that they were no small and inconsiderable party, and they needed not to betake themselves to the little arts of skulking revenges, being able to appear in the capacity of open enemies; that though of but yesterday's standing, yet they had filled all places, all offices of the empire; and what wars were they not able to manage, who could so willingly give up themselves to be slain? Nay, that they need not take up arms and rebel; for their party was so numerous, that should they but agree together to leave the Roman empire, and to go into some remote corner of the world, the loss of so

many members would utterly ruin it; and they would stand amazed and affrighted at that solitude and desolation that would ensue.

6. Yet they were accused of sedition, and holding unlawful combinations, which arose upon the account of their religious assemblies, which their enemies beheld as societies erected contrary to the Roman laws.

Hence **PLINY** giving the Emperor an account of the Christians, and especially of their assembling at their solemn feasts of love, tells him, That he had published an edict to forbid the Hæteriæ or Societies.

But to this the Christians answered, That their meetings could not be accounted amongst the unlawful factions, having nothing common with them. That if the Christian assemblies were like others, there would be some reason to condemn them under the notion of factions; but to whose prejudice (say they) did we ever meet together? We are the same when together, that we are when asunder; the same united, as in every single person, hurting no man, grieving no man; and therefore when such honest men meet together, it was rather to be called a council than a faction.

‘You defame us (says **TERTULLIAN**) with treason against the Emperor, and yet never could any Albanians, Nigrians, or Cassians (persons that had mutinied and rebelled against the Emperors) be found amongst the Christians; they are those that swear by the Emperor’s genius, that have offered sacrifice for their safety, that have often condemned Christians; these are the men that are found traitors to the Emperors. A Christian is no man’s enemy, much less his prince’s; knowing him to be constituted by God, he cannot but love, revere, and honour him, and desire that he and the whole Roman empire may be safe, as long as the world lasts.’

CHAPTER V.

Of the Discipline of the Ancient Church.

1. THERE is one thing yet remains, which was not properly reducible under any particular head ; that is, to consider what discipline was used towards offenders in the ancient Church ; only premising this, That the Christian Church being established by CHRIST as a society, distinct from that of the commonwealth, is, by the very nature of its constitution, invested with an inherent power of censuring its members that offend against the laws of it ; for without such a power as this, it is impossible that, as a society, it should be able to subsist. Now for the better understanding what this power was, and how exercised in the first ages of the Church, we shall consider these four things : What were the usual crimes that came under the discipline of the ancient Church ; what penalties were inflicted upon delinquent persons ; in what manner offenders were dealt with ; and by whom this discipline was administered.

2. *First*, What the usual offences were, which came under the discipline of the ancient Church. In general, they were any offences against the Christian Law ; any vice or immorality that was either public in itself, or made known to the Church. For the Christians of those times were infinitely careful to keep the honour of their religion unspotted ; to stifle every sin in its birth ; and by bringing offenders to public shame, to keep them from propagating a bad example. For this reason they watched over one another, told them privately of their faults, and (when that would not do) brought them before the Church. It is needless to reckon up particular crimes, when none were spared : Only because in those days (by reason of the violent heats of persecution) the great temptation which the weaker Christians were exposed to, was to deny their

profession, and to offer sacrifice to the heathen gods; therefore lapsing into idolatry, was the common sin that came before them. This sin of idolatry, or denying CHRIST, in those times was usually committed three ways: Sometimes by exposing the Scriptures to the malice of their enemies, which was accounted a virtual renouncing Christianity. This was especially remarkable under the Dioclesian persecution in the African churches. For DIOCLESIAN had put forth an edict, that Christians should deliver up their Scriptures to be burned. This command was prosecuted with great fierceness, and many Christians, to avoid the storm, delivered up their Bibles to their enemies. Hence they were styled *Traditores*, with whom the Orthodox refusing to join after the persecution was over, gave birth to that unhappy sect of Donatists, which so much exercised the Christian Church. Otherwhiles, Christians became guilty of idolatry by actual sacrificing or worshipping idols; these were called *Thurificati*, from their burning incense upon the altars of the heathen deities. Others fell into this sin, by corrupting the heathen Magistrate, and purchasing a warrant of security from him, to exempt them from the penalty of the law, and the necessity of sacrificing.

2. *Secondly*, What punishments were inflicted upon delinquent persons: And they could be no other than such as were agreeable to the nature of the Church; which as it transacts only spiritual matters, so it could inflict no other than spiritual censures. It is true, indeed, that in the first age especially, the Apostles had a power to inflict bodily punishments upon offenders; as ST. PETER did towards ANANIAS and SAPPHIRA, striking them dead upon the place. And ST. PAUL punished ELYMAS with blindness, for his malicious opposition of the Gospel: And this, doubtless, he primarily intends by his delivering over persons unto Satan: for no sooner were they excommunicated, but Satan seized upon them, and either by actual possessing, or some other sign, made appear that they were delivered over into his power. This could not but strike

a mighty terror into men, and make them stand in awe of the censures of the Church : And questionless, the main design of the Divine Providence in affording this extraordinary gift, was to supply the defect of civil power, of which the Church was then wholly destitute.

How long this miraculous power lasted in the Church, I know not. The common penalty they made use of, was excommunication or suspension from communion with the Church ; the cutting off an offending person as a rotten and infected member, till by repentance and wholesome discipline he was cured and restored ; and then he was re-admitted into church-society.

3. This suspension, and the penance that accompanied it, was longer or shorter, according to the nature of the crime ; sometimes two, three, ten, fifteen, twenty, or thirty years, and sometimes for the whole life ; nay, in some cases it was not taken off at death, but persons were left to the judgment of God, without any testimony of their reconciliation to the Church. Though herein the severity was mitigated, not only by private Bishops, but by the great council of Nice ; which ordained, that penitent persons should not be denied the communion at the hour of death. If the person offending happened to be in orders, he forfeited his ministry ; and though upon his repentance he was restored to communion, yet it was only as a lay-person, never recovering the honour of his office.

4. Indeed they strove by all ways to discourage sin, never thinking the curb strong enough, insomuch, that by some the string was stretched too far, and all pardon denied to them that had sinned. This uncomfortable doctrine was, if not first coined, yet maintained by the Novatian party. For NOVATUS, ST. CYPRIAN'S Presbyter, being suspended by him for his vile enormities, fled over to Rome, and there joined himself to NOVATIAN, a Presbyter of that Church, (the two names are frequently confounded by the Greek writers,) who ambitiously sought to make himself bishop, and to thrust out CORNELIUS, newly elected into that see ; but not being able to compass his design, between them they

started this amongst other heretical opinions, That the lapsed (who through fear of suffering had fallen in the time of persecution) were not to be admitted to repentance ; that it was not in the power of the Church to absolve or give them any hopes of pardon, leaving them to the judgment of God.

5. *Thirdly*, In what manner offenders were dealt with, both as to their suspension and penance, and as to their absolution. This affair was usually managed after this order : At their public assemblies, (as we find in TERTULLIAN,) amongst other parts of their holy exercises, there were exhortations, reproofs, and a divine censure ; for the judgment is given with great weight, as amongst those that are sure God beholds what they do : And this is one of the highest forerunners of the judgment to come, when the delinquent person is banished from the communion of prayers, assemblies, and all holy commerce.

It is true, that in some cases the martyrs finding such lapsed persons truly penitent, did receive them into private communion : But to public communion they were never admitted, till they had exactly fulfilled the discipline of the Church, which principally consisted in acts of repentance and mortification, more or less, according to the nature of the offence.

6. During this space of penance, they appeared in all the formalities of sorrow and mourning, in a sordid and squalid habit, with a sad countenance, and a head hung down, with tears in their eyes, standing without at the church-doors, (for they were not suffered to enter in,) falling down upon their knees to the Ministers as they went in, and begging the prayers of all good Christians for themselves, with all the expressions and demonstrations of a sorrowful and dejected mind. Without this, neither riches nor honour would procure any admission into the Church.

THEODOSIUS the Great, for his slaughter of the Thesalonians, was by ST. AMBROSE, Bishop of Milan, suspended, brought to public confession, and forced to un-

dergo a severe course of penance for eight months together ; when after great demonstrations of a hearty sorrow and sincere repentance, not more rigidly imposed upon him, than readily and willingly received by him, after his usual prostrations in the church, (as if unworthy either to stand or kneel,) crying out in the words of DAVID, “ My soul cleaveth unto the dust, quicken thou me according to thy word ; ” after having often torn his hair, beat his forehead, or watered his cheeks with tears, and humbly begged peace and pardon, he was absolved, and restored to communion with the Church.

7. This severity was used towards offenders, partly to deter others ; but principally to give satisfaction both to God and his Church, concerning the sincerity of their repentance. Hence it is, that these penances, in the writings of those times, are so often called satisfactions : for whenever those Fathers used the word, it is either with respect to men or God ; if to men, then the meaning is, that by these external acts of sorrow, they satisfy the Church of their repentance, and make reparation for those offences and scandals which they had given by their sins : If to God, then it is taken for the acknowledgment of a man’s fault, and the begging of pardon and remission.

8. The time of penance being ended, they addressed themselves to the Governors of the Church for absolution : hereupon their repentance was taken into examination, and being found to be sincere and real, they were openly readmitted into the Church, by the imposition of the hands of the clergy : The party to be absolved kneeling down between the knees of the Bishop, or, in his absence, of the Presbyter, who laying his hand upon his head solemnly blessed and absolved him.

The penitent being absolved, was received with the universal joy of the people, as one returned from the state of the dead ; being embraced by his brethren, who blessed God for his return, and many times wept for the joy of his recovery.

9. The time of these penitentiary humiliations varied

according to the circumstances of the case ; it being in the power of the Bishops to shorten the time, and sooner to take them into communion. A learned man has observed four particular cases, wherein they were wont to anticipate the usual time of absolution : The first was, when persons were in danger of death : The second, in time of imminent persecution : That so penitents being received into the communion of the Church, might be the better enabled to contend earnestly for the faith. A third case was, when great multitudes were concerned, or such persons as were likely to draw great numbers after them. In this case they thought it prudent and reasonable to deal with persons by somewhat milder and gentler methods, lest by holding them to terms of rigour and austerity, they should provoke them to fly off either to the Heathens, or to Heretics. Lastly, in mitigating the rigours of their repentance, they used to have respect to the person of the penitent, to his dignity, or age, or infirmity, or the course of his past life ; sometimes to the greatness of his humility, and the impression which his present condition made upon him. So wisely did the piety of those times deal with offenders ; neither letting the reins so loose as to encourage any man to sin, nor yet holding them so strait as to drive men into despair.

10. The fourth and last circumstance concerns the Persons by whom this discipline was administered. Now though it is true, that this affair was managed in the public congregation, and seldom or never done without the consent of the people, yet was it ever accounted a ministerial act, and properly belonging to them.

While the number of Christians was small, Bishops were able to manage these and other parts of their office, in their own persons. But about the time of the Decian persecution, when Christians were multiplied, and the number of the lapsed great, it seemed good to the prudence of the Church, to appoint a public penitentiary, (some holy, grave, and prudent Presbyter,) whose office it was to take the confession of those sins which persons had committed

after baptism, and by prayers, fastings, and other exercises of mortification, to prepare them for absolution. He was a kind of *censor morum*, to inquire into the lives of Christians, and to take an account of their failures, and to direct and dispose them to repentance. This office continued till it was abrogated by NECTARIUS, ST. CHRYSOSTOM'S predecessor in the See of Constantinople.

11. But besides the standing office of the clergy, we find even some of the laity, the Martyrs and Confessors, that had a considerable hand in absolving penitents, and restoring them to the communion of the Church. As the Christians of those times had a mighty reverence for martyrs, so the Martyrs took upon them to dispense in extraordinary cases; for it was customary in times of persecution, for those, who through fear of suffering, had lapsed into idolatry, to make their address to the Martyrs in prison, who did frequently mitigate their penance, and by a note under their hands, signify what they had done, to the Bishop.

12. Besides these libels granted by the Martyrs, there were other *Libelli* granted by heathen Magistrates, whence the lapsed that had them were called *Libellatici*, and they were of several sorts; some writing their names, and professing themselves to worship the heathen gods, presented them to the Magistrate; and these did really sacrifice, and pollute not their souls only, but their hands and their lips.

Others there were, who did not themselves sign or present any such libels, but some heathen friends for them, and were hereupon released out of prison, and had the favour not to be urged to sacrifice.

A third sort there was, who finding the keenness of their judges was to be taken off with a sum of money, freely confessed to them, that they were Christians and could not sacrifice; and prayed them to give them a libel of dismissal, for which they would give them a suitable reward. These were most properly called *Libellatici*, and *Libellati*.

These, though not altogether so bad as the *Sacrificati*,

yet CYPRIAN charges as guilty of implicit idolatry, having defiled their consciences with the purchase of these books, and done that by consent which others had actually done.

13. And now having taken this view of the Discipline in the ancient Church, nothing remains but to admire and imitate their piety, their hatred of sin, their care and zeal to keep up that strictness and purity of manners, that had rendered their religion so renowned and triumphant in the world: A discipline, which how happy were it for the Christian world, were it again resettled in its due power and vigour! which particularly is the judgment and desire of our own Church.

“In the primitive Church,” says the Preface to the Communion, “there was a godly discipline, that at the beginning of Lent, such persons as stood convicted of notorious sins were put to open penance, and punished in this world, that their souls might be saved in the day of the LORD; and that others, admonished by their example, might be the more afraid to offend. Which said discipline, it is much to be wished might be restored again.”

A RELATION
OF
THE HOLY WAR:
BY JOHN BUNYAN.

A RELATION

OF

The Holy War.

IN my travels, as I walked through many regions and countries, I came to that famous continent of Universe.

There is in this country a fair town, called Mansoul : A town, for its building so curious, for its situation so commodious, for its privileges so advantageous, (I mean with reference to its original,) that there is not its equal under the whole heaven.

It lieth just between the two worlds : the Builder of it was one SHADDAI. He made it the mirror and glory of all that He made, beyond any thing else that He did in that country : Yea, so goodly a town was Mansoul, that the gods, [angels,] at the setting up thereof, came down to see it, and sang for joy. And as he made it goodly to behold, so also mighty to have dominion over all the country round about. Yea, all were commanded to acknowledge Mansoul for their Metropolitan, all were enjoined to do homage to it.

There was reared up in the midst of this town a stately palace ; for strength, it might be called a castle ; for pleasantness, a paradise ; for largeness, a place so copious as to contain all the world. This place King SHADDAI intended for himself alone, and not another with him ; partly because of his own delights, and partly because he would not that the terror of strangers should be upon the town. This place SHADDAI made also a garrison

of, but committed the keeping of it only to the men of the town.

The walls of the town were well built, yea, so firm were they knit and compact together, that had it not been for the townsmen themselves, they could not have been shaken, or broken for ever.

The town had five gates, and these were made likewise answerable to the walls; to wit, impregnable, and such as could never be opened nor forced, but by the will of those within. The names of the gates were these, Ear-gate, Eye-gate, Mouth-gate, Nose-gate, and Feel-gate.

It had always a sufficiency of provision within its walls; it had the most wholesome and excellent law. There was not a traitorous person then within its walls: They were all true men, and fast joined together: And it had always, so long as it kept true to King SHADDAI, his countenance and protection.

After a time there was one DIABOLUS, a mighty giant, made an assault upon Mansoul, to take it, and make it his own habitation.

DIABOLUS was at first one of the servants of King SHADDAI, taken by him into most high favour, yea, set over the best of his dominions; yet, through pride, he, with many of his companions, rebelled against their Sovereign: For this they were cast out of his sight.

These ranging in much fury from place to place, at last came to this spacious country of Universe, and saw the town of Mansoul; and considering that that town was one of the chief works and delights of King SHADDAI, they resolved to make an assault upon it. So they shouted horribly for joy, and roared on it as a lion upon his prey; saying, 'Now have we found how to be revenged on King SHADDAI for what he hath done to us.' So they sat down, and called a council of war, and considered with themselves what ways they had best to engage in, for winning the town.

Having ended their council of war, they rose up, and marched towards Mansoul, but all invisible, save one

only; nor did he approach the town in his own likeness, but under the shade, and in the body of the dragon.

So they drew up, and sat down before Ear-gate, for that was the place of hearing for all without the town. This done, the giant ascended up close to the gate, and sounded his trumpet for audience. At which the chief of the town, my LORD INNOCENT, my LORD WILBEWILL, my LORD MAYOR, MR. RECORDER, and CAPTAIN RESISTANCE, came down to the wall to see who was there, and what was the matter. And my LORD WILBEWILL, when he had looked over and saw who stood at the gate, demanded, what he was, wherefore he was come, and why he roused the town of Mansoul with so unusual a sound.

DIABOLUS's Oration.

‘Gentlemen of the famous town of Mansoul, I am one that is bound by the King to do you what service I can; wherefore that I may be faithful to myself, and to you, I have somewhat of concern to impart unto you. And first, I will assure you, it is not myself, but you; not mine, but your advantage that I seek by what I now do. I am, to tell you the truth, come to show you, how you may obtain deliverance from a bondage, that unawares you are enslaved under. I have somewhat to say to you concerning your King, concerning his law, and also, touching yourselves. Touching your King, I know he is great and potent; but yet, all that he hath said to you, is neither true, nor for your advantage. 1. It is not true, for that wherewith he hath hitherto awed you shall not come to pass, though you do the thing that he hath forbidden. But if there was danger, what a slavery is it to live always in fear of punishment for doing so small a thing as eating a little fruit? 2. Touching his laws, this I say further, they are both unreasonable, intricate, and intolerable. Unreasonable, as was hinted before, for that the punishment is not proportioned to the offence. There is great disproportion betwixt the life and an apple; yet the one

must go for the other, by the Law of SHADDAI. But it is also intricate, in that he saith, first, you may eat of all; and yet after, forbids the eating of one. And then, in the last place, it must needs be intolerable; forasmuch as that fruit which you are forbidden to eat of is that, and that alone, which is able, by your eating, to minister to you a good as yet unknown by you. This is manifest by the very name of the tree, it is called the "Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil;" and have you that knowledge as yet? No; nor can you conceive how good, how pleasant, and how much to be desired to make one wise it is. Why should you be held in ignorance and blindness? Why should you not be enlarged in knowledge and understanding? Is it not grievous, that that very thing that you are forbidden to do, would yield you both wisdom and honour? For then your eyes will be opened, and you shall be as gods.'

While DIABOLUS was speaking these words to Mansoul, one of his soldiers shot at CAPTAIN RESISTANCE, where he stood on the gate, and mortally wounded him in the head; so that he fell down dead over the wall. Now when CAPTAIN RESISTANCE was dead, (and he was the only man of war in the town,) Mansoul was wholly left naked of courage.

DIABOLUS then added, 'Look on the tree, and the promising fruit thereof; remember also, that yet you know but little, and that this is the way to know more.'

But when the townsfolk "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eye, and a tree to be desired to make one wise," they did as he advised; "they took, and did eat thereof."

Just then, my LORD INNOCENCY sunk down in the place where he stood, nor could he be brought to life again. Thus these two brave men died, the beauty and glory of Mansoul so long as they lived therein; nor did there now remain any more a noble spirit in Mansoul, but they all fell down, and yielded obedience to DIABOLUS. They

RECORDER could say : for besides, DIABOLUS had a way to make the old gentleman unsay and deny what he in his fits had affirmed. And indeed this was the next way to make himself ridiculous, and to cause that no man should regard him. Also now he never spake freely for KING SHADDAI, but always by constraint. Besides, he would one time be hot against that, at which another time he would hold his peace.

But to leave MR. RECORDER, and to come to my LORD WILLBEWILL, who was another of the gentry of the town. This WILLBEWILL was as high born as any man in Mansoul ; besides, he had some privilege peculiar to himself : Together with these, he was a man of great strength, resolution, and courage, nor in his occasion could any turn him away. But whether he was proud of his estate, privileges, or strength, he scorns now to be a slave ; and therefore resolves to bear office under DIABOLUS, that he might be a ruler and governor in Mansoul. And he began betimes ; for when DIABOLUS made his oration at Ear-gate, he was one of the first that was for letting him into the town : wherefore DIABOLUS had a kindness for him ; and perceiving the stoutness of the man, he coveted to have him now one of his great ones, to act in matters of the highest Haven.

garrison he sent for him, and talked with him ; but there provisions not much persuasion : for as at first he was willing endeavour DIABOLUS should be let into the town ; so now he

But not t^{ing} to serve him there. When the tyrant therefore thinks of new^{ly} willingness of my Lord to serve him, he up one, and pu^{ts} de him the Captain of the castle, Governor fore my Lord Ma^y Keeper of the gates of Mansoul : Yea, STANDING, and M^{ake} in his commission, ‘ That nothing CONSCIENCE, he puts ^{it} done in all the town of Mansoul.’

As for my Lord Mayor, self, who but my LORD WILLBE- the rest of the town, in a^s Mansoul ! nor could any thing DIABOLUS thought not fit to let and pleasure throughout the lustre and glory, because he was fore he darkened him, not only by tak^{ing} a clerk, a man every

must go for the other, by the Law of SHADDAI. But it is also intricate, in that he saith, first, you may eat of all; and yet after, forbids the eating of one. And then, in the last place, it must needs be intolerable; forasmuch as that fruit which you are forbidden to eat of is that, and that alone, which is able, by your eating, to minister to you a good as yet unknown by you. This is manifest by the very name of the tree, it is called the "Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil;" and have you that knowledge as yet? No; nor can you conceive how good, how pleasant, and how much to be desired to make one wise it is. Why should you be held in ignorance and blindness? Why should you not be enlarged in knowledge and understanding? Is it not grievous, that that very thing that you are forbidden to do, would yield you both wisdom and honour? For then your eyes will be opened, and you shall be as gods.'

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Just then, my LORD INNOCENCY was so much debauched by the old place where he stood, nor could he be any more. He bethinks him of again. Thus these two brave men, who were, to persuade the men of Mansoul so long as they lived, were now ORDER was mad: And for this remain any more a noble soldier, by one means or another, he fell down, and yielded to neglect and despise whatever Mr.

RECORDE could say : for besides, DIABOLUS had a way to make the old gentleman unsay and deny what he in his iits had affirmed. And indeed this was the next way to make himself ridiculous, and to cause that no man should regard him. Also now he never spake freely for KING SHADDAI, but always by constraint. Besides, he would one time be hot against that, at which another time he would hold his peace.

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So he sent for him, and talked with him ; but there needed not much persuasion : for as at first he was willing that DIABOLUS should be let into the town ; so now he was willing to serve him there. When the tyrant therefore perceived the willingness of my Lord to serve him, he forthwith made him the Captain of the castle, Governor of the wall, and Keeper of the gates of Mansoul : Yea, there was a clause in his commission, ‘ That nothing without him should be done in all the town of Mansoul.’ Next to DIABOLUS himself, who but my LORD WILLBEWILL in all the town of Mansoul ! nor could any thing now be done but at his will and pleasure throughout the town of Mansoul.

He had also one MR. MIND for his clerk, a man every

way like his master : for he and his Lord were in principle one, and in practice not far asunder. And now was Mansoul brought under indeed, and made to fulfil the lusts of the will and of the mind.

A desperate one this WILLBEWILL was, when power was put into his hands. He flatly denied that he owed any suit or service to his former Prince.

He maligned MR. RECORDER to death ; he would neither endure to see him, nor to hear the words of his mouth ; he would shut his eyes when he saw him, and stop his ears when he heard him speak : Also he could not endure that so much as a fragment of the law of SHADDAI should be any where seen in the town. His clerk, MR. MIND, had some old, torn parchments of good SHADDAI in his house, but when WILLBEWILL saw them, he cast them behind his back.

When the Giant had thus garrisoned himself in the town, and had put down and set up whom he thought good, he betakes himself to defacing. Now there was in the market-place, and also upon the gates of the castle, an image of the blessed KING SHADDAI. This image was so exactly engraven, (and it was engraven in gold,) that it did the most resemble SHADDAI himself of any thing that then was extant in the world. This he commanded to be defaced. He likewise gave order to set up his own image in its stead ; to the great contempt of the former King, and debasing of his town of Mansoul.

And further to alienate Mansoul from her King, he commands to set up his own edicts and statutes, in all places of resort ; to wit, such as gave liberty to "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." He encouraged, countenanced, and promoted lasciviousness, and all ungodliness there. Meantime, he promised them peace, content, joy, and bliss, in doing his commands ; and that they should never be called to an account for doing any thing.

And now, having disabled the LORD MAYOR, and MR. RECORDER, from bearing office in Mansoul, he chose

For them a LORD MAYOR and a RECORDER, himself; such as contented them at the heart, and pleased him wondrous well.

The name of the Mayor was, the LORD LUSTINGS. A man that had neither eyes nor ears: all that he did, whether as a man, or as an officer, he did it naturally as doeth the beast.

The Recorder was one whose name was FORGET-GOOD. He could remember nothing but mischief, and to do it with delight. These two, by their power and practice, example and smiles upon evil, did much more settle the common people in evil ways.

Besides these, DIABOLUS made several Burgesses: And these are the names of the chief of them, MR. INCREDULITY, MR. HAUGHTY, MR. SWEARING, MR. WHORING, MR. HARD-HEART, MR. PITILESS, MR. FURY, MR. NO-TRUTH, MR. FALSE-PEACE, MR. DRUNKENNESS, MR. CHEATING, MR. ATHEISM. MR. INCREDULITY is the eldest, and MR. ATHEISM the youngest of the company.

And now DIABOLUS thought himself safe. He had taken Mansoul; he had garrisoned himself therein; he had put down the old officers, and set up new ones; he had defaced the image of SHADDAI, and had set up his own: He had spoiled the old law-books, and had promoted his own lies; he had made him new magistrates, and set up new aldermen; he had builded him new holds, and had manned them for himself: And all this he did to make himself secure in case SHADDAI, or his Son, should make an incursion upon him.

Long before this time, word was carried to KING SHADDAI, how Mansoul was lost; and that DIABOLUS had made sure thereof for himself.

When the King and his Son were retired into the privy-chamber, there they again consulted about what they had designed before; to wit, 'That as Mansoul should be suffered to be lost; so as certainly it should be recovered again:' recovered, in such a way as that both the King and his Son would get themselves eternal glory thereby.

Wherefore, after this consult, the Son of SHADDAI, having stricken hands with his Father, and promised that he would be his servant to recover Mansoul again, stood by his resolution, nor would he repent of the same. The purport of which agreement was this; to wit, 'That at a certain time prefixed by both, the King's Son should take a journey into the country of Universe, and there, by making amends for the follies of Mansoul, should lay a foundation of her perfect deliverance from DIABOLUS, and from his tyranny.

Moreover, IMMANUEL resolved to make, at a time convenient, a war upon the Giant DIABOLUS, even while he was possessed of Mansoul. And that he would by strength of hand drive him out of his hold, his nest, and take it to himself, to be his habitation.

This agreement, therefore, was published in several places, to the no little molestation of the tyrant DIABOLUS; for now thought he, I shall be molested, and my habitation will be taken from me.

When this purpose of the King and his Son, did at first take air at court; who can tell how the high Lords, chief Captains, and noble Princes, rejoiced? First, they whispered it one to another, and after that it began to ring out throughout the King's palace.

Nor could they be content to keep this news at court: themselves came down, and told it in Universe. At last it came to the ears of DIABOLUS, to his no little discontent; but after awhile, he concluded upon these four things:—

First, That this news should be kept from the ears of the town of Mansoul: For, said he, if they once come to the knowledge, that SHADDAI and his Son are contriving good for the town of Mansoul, what can be expected by me, but a revolt from under my government?

To accomplish this, he renews his flattery with my LORD WILLBEWILL; and also gives him strict charge, that he should keep watch by day and by night, at all the gates of the town, especially Ear-gate and Eye-gate: for

I hear a design, said he, to reduce Mansoul to its first bondage again. I hope they are but flying stories: however, let no such news by any means be let into Mansoul, lest the people be dejected thereat.

This was accordingly done: my LORD WILLBEWILL went willingly, and with all the diligence he could, kept any that would from going abroad, or that sought to bring this tidings, from coming into the town.

In the next place, DIABOLUS, that he might make Mansoul as sure as he could, frames and imposes a new oath upon the townsfolk; 'That they should never desert him, nor his government, nor seek to alter his laws; but that they should own, stand by, and acknowledge him for their rightful king, in defiance to any that do, or hereafter shall, by any pretence, law, or title whatever, lay claim to the town of Mansoul.'

After this, he summoned the whole town into the market-place, and there addressed them thus:—

'GENTLEMEN,—It is in vain for us to hope for quarter, for this King knows not how to show it: true, perhaps he at his first sitting down before us will talk of mercy, that thereby, with the more ease, he may again make himself master of Mansoul: whatever, therefore, he shall say, believe not one syllable of it; for all such language is but to overcome us, and to make us, while we wallow in our blood, the trophies of his merciless victory. My mind is, therefore, that we resolve, to the last man, to resist him, and not to believe him on any terms. At that door will come our danger: but shall we be flattered out of our lives? I hope you know more of the rudiments of politics than to suffer yourselves so pitifully to be served.

But suppose he should, if he gets us to yield, save some of our lives, or the lives of some of them that are underlings in Mansoul; what help will that be to you that are the chief of the town, especially of you whom I have set up? And suppose again that he should give quarter to every one of you, be sure he will bring you into that

bondage under which you were before, or a worse, and then what good will your lives do you? Shall you with him live in pleasure as you do now? No, no: you must be bound by laws, and be made to do that which at present is hateful to you. It is better to die valiantly, than to live like slaves; but I say the life of a slave will be counted a life too good for Mansoul now. Blood, blood, nothing but blood, is in every blast of SHADDAI's trumpet. I hear he is coming: up, and stand to your arms! Armour I have by me; yea, and it is sufficient for Mansoul from top to toe; nor can you be hurt by what his force can do, if you shall keep it well girt about you. Come, therefore, to my castle, and welcome, and harness yourselves for the war. There is helmet, breast-plate, sword, and shield, and what not, that will make you fight like men.

1. 'My "Helmet" is Hope of doing well at last, what lives soever you live. This is that which they had who said, "That they should have peace, though they walked in the wickedness of their heart, to add drunkenness to thirst:" a piece of approved armour this is, and whoever has it and can hold it, so long no arrow, dart, sword, or shield, can hurt him; this therefore keep on, and thou wilt keep off many a blow.

2. 'My "Breast-Plate" is a "Breast-Plate of iron:" all my soldiers are armed therewith. It is a hard heart; a heart as hard as iron, and as much past feeling as a stone; which if you get and keep, neither mercy shall win you, nor judgment fright you. This, therefore, is a piece of armour necessary for all to put on, who hate SHADDAI; and that would fight against him under my banner.

3. 'My "Sword" is "a tongue that is set on fire of hell," and that can bend itself to speak evil of SHADDAI, his Son, his ways, and people. This has been tried a thousand times; whoever hath it, keeps it, and makes that use of it which I would have him, can never be conquered by mine enemy.

4. 'My "Shield" is "Unbelief," or calling into question

the truth of the word, or all the sayings that speak of the judgment that SHADDAI has appointed for wicked men. Use this shield ; many attempts he has made upon it, and sometimes, it is true, it has been bruised ; but they that have writ of the wars of IMMANUEL against my servants, have testified that “he could do no mighty work there, because of their unbelief.”

5. ‘ Another piece of my excellent armour is, “ a dumb and prayerless spirit : ” a spirit that scorns to cry for mercy : wherefore be sure that you make use of this. What ! cry for quarter ! Never do that. I know you are stout men, and am sure that I have clad you with that which is armour of proof ; wherefore, to cry to SHADDAI for mercy, let that be far from you. Besides all this, I have fire-brands, arrows, and death ; all good hand-weapons, and such as will do execution.’

DIABOLUS having thus armed his servants in Mansoul, against their lawful King, in the next place doubled his guards at the gates of the town, and takes himself to the castle : his vassals also, to show their gallantry, exercise themselves in their arms every day, and teach one another feats of war ; they also defied their enemies, and sang the praises of their tyrant ; they threatened what men they would be, if ever things should rise so high as a war between SHADDAI and their King.

All this time, KING SHADDAI was preparing to send an army to recover Mansoul from under the tyranny of DIABOLUS : but he thought good at the first not to send them by the hand of his Son, but under the hand of some of his servants ; to see first by them the temper of Mansoul, and whether they would be won to the obedience of their King.

They came to Mansoul under the conduct of four stout Generals. The name of the first was BOANERGES : The second was CAPTAIN CONVICTION : The third was CAPTAIN JUDGMENT : And the fourth CAPTAIN EXECUTION.

To CAPTAIN BOANERGES, for he was the chief, were given ten thousand men. His Ensign was MR. THUNDER :

he bare the black colours, and his escutcheon was the three burning thunderbolts.

To CAPTAIN CONVICTION were given ten thousand men : his Ensign's name was MR. SORROW : he bare the pale colours ; and his escutcheon was the book of the Law, wide open, from whence issued a flame of fire.

To CAPTAIN JUDGMENT were given ten thousand men : his Ensign's name was MR. TERROR : he bare the red colours ; and his escutcheon was a burning fiery furnace.

To CAPTAIN EXECUTION were given ten thousand men : his Ensign was MR. JUSTICE : he also bare the red colours ; and his escutcheon was a fruitless tree, with an axe lying at the root thereof.

The townsfolk at first, beholding so gallant a company, so bravely accoutred, and so excellently disciplined, having on their glittering armour, and displaying their colours, could not but come out of their houses and gaze. But DIABOLUS, fearing that the people should on a sudden summons open the gates to the Captains, came down with all haste from the castle, and making them retire into the body of the town, made this speech unto them :—

‘GENTLEMEN,—Although you are my trusty and well-beloved friends, yet I cannot but chide you for your late uncircumspect action, in going out to gaze on that mighty force that but yesterday sat down before the town. Do you know who they are ? They are they of whom I have told you long ago, that they would come to destroy this town. Wherefore then did you not rather, even at the first appearance of them, cry out, Fire the beacons, and give the whole town an alarm, that we might all have been in a posture of defence ?

‘I will leave off now to chide ; but I charge you, that henceforward you let me see no more such actions. Let not a man of you, without order first obtained from me, so much as show his head over the wall of the town of Mansoul.’

Now were the townsmen strangely altered : they were as men stricken with a panic : they ran to and fro

through the streets of Mansoul, crying out, Help! help! "The men that turn the world upside down are come hither also:" nor could any of them be quiet after, but still they cried out, The destroyers of our peace and people are come.

Before the King's forces had sat before Mansoul three days, CAPTAIN BOANERGES commanded his Trumpeter to go down to Ear-gate, and there in the name of the great SHADDAI, to summon Mansoul to give audience to the message, that he in his Master's name was to deliver. So the Trumpeter went up to Ear-gate, and there sounded his trumpet: but there was none that appeared to give audience or regard, for so had DIABOLUS commanded. So the trumpeter returned to his Captain, and told him: whereat the Captain was grieved; but bid the Trumpeter go to his tent.

Again BOANERGES sendeth his Trumpeter to Ear-gate, to sound as before for a hearing: but they again kept close, nor would they give him an answer; so observant were they of the command of their King.

Then the Captains, and other Field-Officers, called a council of war, to consider what further was to be done; and after a thorough debate, they concluded to give the town yet another summons; but if that should be refused, to compel them to the obedience of their King.

So BOANERGES commanded his Trumpeter to go up to Ear-gate again. The Trumpeter did as he was commanded: he went up to Ear-gate, and sounded his trumpet, and gave a third summons to Mansoul. He said, moreover, that if they should still refuse to hear, the Captain of his Prince would endeavour to reduce them to obedience by force.

Then stood up my LORD WILLBEWILL, the Governor and Keeper of the gates, and demanded of the Trumpeter, Who he was? Whence he came? And what was the cause of his making so hideous a noise at the gate?

The Trumpeter answered; 'I am servant to the most noble CAPTAIN BOANERGES, General of the Forces of

the great KING SHADDAI, against whom both thyself, with the whole town of Mansoul, have rebelled, and lifted up the heel; and my Master hath a special message to this town, and to thee as a member thereof; the which if you shall peaceably hear, well; and if not, you must take what follows.'

Then said the LORD WILLBEWILL, 'I will carry thy words to my Lord, and will know what he will say.'

The Trumpeter replied, 'Our message is not to DIABOLUS, but to the miserable town of Mansoul; nor shall we at all regard what answer by him is made, nor yet by any for him. We are sent to this town to recover it from under his cruel tyranny, and to submit, as in former times, to the most excellent KING SHADDAI.

Then said the LORD WILLBEWILL, 'I will do your errand to the town.'

So he returned from off the wall, and the Trumpeter came into the camp.

After waiting awhile, BOANERGES sent his Trumpeter again to summon Mansoul to hear the message they had brought from SHADDAI. So he went and sounded, and the townsmen came up, but made Ear-gate as sure as they could. When they were come to the top of the wall, BOANERGES desired to see the Lord Mayor. My LORD INCREDULITY was then Lord Mayor, for he came in the room of my LORD LUSTINGS: so INCREDULITY came up, and showed himself over the wall; but when the CAPTAIN BOANERGES had set his eyes upon him, he cried out aloud, 'This is not he: where is my LORD UNDERSTANDING, the ancient Lord Mayor of the town of Mansoul? for to him I would deliver my message.

Then said the Giant, (for DIABOLUS was also come down,) 'You have given to Mansoul four summonses to subject herself to your King; by whose authority I know not. I ask therefore, What is the reason of all this?'

Then BOANERGES, taking no notice of the Giant, or of his speech, thus addressed himself to the town of Mansoul:—

‘Be it known unto you, O unhappy and rebellious Mansoul, that the most gracious King, the great KING SHADDAI, my Master, hath sent me unto you, with commission to reduce you to his obedience. And he hath commanded me, in case you yield, to carry it to you as if you were my friends or brother; but he also hath bid, that if you stand out, we should endeavour to take you by force.’

DIABOLUS was resolved at first to give them answer by himself; but then changing his mind, he commanded the Lord Mayor, the LORD INCREDULITY to do it; saying, ‘My Lord, do you give these runagates an answer, and speak out, that Mansoul may hear and understand you.

So INCREDULITY began:—

‘GENTLEMEN,—You have here, to the disturbance of our Prince, and the molestation of the town of Mansoul, encamped against it; but from whence you come we will not know; and what you are, we will not believe. Indeed you tell us that you have this authority from SHADDAI; but by what right he commands you to do it, of that we shall yet be ignorant.

‘You have also summoned this town to desert her Lord, and for protection to yield up herself to SHADDAI, your King; telling her, that if she will do it, he will pass by, and not charge her with her past offences.

‘Now, from whencesoever you come, yet know ye, that neither my LORD DIABOLUS, nor I, his servant INCREDULITY, nor yet our brave Mansoul, doth regard either your persons, message, or the King that you say hath sent you; his power, his greatness, his vengeance, we fear not; nor will we yield at all to your summons.’

Then did the town of Mansoul shout for joy, as if some great advantage had been gotten of the Captains. They also rang the bells, and made merry, and danced upon the walls.

DIABOLUS also returned to the castle, and the Lord Mayor and Recorder to their place; but the LORD WILL-BEWILL took special care that the gates should be secured with double guards, and double locks and bars, and that

Ear-gate (especially) might the better be looked to, for that was the gate at which the King's forces sought most to enter. The LORD WILLBEWILL made one MR. PREJUDICE Captain of the ward at that gate, and put under his power sixty men, called Deaf-men : men advantageous for that service, forasmuch as they mattered no words of the Captains, nor of their soldiers.

Now when the Captains saw that they could not get a hearing from the old natives of the town, and that Mansoul was resolved to give the King's army battle, they sounded the trumpet ; they in the town made them answer, with shout against shout.

The Captains with their engines made many attempts to beat down the tower that was over Ear-gate, and at the said gate to make their entrance ; but Mansoul so stood it out, through the rage of DIABOLUS, the valour of the LORD WILLBEWILL, and the conduct of old INCREDULITY, that the charge of that summer's war (on the King's side) seemed to be almost quite lost, and the advantage to return to Mansoul. When the Captains saw how it was, they made a fair retreat, and fixed themselves in their winter quarters. .

They there intrenched themselves and their carriages, so as with the best advantage to their King, and the greatest annoyance to the enemy, they might give seasonable and warm alarms to the town of Mansoul.

Now could not Mansoul sleep securely as before, nor could they go to their debaucheries with that quietness as in times past, for they had from the camp of SHADDAI frequent alarms ; first at one gate, and then at another, and again, at all the gates at once. Sometimes the trumpets would sound, and sometimes the slings would whirl the stones into the town ; sometimes ten thousand of the King's soldiers would be round the walls of Mansoul at midnight, shouting, and lifting up the voice for the battle ; sometimes again some of them in the town would be wounded, and their cry would be heard, to the great molestation of the rest.

In these days new thoughts began to possess the minds of the men of Mansoul. Some would say, 'There is no living thus;' others would reply, 'This will be over shortly;' then would a third stand up and answer, 'Let us turn to the KING SHADDAI, and so put an end to these troubles;' and a fourth would come in saying, 'I doubt he will not receive us.' The old Recorder too began to talk aloud, and his words were now as if they were great claps of thunder. No noise now so terrible to Mansoul as was his, with the noise of the soldiers and shoutings of the Captains.

Also things began to grow scarce in Mansoul: now the things that her soul lusted after were departing from her. Upon all her pleasant things there was a blast, and burning instead of beauty. Wrinkles now, and some shows of the shadow of death were upon the inhabitants of Mansoul; and now, O how glad would they have been to have enjoyed quietness of mind, though joined with the meanest condition in the world!

The Captains also, in the deep of winter, sent by the mouth of a Trumpeter a summons to Mansoul, to yield to the King. They sent it once, and twice, and thrice, not knowing but that at some time there might be in them a willingness to surrender. Yea, the town had been surrendered, had it not been for the opposition of old INCREDULITY, and the fickleness of my LORD WILLBEWILL.

Upon their delay, BOANERGES spake as follows:—

'O Mansoul, if you will give yourselves into our hands, or rather into the hands of our King, and will trust him to make such terms with and for you as shall seem good in his eyes, (and I dare say they shall be such as you shall find to be most profitable to you,) then we will receive you, and be at peace with you: but if you will not trust yourselves in the arms of SHADDAI, our King, then we know what we have to do.'

Then cried out old INCREDULITY, 'And who, being out of the hands of their enemies, will be so foolish as to put themselves into the hands of they know not who? I

for my part will never yield to it. Do we know the manner and temper of their King? It is said by some, that he will be angry with his subjects, if but the breadth of an hair they chance to step out of the way; and of others, that he requireth of them much more than they can perform. Wherefore it seems, O Mansoul, to be thy wisdom, to take good heed what thou doest in this matter. Do you indeed know, when you are his, which of you he will kill, and which of you he will save alive? Or whether he will not cut off every one of us, and send out of his own country another people, and cause them to inhabit this town?’

This speech of the Lord Mayor undid all, and threw to the ground their hopes of an accord; wherefore the Captains returned to their trenches and to their men, and the Mayor to the castle and to his king.

Yet this repulse of the brave Captains put Mansoul into a mutiny: for while INCREDULITY went to the castle, the Lord Mayor, my LORD UNDERSTANDING, and the old Recorder, MR. CONSCIENCE, getting intelligence of what had passed at Ear-gate, (for they might not be suffered to be at that debate, lest they should then have mutinied for the Captains,) were much concerned thereat; wherefore getting some of the town together, they began to tell them the reasonableness of the Captains’ demands, and the bad consequences that would follow upon the speech of old INCREDULITY.

The multitude being now convinced of the evil that INCREDULITY had done, began to run together by companies in all places; and first to mutter, then to talk openly; after that they ran to and fro, and cried as they ran, ‘Would we were under the government of the Captains, and of SHADDAI their King.’ When the Lord Mayor had intelligence that Mansoul was in an uproar, down he comes to appease the people, and thought to have quashed their heat with the bigness and the show of his countenance; but when they saw him, they came running upon him, and had doubtless done him a mischief,

ad he not betaken himself to his house. However, they wrongly assaulted the house, to have pulled it down about its ears, but the place was too strong; so he taking some courage, addressed himself out at a window to the people, in this manner:—

‘Gentlemen, what is the reason that there is here such an uproar to-day?’

Then answered my LORD UNDERSTANDING:

‘It is even because thou and thy master have carried it out rightly to the Captains of SHADDAI; first, in that you would not let MR. CONSCIENCE and myself be at the hearing of your discourse: secondly, for that after the Captains had showed us upon what conditions they would have received us to mercy, thou didst undo all again with thy unsavoury and ungodly speech.’

When old INCREDULITY had heard this, he cried out, Treason! treason! To your arms, to your arms, O ye, ye trusty friends of DIABOLUS!’

UND. ‘Sir, you may put upon my words what meaning you please; but I am sure the Captains of such a high Lord deserved a better treatment at your hands.

Then said old INCREDULITY;

‘Sir, what I spake, I spake for my Prince, for his government, and the quieting of the people, whom by our unlawful actions you have this day set to mutiny against us.

Then replied the old Recorder, whose name was MR. CONSCIENCE,

‘Sir, you ought not thus to retort upon what my LORD UNDERSTANDING hath said. He hath spoken the truth; you are an enemy to Mansoul. Had you accepted of the conditions, the sound of the trumpet and the alarm of war had now ceased about the town; but that dreadful sound hides, and your want of wisdom has been the cause of it.’

Then said old INCREDULITY,

‘Sir, if I live I will do your errand to DIABOLUS, and ere you shall have an answer to your words.’

While these gentlemen were speaking thus, down come

from the walls and gates of the town, the LORD WILLBEWILL, MR. PREJUDICE, and several of the new-made Aldermen and Burgesses, and asked the reason of the tumult. With that, every man began to tell his own tale, so that nothing could be heard distinctly.

Now when they that took part with my LORD UNDERSTANDING and with MR. CONSCIENCE, perceived that they were like to come to the worst, for that force and power were on the other side, they came in for their help and relief; so a great company was on both sides. Then they on INCREDULITY's side would have had the two old gentlemen presently away to prison, but they on the other side said they should not. At last they passed from words to blows: the good old gentleman, MR. CONSCIENCE, was knocked down twice, and my LORD UNDERSTANDING had like to have been slain, but that he that shot did not take his aim aright.

When the uproar was over, DIABOLUS sends for my LORD UNDERSTANDING and MR. CONSCIENCE, and claps them both up in prison, as the ringleaders of the riot. Now the town began to be quiet again, and the prisoners were used hardly; yea, he thought to have made them away, but that the present juncture did not serve, for war was in all their gates. The Captains, when they were gone back into the camp, called a council of war, to consult what was further to do. Some said, 'Let us go up presently and fall upon the town;' but the greatest part thought better to give them another summons.

Wherefore to this advice they agreed, and called a Trumpeter, who coming up to Ear-gate, sounded as he was commanded; they that were within came out to see what was the matter, and the Trumpeter spoke as follows:—

'O, hard-hearted Town, how long wilt thou love thy simplicity, and ye fools delight in scorning? As yet, despise you the offers of peace and deliverance? As yet, will ye refuse the offers of SHADDAI, and trust to the lies of DIABOLUS? Think you, when SHADDAI shall have conquered you, that the remembrance of these your car-

riages towards him, will yield you peace and comfort? or that by ruffling language, you can make him afraid as a grasshopper? Doth he entreat you for fear of you? Do you think that you are stronger than he? Look to the heavens, and behold, and consider the stars how high they are! Can you stop the sun from running his course, and hinder the moon from giving her light? Can you count the number of the stars, or stay the bottles of heaven? Can you call for the waters of the sea, and cause them to cover the face of the ground? Can you behold every one that is proud, and abase him, and bind their faces in secret? Yet these are some of the works of our King, in whose name this day we come up unto you. In his name, therefore, I summon you again to give up yourselves to his Captains.'

At this summons they seemed to be at a stand, and knew not what answer to make; wherefore DIABOLUS forthwith appeared, and took upon him to do it himself; but first he turns his speech to them of Mansoul thus:—

'If it is true that this summoner hath said, concerning the greatness of their King, by his terror you will always be kept in bondage. Yea, how can you now, though he is at a distance, endure to think of such a mighty one? And if not to think of him while at a distance, how can you endure to be in his presence? Consider therefore what is for your profit, and remember the immunities that I have granted you.

'Farther, if it be true that this man hath said, how comes it to pass that the subjects of SHADDAI are so enslaved in all places? None in the universe so unhappy, none so trampled upon as they?'

Upon this speech, the town of Mansoul did again harden their hearts against the Captains of SHADDAI. The thoughts of his greatness did quite quash them, and the thoughts of his holiness sunk them in despair: wherefore, after a short consult, they sent back this word: 'That they were resolved to stick to their King.' So it

was but vain to give them any further summons, for they had rather die than yield.

So they ceased that way to deal with them any more, and inclined to think of another way. The Captains therefore gathered themselves together, to have free conference among themselves, to know what was yet to be done; and one said after this manner, and another after that. Then stood up CAPTAIN CONVICTION, and said, ‘My brethren, mine opinion is this:—

‘First, That we continually play our slings into the town, and keep it in alarm day and night; by thus doing we shall stop the growth of their rampant spirit; for a lion may be tamed by continual molestation.

‘Secondly, That done, I advise that in the next place we with one consent draw up a petition to our Lord, SHADDAI, by which we will earnestly implore his Majesty’s help, and that he will please to send us more force and power, that so his Majesty may not lose the benefit of these his good beginnings.’

To this speech they, as one man, consented, and agreed that a petition should forthwith be drawn up, and sent away to SHADDAI with speed. It was drawn up and accordingly sent.

And when it was come to the palace, who should it be delivered to but to the King’s Son? So he took it and read it, and because the contents of it pleased him well, he mended, and also in some things added to the petition himself. After he had made such amendments and additions with his own hand, he carried it in to the King: to whom when he had with obeisance delivered it, he put on authority, and spake to it himself.

Now the King at the sight of the petition was glad, but much more when it was seconded by his Son.

Wherefore he called to him IMMANUEL, his Son, who said, ‘Here am I, my Father.’ Then said the King, ‘Thou knowest, as I do myself, the condition of the town of Mansoul, and what we have purposed, and what thou

hast done to redeem it. Come now, therefore, my Son, and prepare thyself for the war. Thou shalt prosper, and prevail, and conquer.

Then said the King's Son :—

‘Thy law is within my heart. I delight to do thy will. This is the day that I have longed for, and the work that I have waited for all this while. Grant me therefore what force thou shalt in thy wisdom think meet, and I will go, and will deliver from DIABOLUS, and from his power, thy perishing town of Mansoul. My heart has been often pained within me for it, but now it is rejoiced, but now it is glad ;’ and with that he leaped over the mountains for joy, saying,

‘I have not in my heart thought any thing too dear for Mansoul, and glad am I that thou, my Father, hast made me the Captain of their salvation : and I will now begin to plague all those that have been a plague to my town, and will deliver it from their hand.’

Then it was concluded that some should go and carry tidings to the camp. But O, how ready were the high ones at Court to run to carry these tidings.

Now when the Captains heard that the King would send his Son, and that it also delighted the Son to be sent by the great SHADDAI, his Father, they also, to show how they were pleased at the thought, gave a shout that made the earth rend ; yea, the mountains did answer again by echo, and DIABOLUS himself did totter and shake.

The time of his setting forth being expired, IMMANUEL addressed himself for his march, taking with him five noble Captains and their forces.

1. The first was CAPTAIN CREDENCE. His were the red colours ; and MR. PROMISE bare them : and for an escutcheon he had the Holy Lamb, and golden shield. He had ten thousand men at his feet.

2. The second was CAPTAIN GOOD-HOPE. His were the blue colours ; his Standard-Bearer was MR. EXPECTATION ; and for an escutcheon he had the three golden anchors : and he had ten thousand men at his feet.

3. The third was CAPTAIN CHARITY. His Standard-Bearer was MR. PITIFUL: his were the green colours; for his escutcheon he had three naked orphans embraced in the bosom: and he had ten thousand men at his feet.

4. The fourth was CAPTAIN INNOCENT. His Standard-Bearer was MR. HARMLESS: his were the white colours; and for his escutcheon he had the three golden doves.

5. The fifth was CAPTAIN PATIENCE. His Standard-Bearer was MR. SUFFER-LONG: his were the black colours; and for his escutcheon he had three arrows through the golden heart.

So the Prince took his march to go to Mansoul. CAPTAIN CREDENCE led the van, and CAPTAIN PATIENCE brought up the rear. The other three, with their men, made up the main body: the Prince himself riding in his chariot at the head of them.

The Prince's armour was all of gold, and it shone like the sun in the firmament. The Captains' armour was of proof, and was in appearance like the glittering stars.

They marched till they came within less than a league of the town, and there they lay till the first four Captains came thither. Then, they took their journey to the town; but when the old soldiers that were in the camp saw that they had new forces to join with, they again gave such a shout before the walls, that it put DIABOLUS into another fright. So they sat down before the town, not now as the other four Captains did, against the gates only; but they environed it round, and beset it behind and before, so that now let Mansoul look which way it will, it saw force and power lie in the siege against it; besides, there were mounts cast up against it.

The Mount Gracious was on the one side, and Mount Justice was on the other. Farther there were several small banks, where many of the slings were placed against the town. Upon Mount Gracious were planted four, and upon Mount Justice were placed as many, and the rest were conveniently placed in several parts round the town. Five of the best battering rams were placed upon Mount

Hearken: a mount cast up hard by Ear-gate, with intent to break that open.

Now when the men of the town saw the multitude of the soldiers that were come, and the rams and slings, and the mounts on which they were planted, together with the glittering of the armour, and the waving of their colours, though before they thought themselves sufficiently guarded, yet now they began to think that no man knew what would be their lot.

When the good PRINCE IMMANUEL had thus beleagured Mansoul, in the first place he hangs out the white flag, which he caused to be set up among the golden slings that were planted upon Mount Gracious; and this he did for two reasons:—

First, To give notice to Mansoul, that he could and would yet be gracious, if they turned to him.

Second, That he might leave them without excuse, should he destroy them continuing in their rebellion.

So the white flag, with the three golden doves in it, was hanged out for two days together, to give them time to consider. But they, unconcerned, made no reply to the favourable signal of the Prince.

Then he commanded, and they set the red flag upon that mount called Mount Justice. It was the red flag of CAPTAIN JUDGMENT, whose escutcheon was the burning fiery furnace: and this also stood waving before them in the wind, for several days together.

Then he commanded that his servants would hang out the black flag against them, whose escutcheon was the three burning thunderbolts; but as unconcerned was Mansoul at this, as at those that went before. When the Prince saw that neither mercy, nor judgment, nor execution of judgment, would come near the heart of Mansoul, he was touched with much compassion, and said, ‘Surely this strange carriage of Mansoul doth rather arise from ignorance, than from a secret defiance of us, and abhorrence of their own lives: or if they know the manner of

their own wars, yet not that of ours, when I war upon mine enemy **DIABOLUS**.

Therefore he sent to the town of Mansoul, to let them know what he meant by those signs, and also to know of them which they would choose, whether grace and mercy, or judgment and the execution of judgment.

The townsmen made answer to the Prince's messenger according to that which follows :—

‘Great Sir, as to what by your messenger you have signified to us, whether we will accept of your mercy, or fall by your justice, we are bound by the law and custom of this place, and can give you no positive answer ; for it is against the law, government, and the prerogative royal of our King, to make either peace or war without him. But this will we do : We will petition that our Prince will come down to the wall, and there give you such treatment as he shall think fit and profitable for us.’

After the town had carried this news to **DIABOLUS**, and had told him that the Prince waited for an answer, he refused, and huffed as well as he could, but in heart he was afraid.

Then said he, I will go down to the gates myself, and give him such an answer as I think fit.

So he went down to Mouth-gate, and there addressed himself to **IMMANUEL** thus :—

‘O thou great **IMMANUEL**, Lord of all the world, I know thee, thou art the Son of the great **SHADDAI** ! Wherefore art thou come to torment me, and to cast me out of my possession ? This town, as thou very well knowest, is mine, and that by a twofold right. 1. It is mine by right of conquest : I won it in the open field ; and shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive be delivered ? 2. This town of Mansoul is mine also by their subjection : They have opened the gates unto me ; they have sworn fidelity to me, and have openly chosen me to be their King : they have also given their castle into my hands ; yea, they have put the whole strength of Mansoul under me.

‘Moreover, this town hath disavowed thee ; yea, they have cast thy law, thy name, thy image, and all that is thine, behind their back, and have accepted and set up in their room my law, my name, mine image, and all that is mine. Ask else thy Captains, and they will tell thee that Mansoul hath, in answer to their summons, shown love and loyalty to me, but always disdain, despite, and scorn to thee and thine. Now thou art the Just One, and the Holy, and shouldest do no iniquity ; depart I pray thee, therefore from me, and leave to me my just inheritance.’

This oration was made in the language of DIABOLUS himself. For although he can to every man speak in their own language, yet he has a language proper to himself, and it is the language of the infernal cave.

Wherefore the town of Mansoul understood him not, nor did they see how he crouched and cringed while he stood before their Prince.

Yea, they all this while took him to be one of that power that by no means could be resisted. Wherefore, while he was thus entreating that he might have yet his residence there, and that IMMANUEL would not take it from him by force, the inhabitants boasted of his valour, saying, ‘Who is able to make war against him ?’

When he had made an end, the Prince stood up and spake as follows :—

‘I am come to avenge the wrong thou hast done to my Father ; and to deal with thee for the blasphemies wherewith thou hast made poor Mansoul blaspheme his name.

‘I am come against thee by lawful power, and to take by strength of hand this town out of thy burning fingers : for Mansoul is mine, and that by undoubted right, as all shall see that will diligently search the most ancient records, and I will plead my title to it, to the confusion of thy face.

‘First, My Father built and fashioned it with his hand. The palace also that is in the midst of that town he built for his own delight. This town of Mansoul therefore is my Father’s ; and he that gainsays this must lie against his soul. It is therefore mine,

‘1. For that I am my Father’s heir, his first-born, and the only delight of his heart. I am therefore come up against thee in mine own right, to recover mine inheritance out of thine hand.

‘2. And as I have a title to Mansoul, by being my Father’s heir, so I have also by my Father’s donation. His it was, and he gave it me; nor have I at any time offended my Father, that he should take it from me, and give it to thee.

‘3. Mansoul is mine by right of purchase. I have bought it to myself. Now since it was my Father’s and mine, as I was his heir, and since also I have made it mine by virtue of a great purchase, it followeth, that by all lawful right the town of Mansoul is mine, and that thou art an usurper, a tyrant, and traitor, in holding possession thereof.

‘The cause of my purchasing it was this : Mansoul had trespassed against my Father, and my Father had said, that in the day they broke his law they should die. Now it is more possible for heaven and earth to pass away, than for my Father to break his word : Wherefore, when Mansoul had sinned by hearkening to thy lie, I put in and became a surety to my Father, body for body, and soul for soul, that I would make amends for Mansoul’s transgressions ; and my Father did accept thereof. So when the time appointed was come, I gave body for body, soul for soul, life for life, and blood for blood, and so redeemed my beloved Mansoul.

‘Nor am I come out this day against thee but by commandment of my Father ; he said unto me, “Go down and deliver Mansoul.”

‘And now,’ said the Prince, ‘I have a word to the town of Mansoul. (But as soon as mention was made of this, the gates were double guarded, and all men commanded not to give him audience ; yet he proceeded and said ;) ‘O unhappy town ! I cannot but be touched with compassion for thee. Thou hast accepted of DIABOLUS for thy King, against thy sovereign Lord ; thy gates thou hast opened to

him, but hast shut them fast against me ; thou hast given him a hearing, but hast stopped thine ears at my cry ; he brought to thee thy destruction, and thou didst receive both him and it. I am come to thee bringing salvation, but thou regardest me not. Poor Mansoul ! what shall I do unto thee ? Shall I save thee, or shall I destroy thee ? Shall I fall upon thee and grind thee to powder, or make thee a monument of the richest grace ? What shall I do unto thee ? Hearken, therefore, thou town of Mansoul, hearken to my word, and thou shalt live.'

This speech was intended for Mansoul, but Mansoul would not hear it ; they shut up Ear-gate, and kept it locked and bolted, they set a guard thereat, and commanded that none should go out to him, nor that any from the camp should be admitted into the town.

When IMMANUEL saw this, he called his army together, and gave out command throughout all his host to be ready against the time appointed. When he had put all things in a readiness for the battle, he sent again to know of the town if they would yield themselves, or whether they were yet resolved to try the utmost extremity ? They then called a council of war, and resolved upon certain propositions that should be offered to IMMANUEL. Now there was in the town an old man, and his name was MR. LOTH-TO-STOOP ; him they sent, and put into his mouth what to say. So he went, and came to the camp, and when he was come, a time was appointed to give him audience. So at the time he came, and thus began : " Great Sir, that it may be known how good-natured a Prince my master is, he hath sent me to tell your Lordship, that he is willing, rather than go to war, to deliver into your hands one half of the town of Mansoul. I am therefore to know if Your Mightiness will accept of this proposition.'

Then said IMMANUEL, ' The whole is mine by gift and purchase, wherefore I will never lose one half.

Then said MR. LOTH-TO-STOOP, ' Sir, my master hath said, that he will be content that you shall be the nominal and titular Lord of all, if he may possess but a part.'

IMMANUEL answered, 'The whole is mine, not in name and word only; wherefore I will be the sole Lord of all, or of none.'

MR. LOTH-TO-STOOP said again: 'Sir, behold the condescension of my master! He says that he will be content if he may but have some place in Mansoul as a place to live privately in, and you shall be Lord of all the rest.'

Then said the Prince, 'All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and of all that he hath given me I will lose nothing. I will not therefore grant him the least corner in Mansoul to dwell in: I will have all to myself.'

LOTH-TO-STOOP said again, 'But Sir, suppose my Lord should resign the whole town to you, only with this proviso, that he sometimes, when he comes into this country, may for old acquaintance' sake be entertained as a wayfaring man, for two days, or ten days, or a month, or so; may not this small matter be granted?'

Then said IMMANUEL, 'No. He came as a wayfaring man to DAVID; nor did he stay long with him; and yet it had like to have cost DAVID his soul. I will not consent that he ever should have any harbour there.'

Then said MR. LOTH-TO-STOOP, 'Sir, you seem to be very hard. Suppose my master should yield to all that your Lordship hath said, provided that his friends and kindred in Mansoul may have liberty to trade in the town, and to enjoy their present dwellings; may not that be granted?'

IMMANUEL said, 'No: That is contrary to my Father's will; for all his kindred that now are, or that at any time shall be found in Mansoul, shall not only lose their lands and liberties, but also their lives.'

Then said MR. LOTH-TO-STOOP, 'But, Sir, may not my master, by letters, by passengers, by accidental opportunities, maintain some kind of friendship with Mansoul?'

IMMANUEL answered, 'No, by no means; forasmuch as any such friendship, intimacy, or acquaintance, in what way soever maintained, will tend to the corruption of

Mansoul, the alienating of their affections from me, and the endangering of their peace with my Father.'

MR. LOTH-TO-STOOP yet added further, 'But, great Sir, since my master hath many friends, and those that are dear to him, in Mansoul, may he not, if he shall depart from them, even of his bounty bestow upon them some tokens of his love and kindness, to the end that Mansoul, when he is gone, may look upon such tokens of kindness once received from their old friend, and remember him who was once their King, and the times that they sometimes enjoyed while he and they lived in peace together?'

Then said IMMANUEL, 'No; I shall not admit of, nor consent, that there should be the least scrap, shred, or dust of DIABOLUS left behind, as tokens or gifts bestowed upon any in Mansoul, thereby to call to remembrance the horrible communion that was betwixt them and him.'

'Well, Sir,' said MR. LOTH-TO-STOOP, 'I have one thing more to propound, and then I am got to the end of my commission: Suppose that when my master is gone from Mansoul, any that yet shall live in the town, should have business of high concerns to do, and suppose that nobody can help in that case so well as my master, may not my master be sent for upon so urgent an occasion? Or, if he may not be admitted into the town, may not he and the person concerned meet in some of the villages near Mansoul, and there consult of matters?'

IMMANUEL replied, 'It will be a great disparagement to my Father's wisdom to admit any from Mansoul to go out to DIABOLUS for advice, when they are bid before, in every thing by prayer and supplication to let their requests be made known to my Father.'

When MR. LOTH-TO-STOOP had heard this answer, he departed, and came to DIABOLUS, and told him the whole of the matter. When Mansoul and DIABOLUS had heard this relation, they concluded to use their best endeavour to keep IMMANUEL out of Mansoul, and sent to tell the Prince and his camp so.

Then said the Prince, 'I must try the power of my sword; for I will not, for all this, raise my siege and depart, but will assuredly take my Mansoul, and deliver it from the hand of her enemy.' And with that he gave command that CAPTAIN BOANERGES, CAPTAIN CONVICTION, CAPTAIN JUDGMENT, and CAPTAIN EXECUTION, should forthwith march up to Ear-gate. Also he ordered that CAPTAIN CREDENCE should join them; moreover, that CAPTAIN GOOD-HOPE and CAPTAIN CHARITY should draw themselves up before Eye-gate. He bid that the rest of his Captains and their men should place themselves round about the town. Then was an alarm sounded, and the battering-rams were played, and the slings did whirl stones into the town amain. Now DIABOLUS himself did manage the townsmen, and that at every gate, wherefore their resistance was the more forcible and offensive to IMMANUEL. Thus was the Prince engaged with DIABOLUS and Mansoul for several days together; and a sight worth seeing it was to behold how the Captains of SHADDAI behaved themselves in this war.

In this engagement several of the officers of DIABOLUS were slain, and some of the townsmen wounded. For the officers, there was one CAPTAIN BOASTING slain. This BOASTING thought nobody could have shaken the posts of Ear-gate, nor the heart of DIABOLUS. Next to him there was one CAPTAIN SECURE slain. This SECURE used to say, that the blind and lame in Mansoul were able to keep the gates of the town against IMMANUEL's army. This CAPTAIN SECURE did CAPTAIN CONVICTION cleave down the head with a two-handed sword.

Besides these there was one CAPTAIN BRAGMAN, a very desperate fellow; and he was Captain over a band of those that threw fire-brands, arrows, and death: he also received by the hand of CAPTAIN GOOD-HOPE, at Eye-gate, a mortal wound in the breast.

When the battle was over, the Prince commanded that yet once more the white flag should be set in sight of the

town of Mansoul, to show that yet IMMANUEL had grace for the wretched town of Mansoul.

When DIABOLUS saw the white flag hanged out again, he cast in his mind to play another prank. So he comes down to the gate, a good while after the sun was gone down, calls unto IMMANUEL, and saith unto him:—

‘Forasmuch as thou makest it appear, by thy white flag, that thou art wholly given to peace and quiet, I thought meet to acquaint thee that we are ready to accept thereof, upon terms which thou mayest admit.

‘I know that holiness pleaseth thee; yea, that thy great end in making war upon Mansoul is, that it may be an holy habitation. Well, draw off thy forces from the town, and I will bend Mansoul to thy bow.

‘First, I will lay down all acts of hostility against thee, and will, as I have formerly been against thee, now serve thee in the town of Mansoul: And more particularly,

‘1. I will persuade Mansoul to receive thee for their Lord; and they will do it the sooner when they understand I am thy deputy.

‘2. I will show them wherein they have erred, and that transgression stands in the way to life.

‘3. I will show them thy holy law, unto which they must conform, even that which they have broken.

‘4. I will press upon them the necessity of a reformation, according to thy law.

‘5. And, moreover, that none of these things may fail, I myself, at my own proper cost and charge, will set up and maintain a sufficient Ministry, besides Lecturers, in Mansoul.

‘6. Thou shalt receive as a token of our subjection to thee, continually year by year, what thou shalt think fit to lay and levy upon us.’

Then said IMMANUEL to him, ‘Thou talkest of subjecting this town to good, when none desireth it at thy hands. I am sent by my Father to possess it myself, and to guide it into such a conformity to him as shall be pleasing in his sight. I will therefore possess it myself: I

will dispossess and cast thee out. I will set up mine own standard in the midst of them. I will also govern them by new laws, new officers, new motives, and new ways ; yea, I will pull down this town, and build it again, and it shall be the glory of the universe.'

When DIABOLUS perceived that he was discovered in all his deceits, he was confounded ; but having in himself the fountain of rage and malice against SHADDAI and his Son, he strengthened himself what he could to give fresh battle ; but being filled with despair of retaining the town, he resolved to do what mischief he could : Wherefore he commanded his officers, that when they could hold the town no longer, they should do it what mischief they could, renting and tearing of men, women, and children. 'For,' said he, 'we had better make it a ruinous heap, than leave it to be a habitation for IMMANUEL.'

The day of battle being come, the command was given, and the Prince's men did, as before, bend their main force against Ear-gate and Eye-gate. DIABOLUS also, with the main of his power, made resistance from within, and his high Lords and chief Captains for a time fought very cruelly against the Prince's army.

But after three or four charges, Ear-gate was broken open, and the bars and bolts were broken into a thousand pieces. Then did the Captains shout, the town shake, and DIABOLUS retreat to his hold. When the Prince's forces had broken open the gate, himself came up and did set his throne in it ; he commanded also that the slings should be played against the castle whither DIABOLUS was retreated. Now from Ear-gate the street was very straight to the house of MR. RECORDER, and hard by his house stood the castle, which DIABOLUS for a long time had made his den. Then did the Prince command that CAPTAIN BOARGERES, CAPTAIN CONVICTION, and CAPTAIN JUDGMENT should forthwith march up to the Recorder's house, and that was almost as strong as the castle. Battering-rams they took also with them, to plant against the castle gates. When they were come to the house of MR. CON-

SCIENCE, they knocked and demanded entrance ; the old gentleman, not knowing as yet their design, kept his gates shut. BOANERGES demanded entrance, and no one making answer, he gave it one stroke with the head of a ram ; this made the old gentleman shake, and his house tremble and totter. Then came MR. RECORDER down, and, with quivering lips, asked who was there ? BOANERGES answered, ‘ We are the Captains of the great SHADDAI, and of the blessed IMMANUEL, his Son, and we demand possession of your house for the use of our Prince.’ And with that the battering-ram gave the gate another shake ; this made the old gentleman tremble the more, yet durst he not but open the gate : then the King’s forces entered in. Now the Recorder’s house was a place of much convenience for IMMANUEL, not only because it was near to the castle, but also because it was large, and fronted the castle where DIABOLUS was. As for MR. RECORDER, the Captains carried it very reservedly to him ; as yet he knew nothing of the great designs of IMMANUEL, so that he did not know what judgment to make, nor what would be the end of such beginnings. It was also presently noised in the town how the Recorder’s house was made the seat of the war ; in a little time the whole town was possessed that they must expect nothing from the Prince but destruction, and the ground of it was this : The Recorder was afraid, the Recorder trembled, and the Captains carried it strangely to the Recorder ; and the man of the house increased their fears, for whoever came to him, or discoursed with him, nothing would he talk of or hear, but that death and destruction now attended Mansoul.

Other feats of war were performed by other of the Captains. At Eye-gate, where CAPTAIN GOODHOPE and CAPTAIN CHARITY had a charge, was great execution done ; for CAPTAIN GOODHOPE with his own hands slew CAPTAIN BLINDFOLD, the keeper of that gate. This BLINDFOLD was Captain of a thousand men, and they were they that fought with mauls ; he also pursued his

men, slew many, and wounded more, and made the rest hide their heads in corners.

Now the old Recorder and my LORD UNDERSTANDING, with some others of the chief of the town, such as knew they must stand and fall with the town of Mansoul, came together, and after consultation, had agreed to draw up a petition, and to send it to IMMANUEL, now while he sat in the gate. So they drew up their petition, the contents whereof were, 'That they, the old inhabitants of the deplorable town of Mansoul, confessed their sin, and were sorry that they had offended his Majesty, and prayed that he would spare their lives.'

Unto this petition he gave no answer; and that did trouble them more. All this while the Captains that were in the Recorder's house were playing their battering-rams at the gates of the castle. After some time, the gate of the castle, that was called Impregnable, was beaten open, and broken into splinters, and so a way made to go up to the hold where DIABOLUS had hid himself. Then were tidings sent down to Ear-gate, for IMMANUEL still abode there, to let him know that a way was made in at the gates of the castle. The trumpets, at the tidings, sounded throughout the Prince's camp, for that now the war was so near an end.

Then the Prince arose, took with him such of his men of war as were fittest for that expedition, and marched up the street of Mansoul to the old Recorder's house.

The Prince was clad all in armour of gold, and marched up the town, with his standard borne before him, but he kept his countenance much reserved all the way, so that the people could not tell how to gather love or hatred by his looks. As he marched up the street, the townsfolk came out at every door, and could not but be taken with his person, and the glory thereof, but wondered at the reservedness of his countenance; for as yet he spake more to them by his actions, than by words or smiles. But they interpreted the carriage of IMMANUEL to them, as did JOSEPH's brethren his to them, the quite contrary

way; for they thought, if IMMANUEL loved us, he would show it; but he doth not, therefore he hates us. Now if IMMANUEL hates us, then we shall be slain; then Mansoul shall become a dunghill. They knew that they had transgressed his Father's law, and had been with DIABOLUS, his enemy; they also knew that the Prince knew all this, for they were convinced that he was as an angel of God, to know all things that are done in the earth; and this made them think their condition was miserable, and that the Prince would make them desolate. Yet they could not, when they saw him march through the town, but bow and bend, ready to lick the dust of his feet; they also wished a thousand times that he would become their Prince and Captain, and their protection; they would also one to another talk of the comeliness of his person, and how much for glory and valour he outstripped the great ones of the world: but as to themselves, their thoughts ran to all manner of extremes; yea, through the working of them backward and forward, Mansoul became as a ball tossed, and as a rolling thing before the wind.

When he was come to the castle-gates, he commanded DIABOLUS to appear, and to surrender himself into his hands; but O, how loath was he to appear! Yet out he came to the Prince. Then IMMANUEL commanded, and they took DIABOLUS and bound him in chains, to reserve him to the judgment that he had appointed for him.

When IMMANUEL had bound him in chains, he led him into the market-place, and there before Mansoul stripped him of his armour in which he boasted. This was one of the acts of triumph of IMMANUEL over his enemy, and all the while the giant was stripping, the trumpets did sound, the Captains shouted, and the soldiers sung for joy. Then was Mansoul called upon to behold the beginning of IMMANUEL's triumph over him in whom they had trusted.

Thus having made DIABOLUS naked in the eyes of Mansoul, and before the commanders of the Prince, he next commands that DIABOLUS should be bound with chains to his chariot-wheels. Then, leaving some of his

forces, as a guard for the castle gates, he rode in triumph over him quite through the town of Mansoul, and so out at the gate called Eye-gate, to the plain where his camp lay.

When the Prince had finished this part of his triumph over DIABOLUS, he turned him up in the midst of his contempt and shame. Then went he from IMMANUEL, and out of the midst of his camp, to inherit the parched places in a salt land, seeking rest, but finding none.

CAPTAIN BOANERGES and CAPTAIN CONVICTION, men of very great majesty, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and their words like the roaring of the sea, still quartered in MR. CONSCIENCE'S house, and the townsmen had now leisure to behold their actions; but they carried it with that terror and dread in all they did, (and they had private instructions so to do,) that they kept the town under continual heart-aching, and caused (in their apprehension) the well being of Mansoul to hang in doubt, so that they neither knew what peace nor hope meant.

Nor did the Prince himself as yet abide in the town of Mansoul; but in his royal pavilion in the camp, and in the midst of his Father's forces. So, at a time convenient, he sent special orders to CAPTAIN BOANERGES to summon the whole of the townsmen into the castle-yard, and before their faces to take my LORD UNDERSTANDING, MR. CONSCIENCE, and the LORD WILLBEWILL, and put them all three in ward, and set a strong guard upon them, until his pleasure concerning them were further known. This made no small addition to the fears of the town. Now, what death they should die, and how long they should be in dying, was that which most perplexed their hearts; yea, they were sore afraid that IMMANUEL would command them all into the deep, the place that DIABOLUS was afraid of, for they knew they had deserved it. They were also greatly troubled for the men that were committed to ward; for they were their stay and their guide. Wherefore they drew up a petition to the Prince, and sent it to IMMANUEL by the hand of MR. WOULD-LIVE. So

he went to the Prince's quarters, and presented the petition, the sum of which was this :—

‘ We, the miserable inhabitants of Mansoul, humbly beg that we may find favour in thy sight. “ Remember not against us former transgressions, but spare us according to the greatness of thy mercy, and let us not die, but live in thy sight ;” so shall we be willing to be thy servants, and if thou shalt think fit, to gather our meat under thy table.’

The Prince took it in his hand, but sent him away with silence. This still afflicted the town of Mansoul ; but yet, considering that they must either petition or die ; for they could not do any thing else ; therefore they consulted again, and sent another petition, much after the method of the former.

But when the petition was drawn up, by whom should they send it was the next question ; for they would not send this by him by whom they sent the first ; (for they thought the Prince had taken some offence at his deportment ;) so they attempted to make CAPTAIN CONVICTION their messenger ; but he said, that he neither durst nor would petition IMMANUEL for traitors. ‘ Yet withal,’ said he, ‘ our Prince is good, and you may adventure to send it by the hand of one of your town, provided he went with a rope about his head, and pleaded nothing but mercy.

They made, through fear, their delays as long as they could ; but fearing at last the dangerousness of them, they thought, but with many a fainting in their minds, to send their petition by MR. DESIRES-AWAKE ; so they sent for MR. DESIRES-AWAKE, (he dwelt in a very mean cottage in Mansoul,) and delivered the petition to him. He came to the Prince's pavilion : word was carried to IMMANUEL, and the Prince came out to the man. When MR. DESIRES-AWAKE saw the Prince, he fell flat with his face to the ground, and cried out, ‘ O that Mansoul might live before thee!’ and presented the petition. When the Prince had read it, he turned away and wept ; but restraining himself, he turned again to the man, who all this

while lay crying at his feet, and said to him, 'Go thy way to thy place, and I will consider thy request.'

After a while they drew up a third petition, the contents whereof were these:—

'We, thy poor, miserable, dying town of Mansoul, confess unto thy great and glorious Majesty, that we have sinned against thy Father and thee, and are worthy to be cast into the pit. If thou wilt slay us, we have deserved it: if thou wilt condemn us to the deep, thou art righteous. We cannot complain whatever thou doest, or however thou carriest it towards us. But O, let mercy reign, and let it be extended to us! O let mercy take hold upon us, and free us from our transgressions, and we will sing of thy mercy and of thy judgment.'

This petition was designed to be sent to the Prince, but who should carry it? that was the question.

Now there was an old man in the town, and his name was MR. GOOD-DEED, and some were for sending him; but the Recorder was by no means for that: 'For,' said he, 'we now are pleading for mercy; wherefore, to send our petition by a man of this name will seem to cross the petition itself. Besides, should the Prince, as he receives the petition, ask, What is thy name?' and he should say, 'GOOD-DEED;' what think you would IMMANUEL say but this: "Is old GOOD-DEED yet alive in Mansoul? Then let old GOOD-DEED save you." And if he says so, we are lost; nor can a thousand of old GOOD-DEEDS save Mansoul.'

So old GOOD-DEED was laid aside, and they agreed to send MR. DESIRES-AWAKE again.

When he saw that he must go of this errand, he besought that MR. WET-EYES might go with him. This was a near neighbour of MR. DESIRES, a poor man, a man of a broken spirit, yet one that could speak well to a petition; so they granted that he should go with him. MR. DESIRES put a rope upon his head, and MR. WET-EYES went wringing his hands together.

When they were come to the pavilion, they first made

their apology for themselves, and for their coming to trouble IMMANUEL so often ; that they came not for that they delighted in being troublesome, but for necessity ; they could, they said, have no rest day nor night, because of their transgressions against SHADDAI, and against IMMANUEL his Son : they also thought that some misbehaviour of MR. DESIRES-AWAKE, the last time, might give some distaste to his Highness, and so cause that he returned from so merciful a Prince empty.

Then MR. DESIRES-AWAKE cast himself prostrate upon the ground, as at the first, at the feet of the Prince, saying, ‘O that Mansoul might live before thee !’ and so he delivered his petition.

The Prince having read the petition, turned aside awhile, as before, and coming again to the place where the petitioner lay on the ground, demanded what his name was ; and of what esteem in the account of Mansoul ; for that he, above all the multitude in Mansoul, should be sent to him on such an errand ?

Then said the man to the Prince, ‘O let not my Lord be angry ; and why inquirest thou after such a dead dog as I am ? Pass by, I pray thee, and take not notice of who I am ; because there is, as thou very well knowest, so great a disproportion between me and thee. Why the townsmen chose to send me on this errand to my Lord, is best known to themselves ; but it could not be for that they thought that I had favour with my Lord. For my part, I am out of charity with myself ; who then should be in love with me ? Yet live I would, and so would I that my townsmen should ; and because both they and myself are guilty of great transgressions, therefore they have sent me ; and I am come in their names to beg of my Lord for mercy. Let it please thee, therefore, to incline to mercy, but ask not what thy servants are.’

Then said the Prince, ‘And what is he that is become thy companion in so weighty a matter ?’

Then MR. WET-EYES fell on his face to the ground, and said,

‘O my Lord, what I am I know not myself, nor whether my name be feigned or true, especially when I begin to think what some have said, namely, that this name was given me, because MR. REPENTANCE was my father. Good men have bad children, and the sincere do oftentimes beget hypocrites. My mother, also, called me by this name from my cradle, but why I cannot tell. I see dirt in mine own tears, and filthiness in the bottom of my prayers; but I pray thee that thou wouldest not remember against us our transgressions, nor take offence at the unworthiness of thy servants, but mercifully pass by the sin of Mansoul, and refrain from glorifying thy grace no longer.’

So, at his bidding, they arose, and both stood trembling before him, and he spake to them to this purpose :—

‘The town of Mansoul hath grievously rebelled against my Father, in that they have rejected him from being their King, and chosen to themselves for their Captain a liar, a murderer, and a runagate slave.

‘Now this, for a long time, hath been an high affront to my Father, wherefore my Father sent to you a powerful army to reduce you to your obedience; but you know how those men were esteemed of you, and what they received at your hand. You shut your gates upon them, you bid them battle, and fought for DIABOLUS against them. So they sent to my Father, and I came; but as you treated the servants, so you treated their Lord. You shut your gates against me, you resisted as long as you could; but now I have made a conquest of you. Did you cry for mercy so long as you had hopes that you might prevail against me? But now I have taken the town, you cry. Why did you not cry before, when the white flag of my mercy, and the red flag of justice, and the black flag that threatened execution, were set up? Now I have conquered your DIABOLUS, you come to me for favour; but why did you not help me against the mighty? Yet I will consider your petition, and will answer it so as will be for my glory.

‘Go, bid CAPTAIN BOANERGES and CAPTAIN CONVIC-

TION bring the prisoners out to me into the camp to-morrow, and say you to CAPTAIN JUDGMENT and CAPTAIN EXECUTION, Stay you in the castle, and take good heed that you keep all quiet in Mansoul, until you shall hear further from me ; ' and with that he turned, and went into his pavilion again.

When they were come to the prison, they told the first of IMMANUEL's speech to the prisoners : how he reflected upon their disloyalty to his Father and himself, and how they had closed with DIABOLUS, had fought for him, and been ruled by him and his men. This made the prisoners look pale ; but the messengers proceeded, and said, The Prince said, moreover, that yet he would consider your petition, and give such answer thereto as would stand with his glory. And, as these words were spoken, MR. WET-EYES gave a great sigh. At this they were all of them struck, and could not tell what to say ; fear also possessed them in a marvellous manner, and death seemed to sit on their eye-brows.

Then said one, ' Pray what was it more that he said unto you ? ' They paused awhile, but at last they brought out all, saying, ' The Prince ordered to bid CAPTAIN BOANERGES and CAPTAIN CONVICTION bring the prisoners down to him to-morrow ; and that CAPTAIN JUDGMENT and CAPTAIN EXECUTION should take charge of the castle and town, till they should hear further from him.

This last clause,—that the prisoners must go out to the Prince in the camp,—brake all their loins in pieces ; wherefore with one voice they set up a cry that reached up to the heavens. This done, each of the three prepared himself to die ; (and the Recorder said unto them, ' This was the thing that I feared ; ') for they concluded that to-morrow by that the sun went down, they should be out of the world. The whole town also counted of no other but that they must all drink of the same cup ; wherefore the town of Mansoul spent that night in mourning, and sackcloth, and ashes. The prisoners, when the time was come

for them to go before the Prince, dressed themselves in mourning attire, with ropes upon their head. The whole town of Mansoul also showed themselves upon the wall, all clad in mourning, if perhaps the Prince might be moved with compassion.

The prisoners went down all in mourning; they put ropes upon themselves; they went on smiting their breasts, but durst not lift up their eyes to heaven. Thus they went out, until they came in the midst of the Prince's army, the sight and glory of which did greatly heighten their affliction; nor could they longer forbear, but cry out aloud, 'O unhappy men of Mansoul!' their chains still mixing their notes with the cries of the prisoners, made the noise more lamentable.

When they came to the door of the Prince's pavilion, they cast themselves prostrate upon the place; then one went in and told his Lord that the prisoners were come down. The Prince ascended a throne of state, and sent for them in, who, when they came, trembled before him; also they covered their faces with shame. As they drew near to the place where he sat, they threw themselves down before him; then said the Prince to the CAPTAIN BOANERGES, 'Bid the prisoners stand upon their feet.' Then they stood trembling before him; and he said, 'Are you the men that heretofore were the servants of SHADDAI?' And they said, 'Yes, Lord, yes.' Then said the Prince again, 'Are you the men that did suffer yourselves to be corrupted and defiled by DIABOLUS?' And they said, 'We did more than suffer it, Lord, for we chose it of our own mind.' The Prince asked further, saying, 'Could you have been content to have continued under his tyranny as long as you had lived?' Then said the prisoners, 'Yes, Lord, yes; for his ways were pleasing to our flesh, and we were grown aliens to a better state.' 'And did you,' said he, 'when I came up against the town, heartily wish that I might not have the victory?' 'Yes, Lord, yes,' said they. Then said the Prince, 'And what punishment is it, think you, that you deserve at my hand for these and other

your high and mighty sins ? ’ And they said, ‘ Both death and the deep, Lord ; we have deserved no less.’ He asked again, ‘ If they had aught to say for themselves, why the sentence they confessed they had deserved should not be passed upon them ? ’ And they said, ‘ We can say nothing, Lord ; thou art just, for we have sinned.’ Then said the Prince, ‘ And for what are those ropes on your heads ? ’ The prisoners answered, ‘ These ropes are to bind us with to the place of execution, if mercy be not pleasing in thy sight.’

Then the Prince commanded that a herald should proclaim, and that with sound of trumpet, that he had in his Father’s name gotten a perfect victory over Mansoul, and that the prisoners should follow him and say, ‘ Amen.’ So this was done as he had commanded ; and presently the Captains that were in the camp shouted, and the soldiers did sing songs of triumph to the Prince, the colours waved in the wind, and great joy was every where, only in the hearts of the men of Mansoul.

Then the Prince called for the prisoners to come and to stand again before him, and they came and stood trembling : And he said unto them, ‘ The sins, trespasses, iniquities, that you, with the whole town of Mansoul, have from time to time committed against my Father and me, I have power and commandment from my Father to forgive ; and I do forgive you accordingly.’ And having so said, he gave them written in parchment, and sealed with seven seals, a general pardon, commanding both my LORD MAYOR, my LORD WILLBEWILL, and MR. RECORDER, to proclaim it on the morrow by that the sun was up, throughout the whole town of Mansoul.

Moreover, the Prince stripped the prisoners of their mourning weeds, and gave them “ beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.”

Then he gave to each of the three, jewels of gold and precious stones, and took away their ropes, and put chains of gold about their necks. When they heard the gracious

words of **PRINCE IMMANUEL**, and had beheld all that was done unto them; they fainted almost quite away; for the grace, the benefit, the pardon, was sudden, glorious, and so big, that they were not able to stand up under it. Yea, my **LORD WILLBEWILL** swooned outright; but the Prince stepped up to him, put his everlasting arms under him, embraced him, kissed him, and bid him be of good cheer, for all should be performed according to his word. He also did kiss and embrace the other two, saying, 'Take these as further tokens of my love; and I charge you that you, **MR. RECORDER**, tell in the town of Mansoul what you have heard and seen.'

Then were their fetters broken to pieces before their faces, and cast into the air, and their steps were enlarged under them. Then they fell down at the feet of the Prince, and kissed his feet, and wetted them with tears; also they cried out with a mighty strong voice, saying, 'Blessed be the glory of the **LORD** from this place.' So they were bid rise up, and go to the town, and tell to Mansoul what the Prince had done. Then was fulfilled what they never looked for, and they made to possess that which they never dreamed of. The Prince also called **CAPTAIN CREDENCE**, and commanded that he and some of his officers should march before the noblemen of Mansoul into the town. He gave also unto **CAPTAIN CREDENCE** a charge, about the time that the Recorder read the general pardon in the town of Mansoul, he should with flying colours march in at Eye-gate, with his ten thousand at his feet, and go until he came by the high street up to the castle-gates, and that himself should take possession thereof against his Lord came. He commanded, moreover, that he should bid **CAPTAIN JUDGMENT** and **CAPTAIN EXECUTION** leave the strong hold to him, and to withdraw from Mansoul, and return into the camp with speed unto the Prince.

On the morrow, the **LORD MAYOR**, the **LORD WILLBEWILL**, and **MR. RECORDER**, came down to the market-place, where the townsfolk were waiting for them; and

when they came, they came in that attire, in that glory, that the Prince had put them into the day before, and the street was lightened with their glory.

Then the Recorder stood up, and beckoning with his hand for silence, he read out, with a loud voice, the pardon. But when he came to these words, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, pardoning iniquity, transgressions, and sins," and "to them all manner of sins and blasphemy shall be forgiven," they could not forbear but leap for joy.

When he had made an end of reading the pardon, the townsmen ran up upon the walls of the town, and leaped thereon for joy, and bowed themselves seven times with their faces towards IMMANUEL's pavilion, and shouted aloud, 'Let IMMANUEL live for ever.'

Then the whole town of Mansoul came out as one man to the Prince in the camp, to thank him and praise him for his abundant favour, and to beg that it would please him to come to Mansoul for ever. Then said he, 'All peace be to you.' So the town came nigh and touched his golden sceptre, and said, 'O that the PRINCE IMMANUEL, with his Captains and men of war, would dwell in Mansoul for ever; and that his battering-rams and slings might be lodged in her for the service of the Prince, and for the help and strength of Mansoul. For,' said they, 'we have room for thee, we have room for thy men, we have also room for thy weapons of war. Do it, IMMANUEL, and thou shalt be King and Captain in Mansoul for ever. Yea, govern thou according to all the desire of thy soul, and make thou Governors and Princes under thee of thy Captains and men of war, and we will become thy servants, and thy laws shall be our direction.

'For,' said they, 'if after all this grace bestowed upon us, thou shouldst withdraw, thou and thy Captains from us, the town of Mansoul will die. Yea, our blessed IMMANUEL, if thou shouldst depart from us now thou hast done so much good for us, and showed so much mercy unto us, what will follow but that our joy will be as if it

had not been, and our enemies will a second time come upon us with more rage than at first ! Wherefore we beseech thee, O the desire of our eyes, and the strength and life of our poor town, accept of this motion that now we have made unto our LORD, and come and dwell in the midst of us, and let us be thy people.'

Then said the Prince, 'If I come to your town, will you suffer me further to prosecute that which is in mine heart against mine enemies and yours ; yea, will you help me in such undertakings ?'

They answered, 'We know not what we shall do ; we did not think once that we should have been such traitors to SHADDAI as we have proved. What then shall we say to our LORD ? Let him put no trust in his saints ; let the Prince dwell in our castle, and make of our town a garrison ; let him set his noble Captains and his warlike soldiers over us ; yea, let him conquer us with his love, and overcome us with his grace, and then surely we shall comply with our LORD, and fall in with his word against the mighty.'

'One word more, and thy servants have done. We know not the depth of the wisdom of thee our Prince. Who could have thought that so much sweet as we now enjoy, should have come out of those bitter trials wherewith we were tried at the first ? But, LORD, take us by the hand, and lead us by thy counsels, and let this always abide upon us, that all things shall be for the best for thy servants, and come to us, and do as it pleaseth thee. Do what thou wilt, so thou keepest us from sinning, and makest us serviceable to thy Majesty.'

Then said the Prince, 'Return to your houses in peace ; I will comply with your desires. I will remove my royal pavilion, I will draw up my forces to-morrow, and march into the town of Mansoul ; I will possess myself of your castle, and will set my soldiers over you ; yea, I will yet do things in Mansoul that cannot be paralleled in any nation, country, or kingdom under heaven.'

Then did the men of Mansoul give a shout, and returned

to their houses in peace ; they also told to their kindred and friends the good that IMMANUEL had promised to Mansoul. ‘And to-morrow,’ said they, ‘he will march into our town, and take up his dwelling here.’

At the time appointed he made his approach to Mansoul, and the gates were set open for him ; there also the ancients and elders of Mansoul met him with a thousand welcomes : then he arose, and entered Mansoul, he and all his servants. He was clad in his golden armour, he rode in his royal chariot, the trumpets sounded about him, the colours were displayed, his ten thousand went up at his feet, and the elders of Mansoul danced before him.

When he was come into the town, he commanded that one should go to CAPTAIN CREDENCE, to know whether the castle of Mansoul was prepared to entertain them ; and word was brought that it was. Then was CAPTAIN CREDENCE commanded to come forth, and conduct him into the castle. This done, the Prince that night did lodge in the castle with his mighty Captains and men of war.

Now the ancients and elders of the town thought they never should have enough of the Prince ; his person, his actions, his words, and behaviour were so pleasing, so desirable to them ; wherefore they prayed him, though the castle was his place of residence, (and they desired that he might dwell there for ever,) yet he would often visit the streets, houses, and people of Mansoul. ‘For,’ said they, ‘dread Sovereign, thy presence, thy looks, thy smiles, thy words, are the life, and strength, and sinews of the town.’

Besides this, they craved that they might have, without difficulty or interruption, continual access unto him, and for that very purpose he commanded that the gates should stand always open.

When he spake, they all stopped their mouths, and gave audience ; and when he walked, it was their delight to imitate him in his goings.

Now upon a time IMMANUEL made a feast for the town ; and he feasted them all with food that grew not in the

fields of Mansoul, nor in all the whole kingdom of Universe. It was food that came from his Father's court, and they were commanded freely to eat ; but still, when a fresh dish was set before them, they would say to each other, 'What is it ?' for they wist not what to call it. They drank also of the water that was made wine ; "so man did eat angels' food, and had honey given him out of the rock."

Now were they transported with joy, they were drowned with wonder, while they saw, and understood, and considered, what IMMANUEL entertained them with ; and when they were at home in their houses, and in their most retired places, they could not but sing of him and of his actions. Yea, so taken were the townsmen now with their Prince, that they would sing of him in their sleep.

Now it was in the heart of IMMANUEL to new model the town, and to put it into such a condition as might be most pleasing to him, and that might best stand with its profit and security. He provided also against insurrections at home, and invasions from abroad.

Wherefore he first of all commanded that the great slings that were brought from his Father's court, when he came to the war, should be mounted, some upon the battlements of the castle, some upon the towers ; for there were towers built by IMMANUEL since he came thither. There was also an instrument invented by IMMANUEL, that was to throw stones from the castle of Mansoul, out of Mouth-gate ; an instrument that could not be resisted, nor that would miss of execution ; it was committed to the care of, and to be managed by CAPTAIN CREDENCE, in case of war.

This done, IMMANUEL called the LORD WILLBEWILL, and gave him in commandment to take care of the gates, the wall, and towers in Mansoul ; also the Prince gave him the militia into his hand, and a special charge to withstand all insurrections.

News of what had been done now came to DIABOLUS : upon which he yelled, and snuffed up the wind like a

dragon ; he also swore that he would be revenged of Mansoul for this. So both he and his old friend INCREDULITY entered into consultation how they might get the town again.

In the mean time, IMMANUEL appointed them of Mansoul a day wherein he would renew their charter ; yea, wherein he would enlarge it, mending several faults therein, that Mansoul's yoke might be still more easy. So when he had sent for and seen their old one, he said, ' Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.' He said, moreover, ' The town of Mansoul shall have another, a better, more steady and firm by far.' An epitome hereof follows :—

' I, IMMANUEL, Prince of Peace, do in the name of my Father, and of mine own clemency, give, grant, and bequeath to my beloved town of Mansoul,

' *First*, Free and full forgiveness of all wrongs, injuries, and offences done by them against my Father, me, their neighbour, or themselves.

' *Secondly*, I give them the holy Law, and my Testament, with all that therein is contained, for their everlasting consolation.

' *Thirdly*, I give them a portion of the same grace and goodness that dwells in my Father's heart and mine.

' *Fourthly*, I give, grant, and bestow upon them freely, the world, and what is therein for their good, and they shall have that power over them as shall stand with the honour of my Father, my glory, and their comfort ; yea, I grant them the benefits of life and death, and of things present and things to come.

' *Fifthly*, I give and grant them free access to me in my palace at all seasons, (to my palace above or below,) there to make known their wants to me, and I give them moreover a promise that I will hear and redress all their grievances.

' *Sixthly*, I invest the town of Mansoul with full power and authority to seek out, enslave, and destroy all Diabo-

lonians, that at any time from whencesoever shall be found straggling in, or about, the town of Mansoul."

When the town of Mansoul had received their gracious charter, they carried it to the market-place, and there MR. RECORDER read it in the presence of all the people. This being done, it was had back to the castle-gates, and there fairly engraven upon the doors thereof, that Mansoul, with all the people thereof, might have it always in their view, or might go and see what a blessed freedom their Prince had bestowed upon them, that their joy might be increased, and their love to the great and good IMMANUEL.

When this was over, the Prince sent again for the elders of the town, and communed with them about a ministry to be established among them; such as might instruct them in the things that concerned their present and future state.

At this news, the whole town came running together, and all with one consent implored his Majesty that he would forthwith establish such a ministry among them as might teach them both law and judgment. So he told them that he would grant them their requests; and would establish two among them; one that was of his Father's Court, and one that was a native of Mansoul.

He that is from the Court, said he, is a person of no less dignity than is my Father and I: He is the Lord Chief Secretary of my Father's house: he is, and always has been, the chief Dictator of all my Father's laws; a person altogether skilled in all mysteries, as is my Father, or myself. Indeed he is one with us in nature, and also as loving to the town of Mansoul.'

'This is he,' said the Prince, 'that must be your chief Teacher: for it is he, and he only, that can teach you clearly in all high and supernatural things. He only it is that knows the ways of my Father, nor can any like him show how the heart of my Father is at all times, in all things, upon all occasions, towards Mansoul. Nor can any (as he) tell Mansoul what they shall do to keep them-

selves in the love of my Father. He also it is that can bring lost things to your remembrance, and can tell you things to come. This Teacher, therefore, must have the pre-eminence, both in your affections and judgment, before your other teacher; his dignity, the excellency of his teaching, and his helping you to draw up petitions to my Father, must lay up obligations upon you to love him, fear him, and to take heed that you grieve him not.

‘ This person can put life and vigour into all he says; yea, and can put it into your heart. This person can make seers of you, and can make you tell what shall be hereafter. By this person you must frame all your petitions to my Father and me; and without his advice and counsel, let nothing enter into the town or castle of Mansoul; for that may disgust and grieve him.

‘ Take heed, that you do not grieve this Minister; for if you do, he may fight against you; and should he once be moved to set himself against you, that will distress you more than if twelve legions should from my Father’s Court be sent to make war upon you.

‘ But, if you hearken unto him, and love him; if you devote yourselves to his teaching, and seek to have, and maintain communion with him, you shall find him ten times better than the whole world; yea, he will shed abroad the love of my Father in your hearts, and Mansoul will be the wisest and most blessed of all people.’

Then did the Prince call unto him MR. CONSCIENCE, and told him, ‘ That as he was skilled in the law and government of the town of Mansoul, and could pertinently deliver to them his Master’s will; therefore he would also make him a Minister for the town, in all the laws, statutes, and judgments of Mansoul. ‘ But thou must,’ said the Prince, ‘ confine thyself to the teaching of moral virtues, to civil and natural duties, thou must not presume to be a revealer of those high mysteries that are kept close in the bosom of SHADDAI my Father: for those things know no man, nor can any reveal them but my Father’s Secretary only.

'Wherefore, although I have made thee a Minister and a Preacher to the town, yet as to the things which the Lord Secretary knoweth, and shall teach to this people, thou must be his scholar, even as the rest of Mansoul are.

'Thou must therefore in all high and supernatural things, go to him for information; for though there be a spirit in man, this person's inspiration must give him understanding.

'I have made thee my Father's Vicegerent on earth, in such things of which I have made mention before: And thou, take thou power to teach them to Mansoul; yea, with whips and chastisements, if they shall not willingly hearken to thy commandments.'

Then did IMMANUEL address himself in a particular speech to the Townsmen themselves.

'Behold,' said the Prince, 'my love and care towards you: I have added to all that is past, this mercy, to appoint you Preachers: The most noble Secretary to teach you in all sublime mysteries, and this person in all things human and domestic. Not that he is debarred from telling any thing that he hath heard, and received at the mouth of the Lord High Secretary; only he shall not presume to be a revealer of those high mysteries himself, for the discovery of them lieth only in the power of the Lord High Secretary himself. These things, therefore, I would have you observe and do; for it is for your life, and the lengthening of your days.'

After the Prince had thus settled things, he proceeded to give the Elders of the Corporation a necessary caution, how they should carry it to the Captains that he had, from his Father's Court, sent or brought with him to the town.

'These Captains,' said he, 'love you, and they are picked men, picked out of abundance, as men that best suit, and that will most faithfully serve in the wars of SHADDAI, for the preservation of the town. I charge you, therefore, that you carry it not ruggedly to my Captains;

for though they have the hearts and faces of lions, when at any time they shall be called forth to engage with the King's foes, and the enemies of the town; yet a little discountenance cast upon them from Mansoul, will weaken and take away their courage. Do not, therefore, O my beloved, carry it unkindly to my Captains; but love them, nourish them, succour them, and lay them in your bosoms; and they will not only fight for you, but cause to fly from you, all those that seek, and will if possible be, your utter destruction.

‘ If therefore, any of them should at any time be sick or weak, and so not able to perform that office of love, which with all their hearts they are willing to do, (and will do when in health,) slight them not, but rather strengthen them, and encourage them, though weak and ready to die; for they are your fence, and your guard, your will, your gates, your locks, and your bars. And although when they are weak, they can do but little, but rather need to be helped by you, than that you should then expect great things from them, yet when well, you know what achievements they will perform for you.

‘ Besides, if they be weak, the town of Mansoul cannot be strong; if they be strong, then Mansoul cannot be weak. Your safety therefore doth lie in their health, and in your countenancing of them. Remember also that if they be sick, they catch that disease of the town of Mansoul itself.

‘ Next, I warn you, that notwithstanding that reformation that is wrought among you; there are yet some remaining in the town of Mansoul, that are sturdy and implacable, that do already while I am with you, and that will yet more when I am from you, plot, contrive, and jointly attempt to bring you to desolation, and to a state far worse than Egyptian bondage. They are the avowed friends of DIABOLUS; they used heretofore to lodge with their Prince in the castle, when INCREDULITY was the Lord Mayor of this town; but since my coming hither, they lie more on the outsides, and walls, and have made

themselves dens, and caves, and holes, and strong holds therein. Wherefore, O Mansoul, thy work, as to this, will be the more difficult and hard : That is, to take, mortify, and put them to death, according to the will of thy Father. Be diligent ; quit you like men, observe their holds, assault them, and make no peace with them. Wherever they haunt, lurk, or abide, and what terms of peace soever they offer, do you abhor, and all shall be well betwixt you and me. And that you may the better know them from those that are the natives of Mansoul, I will give you this brief schedule of the names of the chief of them ; they are these that follow : The LORD FORNICATION, the LORD ADULTERY, the LORD MURDER, the LORD ANGER, the LORD LASCIVIOUSNESS, the LORD DECEIT, the LORD EVIL-EYE, MR. DRUNKENNESS, MR. REVELLING, MR. IDOLATRY, MR. WITCHCRAFT, MR. VARIANCE, MR. EMULATION, MR. WRATH, MR. STRIFE, MR. SEDITION, and MR. HERESY. These are some of the chief, O Mansoul, of those that will seek to overthrow thee for ever : But look thou well into the law of thy King, and there thou shalt find notes of them, by which they may certainly be known.

These, O my Mansoul, if they be suffered to range about the town, will quickly, like vipers, eat out your bowels, yea, poison your Captains, cut the sinews of your soldiers, break the bolts of your gates, and turn your flourishing town into a desolate wilderness. Wherefore I give to you my LORD MAYOR, my LORD WILLBEWILL, and MR. RECORDER, with all the inhabitants of Mansoul, full power and commission to seek out, to take, and to cause them to be put to death by the cross, when and wherever you shall find them to lurk within, or to range without the town of Mansoul.

‘ I told you before, that I had placed a standing Ministry among you ; likewise my four first Captains, who came against DIABOLUS, can, and if they be, required, will, not only privately inform, but publicly preach both good and wholesome doctrine. Yea, they will set

up a weekly, or, if need be, a daily lecture in thee, O Mansoul, and will instruct thee in such profitable lessons, as, if heeded, will do thee good at the end. And take good heed that you spare not the men that you have a commission to take and crucify.'

When the Prince had thus far new-modelled the town, and instructed them in such matters as were profitable for them to know, he appointed another day in which he intended to bestow a further badge of honour upon Mansoul. A badge that should distinguish them from all the people, kindreds, and tongues, that dwell in the kingdom of Universe. When the day was come, and the Prince and his people met in the King's palace, IMMANUEL said unto them,

'That which I now am about to do, is to make you known to the world to be mine; and to distinguish you also in your own eyes, from all false traitors that may creep in among you.'

Then he commanded that those that waited upon him should go and bring forth out of his treasury, those white and glistening robes, that I, said he, have provided and laid up in store for my Mansoul. So the white garments were fetched out of his treasury, and laid forth to the eyes of the people. Moreover, it was granted to them, that they should take and put them on, according to their size and stature. So the people were put into white, into fine linen, white and clean.

Then said the Prince, 'This, O Mansoul, is my livery, and the badge by which mine are known from the servants of others. Yea, it is that which I grant to all that are mine, and without which no man is permitted to see my face. Wear them therefore for my sake, who gave them unto you, if you would be known by the world to be mine.'

Now Mansoul was fair as the sun, clear as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners.

'And now,' said he, 'I have given you my liveries, let me give you also commandment concerning them.'

‘ *First*, Wear them daily, day by day, lest you should appear to be none of mine.

‘ *Secondly*, Keep them always white, for if they be soiled, it is a dishonour to me.

‘ *Thirdly*, Take heed that you lose them not; lest you walk naked, and they see your shame.

‘ *Fourthly*, But if you should defile them, speed you to do that which is written in my law, that yet you may stand, and not fall before me, and before my throne. This is the way to cause that I may not leave you, nor forsake you, but may dwell in the town of Mansoul for ever.’

When the Prince had thus completed the modelling of the town, to show that he had delight in the work of his hands, he commanded, and they set his standard upon the battlements of the castle. And then,

First, He gave them frequent visits; not a day but the Elders of Mansoul must come to him (or he to them) into his palace. Now they must walk and talk together of all the great things that he had done, and yet further promised to do for them. Thus would he often do with my LORD MAYOR, my LORD WILLBEWILL, and the honest subordinate Preacher, MR. CONSCIENCE, and MR. RECORDER. O how graciously, how lovingly, and tenderly, did this blessed Prince now carry it towards them! In all the streets, gardens, orchards, and other places, where he came, to be sure the poor should have his blessing; yea, he would kiss them, and if they were ill, he would lay hands on them, and make them well. The Captains, also, he would daily, yea, sometimes hourly, encourage with his presence, and goodly words. And a smile from him, would put more vigour, more life and stoutness into them, than any thing else under heaven.

Secondly, When the elders and townsmen did not come to him, he would send in much plenty of provision unto them; meat that came from Court, wine and bread that were prepared for his Father’s table; yea, such delicacies would he send, and therewith so cover their table, that whoever saw it confessed the like could not be seen in any kingdom.

Thirdly, If Mansoul did not frequently visit him as he desired, he would walk out to them, knock at their doors, and desire entrance, that amity might be maintained betwixt them and him : if they did hear, and open to him, then would he renew his former love, and confirm it with some new tokens and signs of continued favour.

Now did Mansoul's cup run over ; now did her conduits run sweet wine ; now did she eat the finest of the wheat, and drink milk and honey out of the rock ! Now, she said, ' How great is his goodness ! For since I found favour in his eyes, how honourable have I been ! '

The Prince did also ordain a new officer in the town, his name was MR. GODSPEACE : This man was set over my LORD WILLBEWILL, my LORD MAYOR, MR. RECORDER, the subordinate Preacher, and all the natives of Mansoul. He was not a native of it ; but came with the Prince IMMANUEL from the Court. He was made Governor of the town in general, especially over the castle, and CAPTAIN CREDECE was to help there. And so long as all things went in Mansoul as he would, the town was in a most happy condition. There were no jars, no chiding, no unfaithful doings in all the town ; every man kept close to his own employment. The gentry, the officers, the soldiers, and all in place observed their order. And as for the women and children of the town, they followed their business joyfully ; they would frequently work and sing from morning until night : so that quite through the town, nothing was to be found but harmony, quietness, joy, and health.

But there was a man in the town, named CARNAL SECURITY ; sprung from my LORD WILLBEWILL, by his mother's side, though he had for his father a Diabolonian.

He was a very busy man ; nothing of news, nothing of doctrine, nothing of alteration, could at any time be on foot in Mansoul, but MR. CARNAL SECURITY would be at the head or tail of it ; but he would decline those that he deemed the weakest, and stood always with them that he supposed was the strongest side.

When IMMANUEL made war upon Mansoul, MR. CARNAL SECURITY was a great doer among the people; encouraging them in their rebellion, putting them upon hardening themselves in resisting the King's forces: but when the town was taken, he wheeled about, and as he had served DIABOLUS against the Prince, so he feigned that he would serve the Prince against his foes.

And having got some smattering of IMMANUEL's things, he ventured himself into the company of the townsmen, and attempted to chat among them.

Now he knew that the power and strength of Mansoul was great, and that it could not but be pleasing to the people if he cried up their might and glory. Wherefore he began with the power and strength of Mansoul, and affirmed that it was impregnable. Now magnifying their captains and their slings; then their fortifications, and strong holds; and lastly, the assurances they had from their Prince, that Mansoul should be happy for ever.

When he saw that some of the men of the town were taken with his discourse, he made it his business, and walking from street to street, house to house, and man to man, he at last brought Mansoul to grow almost as secure as himself; so from talking they went to feasting, and from feasting to sporting; and so to other matters. My LORD MAYOR, my LORD WILLBEWILL, and MR. RECORDER, were also all taken with his words; forgetting that their Prince had given them warning to take heed that they were not beguiled with any Diabolonian sleight: He had further told them that the security of Mansoul did not so much lie in her present fortifications and force, as in her so using what she had, as might oblige IMMANUEL to abide within her castle. For the right doctrine of IMMANUEL was, that the town of Mansoul should take heed that they forget not his Father's love and his; also that they should so demean themselves as to continue to keep themselves therein.

Now this was not the way to do it: They should have heard their Prince, feared their Prince, loved their Prince,

and taken care to walk in the ways of his prescribing ; or then should their peace have been as a river, when their righteousness had been as the waves of the sea.

Now when IMMANUEL perceived that through the policy of MR. CARNAL SECURITY, the hearts of the men of Mansoul were chilled in their love to him :

First, He bemoaned them, and condoled their state with the Secretary, saying, ‘ O that my people had hearkened unto me, and that Mansoul had walked in my ways ! I could have fed them with the finest of the wheat, and with honey out of the rock would I have sustained them.’ This done, he said in his heart, ‘ I will return and go to my place, till Mansoul shall consider and acknowledge their offence.’ And he did so ; the cause of his going away from them was :

First, Mansoul declined him, as is manifest in these particulars :—

(1.) They left off their former way of visiting him ; they came not to his palace as afore.

(2.) They did not regard, nor take notice whether he came, or came not, to visit them.

(3.) The feasts that had wont to be between their Prince and them, though he made them still, and called them to them, yet they neglected to come to them, or to be delighted with them.

(4.) They waited not for his counsels, but began to be confident in themselves, concluding that now they were strong and invincible, that Mansoul was beyond all reach of the foe, and that her state must be unalterable for ever.

Yet before he went, he sent my Lord High Secretary to them, to forbid them such ways ; but twice when he came to them he found them at dinner in MR. CARNAL SECURITY’s parlour ; and perceiving they were not willing to reason about matters concerning their good, he took grief and went his way : which when he had told the Prince, he was grieved also, and so made provision to return to his Father’s Court.

The methods of his withdrawing were these:—

(1.) Even while he was yet with them in Mansoul he kept himself close, and more retired than formerly.

(2.) His speech was not now, if he came in their company, so pleasant and familiar as formerly.

(3.) Nor did he, as in times past, send to Mansoul from his table those dainties which he was wont to do.

(4.) Nor when he came to visit him, as now and then they would, would he be so easily spoken with as in times past. They might now knock once, yea twice, but he would seem not to regard them; whereas formerly, at the sound of their feet, he would run and meet them half way, and take them and lay them in his bosom.

By this his carriage, he sought to make them bethink themselves and return to him. But, alas, they did not consider; they did not know his ways; they were not touched with these, nor with the remembrance of former favours. Wherefore he withdrew himself, first from his palace, then to the gate of the town, and so away from Mansoul, till they should acknowledge their offence, and more earnestly seek his face. MR. GODSPEACE also laid down his commission, and would act no longer in the town of Mansoul.

Thus they walked contrary to him, and he again walked contrary to them. But, alas, by this time, they were so hardened, and had so drunk in the doctrine of MR. CARNAL SECURITY, that the departing of their Prince touched them not, nor was he remembered by them when gone.

Now there was a day wherein MR. CARNAL SECURITY did again make a feast for the town of Mansoul; there was in the town one MR. GODLYFEAR, one now but little set by, though formerly of great request. This man CARNAL SECURITY had a mind, if possible, to debauch and abuse, as he did the rest, and therefore he now bids him to the feast with his neighbours: The day being come, he appeared with the rest of the guests; and being all set at table, they did eat and drink, and were merry. But MR.

GODLYFEAR sat like a stranger, and did neither eat nor drink ; which, when MR. CARNAL SECURITY perceived, he presently addressed him thus :—

‘MR. GODLYFEAR, are you not well? You seem to be ill of body or mind, or both. I have a cordial of MR. FORGETGOOD’s making, which, if you will take, I hope, it may make you blithe, and more fit for your companions.’

GODLY. ‘Sir, I thank you, but for your cordial I have no mind thereto. But a word to the natives of Mansoul : to me it is strange to see you so merry, when the town of Mansoul is in such a case.’

CARN. ‘You want sleep, good Sir. Lie down and take a nap, and we, meanwhile, will be merry.’

GODLY. ‘Sir, if you were not destitute of an honest heart, you could not do as you have done, and do.’

CARN. ‘Why?’

GODLY. ‘It is true, the town of Mansoul was strong, and, with a proviso, impregnable ; but you, the townsmen, have weakened it, and it now lies obnoxious to its foes ; or is it a time to flatter, or be silent ; it is you, MR. CARNAL SECURITY, that have stripped Mansoul, and given her glory from her ; you have pulled down her towers, you have broken down her gates, you have spoiled her locks and bars.

‘From the time that my Lords of Mansoul and you drew so great, the Strength of Mansoul has been defended, and now he is arisen and is gone. If any shall question the truth of my words, I ask, Where is the Prince MANUEL? When did any in Mansoul see him? When did you hear from him, or taste any of his dainties? Though enemies from without, had you taken heed, could not have made a prey of you ; yet since you have sinned against your Prince, your enemies within have been too hard for you.’

CARN. ‘Fie, fie, MR. GODLYFEAR ; will you never shake off your timorousness? Who hath hurt you? behold, I am on your side, only you are for doubting,

and I am for being confident. Besides, is this a time to be sad in? A feast is made for mirth, why then do you break out into such passionate, melancholy language?’

GODLY. ‘I may well be sad, for IMMANUEL is gone from Mansoul, and you are the man that has driven him away; yea, he has gone without so much as acquainting the nobles of Mansoul with his going; and if that is not a sign of his anger, I know not what is.’

His Speech to the Elders of Mansoul.

‘MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

‘Your gradual declining from him, did provoke him gradually to depart from you, which he did for some time, if, perhaps, you would have been made sensible thereby, and have been renewed by humbling yourselves; but when he saw that none would regard, nor lay those beginnings of his anger to heart, he went away from this place, and this I saw with mine eye. Wherefore now, while you boast, your strength is gone; you are like the man that had lost his locks. You may, with this Lord of your feast, shake yourselves, and conclude to do as at other times; but since without him you can do nothing, and he is departed from you, turn your feast into a sigh, and your mirth into lamentation.’

Then MR. CONSCIENCE being startled at what was said, began to second it thus:

CONS. ‘Indeed, my Brethren, I fear MR. GODLYFEAR tells us true: I, for my part, have not seen my Prince of a long season; nor can I answer MR. GODLYFEAR’s question. I am afraid all is not right with Mansoul.

GODLY. ‘Nay, I know you shall not find him in Mansoul, for he is departed and gone, yea, gone for the faults of the elders; for they rewarded his grace with unsufferable unkindnesses.

Then did MR. CONSCIENCE look as if he would fall

down dead at the table ; also all present, except the man of the house, began to look pale and wan. But having a little recovered themselves, and agreeing to believe MR. GODLYFEAR, they began to consult what was best to be done, (now MR. CARNAL SECURITY was gone into his withdrawing-room,) both to the man of the house, for drawing them into evil, and to recover IMMANUEL's love.

And with that, the saying of their Prince came into their minds, what he had bid them do to such false Prophets, that should arise to delude the town. So they took MR. CARNAL SECURITY, and burned his house with fire.

When this was over, they besped themselves to look for their Prince, and they sought him, but they found him not ; then were they more confirmed in the truth of MR. GODLYFEAR's sayings, and began severely to reflect upon themselves ; for they concluded now it was through them that their Prince had left them.

Then they agreed and went to my Lord Secretary, (him whom before they refused to hear, whom they had grieved with their doings,) to know of him where IMMANUEL was, and how they might direct a petition to him ; but the Lord Secretary would not admit them to a conference, nor to his royal place of abode.

And now was it a day gloomy and dark, a day of clouds and thick darkness with Mansoul. Now they saw what the company and prattle of MR. CARNAL SECURITY had done ; but what further it was like to cost them, that they were ignorant of. Now MR. GODLYFEAR began again to be in repute ; yea, they were ready to look upon him as a Prophet.

When the sabbath-day was come, they went to hear their Preacher ; but O, how he did thunder and lighten this day ! His text was that in the Prophet JONAH : " They that observe lying vanities, forsake their own mercies." There was such power and authority in that sermon, and such a dejection in the countenances of the people that day, that the like hath seldom been heard or seen.

He did not only show to Mansoul their sin, but did

tremble before them under the sense of his own, still crying out of himself, as he preached to them, 'Unhappy man that I am, that I should do so wicked a thing! That I, a Preacher, whom the Prince should set up to teach to Mansoul his law, should be one of the first found in transgression.'

About this time there was a great sickness in the town, and most of the inhabitants were greatly afflicted; yea, the Captains also and men of war were brought thereby to a languishing condition, and that for a long time together; so that in case of an invasion, nothing could now have been done either by the townsmen or field-officers. O how many pale faces, weak hands, and feeble knees, were now seen in the streets of Mansoul. Here were groans, there pants, and yonder lay those that were ready to faint.

After some time spent in this desolate condition, the Preacher called for a day of fasting, to humble themselves for being so wicked against the great SHADDAI and his Son; and he desired that CAPTAIN BOANERGES would preach. He consented to do it, and his text was, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" And first, he showed what was the occasion of the words; to wit, because the fig-tree was barren; then he showed what was contained in the sentence, viz., repentance, or utter desolation; he then showed also by whose authority this sentence was pronounced, and that was by SHADDAI himself.

This sermon, as well as the former, wrought much upon the hearts of the men of Mansoul; yea, it greatly helped to keep awake those that were roused by the preaching before; so that now throughout the whole town there was little to be heard or seen but sorrow, and mourning, and woe.

After sermon they got together, and consulted what was to be done. 'But,' said MR. CONSCIENCE, 'I will do nothing without advising with MR. GODLYFEAR.'

So they sent for MR. GODLYFEAR, and desired that he would show what they had best to do. Then said he, 'It is my opinion that you should send an humble petition to

IMMANUEL, that he in his grace would turn again unto you, and not keep anger for ever.'

They with one consent agreed to his advice, and drew up their request. The next point was, who should carry it? At last they agreed to send it by my Lord Mayor. So he went, and came to the Court of SHADDAI, whither IMMANUEL was gone; but the gate was shut, and a strict watch kept, so that the petitioner was forced to stand without for a great while. Then he desired that some would go to the Prince, and tell him who stood at the gate, and what his business was. So one went, and told SHADDAI, and IMMANUEL his Son, that the Lord Mayor of Mansoul stood without, at the gate of the King's Court, desiring to be admitted into the presence of the Prince; he also told what was the Lord Mayor's errand. But the Prince would not come down, nor admit that the gate should be opened to him, but sent him an answer to this effect: 'They have turned the back unto me, and not their face, but now in the time of their trouble they say to me, Arise and save us. Why in their trouble do they visit me, since in their prosperity they went astray?'

This answer made my Lord Mayor sore afraid; it troubled, it perplexed, it rent him sore. And now he began again to see what it was to be familiar with such as MR. CARNAL SECURITY was. When he saw that at Court there was little help to be expected, either for himself or his friends, he smote upon his breast, and returned weeping, and all the way bewailing the lamentable state of Mansoul.

When he was come within sight of the town, the elders and chief of the people went out at the gate to meet him, and to salute him, and to know how he sped at Court. But he told them his tale in so doleful a manner, that they all cried out, and mourned, and wept; wherefore they threw ashes and dust upon their heads, and put sackcloth upon their loins, and went crying through the town, which when the rest of the townsfolk saw, they all mourned and wept. This, therefore, was a day of rebuke, and trouble, and of anguish to the town of Mansoul.

After some time, when they had somewhat refrained themselves, they came together to consult again what was yet to be done; and they asked advice, as before, of Mr. GODLYFEAR, who told them, that there was no way better than to do as they had done, nor would he that they should be discouraged with what they had met with at Court; yea, though several of their petitions should be answered with nought but silence and rebuke: 'For,' said he, 'it is the way of the wise SHADDAI, to make men wait and exercise patience.'

Then they took courage, and sent again, and again, and again, and again; for there was not now one day nor one hour wherein a man might not have met upon the road one or other riding post to the Court of SHADDAI; and this was the work of the miserable town of Mansoul all that long, that sharp, that cold, and tedious winter.

You may remember, that after IMMANUEL had taken Mansoul, yea, and after he had new modelled the town, there remained in several lurking places many of the old Diabolians, that either came with the tyrant when he invaded the town, or that had there, by reason of unlawful mixtures, their birth, and breeding, and bringing up; and their dens and lurking places were in, under, or about the wall of the town. Some of their names are, the LORD FORNICATION, the LORD ADULTERY, the LORD MURDER, the LORD ANGER, the LORD LASCIVIOUSNESS, the LORD DECEIT, the LORD EVIL-EYE, the LORD BLASPHEMY, and that horrible villain, the old and dangerous LORD COVETOUSNESS.

Against these the Prince granted a commission to the LORD WILLBEWILL and others, yea, to the whole town, to seek, take, and destroy, any, or all that they could lay hands of, for that they were enemies to the Prince, and those that sought to ruin the town; but Mansoul did not pursue this warrant, but neglected to look after, to apprehend, and destroy them.

When these Diabolian Lords perceived that Mansoul had offended IMMANUEL, and that he had withdrawn him-

self, and was gone, they met together, and consulted how they might deliver up Mansoul into the hands of **DIABOLUS** again. Now some advised one way, and some another ; but they agreed that a letter should be sent to **DIABOLUS** in their name, by which the state of the town should be showed him, and his advice asked in the case. So a letter was presently framed and sent.

When **MR. PROFANE** (for he was the carrier) was come with his letter to Hell-gate Hill, he knocked at the brazen gates for entrance. Then did the Porter open, to whom he delivered his letter, which he had brought from the Diabolians in Mansoul. So he carried it in and presented it to **DIABOLUS**, and said, ‘Tidings, my Lord, from our trusty friends in Mansoul.’

Then came together from all places of the den, **BEELZEBUB**, **LUCIFER**, **APOLLYON**, with the rest, to hear what news from Mansoul. So the letter was broken up and read, and the contents thereof spread into all the corners of the den.

DIABOLUS answered it thus :—

‘**BELoved CHILDREN**,—We have received your welcome letter, and rejoice to hear that yet we have friends in Mansoul, and such as sought our honour and revenge in the ruin of the town. We also rejoice to hear that they are in a degenerate condition, and that they have offended their Prince, and he is gone. Their sickness also pleaseth us, as does also your health, might, and strength. Glad also would we be, could we get this town again ; nor will we be sparing of our craft, to bring to a wished conclusion your brave beginning.

‘And take this for your comfort, that if we again surprise and take it, we will put all your foes to the sword, and will make you the great Lords and Captains of the place ; nor need you fear that we after that shall be cast out any more, for we will come with more strength, and lay far more fast hold than at the first ; besides, it is the

law of that Prince whom now they own, that if we get them a second time, they shall be ours for ever.

‘Do you, therefore, yet more pry into the weakness of the town of Mansoul. We also would that you yourselves attempt to weaken them more and more, and send us word by what means you think we had best to attempt the regaining thereof: whether by persuasion to a vain and loose life, by tempting them to doubt and despair, or by blowing up the town by the gunpowder of pride and self-conceit. Do you also, O ye true sons of the Pit, be always in a readiness to make an assault within, when we shall storm it without. Now speed you in your project, and we in our desires, which is the wish of your great

‘DIABOLUS.’

When they in Mansoul had received and read this letter, they fell to contriving how they might complete their design; and the first thing that they agreed upon was, to keep all things from Mansoul as close as they could. The next thing was, by what means they should bring to pass the ruin of Mansoul; and one said after this manner, and another said after that. Then stood up MR. DECEIT, and said, ‘Here are three ways proposed:—

‘1. Whether we had best to seek its ruin by making Mansoul loose and vain.

‘Or, 2. By driving them to doubt and despair.

‘Or, 3. By endeavouring to blow them up by the gunpowder of pride and self-conceit.

‘Now I think if we shall tempt them to pride, that may do something; and if we tempt them to wantonness, that may help. But in my mind, if we could drive them into despair, that would do at once; for then they would leave off sending petitions to Him for help and supply.’ So to this they unanimously consented.

The next question was, How shall we bring this to pass? And it was answered by the same gentleman, ‘Let so many of our friends as are willing to venture themselves

for their Prince's cause, disguise themselves with apparel, change their names, and go into the market like far countrymen, and proffer to let themselves for servants to the town; by so doing, they may, if hired, so corrupt and defile the corporation, that her now Prince shall not be only further offended with them, but in conclusion shall spew them out of his mouth; and when this is done, our Prince, **DIABOLUS**, shall prey upon them with ease; yea, of themselves they shall fall into the mouth of the eater.'

This project was no sooner propounded but was accepted, and forward were all Diabolians to engage in the enterprise; but it was not thought fit that all should do thus, wherefore they pitched upon two or three, namely, the **LORD COVETOUSNESS**, the **LORD LASCIVIOUSNESS**, and the **LORD ANGER**. The **LORD COVETOUSNESS** called himself **PRUDENT-THRIFTY**; the **LORD LASCIVIOUSNESS** called himself **HARMLESS-MIRTH**; and the **LORD ANGER** called himself by the name of **ZEAL**.

So upon a market-day they came into the market-place: three lusty fellows they were to look on, and they were clothed in sheep's russet, which was also now in a manner as white as were the white robes of the men of Mansoul. Now the men could speak the language of Mansoul well: so when they were come, and had offered themselves to the townsmen, they were presently taken, for they asked but little wages, and promised to do their masters great service.

MR. MIND hired **PRUDENT-THRIFTY**, and **MR. GODLYFEAR** hired **ZEAL**. **HARMLESS-MIRTH** could not so soon get him a master; but after a while, the **LORD WILLBEWILL** hired him to be both his waiting-man and his lacquey, and thus they got them masters.

These now being got into the houses of the men of Mansoul, quickly corrupted the families where they were; yea, they tainted their masters much, especially **PRUDENT-THRIFTY** and him they called **HARMLESS-MIRTH**. True, he that went under the vizer of **ZEAL** was not so well liked of his master, for he quickly found that he was a counter-

feit; which when the fellow perceived, with speed he made his escape from the house.

When these vagabonds had thus carried on their design, and had corrupted the town as much as they could, in the next place they considered at what time DIABOLUS without, and themselves within the town, should make an attempt to seize Mansoul; and they all agreed that a market-day would be best for that work, for then would the townsfolk be busy in their ways; and always when people are most busy in the world, they least fear a surprise.

These things being thus far agreed, they wrote another letter to DIABOLUS, giving an account of what they had done.

All this time the poor town was in a woeful case, partly because they had so grievously offended SHADDAI and his Son, partly because the enemies thereby got strength within them afresh, and also because, though they had by many petitions made suit to the Prince, yet hitherto obtained they not one smile.

MR. PROFANE was now come with the letter into the den, and his LORD DIABOLUS met him, and saluted him with, 'Welcome, my trusty servant.' The rest of the Lords of the Pit gave him also their salutations. Then PROFANE, after obeisance made to them all, said, 'Let Mansoul be given to my LORD DIABOLUS, and let him be her king for ever.' And with that the hollow belly of hell gave so loud a groan, (for that is the music of that place,) that it made the mountains about it totter, as if it would fall to pieces.

Then they set out at Hell-gate Hill, (for there they had their rendezvous,) and came with a straight course toward Mansoul. As the town had received the alarm of their coming, they set a strong watch at the gates, and doubled their guards; they also mounted their slings in good places, where they might conveniently cast out their great stones to the annoyance of the enemy.

When DIABOLUS was come up against the town, first

he made his approach against Ear-gate, and gave it a furious assault; supposing his friends in Mansoul had been ready to do the work within; but care was taken of that before, by the vigilance of the Captains. Wherefore, missing the help he expected, and finding his army warmly attended with the stones the slingers did sling, he was forced to retreat, and intrench himself and his men in the field, without the reach of the slings.

Having intrenched himself, he cast up four mounts against the town. The first he called Mount Diabolus: there he did set up his standard, and a fearful thing it was to behold; for he had wrought in it, by devilish art, after the manner of an escutcheon, a flame fearful to behold, and the picture of Mansoul burning in it.

When DIABOLUS had thus done, he commanded that his drummer should every night approach the walls of Mansoul, and beat a parley; the command was to do it at nights, for in the day-time they annoyed him with their slings; and he commanded that the drums should beat every night, that through weariness they might at last be forced to yield.

So the Drummer, as commanded, arose and beat his drum; but when his drum did go, if one looked towards the town of Mansoul, "behold darkness and sorrow, and the light was darkened in the heaven thereof." No noise was ever heard upon earth more terrible, except the voice of SHADDAI when he speaketh. How did Mansoul tremble! It now looked for nothing but forthwith to be swallowed up.

When he had beaten for a parley, he made this speech to Mansoul:—"My master has bid me tell you, that if you willingly submit, you shall have the good of the earth; but if you shall be stubborn, he is resolved to take you by force." But by that time he had done, the people had betaken themselves to the Captains that were in the castle; so that there was none to regard, nor give an answer; so he returned again to his master in the camp.

The next night he sent a summons to the town to deliver

up themselves ; but they gave him neither heed nor hearing. They remembered what at first it cost them to hear him a few words.

But after some consultation among themselves, as also with some of their Captains, they applied themselves to the LORD SECRETARY ; of him they begged these three things :—

1. That he would look comfortably upon them, and not keep himself so much retired from them as formerly. Also that he would give them a hearing, while they should make known their miserable condition to him ; but to this he told them, he was but ill at ease, and therefore could not do as he had formerly done.

2. The second thing they desired was, that he would be pleased to give them his advice about their important affairs ; for that DIABOLUS was set down before the town with no less than twenty thousand Doubters. They said, moreover, that both he and his Captains were cruel men, and that they were afraid of them. To this he said, ‘ You must look to the law of the Prince, and there see what is laid upon you to do.’

3. Then they desired that his Highness would help them to frame a petition to SHADDAI, and to IMMANUEL, his Son, and that he would set his own hand thereto as a token that he was one with them in it : ‘ For,’ said they, ‘ my Lord, many a one have we sent, but can get no answer of peace ; but surely one with thy hand unto it may obtain good for Mansoul.’

But all the answer he gave was, ‘ That they had offended IMMANUEL, and had also grieved himself, and therefore they must as yet partake of their own devices.’

This answer fell like a mill-stone upon them ; yea, it crushed them so that they could not tell what to do, yet they durst not comply with the demands of DIABOLUS. So here were the straits that the town was betwixt, when the enemy came upon her : Her foes were ready to swallow her up, and her friends did forbear to help her.

Then stood up my Lord Mayor, my LORD UNDER-

STANDING, and said, 'This unavoidably follows upon the saying of my Lord :—1. That we must yet suffer for our sins : 2. The word yet sounds as if at last we should be saved from our enemies ; and that after a few more sorrows, IMMANUEL will come and be our help.'

Hereupon the Captains began to take courage, and to prepare to make some brave attempt upon the camp of the enemy, and to destroy all that were Diabolians, with the roving Doubters that the tyrant had brought to destroy the town.

The next day, therefore, they came together and consulted, and resolved to give an answer to DIABOLUS with slings ; and so they did at the rising of the sun, for DIABOLUS had adventured to come nearer again ; wherefore he was forced to make another retreat, yet further off from the town. Then did the Lord Mayor cause the bells to be rung, and that thanks should be sent to the Lord High Secretary by the mouth of the Preacher ; for that by his words the Captains and Elders of Mansoul had been strengthened against DIABOLUS.

When DIABOLUS saw that his Captains and soldiers, high Lords and renowned, were frightened, and beaten down by the stones that came from the golden slings of the Prince, he said, 'I will try to flatter them into my net.'

Wherefore, after a while he came down again to the wall, and after he had called for audience, he proceeded and said :—

'O, the Desire of my Heart, the famous town of Mansoul ! how many nights have I watched, and how many weary steps have I taken, if perhaps I might do thee good. Far be it from me to desire to make war upon you, if ye will but willingly deliver up yourselves unto me. You know that you were mine of old ; remember also, that so long as you enjoyed me for your Lord, and that I enjoyed you for my subjects, you wanted for nothing of all the delights of the earth. Be but prevailed with to embrace me again, and I will grant, yea, enlarge your old charter.

so that your liberty shall be to take, hold, enjoy, and make your own, all that is pleasant from the east to the west. Nor shall any of those incivilities, wherewith you have offended me, be charged upon you so long as the sun and moon endure.

‘Bear with your Friend. I take the liberty at this time to speak thus freely unto you; the love that I have to you presses me to do it, as also does the zeal of my heart for my friends with you; put me not therefore to further trouble, nor yourselves to further fears and frights. Have you I will, in a way of peace or war; nor do you flatter yourselves with the power of your Captains, or that IMMANUEL will shortly come to your help, for such strength will do you no service.

‘I am come against you with a stout and valiant army, and all the chief Princes are at the head of it. My Captains are swifter than eagles, stronger than lions! How, then, shall Mansoul think to escape my hand?’

DIABOLUS having ended his speech, the Lord Mayor replied as follows:—

‘O DIABOLUS, Prince of Darkness, and Master of all Deceit! thy lying flatteries we have had sufficient proof of; should we again hearken unto thee, and break the commandments of our great SHADDAI, would not our Prince reject us, and cast us off for ever? We are rather ready to die by thy hand, than to fall in with thy lying deceits.’

When the tyrant saw that there was little to be done by parleying, he fell into a rage, and resolved again to assault the town.

So he called for his Drummer, who beat up for his men to be in readiness to give battle. Then DIABOLUS drew near with his army, and thus disposed of his men: CAPTAIN CRUEL and CAPTAIN TORMENT he placed against Feel-gate, and commanded them to sit down there for the war. At Nose-gate he placed CAPTAIN BRIMSTONE and CAPTAIN SEPULCHRE, and bid them look well to their ward. But at Eye-gate he placed that grim-faced one;

CAPTAIN PASTHOPE, and there also now he did set up his terrible standard.

Mouth-gate the inhabitants of Mansoul kept for a sally-port : wherefore that they kept strong ; for by it the townsfolk did send their petitions to **IMMANUEL** ; that also was the gate from the top of which the Captains played their slings, for that gate stood somewhat ascending, so that the placing of them there did much execution against the tyrant's army ; wherefore for these causes, with others, **DIABOLUS** sought, if possible, to land up Mouth-gate with dirt.

Now as **DIABOLUS** was busy in preparing to make his assault without, so the Captains and soldiers were as busy in preparing within ; they mounted their slings, they set up their banners, they sounded their trumpets, and put themselves in such order as was judged most for the annoyance of the enemy, and for the advantage of Mansoul, and gave to their soldiers order to be ready at the sound of the trumpet. The **LORD WILLBEWILL** took the charge of watching against the rebels within, and to do what he could to take them while without. Also the townsmen had their hopes and expectations heightened, believing at last the day would be theirs.

So **DIABOLUS** commanded his drummer to beat a charge against the town, and the Captains that were in the town, sounded a charge against them ; but they had no drum, they were trumpets of silver with which they sounded against them. Then they which were of the camp of **DIABOLUS** came down ; and the Captains in the castle, with the slingers at Mouth-gate, played upon them amain. And now there was nothing heard in the camp of **DIABOLUS** but horrible rage and blasphemy ; but in the town, prayer and singing of psalms : The enemy replied with horrible objections, and the terribleness of their drum ; but the town made answer with the slapping of their slings, and the melodious noise of their trumpets : and thus the fight lasted for several days together ; only now and then they had some small intermission, in which the townsmen

refreshed themselves, and the Captains made ready for another assault.

The Captains of IMMANUEL were clad in silver armour, and the soldiers in that which was of proof; the soldiers of DIABOLUS were clad in iron, which was made to give place to IMMANUEL's engine shot. In the town some were hurt, and some were greatly wounded. The worst was, a Surgeon was scarce in Mansoul, for that IMMANUEL was absent. Howbeit, with the leaves of a tree, the wounded were kept from dying; yet their wounds did greatly putrefy. Of the townsmen these were wounded:—

My LORD REASON was wounded in the head; the brave LORD MAYOR was wounded in the eye; the honest Preacher, also, received a shot not far off the heart, but none of these were mortal.

In the camp of DIABOLUS were wounded and slain a considerable number. For instance:—

CAPTAIN RAGE was wounded, and so was CAPTAIN CRUEL; CAPTAIN DAMNATION was made to retreat, and to entrench himself further off of Mansoul; the standard also of DIABOLUS was beaten down, and his standard-bearer had his brains beat out with a sling-stone. Many also of the Doubters were slain outright, though enough of them are left alive to make Mansoul shake.

Now the victory that day falling to Mansoul, put great valour into the townsmen and Captains, and covered DIABOLUS's camp with a cloud, but withal made them far more furious. So the next day Mansoul rested, and commanded that the bells should be rung; the trumpets also joyfully sounded, and the Captains shouted round the town.

A while after, the Captains resolved to make a sally out upon the camp of DIABOLUS, and this in the night.

So the time being come, they cast lots who should lead the van; the lot fell to CAPTAIN CREDENCE, CAPTAIN EXPERIENCE, and CAPTAIN GOODHOPE. This CAPTAIN EXPERIENCE the Prince created such when himself resided in the town of Mansoul: They made their sally out

upon the army, and their hap was to fall in with the main body of their enemies. Now **DIABOLUS** and his men being accustomed to night-work, took the alarm presently, and were as ready to give them battle, as if they had sent them word of their coming. Wherefore to it they went amain, and blows were hard on every side; the hell-drum also was beat most furiously, whilst the trumpets of the Prince most sweetly sounded. And thus the battle was joined, and **CAPTAIN INSATIABLE** looked to the enemies' carriages, and waited when he should receive some prey.

The Prince's Captains fought it stoutly; they wounded many; they made the whole army of **DIABOLUS** retreat. But as they were upon the pursuit, following hard after the enemy, **CAPTAIN CREDENCE** stumbled and fell, by which fall he caught so great hurt that he could not rise till **CAPTAIN EXPERIENCE** did help him up, at which their men were put in disorder; the Captain also was so full of pain, that he could not but cry out; at this, the other two Captains fainted, supposing that **CAPTAIN CREDENCE** had received his mortal wound; their men, also, were more disordered, and had no list to fight. **DIABOLUS**, though as yet he was put to the worst, perceiving that a halt was made among the pursuers, and taking it for granted that the Captains were either wounded or dead, makes at first a stand, then faces about, and so comes upon the Prince's army with all his might, and his hap was to fall in just among the three Captains. These he did cut, wound, and pierce so dreadfully, that what through discouragement, what through disorder, and what through the wounds they received, and also the loss of much blood, they scarce were able, though they had the three best bands in Mansoul, to get safe into the hold again.

When the body of the Prince's army saw how these three Captains were put to the worst, they thought it their wisdom to make as good a retreat as they could, and so returned by the sally-port again. But **DIABOLUS** was so flashed with this night's work, that he promised himself an

easy and complete conquest ; wherefore, on the day following, he comes up, and demands entrance, and that forthwith they deliver themselves up to his government.

But the valiant Lord Mayor replied, ‘ That what he got, he must get by force ; for as long as IMMANUEL their Prince was alive,’ though he at present was not so with them as they wished, ‘ they should never consent to yield Mansoul up to another.’

And with that, the LORD WILLBEWILL stood up, and said, ‘ DIABOLUS, thou enemy to all that is good ; we are too well acquainted with thy rule and government, and with the end of those things that will follow submitting to thee, to do it. Wherefore, though while we were without knowledge, we suffered thee to take us, (as the bird that saw not the snare, fell into the hands of the fowler,) yet since we have been turned from darkness to light, we have also been turned from the power of SATAN unto God. And though through thy subtlety we have sustained much loss, and also plunged ourselves into much perplexity, yet we shall not yield to so horrid a tyrant as thou : die upon the place we will rather.’

Yet DIABOLUS resolved to have another trial with Mansoul ; for, thought he, since I beat them once, I may beat them twice ; wherefore he commanded his men to be ready at such an hour of the night to make a fresh assault upon the town, and he gave it out that they should bend all their force against Feel-gate, and attempt to break in through that : The word that then he did give to his officers was, Hell-fire : ‘ And,’ said he, ‘ if we break in upon them, either with some, or with all our force, let them that break in look to it that they forget not the word, and let nothing be heard in the town of Mansoul but Hell-fire, hell-fire.’ The Drummer was also to beat without ceasing, and the Standard-bearers to display their colours ; the soldiers too were to put on what courage they could ; and to see that they played their parts.

When the night was come, and all things ready for the work, he suddenly makes his assault upon Feel-gate, and

after he had a while struggled there, he throws the gate wide open ; for the truth is, those gates were but weak, and so most easily made to yield.

When **DIABOLUS** had thus far made his attempt, he placed his Captains, **TORMENT** and **NO-EASE**, there ; so he attempted to press forward, but the Prince's Captains came down upon him, and made his entrance more difficult than he desired ; and, to speak truth, they made what resistance they could ; but three of their best and most valiant Captains being wounded, (and all the rest having more than their hands full of Doubters,) they were overpowered, nor could they keep them out of the town. Wherefore the Prince's men and their Captains betook themselves to the castle ; and this they did, partly for their own security, partly for the security of the town, and chiefly to preserve to **IMMANUEL** the prerogative royal of Mansoul.

The Captains being fled into the castle, the enemy, without much resistance, possessed themselves of the rest of the town ; and spreading themselves into every corner, they cried out as they marched, according to command, Hell-fire, hell-fire, hell-fire ; so that nothing for a while throughout the town of Mansoul could be heard but the direful noise of hell-fire, together with the roaring of **DIABOLUS**'s drum ; and now the clouds hung black over Mansoul, nor did any thing but ruin seem to attend it. **DIABOLUS** also quartered his soldiers in the houses of the inhabitants of the town ; yea, the Preacher's house was as full of these outlandish Doubters, as ever it could hold, and so was my **LORD MAYOR**'s, and my **LORD WILLBEWILL**'s also.

They turned the men of the town out of their houses, and would lie in their beds, and sit at their tables themselves. Ah, poor Mansoul ! now thou feelest the fruits of sin, and what venom was in the flattering words of **MR. CARNAL-SECURITY**. They made great havoc of whatever they laid their hands on ; yea, they fired the town in several places ; many young children also were by them dashed in pieces : yea, those that were yet unborn, they

destroyed in their mother's womb; many women, both young and old, they forced and abused, so that they swooned, and many of them died, and lay at the top of every street, and in all by-places of the town.

And now did Mansoul seem to be nothing but a den of dragons, an emblem of hell, and a place of total darkness. Now did it lie like the barren wilderness; nothing but briars, thorns, and weeds, seemed to cover the face of it. These Doubters turned the men of Mansoul out of their beds; they wounded them; nay, they almost brained many, yea, most if not all of them. MR. CONSCIENCE they so wounded, and his wounds so festered, that he could have no ease day or night, but lay as if continually upon a rack; but that SHADDAI rules all, certainly they had slain him outright. My Lord Mayor they so abused, that they almost put out his eyes; and had not my LORD WILLBEWILL got into the castle, they intended to have chopped him to pieces; for they looked upon him (as his heart now stood) to be one of the very worst that was in Mansoul against DIABOLUS.

Yet DIABOLUS and his men were not at peace in Mansoul, for they were not there entertained, as were the Captains and forces of IMMANUEL. The townsmen hindered them what they could; nor did they partake of any necessities but that which they seized against the townsmen's will, what they could not hide from them.

The Captains also from the castle did hold them in continual play with their slings. True, DIABOLUS made a great many attempts to have broken open the gates of the castle, but MR. GODLYFEAR was made keeper of that; and he was a man of that conduct and valour, that all the attempts DIABOLUS made against him were fruitless.

This was the condition of Mansoul for about two years and a half; the body of the town was the seat of war, the people of the town were driven into holes, and the glory of Mansoul was laid in the dust. What rest then could be to the inhabitants? what peace could Mansoul have? Had the enemy lain so long in the plain against the town, it

had been enough to have famished them ; but now, when they were within, when the town was their tent, their trench, and fort against the castle, this was terrible ; and yet this was now the state of the town of Mansoul.

After Mansoul had been in this condition for so long a time, and no petitions they presented could prevail, the inhabitants gathered together, and agreed to draw up yet another petition, and to send it away to IMMANUEL for relief. But MR. GODLYFEAR stood up and answered, that he knew his Lord, the Prince, never did, nor ever would, receive a petition from the hand of any, unless the Lord Secretary's hand was to it ; 'and this' said he, 'is the reason that you prevailed not all this while.' Then they said, they would draw up one, and get the Lord Secretary's hand unto it. But MR. GODLYFEAR answered again, that he knew that the Lord Secretary would not set his hand to any petition that himself had not a hand in composing ; wherefore my advice is, that you go to my Lord, and implore him to lend you his aid. (He did yet abide in the castle, where all the Captains and men at arms were.)

They heartily thanked MR. GODLYFEAR, and took his counsel ; they went and made known their coming to him.

Then said the Secretary to them, 'What petition is it that you would have me draw up for you ?' But they said, 'Our Lord knows best the state of the town of Mansoul, and how we are backslidden from the Prince ; thou also knowest who is come up to war against us, and how Mansoul is now the seat of war. Let our Lord therefore, according to the wisdom of GOD that is in him, draw up a petition for his poor servants to our PRINCE IMMANUEL.' 'Well,' said the Lord Secretary, 'I will draw up a petition for you, and will also set my hand thereto.' Then said they, 'But when shall we call for it at the hands of our Lord ?' But he answered, 'Yourselves must be present at the doing of it ; yea, you must put your desires to it. True, the hand and pen shall be mine, but the ink and paper must be yours ; else how can you say it is your

petition? Nor have I need to petition for myself, because I have not offended.'

He also added, 'No petition goes from me to the Prince, and to his Father by him, but when the people that are concerned therein join in heart and soul in the matter, for that must be inserted therein.'

The contents of the petition were :—

'O, our LORD, and Sovereign PRINCE IMMANUEL! Grace is poured into thy lips, and to thee belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against thee. We, who are no more worthy to be called thine, beseech thee to do away our transgressions. We confess that thou mightest cast us away for them; but do it not for thy Name's sake. Let the LORD rather take an opportunity at our miserable condition, to let out his bowels and compassions to us. We are compassed on every side, LORD: our own backslidings reprove us; our enemies within our town fright us, and the army of the bottomless pit distresses us. Thy grace alone can be our salvation, and whither to go but to thee we know not.

'Our wisdom is gone, our power is gone, because thou art departed from us; nor have we ought, we may call ours but sin, shame, and confusion of face. Take pity upon us, O LORD, take pity upon us, and save us out of the hands of our enemies.'

This petition was signed by the Lord Secretary, and carried to the Court by CAPTAIN CREDENCE.

This soon reached the ears of DIABOLUS, who charged the town with it, saying, 'Thou rebellious and stubborn-hearted Mansoul, I will make thee leave off petitioning; art thou yet for petitioning?' Yea, he also knew who the messenger was that carried the petition, and it made him both to fear and rage.

Wherefore he commanded that his drum should be beaten again, and the Diabolonians gathered together.

Then said DIABOLUS, 'Be it known unto you, that there is treachery against us in the rebellious town of Man-

soul ; for albeit the town is in our possession, yet they have been so hardy as to send to IMMANUEL for help. Wherefore I command that yet more and more ye distress this town of Mansoul ; ravish their women, deflower their virgins, slay their children, brain their ancients, fire their town, and do what other mischief you can ; and let this be their reward from me, for their desperate rebellions against me.'

When DIABOLUS had done thus, he went up to the castle-gates, and demanded, that upon pain of death, the gates should be opened to him, and that entrance should be given him and his men that followed after. To whom MR. GODLYFEAR replied, 'That the gate should not be opened to him, nor to the men that followed after him.' He said moreover, that Mansoul, when she had suffered awhile, should be made perfect, strengthened, settled.'

'Then said DIABOLUS, 'Deliver me then the men that have petitioned against me, especially CAPTAIN CRE-DENCE, and I will depart from the town.

MR. GODLYFEAR replied, 'How long will Mansoul be kept out of the dungeon, when she hath given up her faith to DIABOLUS ? As good lose the town, as lose CAPTAIN CRE-DENCE ; for if one be gone, the other must follow.'

Then my Lord Mayor said, 'O thou devouring tyrant, be it known unto thee, we shall hearken to none of thy words ; we are resolved to resist thee as long as a Captain, a man, a sling, and a stone, shall be found in the town of Mansoul.' DIABOLUS answered, 'Do you hope, do you wait, do you look for help and deliverance ? You have sent to IMMANUEL, but your wickedness sticks too close in your skirts, to let innocent prayers come out of your lips. Think you that you shall prosper in this design ? You will fail in your attempts, for it is not only I, but your IMMANUEL is against you ; yea, it is he that hath sent me against you to subdue you. For what then do you hope, or by what means will you escape ?'

'Then said the Lord Mayor, 'We have sinned indeed, but that shall be no help to thee ; for our IMMANUEL hath

said, and that in great faithfulness, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." He hath also told us, O our enemy, that "all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to the sons of men." Therefore we dare not despair, but will look for, wait for, and hope for deliverance still.'

By this time CAPTAIN CREDENCE was returned from IMMANUEL to the castle of Mansoul with a packet. My Lord Mayor hearing that CAPTAIN CREDENCE was come, sent for all the Captains and Elders of the town. When they were come he opened his packet, and the first note was for my Lord Mayor, wherein was signified,

'That the PRINCE IMMANUEL had taken it well that my Lord Mayor had been so true and trusty in his office, that he had been so bold for his Prince, and had engaged so faithfully in his cause against DIABOLUS.' He also signified at the close of his letter, that he should shortly receive his reward.

The second note was for the noble LORD WILBEWILL, wherein was signified,

'That IMMANUEL did well understand how valiant he had been for the honour of his Lord, now in his absence, and when his name was under contempt by DIABOLUS.'

He signified, moreover, that he understood my Lord had with his own hand done great execution upon some of the chief of the rebels, to the great discouragement of the adverse party, and to the good example of the whole town, and that shortly his Lordship should have his reward.

The third note was for the Preacher, wherein was signified,

'That his Prince took it well from him that he had so faithfully performed his office, and executed the trust committed to him while he exhorted, rebuked, and forewarned Mansoul according to the laws of the town. He signified, moreover, that he took well at his hand that he had called to fasting, sackcloth, and ashes, when Mansoul was under her revolt. Also that he called for the aid of CAPTAIN

BOANERGES to help in so weighty a work, and that shortly he also should receive his reward.'

The fourth note came out for Mr. GODLYFEAR, wherein his Lord signified,

'That his Lordship observed he was the first of all the men in Mansoul, that detected MR. CARNAL SECURITY; that he remembered his tears and groaning for the state of Mansoul.'

IMMANUEL also took notice, that he stood stoutly at the gates of the castle, against all the threats and attempts of the tyrant, and that he had put the townsmen in a way so to petition their Prince, that they might obtain an answer of peace; and that therefore shortly he should receive his reward.

After CAPTAIN CREDENCE had delivered his notes, he retired to my Lord Secretary's lodgings, who told him, 'I have made thee the Lord-Lieutenant over all the forces in Mansoul; so that from this day forward, all men in Mansoul shall be at thy word, and thou shalt lead in and lead out Mansoul. Thou shalt therefore manage the war for thy Prince, against the power of DIABOLUS, and at thy command shall the rest of the Captains be.'

To return: When DIABOLUS saw himself thus confronted by the Lord Mayor, and perceived the stoutness of Mr. GODLYFEAR, he fell into a rage, and forthwith called a council of war, that he might be revenged on Mansoul. So all the Princes of the pit came together, and old INCREDULITY at the head of them, to consult how they might take the castle, because they could not conclude themselves masters of the town so long as that was in the possession of their enemies. So one advised this way, and another advised that, till at length BEELZEBUB spake thus:—'It is not our being in the town, nor in the field, nor our fighting, nor our killing of their men, that can make us masters of Mansoul; for so long as one in town is able to lift up his finger against us, IMMANUEL will take their parts, and if he shall take their parts, we cannot prevail. Wherefore, there is no way to bring them into

bondage to us, like inventing a way to make them sin.' To this they all agreed. So they fell to inventing by what means they might do this thing.

Then LUCIFER stood up and said, 'The way to bring this to pass, in mine opinion, is this: Let us withdraw our force from the town of Mansoul, and let us terrify them no more, either with summons, or threats, or with the noise of our drum, or any other awakening means. Only let us lie in the field at a distance, and be as if we regarded them not. I have also another stratagem: you know Mansoul is a market-town, and a town that delights in commerce; what, therefore, if some of us shall feign to be far countrymen, and shall bring to the market some of our wares to sell. Thus let Mansoul be taken up in much business, and let them grow full and rich; remember ye not that thus we prevailed upon Laodicea, and how many at present do we hold in this snare? When they begin to grow full they will forget their misery, and if we shall not affright them, they may happen to fall asleep, and so neglect their town-watch, their castle-watch, as well as their watch at the gates.

'Yea, may we not by this means so cumber Mansoul with abundance, that they shall be forced to make of their castle a warehouse instead of a garrison? and if we get our goods and commodities thither, I reckon the castle is more than half ours.'

This advice was highly applauded by them all, and was accounted the very master-piece of hell; to wit, to choke Mansoul with a fulness of this world, and to surfeit her heart with the good things thereof. But just as this counsel was broken up, CAPTAIN CREDENCE received a letter from IMMANUEL, the contents of which were, That upon the third day he would meet him in the field in the plains about Mansoul. 'Meet me in the field,' quoth the Captain, 'what meaneth my Lord by this?' So he took the note in his hand, carried it to my Lord Secretary, and desired his opinion thereof. So my Lord read it, and said,

'Your enemies have had a great consultation to-day;

they have this day been contriving the utter ruin of the town, and the result of their counsel is, to set Mansoul into such a way, as if taken, will surely make her destroy herself. And to this end they are making ready for their own departure out of the town, intending to betake themselves to the field again, and there to lie until they shall see whether this their project will take or no. But be thou ready with the men of thy Lord, (for on the third day they will be in the plain,) there to fall upon them, for the Prince will by that time be in the field; yea, by that it is break of day, and with a mighty force. So he shall be before them, and thou shalt be behind them, and betwixt you both their army shall be destroyed.'

When CAPTAIN CREDENCE heard this, he went to the rest of the Captains, and told them what a note he had received from IMMANUEL; 'and,' said he, 'that which was dark therein has my Lord Secretary expounded unto me.' He told them, moreover, what must be done to answer the mind of their Lord.

On the second day DIABOLUS and his forces withdrew themselves from Mansoul, and abode in the plains without; but they encamped themselves before Eye-gate, in the strongest manner they could.

The time that the Captains were to fall upon them being come, they eagerly prepared themselves for action; for CAPTAIN CREDENCE had told them over night, that they should meet their Prince in the field to-morrow.

CAPTAIN CREDENCE, with them, drew out their forces before it was day by the sally-port of the town, and being all ready, CAPTAIN CREDENCE went up to the head of the army and gave the word, which was, 'The Sword of IMMANUEL, and the shield of CAPTAIN CREDENCE;' which is in the Mansoulion tongue, 'The Word of God, and Faith.' Then the Captains fell on, and began to front, and flank, and rear DIABOLUS's camp.

They left CAPTAIN EXPERIENCE in the town, because he was yet ill of the wounds given him in the last fight. But when he perceived that the Captains were gone, he

called for his crutches with haste, and away he got to the battle, saying, 'Shall I lie here, when IMMANUEL will show himself in the field to his servants?' When the enemy saw the man come thus, they were daunted the more; 'for,' thought they, 'what spirit has possessed these men, that they fight me upon their crutches?' Well, the Captains fell on, still crying out and shouting, 'The Sword of PRINCE IMMANUEL, and the Shield of CAPTAIN CREDENCE.'

Now when DIABOLUS saw that the Captains were come out, and that they so valiantly surrounded his men, he concluded nothing was to be looked for but blows, and the dints of their two-edged sword.

Wherefore he also falls on the Prince's army with all his deadly force. So the battle was joined. Now who was it that first DIABOLUS met with in the fight, but CAPTAIN CREDENCE on the one hand, and LORD WILBEWILL on the other. Now WILBEWILL's blows were like the blows of a giant, for that man had a strong arm, and he fell in upon the life-guard of DIABOLUS, cutting and battering shrewdly. When CAPTAIN CREDENCE saw my Lord engaged, he did stoutly fall on; so they put them to great disorder.

The rest of the armies were hotly engaged, and that on every side. Then did my Lord Secretary command that the slings from the castle should be played; and his men could throw stones at an hair's breadth. But after awhile, those that were made to fly before the Captains of the Prince, did begin to rally again, and came up stoutly upon the rear of the Prince's army; wherefore the Prince's army began to faint: but remembering that they should see the face of their Prince by and by, they took courage, and a very fierce battle was fought. Then shouted the Captains saying, 'The Sword of PRINCE IMMANUEL, and the Shield of CAPTAIN CREDENCE!' And with that DIABOLUS gave back, thinking that more aid had been come; but no IMMANUEL as yet appeared. Moreover, the battle did hang in doubt; and they made a little retreat on both

sides. In the time of respite, CAPTAIN CREDENCE encouraged his men to stand to it, and DIABOLUS did the like.

No sooner had the Captain made his speech, but one came post to the Captain, to tell him IMMANUEL was at hand. This the Captain communicated to the other Field-Officers, and they again to their soldiers: wherefore, like men raised from the dead, the Captains and their men arose, made up to the enemy, and cried as before, 'The Sword of PRINCE IMMANUEL, and the Shield of CAPTAIN CREDENCE!'

When they had been in the heat of the battle about an hour, CAPTAIN CREDENCE lift up his eyes and saw, and behold IMMANUEL came, and he came with colours flying, trumpets sounding, and the feet of his men scarce touched the ground. Then did CREDENCE wind with his men to the town-ward, and gave DIABOLUS the field. So IMMANUEL came upon him on the one side, and the enemy's place was betwixt them both; then again they fell to it afresh; and now it was but a little while more but IMMANUEL and CAPTAIN CREDENCE met, still trampling down the slain as they came.

When the Captains saw that the Prince was come, and that he fell upon the enemy on the other side, they so shouted that the ground rent again. Now when DIABOLUS saw that he and his forces were so hard beset, he, and the Lords of the pit that were with him, made their escape, and forsook their army, leaving them to fall by the hand of IMMANUEL and of CAPTAIN CREDENCE. So they fell all down slain before the Prince, and before his royal army; there was not left so much as one Doubter alive; they lay spread upon the ground, as one would spread dung upon the land.

When the battle was over, the Captains and Elders of Mansoul came together to salute IMMANUEL. So he smiled upon them, and said, "Peace be to you."

Then they addressed themselves to go to the town: and this was the manner and order of his going into Mansoul.

First, All the gates of the town were set open ; yea, the gates of the castle also, and the Elders of the town placed themselves at the gates to salute him at his entrance ; and as he drew near, and approached towards the gates, they said, “ Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.” They answered again, “ Who is the King of Glory ? ” And they made return, “ The LORD, strong and mighty, even the LORD mighty in battle.”

Secondly, The Elders, and the rest of the men of Mansoul answered one another as IMMANUEL entered the town, till he came at the castle-gates with songs and sound of trumpets, saying, “ They have seen thy goings, O God, even the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary. So the singers went before, the players on instruments followed after, and among them were the damsels playing on timbrels.”

Thirdly, The Captains in their order waited on the Prince as he entered into the gates. CAPTAIN CREDENCE went before, and CAPTAIN GOODHOPE with him ; CAPTAIN CHARITY came behind with other of his companions ; and CAPTAIN PATIENCE followed after all, and the rest of the Captains, some on the right hand and some on the left ; and all the while the colours were displayed, the trumpets sounding, and continual shoutings were amongst the soldiers. The Prince himself rode into the town in his armour, which was all of beaten gold, and in his chariot the pillars of it were of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it was of purple, the midst thereof being paved with love for the daughters of the town of Mansoul.

Fourthly, All the streets were strewed with lilies and flowers, and curiously decked with boughs and branches. Every door also was filled with persons who had adorned every one the fore part of their house with something to entertain him with as he passed the streets ; they also themselves, as IMMANUEL passed by, did welcome him with shouts and acclamations of joy, saying, ‘ Blessed

be the Prince that cometh in the name of his Father, SHADDAI.'

At the castle-gates the elders of Mansoul, to wit, The Lord Mayor, the LORD WILBEWILL, the Preacher, MR KNOWLEDGE, and MR. MIND, with other of the gentry of the place, saluted IMMANUEL again. They bowed before him, they kissed the dust of his feet, they thanked, they blessed, and praised his Highness for not taking advantage against them for their sins, but rather returning to them with mercies, to build them up for ever.

Thus was he had up to the castle; for that was the royal palace, and the place where his Honour was to dwell; which was ready prepared for his Highness by the presence of the Lord Secretary, and the work of CAPTAIN CREDESCENCE.

Then the people and commonalty of the town came to him into the castle, to mourn, and to weep, and to lament for their wickedness, by which they had forced him out of the town. So they bowed themselves to the ground seven times: they also wept, they wept aloud, and asked forgiveness of the Prince, and prayed that he would again, as of old, confirm his love to Mansoul.

To which the Prince replied:—

'Weep not, but go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to them for whom nought is prepared; for the joy of your LORD is your strength. I am returned to Mansoul with mercies, and my name shall be set up, exalted, and magnified by it.'

He also took the inhabitants and kissed them, and laid them in his bosom.

When IMMANUEL had done all these things for the town of Mansoul, then he said unto them,

'Wash your garments, then put on your ornaments, and come to me into the castle.'

So they went to the fountain that was set open for Judah and Jerusalem to wash in; and there they washed, and made their garments white, and came again to the Prince, and stood before him.

And now there was music and dancing throughout the whole town of Mansoul; and that because their Prince had again granted to them his presence, and the light of his countenance; the bells did also ring, and the sun shone comfortably upon them for a great while together.

The town of Mansoul did also now more thoroughly seek the destruction of all remaining Diabolonians, that abode in the walls and the dens (that they had) in the town of Mansoul.

But my LORD WILBEWILL was a greater terror to them now, than ever he had been before; forasmuch as his heart was more fully bent to seek, contrive, and pursue them to the death.

They therefore resolved to make another attempt upon Mansoul, and that by an army mixed and made up partly of Doubters, and partly of Bloodmen.

The Doubters are such as have their name from their nature, as well as from the kingdom where they are born; their nature is to question every one of the truths of IMMANUEL; and their country is called the Land of Doubting, and lieth off to the north, between the Land of Darkness, and the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

The Bloodmen are a people that have their name derived from the malignity of their nature, and from the fury that is in them to execute it upon the town of Mansoul.

The name of their country is the Province of Loathgood; the remote parts of it are far distant from the Land of Doubting; yet they do both butt and bound upon the hill called Hellgate-Hill.

Of these two countries did DIABOLUS, by the beating of his drum, raise another army against Mansoul, of five and twenty thousand strong. There were ten thousand Doubters, and fifteen thousand Bloodmen, and they were put under several Captains for the war; and old INCREDULITY was again made General of the army.

The reason why DIABOLUS did so soon rally another force after he had been beaten out of the field, was, for

that he put mighty confidence in this army of Bloodmen, more than in his army of Doubters.

These Bloodmen he had proved often, and their sword did seldom return empty; besides, he knew that these, like mastiffs, would fasten upon any: upon father, mother, brother, sister, Prince, or Governor; yea, upon the Prince of Princes. And that which encouraged him the more was, for that they once did force IMMANUEL out of the kingdom of Universe; and why, thought he, may they not drive him from the town of Mansoul?

So this army of five and twenty thousand strong, was by their General, the LORD INCREDULITY, led up against Mansoul.

So they beleaguered the town; the Doubters were placed about Feel-gate, and the Bloodmen set down before Eye-gate and Ear-gate.

When this army had thus encamped, INCREDULITY did in the name of DIABOLUS, his own name, and in the name of the Bloodmen, and the rest that were with him, send a summons to Mansoul, to yield to their demands; threatening, that if they still stood out, they would burn down Mansoul with fire.

As for the Bloodmen, they were not so much that Mansoul should be surrendered, as that it should be destroyed, and cut off from the land of the living. They must have blood, the blood of Mansoul, else they die; and it is from hence that they have their name.

When the townsmen had received this summons, they jointly agreed, in less than half an hour, to carry it to the Prince, which they did when they had writ at the bottom of it, "LORD, save us from bloody men."

So he took it, and looked upon it, and took notice also of the short petition written at the bottom of it, and called to him CAPTAIN CREDENCE, and bid him take CAPTAIN PATIENCE with him, and go and take care of that side of Mansoul that was beleaguered by the Bloodmen. They went and did as they were commanded, and secured that side of Mansoul that was besieged by the Bloodmen.

Then he commanded that CAPTAIN GOODHOPE, and CAPTAIN CHARITY, and my LORD WILLBEWILL, should take charge of the other side of the town. This done, he commanded that CAPTAIN EXPERIENCE should draw up his men in the market-place, and there exercise them day by day before the people of the town.

Now this siege was long, and many a fierce attempt did the enemy, especially the Bloodmen, make upon the town of Mansoul, and many a shrewd brush did some of the townsmen meet with from them; especially CAPTAIN SELF-DENIAL, who was commanded to take the care of Ear-gate and Eye-gate, against the Bloodmen.

This CAPTAIN SELF-DENIAL was a young man, but stout, and a townsman in Mansoul, as CAPTAIN EXPERIENCE also was, and IMMANUEL, at his second return to Mansoul, made him a Captain over a thousand. This Captain therefore being a hardy man, and willing to venture himself for the good of the town, would now and then sally out upon the Bloodmen, and give them many alarms; but this could not be done but he must meet with brushes himself; for he carried several of their marks in his face, yea, and other parts of his body.

After some time spent for the trial of the faith, and hope, and love of the town of Mansoul, the Prince upon a day calls for his Captains and men of war together, and divides them into two companies; this done, he commands them in the morning very early to sally out upon the enemy, saying, 'Let half of you fall upon the Doubters, and half of you upon the Bloodmen. Those that go out against the Doubters, kill and cause to perish so many of them as you can lay your hands on; but for you that go out against the Bloodmen, slay them not, but take them alive.

Betimes in the morning the Captains went out: CAPTAIN GOODHOPE, CAPTAIN CHARITY, with CAPTAIN INNOCENT, and CAPTAIN EXPERIENCE, went out against the Doubters; CAPTAIN CREDENCE, and CAPTAIN PATIENCE, with CAPTAIN SELF-DENIAL, went out against the Bloodmen.

Those that went out against the Doubters, drew up in a body, and marched on to give them battle; but the Doubters, remembering their last success, made a retreat, not daring to stand the shock; wherefore they pursued them, and in their pursuit slew many; but they could not catch them all. Now those that escaped went some of them home, the rest went straggling up and down the country. They would also after this show themselves in companies before Mansoul, but never to abide it; for if CAPTAIN CREDENCE, CAPTAIN GOODHOPE, or CAPTAIN EXPERIENCE did but show themselves, they fled.

Those that went out against the Bloodmen did as they were commanded; they forebore to slay any, but sought to compass them about. The Bloodmen, when they saw that IMMANUEL was not in the field, concluded that no IMMANUEL was in Mansoul; wherefore, looking upon what the Captains did to be extravagancy, rather despised than feared them; but the Captains, minding their business, at last did compass them round; they also that had routed the Doubters came in again to their aid; so in fine, after some little struggling, for the Bloodmen also would have run for it, only now it was too late, (for though they are cruel where they can overcome, yet all Bloodmen are cowards when they once see themselves matched,) the Captains took them, and brought them to the Prince.

When they were had before the Prince, and examined, he found them to be of three several countries.

1. One sort of them came out of Blindmanshire; and they were such as did ignorantly what they did.

2. Another sort of them came out of Blindzealshire; and they did superstitiously what they did.

3. The third sort of them came out of the town of Malice; and they did what they did out of spite and implacableness.

For the first of these, they that came out of Blindmanshire, when they saw where they were, and against whom they had fought. they trembled, and cried as they stood

before him; and as many of them as asked him mercy, he touched their lips with the golden sceptre.

They that came out of Blindzealshire pleaded that they had right to do what they did, because Mansoul was a town whose laws and customs were diverse from all that dwelleth hereabouts. Very few of these could be brought to see their evil; but those that did, and asked mercy, obtained favour.

They that came out of the town of Malice, stood gnawing their tongues before him for anguish and madness, because they could not have their will. These last, with all those of the other two sorts that did not unfeignedly ask pardon for their faults, those he made to enter into sufficient bond to answer for what they had done, at the great and general Assize to be holden for our LORD the King, where he himself should appoint, for the country and kingdom of Universe.

And thus much concerning this second army that was sent by DIABOLUS to overthrow Mansoul.

When the town of Mansoul had rid themselves of so many of their enemies, and the troublers of their peace, the Prince sent to them, and appointed a day wherein he would meet the whole people, and give them charge concerning some further matters, that, if observed, would tend to their further safety and comfort, and to the condemnation and destruction of their homebred enemies. The townsmen met together; IMMANUEL also came down in his chariot, and all his Captains attending him on the right hand and on the left; then the Prince spoke as follows:—

‘Many and great are the privileges that I have bestowed upon you: I have chosen you to myself, not for your worthiness, but for my own sake. I have redeemed you, not only from the dread of my Father’s law, but from the hand of DIABOLUS. This I have done because I loved you, and because I have set my heart upon you to do you good.

‘I have taken thee out of the hands of thine enemies,

unto whom thou hadst deeply revolted, and by whom thou wast content to be possessed, and also to be destroyed. I came to thee first by my Law, then by my Gospel, to awaken thee, and show thee my glory; and thou knowest what thou wast, what thou saidst, what thou didst, and how many times thou rebelledst against my Father and me; yet I left thee not, as thou seest this day, but came to thee, have borne thy manners, have waited upon thee, and after all accepted of thee, even of my mere grace and favour; and would not suffer thee to be lost, as thou most willingly wouldest have been. I also compassed thee about, and afflicted thee on every side, that I might make thee weary of thy ways, and bring down thy heart to a willingness to close with thy good and happiness: and when I had gotten a complete victory over thee, I turned it to thy advantage.

‘Thou seest, moreover, how I have passed by thy backslidings, and have healed thee. Indeed I was angry with thee, but I have turned mine anger away from thee, because I loved thee still, and mine anger and mine indignation is ceased in the destruction of thine enemies. Nor did thy goodness fetch me again unto thee, after that I for thy transgressions have hid my face, and withdrawn my presence from thee. The way of backsliding was thine, but the way and means of thy recovery were mine. I invented the means of thy return; it was I that made a hedge and a wall, when thou wast beginning to turn to things in which I delighted not; it was I that made thy sweet bitter, thy day night, thy smooth way thorny, and that also confounded all that sought thy destruction; it was I that set MR. GODLYFEAR to work in Mansoul; it was I that stirred up thy conscience and understanding, thy will and affections, after thy great and woeful decay; it was I that put life into thee, O Mansoul, to seek me, that thou mightest find me, and in thy finding, find thine own health, happiness, and salvation.

‘And now, my Mansoul, I am returned to thee in peace, and thy transgressions against me are as if they had not

been. Nor shall it be with thee as in former days, but I will do better for thee than at thy beginning ; for yet a little while, after a few more times are gone over thy head, I will take down this town to the ground, and will carry the stones thereof, and the timber thereof, and the walls thereof, and the dust thereof, and the inhabitants thereof, into mine own country, even into the kingdom of my Father, and will there set it up in such strength and glory as it never did see in the kingdom where now it is placed. I will there set it up for my Father's habitation, for, for that purpose it was first erected in the kingdom of Universe ; and there will I make it a spectacle of wonder, a monument of mercy ; there shall the natives of Mansoul see all that of which they have seen nothing here, and there shalt thou have such communion with me, with my Father, and with your Lord Secretary, as is not possible here to be enjoyed, nor ever could be, shouldest thou live in Universe the space of a thousand years.

‘There, O Mansoul, thou shalt meet with many of those that have been like thee, and that have been partakers of thy sorrows ; even such as I have chosen, and redeemed, and set apart, as thee, for my Father's Court.

‘Thus, O Mansoul, I have showed unto thee what shall be done to thee hereafter, if thou canst hear, if thou canst understand ; and now I will tell thee what at present must be thy practice, until I come and fetch thee to myself.

‘First, I charge thee that thou dost hereafter keep more white and clean the liveries which I gave thee. They are in themselves fine linen, but thou must keep them white and clean. This will be your wisdom, your honour, and for my glory ; when your garments are white, then I am delighted in your ways. Deck thyself, therefore, according to my bidding, and make thyself by my law straight steps for thy feet ; so shall thy King greatly desire thy beauty, for he is thy LORD, and worship thou him.

‘That thou mayest keep them white, I have provided for thee an open fountain to wash thy garments in. Look, therefore, that thou wash often in my fountain, and go not

in defiled garments. Let not, therefore, the garments I gave thee be spotted by the flesh. Keep them always white, and let thy head lack no ointment.

‘I have lived, I have died, I live for thee. I live that thou mayest not die. Because I live thou shalt live also. I reconciled thee to my Father by the blood of my cross, and being reconciled thou shalt live through me. I will pray for thee, I will fight for thee, I will yet do thee good.

‘Remember, therefore, O Mansoul, that thou art beloved of me ; as I have taught thee to watch, to fight, to pray, and to make war against my foes, so now I command thee to believe that my love is constant to thee ; now have I set my heart, my love upon thee, watch. Behold, I lay none other burden upon thee than what thou hast already ; hold fast until I come.’

A
GOSPEL-GLASS:

OR,

A Call from Heaven to Sinners and Saints,

BY

REPENTANCE AND REFORMATION,

TO

PREPARE TO MEET GOD.

The LORD knoweth, I take no pleasure to rake in these dunghills : I dread the ill uses that the sons of **BELIAL** may make of this enterprise : I expect various censures from them who should be otherwise minded ; but my record is on high, that the great design of this publication is, to reduce professors to a more awful, humble, serious repentance towards GOD, and singular conversation before men.

I have had no quiet in my conscience, till I entered upon this labour. Though my bodily distempers pleaded hard for my silence ; though I was told, the prudent should hold their peace in an evil day ; though I know it is an unthankful office to admonish and reprove : yet I have laid by all impediments and objections ; and wish I had such gifts, and such affections, as might render me some way useful, to put you upon self-reflection, upon self-trial, in order to a full repentance : I pray GOD, I may so far at last succeed, as to obstruct that cursed exclaiming against the sins of Governors, and other parties, as at length to make you cry out, What have I done ? Oh ! how have I provoked GOD !

Having given you an account of my design, and the reason of it, I shall only add,

1. That it may not be expected I should give you a full catalogue of all your sins, which are provocations in the eyes of the LORD this day. Who can understand his errors ? Cleanse thou me (and the land) from all our secret, as well as known faults.

2. GOD forbid I should be so censorious, as to judge all guilty of these sins, in all the particularities, or in all the aggravations of them. Some are to be charged one way, some another ; but few can wash their hands in innocency, that they are no ways principals or accessaries.

3. Far be it from me to be partial in my charge, to advance any party of men upon the ruins of their brethren.

4. I desire you would take this catalogue into your closets with you, and as you read, set a special mark of observation on those sins which are chiefly yours, in order to repentance and amendment ; and then give the LORD no rest, till he hath taken his pen, and dipped it in the blood of his Son, and blotted them out of his diary and remembrance.

5. And, lastly, Let me beseech the reader to be very importunate with the LORD, for an humble, tender spirit ; that unbelief and hardness of heart may not accompany him in the perusal of the following lines, and thereby both his and my own endeavours become abortive.

a worm of two or three cubits long, and am in danger to be thrown into a hole every day, yet I carry with me a jewel, the loss whereof the whole world cannot repair.' How seldom do they consider, sadly and seriously, what will become of their souls when their excellency which is in them shall go away, as ELIPHAZ speaks? Examine your thoughts all the day long, from morning to evening, and few are laid out for the soul.

3. Are not all the thoughts and cares laid out upon the body, though the body be but clay, and the soul is a spirit? The body must die, but the soul shall never die. How frequently do we think of our bodies, what their wants, burthens, necessities, are? but not so of our souls. How much of every day is spent in providing for thy body, but how little for thy soul? The body should be but the soul's servant; yet men feed the slave, and starve the child. The body must be fed every day, clad every day, yea, adorned every day, and physicked, if distempered; but the soul needs food, raiment, physic, continually,—yet lieth unregarded,—is left miserable, naked, starved. A servant hath two talents to keep,—The child, and the child's clothes: will the master thank the servant if he plead, I have kept the clothes, but I have neglected the life of the child? Thy body is but thy soul's outward garment. How often have your Ministers told you, that the soul was better than the body, and that your souls needed daily care more than your bodies? And yet you look after the one, with the neglect of the other. A day is coming, when thou wilt wish thou hadst been bred in the field, among the beasts; for that thou regardest thy soul no more than if thou hadst but the life of a beast: thou wilt wish thou hadst been made a toad, a serpent, a worm, a dog, a swine; for then thou shouldest not have suffered to eternity, as now thou wilt, unless the eyes of thy understanding be opened to see, consider, and make provision for thy precious, but perishing soul. Thy body is perishing every day, and thy soul is upon the borders of eternity; it must live for ever; and yet all thy care is for the body, which, likely, will not live

threescore years and ten; but the soul is neglected, that must live threescore millions of years in hell without repentance; and then, when that date is over, thou art as far from the end of thy misery as thou wast the first day thou wast thrown among the damned!

4. How many will not speak with their souls! They are greater strangers to them, than the Londoners are to their next neighbours. Didst thou ever ask thy soul such questions? 'O my soul, how is it, how will it be with thee? O my soul, what will become of thee? What will become of thee in the next world?'

5. At what cost were we any time for our souls? The Physician is consulted with, if there be an ache upon the body: we will, with the woman, part with all, beggar ourselves, to recover health of body: when did you know a man starve himself, if he could have bread and water, whatever it cost? We will be at any expense of time, labour, and charges, to keep our bodies from starving; but how are the ordinances of God, the word, and sacraments, (the spiritual food of the soul,) neglected? The flesh must be satisfied; as for the soul, there is little regard to its well-being. We cannot endure to see a beast want meat; but how easily do many digest the want of that milk, whereby they should be maintained and grow? 'God (saith one) gives to these their request; he gives them quails, but sends leanness into their souls.'

6. How fearless are many of spiritual losses! How common is it for people to draw back from the service of CHRIST! What is the matter? I shall lose my estate, liberty, pay such a fine. They little consider what their souls will lose, if they do not persevere. Though you see not the worth of your souls, yet know that they are the most considerable jewels you stand possessed of. All the world will not weigh with one soul. Thy money may ransom thy body; nothing but CHRIST's blood thy soul. Pause awhile, Reader, and reflect on all thy sinful neglects of thy immortal soul; lest on thy death-bed thou shriek and cry, 'O my soul, whither art thou going?'

II. How little are the souls of others valued and cared for ! How many masters are there that care no more for their servants' souls than for the dogs ! nay, not so much. Perhaps some of you are careful that the bodies of your families be clothed, be fed, but the souls lie unprovided for.

1. How do we justly censure them as worthy of capital punishments, that murder the bodies of men ; but not so others, who poison and destroy thousands of souls. •

How do you hate to have a hand in murdering the bodies of any, to lay poison for the destruction of any ? And yet how commonly do men lay the poison of ill counsel and ill example before others, to cause them to fall into the pit of hell ; and are not affected with this great evil.

2. How troubled are we at any that kill bodies, and that murder others ; but not so at the millions that destroy their own and others' souls ; that have a hand in ruining, in damning, themselves and others !

3. If any neglect means that might have continued the life of their husbands, children, &c., how are they dejected ! How do they wring their hands, and beat their breasts ! Whereas, if by carelessness, if by the neglect of their duties, if by evil example, they have destroyed their souls, they are not troubled about the matter.

How meanly do you think of all that take pains for their souls ! That wait at the pool of Bethesda, that consult Ministers and books, and attend on the ordinances for their souls ; whilst you account it your wisdom to lay out most, if not all, of your time for your bodies. Hast thou the name of a Christian ? I pray God to let one word sink into thine heart. Thou hast not CHRIST ; thou hast not the SPIRIT of CHRIST in thee : he knows how to value souls, and therefore shed blood for them, and sends his SPIRIT in the Gospel to be importunate for their salvation.

CHAPTER II.

Their want of saving Conviction and Compunction.

How many, like PAUL, are “alive without the law!” How many, like Sardis, have “a name to live, when they are dead!” How many are alive in their own conceit, and perhaps in the conceit of others, and yet are void of the true supernatural life! How many are contented with their being baptized! They see no need of CHRIST, they were born of Christian parents, they are of the stock of ABRAHAM: “we have ABRAHAM to our father.” They do not consider, how many baptized persons are deadly enemies to CHRIST, and to their souls, and averse to the ways of holiness; they will not consider that swearers, drunkards, and adulterers, have as good claims to CHRIST and heaven as these have. How many also please themselves with the religion of education! But GOD hath not moulded their hearts, though parents have taught them some principles of religion; but they are strangers to the wonderful operations and teachings of the HOLY GHOST; they have not the “unction from above,” (they know not what it is,) “that teacheth all things;” and yet such as these are alive; *i. e.*, merry, jocund, jovial, confident if any go to heaven, they shall be of the number. But to speak more particulaly,—

First, How many are there that were never convinced of original sin, imputed or imparted! 1. How few are convinced that ADAM was a common person, and that we sinned in his loins; that if he had stood, we had stood; and that it is just with GOD, that he shipwrecking himself, we should be counted sinners in him. We did eat of the forbidden fruit in ADAM; we in ADAM believed the Devil rather than GOD; we in ADAM broke with GOD for toys and trifles; we were ungrateful, disobedient in him; we apostatized in him, and broke covenant with GOD in him; hence “by one man’s offence sin entered into the world, and death by sin; for that (as LEVI paid tithes in

ABRAHAM, so) we became rebels against the Majesty of Heaven in our first parents. When did you shed a tear for ADAM's sin, for your and his grand provocation ?

2. How few see ADAM's sinful nature imparted to them ! They see not their inward parts are very wickedness, nothing but wickedness. Few see what a sad apostasy from the perfection of man's nature, sin hath brought into the world, and how black an image of SATAN it hath drawn upon the soul ; they never saw what filthy, loathsome things they are in the eyes of GOD ; they never saw their noisomeness and venom, the garbage and malignity of their hearts. How few see a general defect of all righteousness and holiness, wherein at first they were created ! How few are convinced of an antipathy to all that is good ! that they are haters of GOD by nature ; that " they are dead in trespasses and sins ; (a more dreadful estate than if they were rotting in their graves ;) that they have an ocean of corruption within them ; that they have a worse leprosy than that among the Jews, which got into the very walls. Who almost think so sadly of themselves ? They bless GOD their hearts are good, though they be the worst of men ; they slight ordinances, closet-duties, and family-worship, yet the Devil persuades them all is well,—their hearts are good ; though the heart of man by nature be like hell itself, whose fire of lust is unquenchable,—though it be like PETER's great sheet, which he saw in the vision, " full of all unclean things,"—though it be a receptacle of all impiety, yet how few turn their eyes inward, to see their natural deformities !

Alas ! all the venom the snake sends forth, is nothing to the poison that lies in its nature : and all those monstrous impieties which the lives of men are tainted with, are not to be compared with the venom that lurks in the heart of every man by nature. Men would not glory in their blood and descent, did they but believe how sin descended : men could not content themselves to walk heavily under some actual misdemeanours, were they convinced of the body of sin within them ; their greatest sorrows would be for their

sinful propensities; neither would you wonder at any impieties and enormities in the earth, but would admire the restraints of Heaven, that they are no greater. Alas! if the Reader were left to himself, he would presently lay hands on his nearest relations, and on himself. Certainly, the reason why we turn not cannibals, why every man is not a Sodomite, a murderer, an oppressor, is, because God hath a rein on the heart, and curbs it, for the continuation of mankind, that otherwise would soon be destroyed. The great boundary of the seas, and of the ocean of corruption, is the Sovereign above. But O, how do we commend nature! Such a man hath a good nature; such a man you may trust him; he will never commit such abominations. You may as well believe a toad will not poison, or the sea will not overflow the earth, if God leaves it to itself. But to descend to particulars:—

1. How few see the corruption of their mind! How few are convinced, that “the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be!” How are our minds delighted with toys, more than with the serious mysteries of God! How few are sensible that they are as foolish and mad as any bedlams, in that they please themselves with that which should be their greatest burden, namely, sin. They are worse than the bee or ant, for these prepare for a hard winter, these provide for hereafter, whilst most people mind present things, present pleasure, present profit. They busy themselves to know what is of no consequence, but are careless of momentous and eternal matters. Few employ their minds to know God, and how he is to be worshipped and pleased; but employ themselves in unprofitable speculations, like fools and children, who prefer painted glass before jewels of value. They set more by a little mirth and pleasure, than the matters of their salvation. How are our minds enslaved to our affections; to the more brutish and ignoble parts of the soul, and we love to have it so. Through this corruption of our minds, how do we justify sin, excuse it, and plead for it! Hence also there are

swarms of idle, confused, impertinent, foolish, ridiculous thoughts, that fill our souls and duties; seldom in the day, week, or year, any conceptions of God, suitable to his majesty and holiness. How unstable are our minds and judgments; so that we are as reeds shaken with the very wind: now for duty, then soon wheeled off again; now for repenting, then tired, and soon diverted; and if we know the outside of truths, yet how often is that a bar to our closing with CHRIST, and walking in him. And yet, though these poor blind, deluded BARTIMEUSES fill all our ways, so that wherever we go we meet with them, how seldom are any convinced of this; how seldom do any cry for eye-salve, that they may see?

2. And though not only the mind, but the conscience is defiled; though there be a blindness upon it, whereby it misjudgeth, and calleth darkness light; and though it be senseless as a stone, yet few believe this corruption. Hence they take sanctuary in their consciences; their conscience bears them witness, though it be bribed and corrupted; and they think they have a good conscience, though they know not what conscience is.

3. How few are convinced of the corruption of their will! How do they wish that drunkenness, uncleanness, &c., were no sins! How do they choose to live a merry, rather than a holy, life; to be the servants of the Devil, rather than of God; to commit sin, and thereby hazard their damnation, rather than "through many tribulations to enter into the kingdom of God;" and how gladly would most take up their rest in somewhat below God, if they could but enjoy the world according to their will.

4. Few are convinced of the corruption of their affections. Though they hate what they should love, and love what they should hate; though they love sin, which they should hate, and hate and slight God, whom they should love; though all be in disorder, all be misplaced,—though God be dethroned, and sin, SATAN, and the world, be set up above all that is called good; yet few really believe that such a miserable chaos is upon them.

5. How few are sensible of the corruption of their memory! Though they are especially charged to remember God, how to get possession of him; to remember duty, how to practise it; and to remember sin, how to shun it. Yet how soon do they forget such truths, and lodge in their memories injuries, that they may avenge them; and vanities, foolish jests, unprofitable toys and tales, to please themselves therewith. You can remember how merry you were such a time, but you soon forget a sermon; if you remember any thing of it, it is that which either concerns others, or which yields you the least advantages heavenward. We can remember the fall of PETER much easier than the repentance of PETER; DAVID's adultery, but not his repentance.

Secondly, How few have been convinced that sin is the greatest evil! How few have seen it in its perfect odiousness, as that which makes men devils! How are most strangers to its pedigree, and consider not the Devil to be its father? We would be thought to have nothing to do with the Devil, nor that he had any thing to do with us: we can live in sin, and yet defy the Devil and all his works; we can make more moderate constructions of our sins, and call them frailties: but "he that commits sin is of the Devil," *i. e.*, the Devil's drudge: SATAN works in him and by him. O, with what greediness is the dung of hell devoured and swallowed! How few see sin to be contrary to the works of God! God saith, 'I will have this done;' 'I will not do it,' saith sin. 'I will have this suffered,' saith God; 'I will not suffer it,' saith sin. Nay, so great is the contest betwixt sin and God, that if it could it would un-be God. How few take notice of its contrariety to the very nature of God! God is good, sin is evil; God is pure, sin is impure. How few believe sin to be universally evil; that there is no good in it! We cannot persuade men that there is good in poverty, good in reproaches, and persecutions unto death; but easily are men persuaded there is some good in sin. How few are convinced of the miserable effects and consequences of

sin ! The wrath of God is not revealed against their unrighteousness and ungodliness so as to make their knees to tremble ; the hand-writing on the wall is not observed ; they are still alive. We cannot for our hearts persuade men to go up to heaven, to see what spoils it made there : could we herein prevail, then would they infer that there is more evil in the least sin, than there was good in all the angels in heaven : for that one sin conquered them, and spoiled them of all their beauty, and made them, of glorious creatures, to become such loathsome and hideous spectacles. Neither can we prevail with any to take a journey to Paradise, to see its venom there ; or to go to the garden, or to Mount Calvary, to see what work it did there ; or to go to hell-gate, to hear the doleful shrieks and cries which it hath caused there. Though God hath said, “ God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such a one as goeth on still in his trespasses ; ” though “ there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked ; ” though sin be the sole object of God’s hatred ; (for God loved the whole creation, till its beauty was blasted and stained by sin ;) though sin only separates between God and souls ; though it be the founder of all graves and of Tophet ; though it fill the conscience with terrors, and hell with fire and brimstone ; yet few are afflicted with the evils of it, but they drink in iniquity as water !

Thirdly, How few are sensible that they are cast by a holy and righteous law ; that they are condemned creatures ; that the wrath of God abideth on them ! Few have seen the black cloud full of woes, full of wrath, ready to empty itself upon their souls ; they take no notice, that though the sentence be not executed speedily, yet it is given forth, and there may be but a little breath, and they are gone for ever. How many senseless souls are there whose consciences were never shaken ; whose spirits were never wounded ; who never received the spirit of bondage to fear ; who never knew what a fearful expectation of judgment meant ; who go dancing to hell ! These are “ rich, and full, and needing nothing ; ” when God is about to

spew them out of his mouth: these are “wiser in their own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason.” Though we endeavour with scripture upon scripture to convince them of their sin and danger, yet they are confident and easy. Never did they break one night’s sleep upon the consideration of their lost condition by nature; never did they loath their ordinary food, or feel the smart of broken bones, as DAVID did; never did they know what a wounded spirit meant, what anguish of soul was; never did they feel GOD’s wrath, or sin, a burthen insupportable; they were never pricked at the heart, so as to cry out, “What shall I do to be saved?” Would you know the reason of all this security? They are dead in sins and trespasses. A dead condition is an insensible condition. Death deprives of sense, as well as life. The dead are not frightened with the swords and pistols at their breasts; the dead fear not, though threatened with fire and brimstone; the dead hear not, though GOD be upon Mount Ebal, thundering curses upon curses; the dead see not, though sin be so ugly a monster, and hell so frightful a place; the dead smell not, though sin stinks worse than rotten sepulchres; the dead feel not, though that which is heavier than mountains of lead be lying on their backs. Though there be so many curses upon the heads of all natural persons; though there be an entail of wrath upon the heads of the very sins they live in; though their sins are, or may be, circumstantiated to a greater degree than any of the scripture-offenders that we read of, as being committed under the open sun of the Gospel; though hell be open to receive them every moment, to entertain them with the vengeance of a justly-provoked GOD; yet few fear, few work out their salvation with weeping eyes and trembling hearts: they are still alive without the law. I pity these secure souls. How short will they fall of their hopes, and how far short of heaven!

Fourthly, How few are sensible that all this while the Devil works in them, as in his work-house; that he possesseth the heart of every unregenerate man! “The

strong man keeps the house," and so all is quiet. It was a sad day when the abomination of desolation was seen standing in the holy place : but what are abominable men to abominable devils ? They did but exercise their cruelties on the bodies of the Jews ; but how many devils have their walks in the hearts of natural men and women ? If thou art in thy blood, the Devil hath entered into thee, as sure as ever he entered into the herd of swine, and so hurried thee into base lusts, as he carried them headlong into the sea.



CHAPTER III.

Their Want of Self-Despair.

IF men are sensible of their sin and misery, yet how many are "going about to establish their own righteousness !" Though some are convinced of the ugliness of sin, of the misery by sin, yet they are not fully convinced that the Covenant of Works requires perfect, personal, and constant obedience ; that it admits not of repentance ; that it accepts not of the will for the deed ; but curseth "every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." So that if there be a vain thought, the conditions of that Covenant are broken ; and nothing save fearful expectation should seize on such a soul. Few, I say, believe this : but though they are bankrupt children of ADAM, yet they hope to set up again, and maintain themselves, without being beholden to any other for the procuring of their salvation. Hence they reform in many things ; and now, "Soul, take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up for many years," yea, for eternity ; thou art converted sure ; and so think all the neighbourhood. O what a change is here ! The man was a drunkard ; not so now. An adulterer, or profane ; but now civilized, yea, a devout man, and, "touching the

righteousness which is in the law, blameless." Now he is alive indeed ; his conscience is pacified, which before troubled him ; he can hear the word gladly, he can pray with some delight ; when before all the ordinances of **GOD** were tedious. Now he thinks, Sure I have life within me ; I am not dead. He sees not all this while that he must have life from without, and ability from without. He doth not yet say, " Mine iniquities are gone over mine head, as an heavy burthen, they are too heavy for me. Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up." He doth not see that he is dead, *i. e.*, damned, and insufficient " to think any thing as of himself, but all his sufficiency is of **GOD**." He thinks he is not utterly unable to make amends for his sins, not quite dead. He sees not that it is as easy to make new worlds, as to put up one acceptable prayer to **GOD**. He sees not that he needs an almighty power to enable him to perform his duties, and infinite satisfaction to discharge him of his debts. He is somewhat sensible of his danger by sin, but he eyes not him that " is mighty to save." He looks for help within, but not without ; he sees no absolute necessity of **CHRIST** all this while ; he sees not that there is no salvation in any other, " no other name given among men whereby we must be saved." He hopes to go to heaven through doors of his own : the door of repentance, the door of reformation, the door of good works ; hence he takes hold of the mercy of **GOD**, and the promises of pardon. " Thus have I done," saith he, " and now my case is good. O what a change is here ! " This is the case of multitudes whom **CHRIST** will not save, for they are not lost ; they think to save themselves from wrath to come. They see not that there is a satisfaction to be made which they cannot make ; wherefore their hopes are from their reformations, not from **CHRIST** ; their peace is from their performances, not from the blood of atonement ; whereas, if they saw the absolute necessity of obtaining **CHRIST** and his righteousness, they would be put off with nothing else. But oh, how hard do we find it first to take off men from

their sins, and then from confidence in their duties ! We tell men, CHRIST will have no sharer in the glory of saving lost man ; but people will at least have their works and CHRIST to divide the spoils. We advise men to lay no weight on their duties, but to lean alone on CHRIST's merits ; but in vain. "CHRIST saith, "If ye seek me, let these go their way ;" these duties, as well as these sins : but the deaf ear is turned, and we find it much easier to persuade men their sins will damn them, than their duties, whilst CHRIST is thereby neglected.



CHAPTER IV.

Their Miscarriages about their Spiritual Troubles.

IF the SPIRIT of the LORD hath convinced men of their danger by their sins, and their own righteousness, so that they still see GOD angry with them, and their souls remain under trouble and disquiet ; yet are they not guilty of some, if not all, of the following miscarriages ?

1. How few are there that justify GOD ! Few accept of the punishment of their iniquities : they do not clear GOD, as they should, from all unrighteousness. Commonly, proud hearts swell and fume against these methods of GOD. Though the filthiness of their hearts be laid open before them, yet they fall not down upon their faces in the acknowledgment of their unworthiness of mercy : few charge themselves, and acquit GOD. They cannot be brought to give GOD the glory of his righteousness, if he should condemn them to the pit of hell : they do not own the desert of damnation, and charge themselves with it as their due portion. Few say, "I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him ;" or, with DANIEL, "O LORD, righteousness belongeth unto thee ; but unto us confusion of face." How seldom do you

hear this confession in their mouths :—‘ LORD, I am thy creature, and thou mayest do with thy creature what pleaseth thee. It pleased thee to put thine image on me, to “create me upright ; but I have sought out many inventions ; I have sold myself for nought ;” I have preferred the Devil’s work before thine, and therefore thou mayest abhor me, and give me my portion among the damned ; and if I feel some sparks of hell-fire, in thy present frowns, it is of thy rich patience and mercy that they are but sparks. If thou cast me off for ever, it is but what I have deserved long ago ; it is of the LORD’s mercy that I was not hurled to hell, because of my native sinfulness ; but woe is me, I have provoked the pure eyes of thy glorious Majesty days without number. I have been a rebel of a long standing against thee ; my will hath been quarrelling with thine these many years, and therefore if I be sent to hell, thou art righteous and “clear when thou judgest.” I can blame none save myself, if I perish everlastingly ; though I have many fears and sorrows on me, yet blessed be GOD, they are not the sorrows of hell ; thanks be to the LORD that I am not yet among the damned, roaring in the pit.’ Few believe they deserve damnation : hence souls are murmuring at any affliction ; at the loss of a husband, child, estate ; as if GOD had dealt hardly with them.

2. How few, when under troubles, are willingly under them ! They see not the advantage of having their way hedged up with these thorns ; they do not receive “the spirit of bondage ;” they do not accept this punishment ; they take it not kindly at GOD’s hands ; their troubles are involuntary ; they are held in the chains against their will. How many are afraid of sorrow for sin. Some think it will spoil good faces, and their beauty may be lost through their troubles ; others think it will bring them to despair, and therefore farewell to such a Preacher : he is too terrible for their souls. Hence SAUL must have his harp to divert him ; the cards must be taken up again ; some merry books must be read ; perhaps a play

may be seen ; company must be called in : and all this to divert the soul from minding its danger : or some unskilful and unfaithful empirick shall be sent for, to sow pillows under him, that he may sleep the quieter. How few are active in their troubles ; retire, that they may search the Scriptures, and ransack^r their hearts ! How do some quarrel with their Ministers, and snarl at the books, that give them trouble of spirit !

3. How few mourn for sin upon spiritual accounts ! That their God is dishonoured, (their good and gracious God, who hath done so much for them,) doth not chiefly cut their hearts ; “Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight ;” but perhaps they are troubled for wronging themselves, endangering themselves. They cry as dogs, when they have done a fault : they fear the whip, and so they howl.

4. How many mourn for their sins, yet live in the continued practice of them ! Notwithstanding their tears, yet their hearts are in league with their lusts. Few, whilst mourning for their sins, are careful which way God may have satisfaction for the injuries that have been done unto him. The mourning of many lasts no longer than the trouble of conscience : as soon as the guilt of sin is removed, (as they hope,) their mourning ceaseth ; though the strength of sin be as great as ever.

5. Among the multitudes professing religion, how many seek for grace in order to their comfort ; (joy, peace, comfort, being their great end ;) but how few seek for comfort in order to grace !

6. How few mourn for their slighting of CHRIST ! It is more natural, and so more easy, to mourn for sins against the Law, than those against CHRIST and his Gospel : Therefore, if there be many tears shed for neglect of prayer, for theft, perjury, &c., yet how few are found mourning for undervaluing and rejecting CHRIST ! Whose soul cries out, ‘O, how unkind have I been to CHRIST ? O ! that he should come out of his FATHER’s bosom for me ; come under the Law, yea, die for me ; and yet I should keep him

out of doors; that the SON of GOD,—that “the brightness of the FATHER’s glory, and the express image of his person,” the “Upholder of all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, and sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,”—should stoop so low as to “stand at the door, and knock,” and yet that I should not let him in. Break, heart, break into small dust: be trembling all over for thy unkindnesses to so great, so rich, so good a friend! O wretch that I have been! “I abhor myself in dust before thee.” I meet with few of these mourners.



CHAPTER V.

Their ignorance of CHRIST: their seeing their Turns of CHRIST: their making base Capitulations with CHRIST.

How many are ignorant of CHRIST, and of what use he is to perishing souls! They know no more the gift of GOD than the Samaritan woman did. They know not what an excellent gift CHRIST is; that he is “the Fountain of living water;” and therefore ask nothing of him. How few know CHRIST to be their only life! If you did believe that “he that hath the SON, hath life; and he that hath not the SON of GOD, hath not life;” and that “whoso findeth me;” (CHRIST,) “findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD. But he that sinneth against me,” (CHRIST,) “wrongeth his own soul; all they that hate me,” (CHRIST,) “love death.” Upon such a conviction, what would you not give for life? ESAU will part with his birth-right to preserve his life. The woman will part with all her estate to recover health, and to secure herself from the grave. Of all blessings, we value life most; but few have such esteem of CHRIST. Few

can say, as PAUL : “ What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for CHRIST ; yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS my LORD ; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win CHRIST.” Or with DAVID : “ Whom have I in heaven but thee ? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.” Few look on CHRIST as the original of their life : that they must live, move, and have their being in CHRIST, and from CHRIST alone ; that they are dead without him : and hence their desires are not after him. If you knew that you want CHRIST more than bread and water, then would you cry out, ‘ LORD, give me CHRIST ; none but CHRIST, none but CHRIST : in him is my help, in him is my salvation.’ He is the Author of all our good affections, and of all our gracious abilities ; but, alas ! blind man sees him not in his usefulness. Men must die, and be damned, without CHRIST, but they know it not ; they know no good that CHRIST is, and no good that CHRIST brings.

Secondly, How many serve their turns of CHRIST ; close with CHRIST for their own ends ! When men have served their turns one of another, away they go : so these ; troubles they have, and ease they would have ; they have stayed off from CHRIST as long as they could : they have tried worldly comforts ; they will not do : they have tried duties ; they will give no rest : and therefore, in the terror of their spirits, they must have CHRIST ; so much of him as may give them quiet and rest. Men are weary of the fetters wherein they are held under the Law ; they would fain be delivered from SATAN that torments them, and from the sins that now stare them in the face ; they groan under the weight of the wrath of GOD, but not under the body of sin : SATAN, as a tormentor, is unwelcome ; but as a tempter, is still liked well enough. ‘ O I am afraid I shall go to hell ! O if there be no other way to escape but through CHRIST ; O then for CHRIST !’ Then sermons and Ministers are welcome, in hopes of bringing in (not so

much CHRIST, as) peace and comfort to the troubled spirit. So that men use CHRIST, as sick men take meat; not for love of it, or liking to it; (for their stomachs rise against it;) but for fear of death, which makes them force themselves to eat. Though many come to CHRIST, it is by constraint, not willingly; not with delight, not as a healthy man comes to a full table to feed with pleasure. Many, to avoid a greater mischief,—to avoid damnation,—to avoid eternal torments, will apply to CHRIST in their sore extremities: they will then make large confessions; take up great resolutions against their sins; pray to GOD as they never prayed before: but upon ease to the impostumed matter; upon recoveries out of their troubles; they become, if not profane, yet worldly, and negligent of CHRIST, his person, his laws, his concernments.

I appeal to thy conscience, whether CHRIST be valued, be looked after, save in a strait? When trouble is upon thee, then this Physician is sent for; but when the pang is over, the Physician's company is too chargeable, is no way desirable; the sooner he turns his back the better. Is it not so? If CHRIST in the day, as well as in the night, lies chief between thy breasts, thou hast cause to say, "Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy Name." But I fear CHRIST in the time of contagion shall go for something, but CHRIST in days of health and ease shall be valued no more than a mere cipher. It is one thing to take CHRIST to pacify the conscience, and another to take him to purify the heart.

Thirdly, How many have base capitulations with CHRIST! Many come running to CHRIST, and ask him, (with the man in the Gospel,) "Good Master, what shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?" CHRIST tells him and them, "Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me." But as he, so they are discontented: "And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved, for he had great possessions." Undoubtedly many have some glimpse of CHRIST's glory,

and run to CHRIST, whilst others deride him ; but they like not the price that CHRIST sets ; they would have CHRIST on their own terms. CHRIST's terms are to have the heart. " My son, give me thy heart ; " do not lend it only, but give ; give it cheerfully, give it me now : give me thy heart, to be framed and fashioned by me ; to be stamped and sealed by me ; be no longer thine own : give me thine heart, do not keep it to thyself ; lay up and leave thine heart in my hand, for me to keep it for thee.

But, alas, how shamefully do we break with CHRIST ! We are content to give CHRIST the body, the outward man, the ear, the tongue, the head ; but we reserve our hearts for the service of the world and of sin. Or if we are persuaded to give the heart, yet it is but a divided heart, not the whole heart. " Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD with all thine heart," saith CHRIST ; but pride, covetousness, or voluptuousness have a share. Few see themselves so miserable without CHRIST, as to come up to the price ; they will not treat with CHRIST, unless they may have the pleasure of sin, and may fulfil the lusts of the flesh ; but if conscience be disquieted and troublesome, then they make new offers ; they will leave many sins, they will except but one ; if one sin and CHRIST may share the heart betwixt them, the man is contented ; but few are contented that " every knee should bow," that every sin be parted from. If the conscience be not quiet upon this, then, as mariners throw overboard their goods, their jewels, their bales of silk, in a tempest, to ease the vessel, which they wish for in a calm, and labour to fetch up again ; so many will part from all the practice of sin, throw all overboard, though much against their wills, in hopes of riding out the storm, and then wish for their lusts again, yea, with the dog, return unto the vomit.

Again, many like somewhat of CHRIST, but not all of CHRIST ; they like his heaven, but not his commandments ; his sacrifice, but not his service. They would take of his mercy, his peace ; but not his grace, his holiness. What saith CHRIST ? " If you will have my comforts, you must

have me too ; if my pardons, my person too : you must take me, as well as mine ; you must have me, as well as my heaven.' This makes many go away sorrowful.

Again : 'If you will have me, (saith CHRIST,) you must be at some cost, at some pains and trouble to enjoy me. Nothing of me or mine is got without difficulty and industry ; your cold prayers will not suffice ; your lazy hearings are not enough : you must watch your hearts all the day long ; you must make a covenant with your eyes, and keep your lips as with a bridle. Are ye content ?' 'O no,' saith the slothful ; 'I would go to heaven on a feather-bed : I would be content to pray now and then, morning and evening, so I may be at my own disposal all the following hours.'

'Three alls I expect you to part with,' saith CHRIST.
 1. All your sinful lusts, all the ways of the old ADAM.
 2. All your worldly advantages. "By faith MOSES, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of PHARAOH's daughter ; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of GOD, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." He that hath all these must be ready to part with all. 3. All self, self-will, self-righteousness, self-sufficiency, self-confidence, and self-seekings.' But O how do many pretenders to CHRIST hate these proposals !



CHAPTER VI.

Their Delays to close with CHRIST.

How many delay in their coming to CHRIST ! And O what indignities are herein put upon him ! How long doth he stand at the doors of sinners, ere they let him in !

“My head” (saith CHRIST) “is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.” Though he limit sinners to a day; “To-day, if you will hear his voice;” though our life be “even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away,” ready every moment to expire; though we must needs be damned, if we believe not in him before we die; though “now is the accepted time;” though the SPIRIT may never invite more; though we are not sure of another day of grace more; yet how do many hazard their eternity, rather than they will be yet beholden to CHRIST for life and salvation! Though they may have his righteousness, his redemption, his Spirit, his image, his heaven, his glory, his love, his inheritance, by coming to him; yet what trifling delays are men’s hearts filled with! Though they are actually condemned by the Law for their capital offences, for high treason against the Majesty of Heaven, and pardons be offered freely by JESUS CHRIST, if they will but accept of him and them; yet so is CHRIST fallen in the account of them who yet are called Christians, that they will hazard their souls, rather than they will yet be so much beholden to CHRIST. This desperate enmity against CHRIST and his offers is the condemning sin: “This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.” All other sins are nothing to this. What? When God hath limited thee to a day, wilt thou, darest thou, carelessly mis-spend that one day, when thou art not sure of another? How darest thou, having so many ways transgressed against this God, having provoked him to wrath by so frequent breaches of his holy Law, to add to all these iniquities thy trifling delays of coming into CHRIST, that thou mayest be pardoned? How dost thou, when lying under the wrath of a justly incensed God, send away CHRIST, as FELIX did PAUL, with “Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee.” When, wretch, is that convenient season? Is it then, when thou hast served the Devil some weeks, months, or years longer? When thou hast spent all the flower of thy time

and strength in the service of hell? Must, then, CHRIST have the dregs of thy time? Must he have nothing but SATAN's leavings? Doubtless for these delays is CHRIST's wrath ready to be poured out upon this nation to the uttermost. "The LORD JESUS shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that obey not the Gospel of our LORD JESUS CHRIST." By delaying to hearken to CHRIST's calls and invitations, thou tellest CHRIST to his face that he is not "altogether lovely," that he is not "the fairest of ten thousand," that there is somewhat in Sin's service and the Devil's that is more desirable than can be had in his. But GOD alone knows how soon his SPIRIT shall cease striving with these poor souls, and how long they shall be within a capacity of obeying the heavenly call. The Jews have a rule, that if a man vows any service to GOD before he dies, he must do it presently, because he may die presently. Death and hell are described coming on horseback in full speed; ask thyself, therefore, JEREMIAH's question: "Can I outrun these horsemen?" However, through the wonderful averseness there is in men's hearts from CHRIST, they stay and linger, like LOT in Sodom, that if GOD do not work a miracle upon them, and for them, they will perish in the flames. One hath a wife, another a yoke of oxen, all of them some business or other, to detain them for the present from CHRIST. There are several sorts of these delaying professors.

1. Some, from their love to their lusts, and to the sensualities, which they fear when they are under CHRIST's yoke they shall be bereaved of, delay coming to CHRIST. Sin hath so rooted itself in their hearts and affections, that they are loath to take a final farewell thereof, loath to mortify their earthly members; sin is so prevalent with them, that they had rather part from their right eye, hand, and foot, than part from their sins; hence they choke their convictions what they can, admit of any pleasures and diversions to wear out the impressions that are made in their consciences, that they may still lodge sin in their

bosoms, and not come to CHRIST ; hence they labour to quench the SPIRIT of GOD, and will not use the means whereby they may be fully converted to CHRIST. They pretend they are desirous of CHRIST, only they doubt whether CHRIST is willing to receive them ; but that which lieth at the bottom is, they are loath to leave their darling lusts, and loath to pray and watch their hearts, and to do what GOD requires and expects at their hands, in order to conversion. You may imagine GOD is highly provoked hereby ; for GOD to send his SON unto you, the best jewel that ever lay in his bosom, and for you to neglect and undervalue him, and prefer swinish lusts before him, it is a plain argument that you never saw sin aright, and that you do not credit GOD in his discoveries of the glory of his SON. You do not believe you are so miserable without CHRIST as indeed you are ; you slight the greatest gift that ever GOD conferred upon the children of men ; you make void the great counsels of GOD, all the thoughts of his wisdom and grace, in contriving such a way by JESUS CHRIST, to save you from wrath to come ; you also frustrate the expectations of GOD, for surely, saith GOD, “they will reverence my SON ;” whereas, by your trifling delays, you tell GOD and men that you believe not any advantage you shall have by the SON of GOD ; you think it will be to your loss to receive the LORD of glory.

2. Others, in imitation of the old ADAM, believe the Devil before GOD, credit his suggestions beyond all GOD’s discoveries. O ! what a black-grained sin is this ! Saith the Devil, ‘You have sinned against light, and therefore CHRIST will not favour you.’ Saith GOD, “Let the wicked forsake his way and his thoughts, and I will abundantly pardon.” Saith the Devil, ‘You have sinned more than others, you have provoked GOD exceedingly, and therefore never hope for saving benefit by CHRIST’s death.’ Saith GOD, “Cease to do evil, learn to do well ; come now, and let us reason together : though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.” Saith the Devil, ‘You have sinned, not only against the Law, but against

the Gospel; you have neglected **CHRIST**.' Saith **GOD**, "Every sin against the Son of Man shall be forgiven." Saith **SATAN**, 'You have no right to **CHRIST**; it is in vain to come.' Saith **GOD**, 'Whosoever believeth shall not perish.' Saith **SATAN**, '**GOD** never intended you good, you are a vessel of dishonour.' Saith **GOD**, "As I live I desire not the death of a sinner, but that he turn and live." Now I pray consider whether **GOD** takes it kindly at your hands, that you should lay more weight on the Father of Lies, than on the faithful **GOD**, "who hath promised, and cannot lie;" who must cease to be **GOD** in that very moment wherein he ceaseth to be true. You believe the enemy more than the friend. O what a provocation is this!

3. Others, through the pride of their hearts, will not come (as yet) unto **CHRIST**. They have no mind to "submit to the righteousness of faith." He is a proud man who, when condemned, will not submit, will not stoop so low as to accept of a pardon. I must indeed correct myself: Men are willing to be justified, but they would have their duties to purchase the favour of **GOD**; they scorn to be beholden to **CHRIST**. Thousands will die and be damned, rather than they will have a pardon upon the sole account of **CHRIST**'s merits and obedience. O the cursed pride of the heart! When will men cease to be wiser than **GOD**? To limit **GOD**? When will men be content with **GOD**'s method of saving them by the blood of the everlasting covenant? How dare men thus to prescribe to the infinitely wise **GOD**? Is it not enough for thee that thy destruction is of thyself? But must thy salvation be of thyself too? Wilt thou be damned unless thou mayest be thine own Saviour? **GOD** is willing. Art thou so proud, as that thou wilt not be beholden to **GOD**? Thou wilt deserve, or have nothing; and so scornest to submit to **GOD**'s method for salvation by **CHRIST** and his righteousness alone.

4. Others, through their ignorance and weakness, stay off from **CHRIST**, in hopes of working that which cannot

be wrought without CHRIST. Could they see all their sins subdued; were their hearts more prepared to lodge so great a friend, they would then close with the promises; whereas, they should come to CHRIST as soon as they apprehend they are poor, blind, and naked. But, alas, a sight of their wants is a bar to their coming. They would have the fruit first, and then the tree; have their hearts purified, and then come to CHRIST. GOD comes by his SPIRIT to convince them of their sinful nature, on purpose that, seeing their necessity of CHRIST, they might fly to him as their City of Refuge, and they are driven farther off by the sight of their sins and unworthiness; whereas they should come to CHRIST as to a magazine and store-house, and wait on him in the use of means, for the broken heart, the pure heart, and all other spiritual mercies, which their souls are yet destitute of. "O faithless generation! How long shall I be with you, how long shall I suffer you?" CHRIST is put to the utmost of his patience, to bear with unbelief.

5. Others, through some kind of seeming modesty and tenderness, delay coming to CHRIST. They are afraid of abusing the holiness and justice of GOD, if they should hope for any privilege in the blood of CHRIST. 'What! mercy for me? Me, a proud wretch, an unclean wretch, an enemy to GOD, and a sligher of his SPIRIT? I deserve nothing but hell. What! heaven for me! I have affronted the Majesty of the great GOD, and what! this GOD bestow CHRIST on me! Who can believe that the just GOD, who turned the glorious angels to hell for one transgression, will love me, who have committed more sins in number than the hairs of my head, than the sands on the sea-shore? And what, mercy for me! Shall I have CHRIST? Will CHRIST accept of me, who have wronged him for so many years together?'

O! how long doth many an awakened soul hang in doubts and fears, ere it will venture upon CHRIST's graciousness alone; and then, when the soul hath long stood out, the fears increase. 'I have refused CHRIST so long;

to all my former transgressions I have added this, my putting off CHRIST and salvation, when freely tendered, and therefore sure I may not now come.' And now if CHRIST offers them mercy, still they are fearful; they cannot believe that CHRIST is serious and real. O! by these jealousies of CHRIST, you provoke him not a little. You are ready to say, This is too good news to be true. What is this but to say, The Gospel is false; it is no true and faithful word; it is not to be received with "all acceptance, that JESUS CHRIST came into the world to save" the greatest of "sinners." This is the great sin that made CHRIST weep. You seldom find CHRIST weeping over the idolaters of the world: I find him not weeping over Sodom and Gomorrah, but if Jerusalem refuse CHRIST, this makes him weep indeed. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, O if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that concern thy peace!" It troubles CHRIST to see thee go about to make GOD a liar, and to be denied thy affections, for whose sake he submitted to his Father's frowns. O! this sin of unbelief hath great unkindness in it, and therefore no wonder if CHRIST upbraids for it. A man is properly upbraided, when the kindness that hath been done to him is revealed to him, together with his ungratefulness: but what shall I say? So far are souls from coming to CHRIST, that they do seldom heal this sin, and seldom seek to GOD for power against it; and though men pretend they cannot come to CHRIST, yet the truth is, they will not.



CHAPTER VII.

Their taking CHRIST partially; without conjugal Affections; and without considering the Cost they may be at.

IF at length men are persuaded to come to CHRIST, yet they take him partially, both as King, Prophet, and Priest.

As their King, they are contented he shall rule in many things, but not in all. Some part of CHRIST's commandments they will submit to ; they pick and choose : here they will obey ; in another thing, I pray have me excused. Few are brought to say, 'Any thing, LORD ; I am brought to thy foot, (as the man of the East was,) ready to go after thee to the ends of the earth.' As their Prophet. Here they divide too : many things they will learn of CHRIST, but they must partly lean to their own understandings. They are also partial in their close with CHRIST as their Priest. They hope to be saved partly by his mediation, and partly by their own. As the Papists, so many Protestants are for a divided CHRIST ; few are for exalting CHRIST alone, so as to renounce all other lords who have had dominion over them, and to count all other teachers besides CHRIST as vain and weak. Few renounce all their own righteousness as dung, to put the crown on CHRIST's head alone, to make CHRIST their alone mediator, their alone intercessor. How many hope to be pardoned, partly by CHRIST, and partly by their new obedience ! They lay their title to GOD, heaven, and glory, partly on CHRIST's merits, and partly on their own deserts. Few, whose hopes are founded on CHRIST's satisfaction alone : their hopes of acceptance with GOD are more from their reformations than from CHRIST's entering within the veil. If they have peace of conscience, they ascribe it to their prayers, rather than to CHRIST's intercession ; and if they pray in secret in their closet, and in their family too, when both before were neglected, they hope to pass by this bridge to heaven ; but if it be too short they will set CHRIST to patch up what is wanting, that they may land on the other shore. CHRIST is still used only upon necessity, and to make up the want of somewhat else ; but very few dare rest on the merits of CHRIST alone. To few is CHRIST made of GOD "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." But let me tell you, You must receive CHRIST entirely ; all CHRIST, and all of CHRIST, or you are not Christians, though you may have a

name to live. These are indispensable terms on which **CHRIST** will insist,—all or none : **CHRIST** as a refiner, as well as a Saviour; **CHRIST** as a Lord, as well as a sacrifice.

If men are persuaded in the horror of their spirits to take **CHRIST** as Priest, Prophet, and King, as a mere shift, to escape their troubles and sorrows, yet their hearts stand off from **CHRIST** as a Husband; they have not conjugal affections to him, their hearts are not brought over to him, they receive him not into their bosoms, into their choicest affections. **CHRIST** is not the chief Corner-stone; whereas to them that believe he is precious, exceeding precious. Few, like **PAUL**, are determined to know nothing save **CHRIST**, and him crucified. One **CHRIST** was enough to take up **PAUL**'s thoughts to eternity: he did not care what he was ignorant of, so he knew **CHRIST**. Though he was brought up at **GAMALIEL**'s feet, he laid down all his knowledge at his feet.

1. Are your hearts so drawn to **CHRIST**, as to count him the most necessary good in all the world; and all other things to be but adjuncts; so that you are able to live without them, but not without **CHRIST**? Liberty is sweet to a believer; but he can live in a prison, yea, and sing there, if **CHRIST** be within the grate. Bread is sweet; but he can live in a wilderness, (a desolate howling desert,) and sing there too, as **MOSES** did, if **CHRIST** be there, yea, and prefer it before Canaan. A wilderness with **CHRIST**, is more precious than a Canaan without him. If ye were true believers, the world would not be accounted among the necessities. One thing is necessary; one, not many. Other things may a little refresh; but **CHRIST** is the necessary.

2. Is he, in a sense, the only good to your souls? Is nothing else good separated from **CHRIST**? Give a believer what you will without **CHRIST**, it weighs nothing; he droops as the marygold when the sun withdraws. There is none good but **CHRIST**; riches are miscalled good; they are not good save as they relate to **CHRIST**, as they come from **CHRIST**, from that Bosom of Love, and as they advance **CHRIST**, and bring **CHRIST** and the soul to nearer

communion. If the world, in its glory and fulness, hinder communion with CHRIST, by deadening, flattening, and distracting the heart, it becomes a burthen ; he is burthened with friends, relations, enjoyments of all sorts, that rob him of CHRIST, that eclipse the face of the Sun of Righteousness, through their unhappy interposals. What was gain is counted loss. As he enjoyeth much or little of CHRIST, he laughs or weeps, he riseth or falleth. In CHRIST are riches, honours, and friends ; yea, prayers, sermons, sacraments. The LORD is the Temple : he is all things, and in all things ; not only by way of merit,—whatever they have or expect, is on CHRIST's account ; not only by way of conveyance,—through him we have all good communicated ; not only by way of causality,—as he worketh in all ; but he is all virtually ; he is instead of all things to them ; he makes up the defect of all things. If he have no estate, no friends, no liberty, no health, yet the believer wanteth nothing : “As having nothing, and yet possessing all things.” Thus the woman told the persecutor, when he threatened to deprive her of her husband, “CHRIST is my husband.” Look to your affections, and then you will have cause to cry, “My leanness ; woe unto me, I am a dry tree.”

How few Christians have, in closing with CHRIST, considered the cost they may be at ! They were told of the cross, but the cross was at a great distance, and things, when remote, seem little. How many little study the import of that word,—Cross ! What a shameful, painful, tedious death it imports ! Something of trouble they would undergo for CHRIST, but really they never thought of dying for CHRIST,—of spilling their heart's blood for CHRIST ; so that they did not close with CHRIST understandingly. Either they were ignorant of CHRIST's person, or of the consequents of closing with him ; that they should “be hated of all men for his namesake ;” that they must “through much tribulation enter into his kingdom ;” that they shall “be put out of the synagogues, and that the time cometh that whosoever killeth them will think he doth God service.” Hence, when unexpectedly “the rain

descends, the floods come, and the winds blow and beat upon their houses ; ” (the stately spiritual buildings which they have been erecting ;) they not only totter, but fall ; and great is their fall. How many in such times put away “ a good conscience, and concerning faith have made shipwreck ! ” How many are “ trees, whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots. ” They see not, that the riches of CHRIST will make them amends for all the losses and perils ; they cannot balance the troubles of the flesh with the comforts of the SPIRIT ; the present evil things with the future inheritance in heaven. These poor souls (O that my heart could bleed for them !) were willing to come up to some of CHRIST’s terms ; to lose a little, nay, to suffer many things ; but they cannot endure to lose life. O my soul ! weep in secret for them : God will not abate a point of what he requires ; he expects that we “ take up the cross daily ; ” that we hate life itself, as well as whatsoever else is near and dear unto us. The conditions are irreversible ; he will never stoop lower : this makes many a man to go away sorrowful. I beseech thee, Reader, to go over with the work of conversion again, now the cross is in sight, now tribulation ariseth : now let him see whether CHRIST is better than name, liberty, friends, relations, livelihood, and life itself ; and whether he can believe, that “ he that will save his life, shall lose it, and he that will lose his life for CHRIST’s sake, shall find it ; ” and that with advantage.



CHAPTER VIII.

Their shuffling together false Signs of closing with CHRIST.

How many shuffle together a company of false signs of closing with CHRIST ! How do they count them true and

infallible, which are not so, and so deceive themselves, as if they had CHRIST and real grace within them ! Excuse me, if I bring in some of their pleas, and answer them briefly.

1. ‘I see a beauty in the Church and people of God.’ So did BALAAM : “How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel ! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river sides, and as cedar trees besides the waters.

2. ‘I have some sights of another world, and I desire to spend an eternity with the saints.’ So had BALAAM ; and did not he desire so much ? “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.”

3. ‘When I think of the day of judgment, I am affected with it ; whereas before I was sottish, and secure.’ So was FELIX. “As PAUL reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, FELIX trembled.”

4. ‘I am an orthodox Protestant.’ So thou mayest be a Teacher too ; thou mayest not only “know God’s will, and approve the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the Law, but confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge, and of the truth in the Law,” and yet fall short of CHRIST, and of heaven.

5. ‘I live inoffensively ; none can lay any thing to my charge.’ But was not PAUL, “touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless,” at the same time he was persecuting the Church of God ?

6. ‘I have obeyed the commandments of God for a long time.’ So had the young man in the Gospel : he said unto CHRIST, “All these things I have kept from my youth up.”

7. ‘I have joy in the ordinances of God : the word of the LORD is sweet and precious. I know the time when it was not so.’ But did not HEROD “hear the word of God gladly ?”

8. ‘But I pray, and pray oft, as well as hear, and there-

fore is it not well ? ' It may be ill enough, if thou hast no better evidence. "When you make many prayers," (when you multiply prayer, when you add prayer to prayer,) "yet I will not hear."

9. 'I consult Ministers for my soul, and have high attainments.' But wherein dost thou go beyond those of whom it is said, "They seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God ; they ask of me the ordinances of justice ; they take delight in approaching to God." If thou hast not better things than these, thou hast not savingly closed with JESUS CHRIST ; for as yet thou hast nothing that accompanieth salvation ; from which salvation cannot be separated.

O ! I cannot but pity these almost-Christians. Almost-Christians, and almost saved. I may say they are not far from the kingdom of God ; and yet in a sense they are farther than any others. Our great difficulty is to undeceive these ; I mean to take off these fig-leaves with which they have covered themselves. It is hard work to persuade a proud Pharisee that all his righteousness will not stead him, that he must fling away all, that he must have something else to show for heaven and glory. How have men fled in our faces, when we have told them, that yet they have nothing that is essential to a Christian, no more than a picture hath of the essence of a man ! You may imagine a man that hath bestowed twenty or thirty years in building, how loath he is to pull down all again. Though he fears the foundation is but on the sands, he will rather venture, than begin all anew : he is even ashamed to unravel all the clue of his ungrounded confidences. What ! begin upon a new bottom ! No, not he ; and so CHRIST and he part. He takes his supposed grace to be CHRIST, or at least, that there must be CHRIST where such changes are ; and so cries out, "Soul, take thine ease ; thou hast goods laid up for many years ;" yea, for eternity.

CHAPTER IX.

Their Ungodliness, their Ignorance, their Errors, &c.

HAVE not many who professed religion been ungodly men, ἀσεβείς,—men without worship! If to deny or withhold any part of that honour that is due to GOD, be ungodliness; how much ungodliness has there been, and is there still among us? Which of us hath not been guilty of not giving GOD his right or due honour? Have not we sucked in ungodly principles? As, that it is in vain to worship GOD; there is no happiness (comparable to what the world doth afford) in communion with GOD; this world must be looked after, whatever becomes of conscience. Have we not been guilty of ungodly thoughts? Have not we thought that GOD is not so harsh, but we may take liberty in sinning; that he taketh no notice of what we think, speak, and do. Have not we spoken ungodly words? Have not we uttered those hard speeches which ungodly sinners speak? Have not we spoken against GOD's servants? Yea, have we been afraid to speak against his servant MOSES? And have not many of our deeds been ungodly? GOD hath always been sorely provoked by ungodliness: the flood swept away the world of the ungodly. But yet we might have been ungodly under the Law at a cheaper rate than under the Gospel; because the Gospel gives us more clear and certain notions of GOD's excellency and glory, and lays more obligations upon us to respect GOD, and therefore is called "a doctrine according to godliness." "The ungodly shall not stand in judgment," neither in the world to come nor in this world. The day of judgment is appointed on purpose to take vengeance of ungodly persons.

First, Have not some been, and still are, altogether ignorant of GOD? May it not be said to many of us, "Ye worship ye know not what?" Do not many professors worship GOD upon no other account than the Romans

did their JUPITER, or the Ephesians their DIANA, *viz.*, because he is the GOD of the nation wherein they were born ; because he was their forefathers' GOD. Have not we worshipped GOD by tradition, more than out of conviction of judgment ? Hath not our worship been "to the unknown GOD ?" GOD is truly, in a scriptural sense, unknown to all that do not know him experimentally and practically. Now, "have we tasted and seen that the LORD is gracious ?" Have not we said we knew GOD, and yet kept not his commandments ? He that saith so "is a liar, and the truth is not in him : hereby know we that we know Him, if we keep his commandments." If we do not thus know GOD, we are none of his children. He hath no child so little, but he knoweth his Father : "they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest." Our being the people of GOD in profession, will not secure us from ruin. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." The LORD JESUS will come in flaming fire, to render vengeance on us ; for he will so deal with all "that know not GOD."

Secondly, How erroneous have we been ! None can be such a stranger to our Israel, as to be ignorant that a spirit of delusion hath been let abroad, from Dan to Beersheba, so that the pillars of religion are shaken, the most concerning truths questioned, if not exploded with scorn. Have not some made GOD the author of sin ? Have not some denied CHRIST'S Deity ? How many have denied the Trinity of Persons ? How many, under pretence that the law of works binds not, have abrogated all the laws of CHRIST ? How many have, under pretence of advancing the SPIRIT'S testimony, cried down all marks and signs ? How many have held, that the doctrine of repentance, fasting, and humiliation, are too legal for the spirit of a Christian ? How many have been altogether for inspirations, and professed themselves above the sphere of ordinances ? How many have accounted it their highest perfection to sin away all tenderness of conscience ?

How many thousand souls have perished by these delu-

sions ? And what a dishonour hath come to the Christian religion by reason thereof, I cannot express. ‘Certainly,’ (saith BISHOP HALL,) ‘there is more deadly mischief, and higher offence to GOD in them, than in those practical evils, which honest hearts abhor. These, as they are immediate fruit of our spiritual part, so they more immediately strike at the GOD of spirits in his truth and holiness ; and as religion is the highest concernment of the soul, so the depravation of religion must needs be the most dangerous and damnable.’

But, alas ! how little have we been affected with the flood cast out of the serpent’s mouth after the woman ? Though the trumpet hath sounded, “Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth,” because of spiritual plagues, we have been puffed up, and have not mourned. We have not considered this judgment as coming from the LORD, as a token of his wrath, in giving up so many of our countrymen “to strong delusions, to believe a lie.” We have showed little zeal for GOD’s glory, that hath been blemished by these detestable things ; neither have we pitied the many that have followed these pernicious ways. How little have we mourned for them, though the Apostle saith, “their damnation slumbereth not.”

How few means have we used for their reducement ! Hardly put up a prayer for them ; not admonished them, but let them alone to perish in their delusions ; not so much as requested an able Minister to have recourse to these poor deluded souls, in order to the turning them from the idols of their own brains.

How little have we endeavoured to strengthen ourselves, to prepare antidotes against this infection ! We have not studied the Scriptures, that we might warn the unruly, and resist gainsayers, and be established in the present truths ; but, though we have seen so many shipwreck their faith and consciences, yet we have been high-minded, and have not feared.

Have we not been guilty of not expressing our dislike of the ways of heretics as we should ? We have not shunned

them as we ought. To maintain a party, to strengthen a faction, how have we too much countenanced them! Their fellowship hath not been enough avoided. How little have we regarded these apostolical injunctions:—"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. And if any man obey not our word, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." We have shunned the house where one with the plague-sore dwells; but we have not withdrawn "from them that cause to err from the words of knowledge."

What shall I say? We have not so heartily and vigorously "contended for the faith which was once," and but once, "delivered to the saints," as we ought. The Lord humble us for our lukewarmness. Sure we have not been "valiant for the truth upon the earth." I do not in all this go about to justify undue rigours. God knows we have been too severe against some things of less moment; we have had too much zeal about mint and anise; we have been too imposing of what lies dark and obscure in the book of God, and this while the enemy's tares have been suffered to grow, and the fundamentals of our religion endangered. But that which hath been England's sin, is too much permitting and countenancing damnable doctrines. When God hath said, "Who is on my side? Who?" We have hardly answered for ourselves: we have been doubtful in the faith; not quite on, nor quite off; but staggering and tottering. Our religion hath been rather opinion than faith; so that we have stood looking on as neuters; whilst heretics have "made merchandise of souls with feigned words." The great truths of God have lain loose upon our hearts; they have not been "fastened by the Master of the Assemblies, as nails in a sure place;" and having little experience of what we profess to know, hence lukewarmness followeth of course.

O how, by reason of the great defection amongst us,

hath the “way of truth been evil spoken of!” The common enemy fasteneth all upon religion. They will not distinguish between truth and error ; but if any that had been called a Christian fell into any damnable errors or practices, all Christians suffered thereby. And though some amongst us have, by confessions of faith, and otherwise, borne witness against errors, yet doubtless our consciences will tell us, that we have not by fastings, prayers, studies, and all endeavours, improved all our time and spirits for drying up the flood of the serpent, the soul-destroying flood, as we should ; but if we have had any spirit, we have let it forth upon them that have crossed us about little points, rather than against them who have shaken the foundations of our religion.



CHAPTER X.

Their Want of Love to God.

WANT of love to GOD is another great branch of ungodliness abounding among the professors of religion. This is so great a branch of ungodliness, that CHRIST hath reduced all the commandments of the first table, concerning the worship of GOD, to this,—“Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and all thy might.” Indeed every one pretends to love GOD : I hardly ever met with a person but said he loved GOD. But GOD may say truly, ‘How canst thou say, I love thee, when thy heart is not with me?’ GOD is used, and the world is enjoyed. If GOD comes empty-handed, or with his hands full of trouble, farewell. They like GOD whilst they enjoy their pleasures too ; whilst they may not be infringed. Let but a few things be considered, and we shall see how much want there is of love to GOD in CHRIST.

1. Whom we love we are not ashamed of. The mother's love is such to her child, and God's to us. He is not ashamed to be called our God. But do not we conceal our title to God in some companies? How do we throw off our livery, and dare not to be known to have walked with God!

2. Parents are troubled when their children are dishonoured, and so children when their fathers; but are our souls vexed with the filthy conversation of the men of Sodom? Where are the rivers of waters? Where is the horror because men keep not God's commandments?

3. Did we love God, we should trust him. We dare trust our very lives in a friend's hands; but we dare not so trust God. What would a man give that he had but his life and health in his own disposal! When he is poor, he had rather it was in his own hand to supply his wants, than in God's; for he thinks it would go better with him. We trust God for little. We think ourselves quite undone, when we have nothing save a God and a promise to trust to.

4. How little do we joy in the presence of God and CHRIST, and grieve for their absence! Is God All in the want of all, and is God the All in the enjoyment of all? Can we say, "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us?" When we have no fig-tree left, can we "rejoice in the God of our salvation?" Can we say, "Take all, Ziba, now that my LORD is come, now that the LORD stoops to dwell in houses of clay?" O Worldlings! take your riches, and make the best of them; I envy you not; I have enough in God. Do we so grieve for the absence of God and CHRIST, that nothing but God and CHRIST can make amends? O that our happiness, life, comforts, were folded up in God and CHRIST! Can we live no more without God and CHRIST than a beam without the sun?

5. True lovers are thoughtful to please the beloved. Are we so to please God? A true lover of God is always proving "what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." He is still searching, that he may know

more wherein he may please God, as willing always to be more useful for God ; but how seldom do we ask our hearts, what way we may walk in all well pleasing ?

6. True lovers are open-handed, and bountiful to God. They bestow readily and freely any thing they have on him ; they will part with their Isaacs, their dearest things. Will we ? When God calls for limbs, can we say, farewell to them ? Are there not some things so dear to us, that we cannot spare them to CHRIST ? Are we so taken with CHRIST, that our hearts are disengaged from the love of other things ? Is every thing vile but CHRIST ? Is all you part from instantly supplied in the love and smiles of CHRIST ?

7. True lovers are wont to praise each other. But how seldom do we set forth the praises of CHRIST ? Love is full of eloquence. DAVID thought seven times a day too little, and therefore he called all the creatures of heaven and earth, air and sea, to praise God ; the dragons in the deep must not be silent. True lovers praise God as much as they can ; they exalt God to the utmost of their power, and then, from a sense that God is above all their praise, they would have every thing that hath breath to praise the LORD.

8. Did you love God, you would love every thing of God. Do you love his justice, his holiness ? True love to CHRIST sticks not barely in the person of CHRIST, but reacheth to all that have an union with him. Do we love CHRIST mystical, as well as personal ? Are we of catholic spirits ? The Apostle is peremptory, and brandeth them all as liars that pretend to love God and CHRIST, and do not love their brethren.

9. True lovers of God thirst after nearer communion with God : “ My soul followeth hard after thee.” The soul still encroacheth upon God : “ Let me see thy glory,” saith MOSES ; though he saw more than mortals were commonly permitted to behold : yet much would have more. “ As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God,

for the living **GOD**. When shall I come and appear before **GOD**? A true lover of **GOD** is under a holy impatience till he ceaseth to see darkly in a glass; he would fain see with open face. ‘O!’ saith such a soul, ‘the distance between **CHRIST** and me is too great; I cannot but groan earnestly, when I consider I am absent from the **LORD**, whilst present in the body. **LORD**, I will die, that I may enjoy thee; I will not live, but I will die; I desire to die, that I may see **CHRIST**; and refuse to live, that I may live with **CHRIST**.’ The contracts and espousals content not the true lover; but he longs for the marriage-day. Here are clouds that oft pass betwixt **GOD** and my soul. O that I were above them! Here, if I see and enjoy, the fear of losing so sweet a sight abates the comfort of fruition; but then welcome an eternal day, that shall never have a night.

10. If you loved **GOD**, his commandments would not be grievous to you. Love cannot be easily posed: love hath a kind of almightiness in it; so that heavy burdens are made light; and almost impossible things become feasible. But of how many things do we say, ‘What a weariness is it!’ How are you haled by conscience, and by the terrors of the Law, unto duties? How, like slaves chained to galleys, you must work, though sore against your will? Did you love, you would count nothing tedious, save dulness in his service. Sin would only be the weight. O the burden of formality, pride, and anger! But his “yoke is easy, and his burden light.”

11. Did you love **GOD**, you would be jealous lest it should go ill with **GOD**’s affairs. The loving mother trembleth lest the child should suffer when she is from it. But, alas! how few are there whose hearts tremble because of the Ark! Do you really fear, lest formality should eat out the power of godliness; lest your trades should spoil your communion with **GOD**?

You may easily imagine, the want of love to **GOD** must needs be a great provocation. What an indignity is it to the husband, that the wife loves the slave before him?

The world should be your slave; but it hath got the heart; and CHRIST must “stand without doors till his locks are wet.” O that GOD should stoop so low as to love you! This goodly fabric of heaven and earth had not been erected, but as a stage whereon the LORD GOD Almighty would show his love to you. And did he not, in the fullness of time, purchase you by the blood of his first-born, yea, by his only-begotten SON, and for this very end, that he might gain your love, as well as reveal his own love? Sure you should cast back GOD’s beams of love upon himself. This is all he expects: “My son, give me thine heart.” All the command he lays upon you is, in one word, to love him. GOD might have commanded our children to be sacrificed, to pass through the fire. O what a favour is it to love the LORD! That GOD will honour us so far as to suffer us to love him! And yet we love any thing, any sordid base lust, rather than GOD. GOD would have us to love him “with all the heart, with all the soul.” The LORD would not lose one grain of our love. O that we should deny him that which he (with reverence be it spoken and thought on) is so fond of! “And now, Israel, what doth the LORD require of thee, but to love him, and to serve the LORD thy GOD with all thy heart, and with all thy soul? GOD requires not the cattle upon a thousand hills, or rivers of oil; only love me: love me heartily, constantly. And yet we deny him this! I hate myself that I love the LORD so little, so seldom. It was he that made me, and not I myself; he hath wonderfully formed me, wonderfully preserved me, and showed many wonders in the deeps to me. O! what shall I do to love the LORD! Let me love nothing if I love not thee; nay, love nothing until I love thee! O that you would grieve abundantly for want of love to GOD! You have passed as through the Red Sea, you have been as the flaming bush. GOD hath looked after you, as if he minded none but you; you have been as the signet on his right hand. And what, not love the LORD? Shame upon you, that you can dote upon the dark, filthy world, and neglect the LORD of glory!

All the affections you have, God gave them (when he gave thee a reasonable soul) but for this end, that you should place them on himself, and not on his enemy. Is it not hard measure that God should be denied love, when he gave you power to love? Believe it, whatever you do for the LORD, unless you love him, it is not accepted. "Though you give your body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth you nothing." Whatever a man gives me, if his heart be not in it, I slight it : God much more. The holy Apostle counts him worthy of a curse, that loves not JESUS CHRIST. "If any man love not the LORD JESUS, let him be anathema maranatha." And is it not sad to be cursed to the coming of CHRIST? He deserves it that loves not CHRIST; and he must and shall be forced to own the righteousness of God in sentencing him to eternal flames, who might have been secured against them, had he but loved CHRIST more than a base dunghill lust.



CHAPTER XI.

Their evil Surmises of God.

EVIL surmises of God are another piece of ungodliness, found too frequently among even such as have the root of the matter in them. I shall the rather insist on this sin, because right thoughts of God are the fuel which maintains the fire of religion; without which it soon decayeth, and is extinguished.

1. Do not we miscall God's tokens of love? Hath not God sent thee many tokens by his SPIRIT, to assure thee that he owns thee, and delights in thee as his own? For thee to question thy relation to him upon every turn, must needs be grievous to him. How grievous then is it for thee to deny all his tokens of grace and love to thy soul, and to count them but delusions, but the works of the in-

fernal Spirit, transforming himself into an angel of light? You that are husbands, wives, parents, children, cannot endure to have your love and fidelity suspected upon every base suggestion and whisper. Believe it, God takes notice, and lays to heart all your jealousies of him, all your base unworthy censures of him.

2. How ill are God's providences resented! Although God hath told you there is a beauty in their texture; that things present and things to come are yours; that all shall work together for good; that your providential enjoyments, that your changes, as well as your settlings, your wants as well as your abundance, shall all be sanctified to you; yet how few, with that blessed man, bless the LORD when taking away! and, with ST. PAUL, rejoice, yea, "glory in tribulations!" God assures you that your sickness, reproaches, wants, shall do you good; yea, death shall do you good; all shall be good, or do you good. All shall be food, or physic; out of the eater shall come forth sweetness; your very thorns shall drop honey, shall bear grapes; yet, notwithstanding, what hard thoughts have you of God under such dispensations! Didst thou only accuse thyself, judge thyself, abhor thyself, it were well; but thou fallest upon God himself, by questioning his love from these providences. Deny thyself what thou wilt, but beware of a denial of God's love, and of the SPIRIT of grace that dwelleth in thee. O that all doubting Christians would consider this (too seldom suspected) unkindness of theirs towards God! O take up, and keep up, better thoughts of God, whatever his carriage be towards you! "Though he slay you, yet trust in him." When will you be as DAVID, who, though beleagured with enemies, yet kept up good thoughts of God: he doubted not of God's favour and protection. "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; in this will I be confident." In what? Why, that "the LORD is my light, and my salvation, and the strength of my life." God hath

not spent all his stores ; he hath enough for me : “ he will not suffer me to be tempted above what I am able to bear ; but will, with the temptation, make a way for my escape.” Thou canst entertain good thoughts of God in fair weather, but let them fall in a storm. Whilst the candle of the LORD shines on thy tabernacle, whilst thou hast dews on thy heart, melting and enlargements in ordinances ; so long thou canst keep up good thoughts of God and his love ; but let the scene be altered,—let the sun wrap up itself in a cloud, and then not only grace within is questioned, but the love of God without. “ I am cast out from before thine eyes ; his mercy is clean gone.” But, alas ! how ignorant art thou of the methods of God ! Doth not he chasten every son that he receiveth ? Should not he have liberty to use what rod he pleaseth, whilst all are for thy profit, that thou mayest partake of his holiness ?

3. How do some draw sad conclusions from God’s providential dispensations concerning his intentions for the future ! When they lose dear relations,—a husband, a wife, a sweet child snatched away, and perhaps by inadvertency ; then no sooner can we enter into the house of mourning, but we hear cries from you, ‘ This is God’s severity ! ’ Whereas you should entertain other thoughts of God ; *viz.*, That now he is removing the idols of jealousy ; now he is weaning your hearts from creatures, that he may have all your love : he knew how much spiritual communion you have lost by the company of your relations, and now he himself would have more of your company ; he would have you to delight more in himself ; he hath dried up the stream, (a weak, unsatisfying stream,) that you may drink, and drink abundantly, of the crystal waters that drop from the blessed Fountain immediately. Now God hath a blessed design of grace, to prepare you for glory ; he is making the earth a howling wilderness, that you may long for Canaan ; he is leaving you to naked walls, that he himself may fill them. Few put these comments upon God’s providences towards them ; but commonly take all in the worst sense.

Are there not some that are apt to question the love of GOD to them, from the blasphemous thoughts and injections that they are harassed with? What? Because SATAN is your adversary, must GOD therefore not be your friend? Because SATAN doth tempt you, will it therefore follow, that GOD doth not love you? Were we not wonderfully prone to evil surmises of GOD, we should not make SATAN's malice a ground to doubt of the love of GOD.

O how is SATAN gratified hereby! He is the great accuser, the great tale-bearer, that separateth choice friends. Believe it, the false witness which he brings is against him who hath given you wonderful proofs of his love towards you. It is the enemy that veils and obscures the work of the SPIRIT what he can. Hence you doubt of the acceptance of your persons and duties: 'There is a cloud hangs over my prayers, that they cannot pass up; if I come to CHRIST, he will not look on such a wretch as I am.' Many such hard thoughts of CHRIST are suggested by SATAN, and too soon entertained by us. Whilst so, you can never thank GOD for any mercy; for you doubt whether it be a mercy to you.

By giving way to these jealousies, you dam up the springs of praise that should flow from your lips day and night. Hereby you will also be hindered from waiting on the LORD with a free and cheerful spirit as you ought. O that this cursed GOD-dishonouring sin were quite rooted out of the hearts of Christians! Surely it is a provocation to GOD, and "let it be for a lamentation."



CHAPTER XII.

Their Unthankfulness.

UNTHANKFULNESS is another piece of ungodliness that the professors of religion are very guilty of. Praise, or

thankfulness, **GOD** expects as acknowledgment, as high rent, to be paid him for all we hold of him. But how hath this been denied ! And thereby how justly have we forfeited all into the hands of **GOD** ! Though the paying of this rent-penny be the only heavenly work that can be done on earth,—the only joyful employment that shall last to all eternity ; yet, how unthankful are the most of us ! The very heathens will rise up in judgment against unthankful Christians : they had their hymns to their gods. **PLATO**, when ready to die, gave **GOD** thanks for three things :—That he was made a man, that he was born in Greece, and that he lived in the time of **SOCRATES**. How much more should our lips “shew forth the high praises of **GOD**,” who hath made us not only men, but new men ! That we are born of **GOD**, adopted the children of the Most High, and regenerated by the Spirit ;—that we have breathed not in Greece, but in England ! O the riches of free grace ! That our mothers conceived with us in this place of light, and at such a time when the nation was most enriched with the light of the Gospel ! Why had not **GOD** brought thee out of the womb when this land was over-run with Paganism, with Popery ? Why had not the **LORD** shut thee up with the rest of the world in darkness, and in the shadow of death ? O that when the Gospel shines but upon a little spot of ground, which **GOD** hath enclosed for himself, and styles it his pleasant place, his garden, thou shouldest be the man born there ! That when the rest of the world is like the barren mountains, that **GOD** should bring thee forth in the place of his tabernacle ! And yet thou, ungrateful wretch, wilt hardly confess, that “the lines are fallen happily, and thou hast a goodly heritage.”

How seldom is such language as this heard from thee ? ‘Blessed be the **LORD** that my lot is fallen in so fair a ground ; blessed be **GOD** that I was born in England, and not in the wastes of Arabia or America. Thanks be to the **LORD** that I have had more than the light of the sun, moon, and stars, to conduct me to **JESUS** ; that so many

wells of salvation have been opened unto me, which have been shut unto the most of the world.'

If PLATO thanked GOD for living in the days of SOCRATES, we may say, that greater than SOCRATES have been among us. We have had those "with whom we have taken sweet counsel, with whom together we have gone to the house of GOD;" who have been burning as well as shining lights; many examples of close-walking, heavenly Christians have we enjoyed, such as have had the wisdom from above, and more pure learning than ever SOCRATES or PLATO could pretend to. The society of how many heavenly, serious, active Christians have we been blessed with, such as have been faithful admonishers,—such as would not suffer sin to rest upon us,—such as have daily told us, Here is the way, walk herein. O the helps we have had! But O the cursed unthankfulness of our hearts towards GOD, notwithstanding his bestowing upon us so many lights to guide us, so many fires to warm us, and so much salt to season us!

1. Instead of giving GOD the glory of all, how have we sacrificed to our own nets, and to other instruments! We have praised ourselves rather than GOD for what we have; we have not ascribed the glory to GOD, but to instruments; like unto that Cardinal, who writ down what such a Lord did for him, and what such a Pope conferred on him; whereupon another inferred, This man remembered his friends, but forgot GOD. "SAUL hath slain his thousands, and DAVID his ten thousands;" but GOD hath little or no share in the triumph.

2. How sensible are we of our wants and straits, but how unaffected with the goodness of GOD towards us! How full of complaints are we, but empty of acknowledgments! Hath not the want of some one thing robbed us of the comfort of all our enjoyments, and GOD of the praise that was due to his Name? We have been (such is wayward nature) more troubled for the want of some one thing, than thankful for many mercies. Like HAMAN: one MORDECAI not bowing to our desires, hath made us

heavy and senseless under all our honours, and God's vouchsafement. Like AHAAB, we have been more dejected for want of NABOTH's vineyard, than we have blessed God for a kingdom.

3. Are not we oftener, longer, and heartiest in the petitionary part of prayer? We are still craving the supply of wants; but too seldom blessing God for what we are stored with. Our petitions are long, but our praises are short.

4. Do not we set up our rest in being glad of mercies and deliverances? Whereas it is one thing to be glad of a deliverance, but another thing to be thankful for it. Then are they glad; but that will not serve the turn: it is a return of a higher nature which God looks for. "O that men would praise the LORD for his goodness."

5. Have not we neglected to make catalogues of the mercies we have received, to help our memories? This God hath ordained for a law, and a statute for Israel. What was this? That they should write it, what God had done for them; and so provide that the generations to come might know what God had done. But, alas! how little care have we, that whatsoever God does may be for ever to his glory! How unjust are we unto our children, and the generations to come, in depriving them of a faithful record of God's mercies to us, in which God speaks to them, as well as unto us. How injurious to them! By such a faithful record, they might read the right way, in sailing heaven-ward; by our falls, they might know where lie the rocks and quicksands; and by our deliverances, where out-gates are to be found.

6. Have not we neglected to call on others to join with us in blessing God? When did we make a collection of praises from our friends, that would gladly have been in the choir? A thankful heart is filled with enlarged desires, that others, that all, would join in the work of praising God. A gracious heart doth not think it enough to praise God alone; though it would be praising God, were there none in heaven or earth to bear him company.

But I shall speak more particularly, and instance in some of those choice personal mercies, to waive national ones, for which the best of us are too unthankful.

How have we forgot the deep pit, and miry clay, out of which we were digged! Have we not been unmindful of the blessed jubilee, when the prisoners were let out of the prison-house? PAUL remembereth many circumstances of his conversion: the place wherein,—“in a journey night to Damascus;” the time when,—“about noon;” the manner how,—“suddenly there did shine from heaven a great light round about me, and I fell to the ground, and heard a voice.” He remembered also what he was before conversion: “I was a persecutor, a blasphemer, and injurious.” But how have we forgotten that the LORD, by his blessed SPIRIT, “translated us out of the kingdom of SATAN, into the kingdom of his dear SON!” It was he that made Jordan to give back, and delivered us from Egypt and the wilderness, that we might inherit the good land.

How little do we bless GOD for CHRIST! Though he be the Stream that alone refresheth the city of GOD, yet how seldom is his love, his condescension for us, with his bleeding and dying for us, remembered by us with hearty thanksgivings!

How little do we bless GOD for the Covenant of Grace,—the bow in the cloud, after a deluge of sin and misery,—the forfeited lease of eternity renewed,—the Magna Charta of the city of GOD! And in particular, for the promise of the SPIRIT, in all his offices and operations, for the application of the purchased possession!

How little do we remember to thank the LORD for outward blessings! You began perhaps with a little, as JACOB, and now behold you have two bands: a troop of children, friends, and an estate to maintain them. When others have had one mess, you have had BENJAMIN’S portion,—riches and GOD too; estate and CHRIST too; peace, and the GOD of peace too; the world, and a good title to it. And yet do not you seldom cry out, “Bless

the LORD, O my soul! and let all that is within thee praise his holy Name?" How seldom do you consider who hath maintained you all this while? Who hath delivered you, and "pulled you as brands out of the fire?" You have had the sentence of death in yourselves; you have been, with DAVID and PAUL, in the mouth of the lion, and yet saved; near to perish by the sword, fever, or other dangers, and yet your lives given you for a prey: but how soon have you forgotten the wonders shown unto the dead! O, the many preventing mercies that you have been made partakers of! Hath not GOD secured you in many travails! How many have died much younger than you, whilst the LORD lengthened out your days in order to repentance! How many have died in an instant, and been snatched away without any warning of death's approach, whilst you have had many an harbinger, to give you to understand its nearness to you! How many have been crushed by falls from houses, or by other accidents hastened to their long home, whilst GOD is long-suffering to you! How many have you seen led to shameful and violent deaths, whilst you have been kept from such dismal ends! And yet how seldom do you admire his providence, and preventing loving-kindnesses! You have a guard of angels to attend you day and night, to secure you from danger; but how little do you bless the LORD for the heavenly host! And yet, if you do thank GOD for some outward mercies, perhaps for ease from the stone, gout, colic; if you thank not GOD more for deliverance from hell, from the guilt and power of sin, than for outward blessings, you discredit GOD, and his choicest mercies, by under-rating spirituals to temporals.

We should have blessed GOD for his rod, as well as his staff; for both are mercies: but how unthankful are we even for sufferings for righteousness' sake! "In every thing give thanks:" as you should not be partial in your obedience, so neither in your thanksgiving. How little have we imitated the ancient Christians, whose mouths were always full of 'Thanks be unto GOD!' When they

heard of persecution or protection, crosses or comforts, they still cried out, "God be thanked!" How unlike are we to **MR. BRADFORD**! 'If,' said he, 'the Queen will release me, I will thank her; if she will keep me in prison, I will thank her; if she will burn me, I will thank her.' Thou shouldest say from thy heart, 'Though sick, though scorned, though threatened, though "all the day long counted as a sheep to the slaughter," yet blessed be God that I am "counted worthy to suffer for his name;" blessed be God that he "counts me a son, and chasteneth me for my profit, that I may be partaker of his holiness;" blessed be God that I am chastened, that I may not be condemned.' But we have been too backward to glorify God in Zion, much more in the fires. The Apostle **PETER** would not have "any man suffering as a Christian" to be "ashamed;" but to "glorify God on this behalf," and to rejoice, in as much as he is a partaker of **CHRIST**'s sufferings. But God knows how far from praises we have been when the storms have been high, and threatened our tabernacles.

How hath God charged us to remember mercy, and to praise him for it! "Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; praise him, O ye servants of the LORD! Praise thy God, O Zion! Praise him for his mighty acts; praise him according to his excellent greatness." Doth not the innumerableness of God's demands of praise and thanksgiving, aggravate our neglect of this duty? What provision hath **CHRIST** made against this sin? Hath not he appointed the Sacrament of his Supper, on purpose to remember him and his saving benefits? "Do this in remembrance of me." But have not many been so unthankful, that they have neglected this great ordinance, which was appointed to strengthen their remembrance of past mercies? I wonder not that many complain of their decays of love to God, whilst they forget his wonders of grace and love to their souls. Did we oftener recount the mercies of God, they would work endearments betwixt God and our souls; did we consider, what a wonder it is that God should draw us out of nothing,—that He who stoops to behold the things

of heaven, should put his finger to our workmanship,—that He should curiously work us as needle-work in the dark vaults of nature,—and that when we were fuller of sin than the toad of poison, yet He should feed and clothe us,—the fire of love to GOD would burn within our breasts. How is GOD provoked by this sin! GOD took it ill of the Israelites, that they “remembered not his hand, nor the day in which he delivered them.” How much more do we grieve the LORD, who remember not the goodness of the LORD in Canaan, yea, in Zion? Our SAVIOUR was grieved that his disciples remembered not the “five loaves,” and the “seven loaves,” and “how many baskets they took up.” Innumerable greater favours hath GOD showed to us, and yet we forget them. How have we forgotten the GOD that bridled nature’s proud waves, and said, “Hitherto shall you go, and no farther!” When we were ripe for judgment, then mercy stepped in; and yet how slow to give thanks! Hardly one of ten blessed GOD for cleansing mercy as they ought. “Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?” This makes me fear people have not had a deep sense of the stains of nature, for that their SAVIOUR is no more thanked. Was it not GOD that brought you to such a parish, to such a Minister, and to such a text? And did not he, by his almighty power, enable thee to believe and apply? Was it not he that broke thine heart, when as hard as the nether mill-stone? And what! Forget the wonders of the LORD in the deep? This vexeth the LORD to the heart. Did not he cause the walls of Jericho to fall, “as by the voice of rams’ horns,”—by weak, inconsiderable means? Did he not alienate thine heart from those idols that were dearer to thee than thine eyes? Did he not present the face of CHRIST as lovely to thy soul, who before was despised and rejected? And hath not CHRIST fed thee with fresh supplies of free grace that have watered thy soul every moment? How many doubts hath CHRIST answered? how many scruples hath he, by his HOLY SPIRIT, satisfied thee in? And yet, O wretched heart, how un-

thankful hast thou been ! Thou hast forgotten all his benefits. How just is it with GOD to plague us for this our unkindness. Wonder not that the showers are withheld, that the LORD causeth the sun to set on the Prophets at noon-day, that the manna falls not before your doors. You have not "taken care for the fragments, that nothing be lost." GOD's mercies have been lost upon you. Our waters were become wine, our gleanings were better than the world's vintage. GOD dealt with us as sons ; but now if he draw in his hand, and "make his garden as a desolate wilderness" for this sin, who can say unto GOD, "What doest thou ?" Must not all of us put our mouths in the dust ? Did not we sit under our own vines ? Had we not our solemn assemblies ? Did not "we go in troops to the house of the LORD ?" Did not fear come ? And had not the Churches rest ? Did we fear the shaking of the spear ? Might we not have been as holy as we pleased ? Had not we as much liberty as we desired ? But O, then how unthankful were we ! How troubled were we that every MORDECAI did not bow ; that every one would not be of our mind ! GOD knows what a controversy there is with the land, for the unthankfulness of them that dwell therein.



CHAPTER XIII.

Their Neglect of Prayer, especially of Secret Prayer.

NEGLECT of prayer is another part of ungodliness too common even among the professors of religion. Request and thanksgiving are (saith one) like the double motion of the lungs, by which they suck in, and breathe out the air again. In the petitionary part of prayer, we desire either the bestowing of some good thing, or the preventing or removing of some evil ; and in the gratulatory part of prayer,

we return the praise of what we received from God, to God. Though the thanksgiving part of prayer be most, yet the petitionary part of prayer is too much, neglected. It is ungodliness to go about any business, or journey; to fix our abode, to use any creature, food, or physic, without asking God's leave and blessing in prayer; yea, it is a branch of Atheism: this irreligion is laid at the door of Atheism by the Psalmist. Is it not a just cause of lamentation, that so many should be guilty of such ungodliness?

Are there not many that never prayed in all their lives? "Thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob!" Do not many clearly evidence that they are prayerless souls, by their disobedience to the preceptive, their impatience under the providential, will of God? "She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near unto God." By their entering into so many temptations: "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation." By their being deceived, and labouring to deceive others in the things of God: "The Pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the LORD."

Doth not this sin speak high contempt of God? That God is not entertained, so much as in thought? Yea, doth not it speak the heart's denial of God? What saith the Psalmist? "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God; he calleth not upon God." To live without prayer, is to be dead while alive; for it is to live "without God." The families that know not God, and call not on his name, are the same. What! will ye not do so much as pray unto God? What can you do less for God, than by this homage to own him for your Maker? Or less for your own souls than to beg their lives of him, whose hand of justice is lift up against them? Their souls, and theirs only, shall live that seek the LORD. No malefactors die more unlamented than those that, when cast, will not beg for their lives.

How many also are there that have cast off prayer! How many have restrained prayer! When they have

thought they have prayed themselves out of affliction, they had no more to say to God till under affliction again ; and when they have for some time prayed for deliverance to no purpose, "This evil is of the LORD ; why should I wait any longer ?" This is worse than not to pray at all. Not to pray at all, notes only the neglect of duty ; but to cast off prayer, a distaste of duty. But I shall be more particular :—

Though prayer be the only key to unlock the store-houses and treasures of all blessings, yet how little hath this key been used ! I shall waive public and private, and only instance in secret prayer, and that both sudden, and composed, and solemn. How few have made conscience of ejaculatory prayer ! How seldom have we darted up our souls to heaven ! As, when we are hearing : 'LORD, set home this word upon my heart.' When in prayer our hearts are melting : 'LORD, suffer not my heart any more to be hardened from thy fear.' When we are about our worldly employment : 'LORD, keep my heart with thyself.' Are not some of us wholly unacquainted with this kind of praying ? 'Not such a dart' (saith one) 'to be found in all their quiver.' • They know not how, in the midst of their worldly business, and company, yea, in the midst of their solemn religious duties, in hearing, reading, conferring, praying, to send their thoughts to give God a visit, though a short one, in a desire or two ; to speak at least one or two heart-words unto him. Have not most contented themselves with their solemn visits of God, and between their solemn duties scarce ever conversed with God ? What account shall we be able to give of our thoughts (the first-born of our souls) from morning to evening ? Is not this the highest improvement of them, to send them in embassies unto heaven, and by them to converse with God ? Do not the best of us find strangeness apt to grow between God and our souls, between our set duties ? And may we not impute that strangeness to our omission of these more transient and occasional talkings with God ? How many precious things in Christian con-

ference, in sermons, in our solemn joint prayers, are lost, for want of present lifting up our hearts to God, for his presence therein, and blessing thereupon! How many blessed motions of the HOLY SPIRIT, suggested to us in our particular callings, are quenched, for want of these sallies of our souls to heaven, for more grace, that these sparks may be kept alive, yea, blown into a flame! Neglect of this kind of prayer is no small provocation; it grieves God; there is much unkindness in it, that God should be so gracious as to let his door stand wide open at all times, and that he should assure us of welcome whenever we come, and yet that we should not step in so much as with a desire, hour after hour; though we may thus visit him, and not neglect any business we have in hand, or be uncivil to any company.

How few have made conscience of closet-prayer? Though CHRIST takes it for granted that his disciples will thus pray, and hath annexed a sweet promise to the due performance of this duty. "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy FATHER which is in secret, and thy FATHER, which seeth in secret, will reward thee openly." Retire thyself, get thee a place, set thyself a time, wherein thou mayest make it thy business to pray to God. Yet how is this duty wholly neglected by some, and too seldom performed by others! SATAN prevails with some to put off this duty from time to time, by telling them, either that they will but play the hypocrites therein; or, that the time is not convenient, by reason either of some bodily, or of some spiritual distempers; or that this and the other worldly business must of necessity be dispatched at such a time. O how little do such love the LORD, that are afraid to talk too often in secret with him! But, alas! how many omit closet-prayer altogether! Some content themselves with praying with others, either in the church, or in the family. How can such look upon themselves as Christians, whatever profession they make? What! a Christian, and

yet never desire any privacy between **God** and thy soul ? A Christian, and yet find no errand to invite thee to speak to **God** alone ? Sure thou rather seekest to approve thyself to men, than to **God**. The true lover delights to visit his friend when he may find him alone ; like that good man, who, when the set time for his closet-prayer was come, would break from any company he was in, with this speech, ‘ I have a friend that stays for me : farewell.’ Others put off this duty, by pretending they pray always ; every hour they are darting up ejaculations to heaven. As the pretence of every-day sabbath, comes just to no sabbath ; so the continual praying of some, comes to no praying at all.

Ejaculatory prayer should not hinder, but rather fit for, solemn set praying. Fire must be kept upon the altar continually, but that must not hinder the morning and evening sacrifice. True Christians cannot be satisfied with a bit and away, but they must have their set meals. Others look at closet-prayer to be but a free-will offering, (as they term it,) which they may offer if they will, but will not own it a duty. Surely, such are little sensible of their heart-plagues, or else they would alone “ make prayer and supplications.” In all my observation, the ruins of Christians have begun in their closet-neglects ; either by omitting the duty totally, or by careless, formal, customary management of it. ‘ The truth is,’ (saith a late writer,) ‘ this is the first step towards apostasy : backsliders grow first out of acquaintance with **God** in secret ; then, delight in this duty declineth by little and little ; then are they less frequent in their visits, upon which followeth a casting off the duty ; and yet they may appear great zealots in public ordinances ; but if they recover not what they have lost in their secret trade, they will, ere long, break here also.’

A hundred things may keep thee, and hold thee to public duties ; but herein is the trial of thy uprightness,—what thou dost in secret for **God**, and with him. When

the masters part, (the two great ones,—God and the world,) then is the trial of thee, whose servant thou art ; but O when the Master is alone, then he is most neglected.

When alone, thou art fittest for this duty of calling upon God ; then thou hast a discharge from the cumbers of the earth. A heathen (SCIPIO) will tell thee : ‘ I have never better company than when I have no company, for then can I freely entertain my own thoughts, and converse with all the learned that have been in former ages.’ But thou art called to greater honour,—to improve thy solitude to converse with God ; when alone to have thy Father with thee.

Yea, God communicates most of his affections to his people when they are in secret : when DAVID was “ in the night-watches, then his soul was filled with marrow and fatness.” Not that he wanted God’s presence in the day ; for seven times a day he praised God ; but this day-sacrifice yielded him not that sweetness tasted in the night, when he was sequestered from all company and business.

How few have observed the fittest time for secret prayer ! God would have us, in this sense, watch unto prayer ; God would have us early to tell the world whose servants we are, and that we dare not undertake any business without first engaging God with us ; that we dare not enter on SATAN’S territories without CHRIST, our great champion, with us. This post should be sent to heaven in the beginning of the day ; for no sooner in the morning do we begin to live, and stir, but we need fresh succours from heaven.

A true Christian counts that the sweetest air, which is the fruit of prayer, and all things relish well with him that run through this golden channel ; therefore he is up early in his closet, that he may receive all, this way, from the Lord’s bounty and faithfulness. Therefore, no sooner doth he open his eyes, but he opens his heart to God ; and before he dresses, he must to heaven in secret ejaculations ; at least before he goes to his closet, to pour out his soul more plentifully before God. He expecteth no good

day, unless it be begun with a good duty, and therefore saith, "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning ; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee." DAVID "prevented the dawning of the morning;" nay, he prevented GOD, *i. e.*, his providences and favours which he expected : he loved to have them in the channel of prayer.

But, alas ! how do we shuffle with GOD by deferring ! And hereby many mischiefs attend.

The world, that pest of souls, is admitted before we have got our antidote against the infection of it ; hence deadness of heart ensues, multitudes of worldly distractions, so that after a time, the soul hath no mind at all to speak with GOD ; but though it must to the closet, yet there is it filled with wandering, discontented, and worldly thoughts ; so that the time which should be spent in communion with GOD, is taken up in driving these fowls from the sacrifice.

Besides, GOD is a holy GOD, and jealous for his Name ; and he esteemeth it a reflection on him to be so neglected, that he must be served last of all, and therefore withholds his influences from the soul ; and then no wonder if thou be soon overcome with a world of impertinent thought. By neglect of early going into your closets, you honour the world too much, as if it were more worthy of your time and strength than the LORD is ; whereas you should profess that all your hours are GOD's, and therefore you dare not but "honour him with the first fruits of all your increase ;" you will thereby sanctify all the harvest, all the vintage, by presenting GOD with the green ears.

You neglect the fittest season, for then the mercies of the night smell sweetest, which after awhile, like flowers, will lose their scent with us : whilst the iron is hot, it is our business to strike : his mercies are renewed every morning ; so should our praises.

By entering on business without calling on GOD, you declare you need not the LORD's assistance, and that you can make a shift to live without him ; whereas GOD feeds us from hand to mouth, and hath not left any stores with

us, that we may make our address to him night and day, who must water us every moment. Poor souls ! did you but see your dangers, by reason of the three brigades of enemies,—the world, the flesh, and the Devil, you would not be so fool-hardy to venture abroad, until you have besought God to help poor, indigent creatures. Remember, you want as soon as you wake ; and those things you want which none but God can supply. You need divine power to follow your callings.

By neglecting this season, the Devil and the world have often made you forget, or omit, the duty for the day. You have no leisure in the morning, and what then ? The Devil fills thy hand with unexpected business, that the excuse grows stronger and more plausible. But must we serve the slave, and neglect the LORD of glory ?

But, O ! what hazard dost thou run, not only by preferring other things and business before God, but by neglecting the first hour of the day, when thou art not sure of a second ! Thou proposest such an hour to pray ; but what is thy life save a vapour, which may expire before that hour ?



CHAPTER XIV.

The Miscarriages of those who do pray, about Prayers.

THERE is not only ungodliness in not praying, (prayerless souls worshipping God no more than beasts,) but in praying amiss. And O how many ways do we fail about this duty, both before, and in, and after !

First, How do many fail before their entrance upon this duty of prayer !

1. By neglect of meditation. Few can say, ‘ Consider my meditation.’ Have not we rushed upon this duty before we have meditated of the God we were approaching

to? What a holy GOD he is, and how unworthy we are to take his name into our mouths? What a consuming fire he is, and what dry stubble we are?

Have we not rushed into GOD's presence, as the horse rusheth into the battle?

Have we considered that his eyes are piercing as flames of fire? "That all things are naked and open" (as it were dissected) "before him, with whom we have to do?" We have not set GOD before our eyes. Our thoughts would not be so low, so earthly, so distracted, did we believably consider into whose presence we are coming.

Have we considered GOD's almightiness? That he can do more for us than we can ask or think? He that cometh to GOD (in prayer) should believe that GOD is, that he is the strength of Israel. Pardon of sin, and victory over it, are mercies beyond the creature's power; but "the LORD's arm is not shortened, that he cannot help."

Have we meditated on GOD's bounty, pity, and tender compassions? As one more ready to give than we to ask; as one who giveth liberally, and upbraids not with our oft coming? We want vast thoughts of the goodness and mercy of GOD; we have base, beggarly thoughts of GOD, as if we should trespass too much upon him, and weary him by coming too oft to his door.

Have we mused upon the faithfulness of GOD? who is under engagements to relieve us, to ease us, to be found of us, when we seek him with our whole hearts. "And this is the confidence we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us."

Have we meditated of the Way, by whom we must come to GOD? How daring are souls to venture on an absolute GOD! How is the new and consecrated way neglected! How is CHRIST laid by, as if there were no need of a Mediator, or of an "Advocate with the FATHER!" How seldom do we pass through Golgotha to the heavenly Jerusalem; and see that "none can come to the FATHER, but by the SON!" We see not our need of incense and

odours to be mingled with our sacrifices. Little do we consider, that the opportunity of speaking with God is the price of blood, of the precious blood of the SON of GOD.

Have we meditated on our sins ; on those to which we are by nature and custom most addicted ; and of those with which we have, since the last duty, polluted our souls ? From the want of meditation hereof, ariseth formality in duties ; the heart is not humbled in confession, neither is the soul importunate with the LORD for pardon and victory.

Have we made conscience to meditate upon our wants ;—what graces we most needed,—what we are most defective in ? From this neglect, we pray as if we did not pray ; without zeal, earnestness, and importunity ; whereas, had we viewed our want of GOD, of his grace, SPIRIT, protection, mercy, and presence, we should pray as for life ; and those straggling, vain thoughts, would hereby have been suppressed. When the malefactor is begging his life at the bar, his soul is not running adrift after every feather, but he minds his business ; it is life, and his life that is in danger ; and therefore he gathers up all possible arguments that may induce the Judge to abate the rigour of justice. But how oft have we been on our knees, and have been ignorant of what ailed us, so that we might truly say, we knew not what to ask ? When you go to your markets, you consider what you and yours want ; but do we so when we go to our spiritual markets ?

Have not we neglected to meditate of the mercies of GOD, which we have received ? Hence we come either customarily before GOD, or not with that holy boldness, as we should. One mercy opens a door to another ; “the valley of Achor was given as a door of hope to Israel.” Forgetting the returns of prayer, makes our hearts ache, and knees faint. We should book the passages of GOD’s grace ; how “he remembered us in our low condition ;” how he hath visited us day by day ; when we have come in as the parched ground, we have found GOD a dew to us, and springs of water have appeared in the wilderness ;

when we have come in before **GOD** with our shackles on our feet, with irons that have entered our souls, **GOD** hath made it a jubilee,—he hath proclaimed the 'acceptable year,—he hath let us out of the prison-house, and hath set our feet in a large place ; when we have come in before **GOD** with guilt on our souls, and with fearful expectations, how hath **GOD** given us the white stone, and sent us away with his blessing, and with gladness of heart. The neglect of our diaries of the providence and mercies of **GOD**, makes us more like slaves than children.

Have not we neglected to meditate on the great and wonderful things that have been done upon the prayers of **GOD**'s people ? We should have in everlasting remembrance what a powerful engine prayer is. It hath held the hands of the Almighty : **JACOB** and **MOSES** prevailed over **GOD**. It hath been a key to open and shut the heavens : **ELIAS** "was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months : and he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." And O what wonderful things hath **GOD** promised to a praying people ! "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not." "Whatsoever ye ask in my name, I will do it." Here was more than **HEROD** offered : that was but "half the kingdom ;" here is a "Whatsoever." Did we appear before **GOD** with these instances of grace and promises fresh in our thoughts, we should not say, "What a weariness is it !" or that "there is no profit in serving **GOD** ;" and gallop through our duties as we are wont.

2. Another neglect before prayer is, the not stirring up our graces before we set upon the duty. We too much rest on habitual preparation, whereas actual is necessary. He that leaps immediately from the shop to the throne of grace, and labours not to quicken his dull soul, and to leave worldly businesses behind him, no wonder if he lose the duty, and provoke the **LORD**, rather than be accepted

with him. The well is seldom so full, but that you may, nay, you must, throw in a little to fetch up the more. It is thought, by the redoubling of DAVID's charge, that he found not his heart in a good frame for exalting GOD, and therefore cries out so vehemently, "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, praise his holy Name. Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

Secondly, How have we failed, when we have entered upon the duty ! And that in invocation, in confession, in petition, and thanksgiving.

1. In our invocation. We call GOD, Father, and yet how unlike are we unto him : we resemble not him we call Father ; we reverence not him we call Father ; we trust not in him with that confidence we would in our fathers of the flesh ; we fear, when we ask bread, he will give us a stone ; we have lower thoughts of GOD's bowels than our own ; we think ourselves more pitiful than GOD himself. If I were a mother, and my child in distress, I should deny him nothing.

2. In our confessions of sin we are not full, and free, and ingenuous. We sit, with RACHEL, upon some idols : we do not "declare our ways unto him," but rather "cover our transgressions," as ADAM. Few can clear themselves as JOB did. You will perhaps confess, "We have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep ;" but still in generals. DAVID was in this gravelled : "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long." But you descend not to particulars ; or if to particulars, yet the Benjamin is reserved ; loath to let Benjamin go ; loath to confess envy, pride, breach of vows, want of love, or loving the rich only, neglecting the poor. You will confess what every man knows you are guilty of, or what every man is addicted to ; but you shame not yourselves, by instancing in the particular neglects and omissions, by which you chiefly provoke the LORD. The Agags are not brought to execution ; the best of the cattle are kept back ; one wedge is hid in the

tent. Or if you confess particularly, yet it is without hatred of the sins confessed. You confess sin, yet hug it, plead for it, within one quarter of an hour; you confess sin, but without self-abhorrence; you loathe it not as the plague of your hearts. "I abhor myself," saith JOB. This implies a dislike, a hatred, an indignation against, an utter alienation from, and an opposition against sin. GOD knows how little of this is mixed with the confessions of most persons.

3. In their petitions. Both matter, and manner, and end. Have not we been faulty in the matter? Have they been always for the best things? Life, liberty, estate, are desired; but grace, victory over pride, passions, and worldliness, lie unsought for. We fail also when we pray simply that we may not suffer; for there is no foundation in the promise for such a prayer, and we may not pray save for what GOD hath promised.

Have not we failed in the manner? Have we always prayed with earnestness, humility, faith, and sincerity? Hath the whole man been employed? Few can say, "With my whole heart have I entreated thy favour." Alas! few pray effectually. The heart and soul are not at work in the duty. It is the effectual fervent prayer that avails. We pray as if we had a mind GOD should deny us. We are too much like children, scribbling over a piece of paper, which, when they have done, they lay it aside, or tear it, or think no more of it. We have not continued in prayer; we have not backed our prayers with prayers; reinforced them; we have soon fainted; we have not been the right seed of JACOB: "I will not let thee go, until thou bless me." We soon faint, and our desires expire.

Have we not failed in the end? May I not say, as the Apostle JAMES, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that you may consume it upon your lusts." Hath not our level been too low? We should have made GOD's glory our end, and we have made ourself, barely to quiet conscience, or to obtain pardon of sin, rather than purity of heart and life. You have been perhaps earnest for the

pardon of your own and England's sins, and yet selfish in all. You fear (and well you may) temporal plagues ; you are afraid that Sodom's sins may bring down fire and brimstone ; and therefore, for your own sakes, rather than God's, you pray, and with some vehemency ; but your end is still too low. Never do you pray aright, until you pray more for CHRIST's sake than for your own,—for his glory, rather than for your own present, future, temporal, or eternal advantage. It is one thing to seek ourselves, and another thing to seek God in a duty.

4. In our thanksgivings. Who is free from guilt in the gratulatory part of prayer ? Some bless God for justification and sanctification, and are strangers to these privileges ; yea, if catechised, know not what these mercies are, no more than parrots know what they prattle. Others, if like the lepers they are cleansed, yet return not to bless the LORD ; they are large in petitions, but very sparing in their praises. Unthankful beggars are an abomination to God and man. We should be thankful for the least mercy ; but though we have had the honour to be admitted in the presence-chambers as favourites, yet we are sullen, and slow to return praises for such a vouchsafement. You have not come to dry breasts ; you are every day full of mercy ; but, alas ! “you render not according to what you have received, therefore wrath is against you.” Hast thou had no meltings in prayer, no enlargements, no desires to fear the LORD, no importunities, no wrestlings ? Why yet it is mercy that thou livest upon the patience and bounty of God ; it is much that thou shouldest have a being, and be preserved to this day ; it is a wonder he should feed thee, clothe thee, protect thee, strive with thee, suffer thee, who art but dust and ashes, to speak with him. The last night thou mightest have lain on a bed of fire, or by the hedge, or have been in the great deeps ; but, alas ! few so ready to praise as to pray. We are too much like the vagabonds : when we have what we come for, away we go, and come no more until pinching necessity drives us ; yea, we too often aggravate our miseries, and

overlook the benefits we enjoy, that are mixed with our crosses.

Thirdly, How have we, when our prayers have been ended, failed of our duties towards God, by running post-haste from the throne of grace to the world ! Not considering how our hearts were in time of duty ; whether straitened or enlarged, whether composed or distracted ; whether we had the face of God towards us, or his face veiled ; whether we were lively or lifeless, dead or quickened, serious or light ; what faith was stirring, what repentance exercised. The Church and people of God observed their hardness in duty : “ Why hast thou hardened our hearts from thy fear ? ” We should look back upon our prayers, that we may be humbled for all our vain thoughts, untowardness, distractions, and unbelief in the duty, and we should do it then, whilst we are in the highest capacity to know the miscarriages of the soul,—what the aggravating circumstances thereof are ; and not only in order to humiliation, but reformation, that for the future we may not dare to touch the mount of God’s presence with such beastly frames.

In case we were in a good frame in the duty, did we labour to retain the influences of the ordinance upon our hearts ? Did not we let the fire go out again ? Have not we, like some in a great sweat, gone into the open air too soon, and took a cold ? That is dangerous. DAVID was more careful to maintain his fresh and lively frames, and therefore he entreated the LORD to “ keep the same in his servant’s heart for ever.”

How have we been faulty in not believing that our prayers shall be answered ! We direct our prayers unto God, but we do not look up until God look down. We do not hearken what God the LORD will speak. PAUL observed how long the LORD was silent to his prayer : “ For this I besought the LORD thrice,” and yet no answer. O when shall we resolve, with HABAKKUK, to “ stand upon our watch, and look and see what he will say to us ? ” The neglect of this hath bred so many formalists in our

congregations. After we have put our prayers into God's hands, we never mind them more. We would be angry with beggars, if they begged an alms, and away presently, as careless of answers.

The sincerity of thy heart would be more evidenced, if thou didst consider what returns thou hast, that thou mayest bless God for them, and improve them for God, and in case of denials, be of a troubled spirit, as HANNAH was, for that her prayer for a child was so long denied.

What mournings hast thou for that thy pride, worldliness, unbelief, and hardness of heart, are not yet pardoned and subdued? Thou continuest in the road of duty, but observest not whether God hears thee or not. SAUL went beyond thee: he observed, and was troubled "that God answered him not by URIM, nor yet by Prophets." Have not we by carelessness, by returning to our vomits and mire, intercepted our own prayers?

Have not we torn our own petitions, and snatched them out of God's hands? Behold, "the LORD's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."

How seldom have we taken BERNARD's advice in his gloss upon, "Let us lift up our hearts with our hands;" 'That is,' saith he, 'let us pray and endeavour. We love to employ God to subdue our sins: but we sit idle; we hate taking pains; we are not co-workers with God. Prayer is a key to open heaven to believers; but it may be so managed as to open hell to thee.'

CHAPTER XV.

Their Slighting the written Word of God, especially in not reading and meditating on it as they ought.

SLIGHTING of the written Word of God is another piece of ungodliness, which English professors of religion have been very guilty of. There is not a surer sign of despising any person, than the setting light by what he saith unto us: for according to the honour we give unto the speaker, the words spoken will be of weight with us. But, alas! how hath the Bible, God's written word, been undervalued by us!

How little have we credited God's written word! And yet it is natural for us to believe whatsoever is said by one, of whose truth we are confident. Have not scripture affirmations been doubted of by us? How little hath our knowledge of them been attended with building a christian life upon them as a foundation? Have we believed that scripture commands come from God, and are most just and fit for him to lay upon us? Hath this belief brought forth obedience? Have we believed that scripture threats are God's threats, and will therefore be performed to every impenitent sinner? And hath this belief kept us from sin, or promoted repentance? Have scripture promises been believed to be God's promises, and that therefore all shall certainly be performed to those that perform the conditions? And hath this belief stirred us up, and helped us to perform the conditions?

God hath magnified his word above all his Name; but so have not we. We are apt to be afraid at the appearances of God in the Scripture; and yet God appears more in the glory of his majesty therein, than in all his other works, whether of creation, or of common providence. God maketh more account of his written word than of heaven and earth. He had rather lose heaven and earth than "one jot or tittle of his word."

But have not we accounted it no great matter to swerve

a little from the written word of God? Yea, have not we made a light matter of leaving undone what is therein required, and of doing what is therein forbidden? Were the Scriptures high in our esteem,—did we look upon God's testimonies as wonderful things, our very souls would be in keeping them. "Thy testimonies are wonderful, therefore doth my soul keep them."

Have not we been willingly and contentedly ignorant of Scripture discoveries? So is not the scholar, of those notions which he valueth. Have not our hearts cried out many times unto the Bible, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of God's ways," either as to worship or manners; and that because knowledge is an obligation, yea, a provocation to duty, and a sting in case duty be neglected?

How have we been guilty of not reading the Scriptures as we ought! That every one ought to read them is so evident, that there is no way for the Papists to keep men from believing this truth, but by keeping them from reading the Scripture. No business can discharge us from this duty, and yet how is this duty neglected!

Many, notwithstanding their resolutions, never set upon reading the Bible over. They have seen no excellency in this book; they have seen more in a piece of philosophy, in a rational discourse of divinity, in an ingenious history, in a politic discourse, yea, in a play; like the politician, who preferred an ode in PINDAR before DAVID's Psalms.

How many read the Bible too seldom, thinking it too much to read it daily,—to spend one hour therein every day! Have not some spent several hours in a day, in reading some good books of men's inditing, but not a quarter of an hour in reading God's book? 'I even hate mine own works,' said LUTHER, 'and oft times wish they were burned, because I fear lest they should withdraw men from reading the Scriptures.'

How much greater is the number of those that have not read the Bible aright? Are not all of us of this number? When have we prepared for the reading of the Scriptures,

as becomes those that are going in unto God? So going into the sanctuary, where the word of God was kept, is termed.

Have not we read fearlessly? When we were going to take the Bible into our hands, have we trembled at the word, lest we should not sanctify the name of God; yea, lest we should take the name of God in vain in our reading?

Have not we read heedlessly? Not diligently marking the duties commanded, the sins forbidden, the rewards promised, and the punishments threatened therein? Have not our thoughts been wandering, and not fixed upon what we read? When did we attend to Scripture words as heedfully as BENHADAD's messengers did to the words of AHAB?

Have not we read unbelievingly? Not believing that the SPIRIT of God, the inditer of every word in this book, did particularly intend our good in every verse; that in the Scripture, life and death is set before us; yea, that Scripture words are our life?

Have not we read for wrong ends? Either to satisfy our curiosity, and not to regulate our hearts and lives; or to have matter of discourse, but not matter of practice; to have Scripture at our tongues' end, not in our hearts; or only to know, being ashamed to be ignorant of those things which all Christians know; and to be able to say nothing of such matters, which we cannot but have occasion divers times in company to talk of, but not to do? When did we read the Scriptures with this particular intention, That they might be "a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our paths?" That we might thereby be helped "to order our conversation aright?" When did we read the Bible with the same attention, reverence, and resolution to follow every rule therein, as we think we would if we had lived when CHRIST was upon earth, received a letter from him, directing us what to believe and do, that we might be saved? Or as we think we should a book writ immediately by the finger of God, as

he wrote the ten commandments in two tables? Why, the Bible is God's letter to every one of us in particular, written by himself, though mediately; "I have written to him the great things of my law." To him; it is in the singular number, because to every man and woman particularly. When did we read the Bible, as children read the last will and testament of their deceased parent?

Have not we read the Scripture without begging of God his SPIRIT, to help us to understand what we read, and to practise what we understand; at least, not so importunately as we would, if we had been begging for our lives at the bar of a Judge? Have not we sown this seed among thorns, in unploughed hearts, and have not so much as prayed to God, to take away the heart of stone, and to give a heart of flesh, a teachable, pliable, tractable spirit, ready to receive every divine impression? O when shall we make conscience of reading the Scriptures daily as we ought? 'The Emperor of Heaven,' saith GREGORY the Great, 'the LORD of angels and men, hath sent to you that which concerns your life; and will you (still) neglect to read it with a fervent and zealous spirit?'

How guilty have we been in not meditating on the word of God as we ought! How little, if at all, have we dwelt in our serious thoughts upon the matters contained in the word of God, to the end we might understand how much they concern us, and that our hearts may thereby be raised to holy affections and resolutions! Though meditation be commanded as a chief means sanctified by God for the keeping of his word; though we cannot be holy and happy without it altogether; though it be one of the most profitable duties of a Christian; though it be the duty by which the soul digesteth truths, and draweth forth their strength for its nourishment and refreshment; yea, the duty by which all other duties are improved: yet how much is this duty neglected by all sorts of men, because, though it be delightful to the spirit, yet it is tedious to the flesh!

Have not many been long professors of religion, and yet if they would tell the truth, they never spent one hour together in meditating on the most weighty scripture truths: on **GOD**, on man's estate by creation, the fall, regeneration, on **CHRIST**, on the vanity of the creature, on the beauty of holiness, on death, on judgment, on heaven, and hell?

How few have managed this duty aright! Hath not that which we call meditation been study only? Hath not some controversial point, or some nice speculation, been the matter of our meditation? Hereby we evidence that we have not so great spiritual hunger after righteousness as we should. 'Hungry men (saith one) do not use to stand and pick bones, when they have meat enough to eat.' Hath not our end in meditating been only the increasing our knowledge, and not the improving our knowledge? Have not we begun this work without **GOD**? When we were going about to meditate, have not we neglected prayer for help from heaven to go through with the work, though without **GOD** we can neither know, resolve upon, nor perform what is good; for from him, yea, from his own good pleasure, comes both the will and the deed. Have not we idled away our meditating seasons, if we have sequestered ourselves from worldly businesses, and company, for meditation at any time, by suffering our thoughts to wander up and down to no purpose, to be sure not to fetch in considerations for the stamping holy impressions upon our hearts and lives? Have not we in meditating been without a due sense of **GOD**'s presence? May not we cry out, Surely the **LORD** was in such and such a place, where I have been meditating, and I knew it not, *i. e.*, I considered it not? Hath not the work of our understanding, in this business, been to retain, and not to convey truth into the heart? Have our understandings represented what should work holy affections and resolutions aright? Have they presented things good, of a divine and heavenly nature, as **GOD**, **CHRIST**, and heaven, in their beauty? Have they presented things in their nature simply evil, as sin, **GOD**'s

wrath, hell, at their worst? Have not we left off meditating before we attained the end of meditation,—before holy affections and resolutions were wrought? Have not we rushed out of this duty, as well as rushed into it? Have not we gone from this work, as a bird out of the snare, with joy and speed? Have not we ended as well as begun this work without God? Not praying to God for strength to perform what we have been enabled by grace to resolve upon for God; and for pardon of what hath been amiss in the duty? O when will we be prevailed with to make conscience of this duty of duties? ‘I once more entreat thee,’ to use MR. BAXTER’S words, ‘as thou art a man that maketh conscience of a revealed duty, and that darest not wilfully resist the SPIRIT; and as thou art faithful to the peace and prosperity of thine own soul, that thou speedily and diligently set upon it.’

O what a mighty blessing is it to have such a book, wherein is written by God himself the counsels of his will concerning man’s eternal salvation! What a sin is it, then, to have low, mean, yea, vile and base thoughts of it! Is not our slighting the word of the LORD the cause of all the wickedness in our hearts and lives? Whence are all our omissions and commissions, but because we make a light matter of sinning against the Scriptures? Certainly this great provocation hath a great hand in our miseries, and threateneth utter ruin to us. “Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: therefore, as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff; so their root shall be rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust; because they have cast away the Law of the LORD of Hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.”

CHAPTER XVI.

Their Miscarriages about the Promises.

MUCH ungodliness is also evidenced in our miscarriages about the promises of the word. The promises being the great promoters of godliness in the world, not only as arguments to induce it, by showing how GOD will reward it, but likewise as principles of godliness, or the chief instrument whereby GOD makes souls partakers of the divine nature.

1. How little do we believe the truth of the promises. How little do we believe that the SPIRIT of GOD and glory rests on them that suffer for CHRIST, and his Gospel ! And that as tribulations abound for CHRIST, so shall consolations by him ! Or that we shall have an hundred-fold advantage by any loss we sustain for CHRIST ! All that fear of man ; all that cowardice ; all those tremblings of heart, that are upon us this day ; all that enmity against the cross of CHRIST, which appears on the faces and hearts of men, are clear demonstrations how little the promises for the bearing up under suffering, for the deliverance out of suffering, or rewarding of suffering for CHRIST, are believed. We cannot set the promise against all crosses.

2. How low is our esteem of the promises of GOD, of the great and faithful GOD, in comparison of what they are concerning the promises of honest and sufficient men. I appeal to thee, if the King should promise thee a thousand pounds per annum, whether it would not more rejoice thine heart, than the promises which GOD hath made unto thee do ? With how few are the promises of GOD “ exceeding great and precious ! ”

3. How little do we admire at GOD’s stooping so low as to oblige himself in promise to such as we ! GOD might have dealt with us by way of absolute sovereignty and dominion, imposing commands to do our duty, without adjoining any promise of reward. He, being ou

Creator, and we his creatures, it is his great condescension to deal with us by way of promise, which is not only a signification of what he will do, but a laying a bond or obligation upon himself to do so and so. And yet how little are we in admiration !

4. How little do we bless the **LORD** for those jewels that are wrapped up in the promises ! For the fruit that hangs on this tree of life ! This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. A crown is promised : “He shall receive a crown of life, which the **LORD** hath promised to them that love him.” A kingdom is promised : Hearken, my beloved brethren ; “hath not **GOD** chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him ?” Yet how unthankful ! This doubtless proceeds from our diffidence of the faithfulness of the Promiser, and therefore that shall be another question.

5. How little do we rely upon **GOD** to make good his promises ! How many think **GOD** the promiser, as changeable as themselves ! Men in boats, being in constant motion upon the waters, are apt to fancy that the land and trees move, as they themselves do : so many Christians think, as oft as they fail, **GOD** will fail too. Who lays all the stress upon the faithfulness of him that hath promised ? Do not we lean partly to our own endeavours, and the means we use, and so divide our dependences betwixt the promises of **GOD** and our own duties, to bring in pardons and peace ?

6. Do not we eye promises without eyeing **CHRIST** ? Do not we dote upon the bracelets, but neglect the friend ? Do not some set a greater value on the promise than on **CHRIST**’s person ? Though the promises are only the crystal streams of that river of life, which proceedeth out of the throne of **GOD** and the Lamb ; yet do not we make them the primary and not the secondary objects of faith ? Who look upon promises only as instruments, to bring **CHRIST** and the soul together ?

7. How little do we wait until that good which is in the

promises be given out to us ! “Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promise.” Sure, the vision is for an appointed time, and God would have us to wait, though it tarry ; because it will not tarry beyond the time appointed by the wise and faithful God. But though God never fail of his own time, yet he seldom comes to ours ; and then we run into unbelief, if not impatience of spirit. How oft do we ante-date the promise, and set it a time before God’s time ! Patience hath not its perfect work, so that if God save us out of our miseries, we shall not be able to say, “Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us ; this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.” This limiting the Holy One of Israel, either as to means, (when we tie up the Lord to work by ways and causes of our own) or to days and hours of our own bold and impudent prescription, is no small provocation. “How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert ! Yea, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.” Some will wait a month or two for the promise of pardon, that they may have peace in their consciences ; but when they see nothing comes of their waiting, then there is no hope ; why should I wait on the Lord any longer ? We allow time to the Physician to cure us ; we yield, that he knows the fittest time to apply cordials ; but we yield not so much to God ; we would have the smarting plaster pulled off before the wound be healed ; whereas it is best for us to have it kept on. DAVID waited patiently ; but so do not we : our hearts are not at rest, but we stagger like drunkards : we reel this way, and that way, but are not established ; in this we are not confident, that God who hath promised, cannot lie, and therefore will perform the word that is gone forth from an unfeigned lip. We are too hasty in our desires, whereas God knows the fittest season for the promise to bring forth ; we shall have it when the time is come ; but we hasten the birth, and spoil the conception. The Prophet of old complains

of some, that they were of a hasty heart ; whereas, “ He that believeth, maketh not haste.” **GOD** defers, to put an edge on our desires, a value on what is promised, and to exercise our faith.

8. How many have abused, rather than applied promises ! How many abuse the mercy of **GOD**, so that even the promises become an occasion of stumbling, whilst they continue in sin, in hopes of pardon ! We are not led by the sweetness of the promise to repentance ; but rather harden our hearts, presuming of pardons on course from the **GOD** of grace. Many “ continue to sin, that grace may abound ; ” hence repentance is put off. The promises are not made a sanctuary, into which men fly from sin, but as a sanctuary to protect them in their sinful courses. Do not we eye promises, and yet hate commands ? Do not we mind temporal promises, with the neglect of spiritual, and therein disparage **GOD**, by setting a deeper value on earth than on heaven ; on our back and bellies, than on **GOD** ? Do not we eye the promises that speak of mercy, and pass over those that lead to duty ? View with pleasure pardoning promises, but neglect the promises of sprinkling us with clean water, and that “ sin shall not have dominion over us ? ” We like it, that **GOD** should be our **GOD** ; but we love not to be **GOD**’s people. We take hold of promises, but we forget the condition : “ If my people shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their evil ways.” Little is that minded by us which the Prophet speaks : “ At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them.” We love promised mercies, but we overlook the preparatory duties of fasting, praying, repenting, and reforming our hearts and ways. **GOD** hath linked his promises and our seeking together. “ Thus saith the **LORD GOD**, I will yet for this be inquired of for the house of **Israel** to do it for them.” But how many of

us do either altogether neglect, or slothfully go about to perform, the condition of the promise? Are not some of us altogether strangers to Faith, the condition of the whole Covenant of Grace? We never gave ourselves unto the **LORD**, yet run away with the promises of forgiveness; though ignorant of the Mediator betwixt **GOD** and sinful creatures, though full of pride and high conceits of our own righteousness, yet we boast that **ABRAHAM** is our father; that the promises are ours. How do the promises of **GOD** make some slothful in the use of appointed means? How formal in duties are we? May it not be said of us, as of the image, There is somewhat wanting within? Are not we silly doves, without heart? Are not we bolstered up with the promises? O these pillows under our heads make us slumbering virgins: all is well; **GOD** is merciful; but we do not sweat and get our living by labour; we strive not to "enter in at the strait gate."

9. How nice and curious are some in applying of promises! They take no pleasure in any promises, but such as they think no hand touched before their own. They neglect the plain, clear, open promises of the Gospel; and if any be more abstruse, and hard to be found out by an ordinary eye, they are greedily sucked in: they are only or mainly for mystical promises. Such think they are delighted with the goodness of the promise, whereas they are only pleased with the newness of it, or with their own invention, and that they can see farther into a mill-stone than another. I have known some of these, and I have seen what is become of them: their pride and affectation have led them also from the plain paths of holiness.

10. How many will not close with a promise, until the thing promised be found within them! Because their hearts are so corrupt, therefore they will not apply the promises of purifying the heart: whereas there is no way to get their corrupt hearts cleansed, but by laying hold on such promises; and the longer they keep off the promise, the worse it will be with them. There is no

other way, but by this ark, to escape drowning; and the longer they wander in this wilderness, the more hard it will be to enter into Canaan.

11. Do not we pretend to eye the promises, and yet use indirect means to bring our devices to pass? We have pretended to live the life of faith; but God knows what wicked (at least questionable) courses men have taken; how much evil hath been done, that good may come. Have not we, to help God's promises to bring forth, turned out of God's way, offered violence to known laws, wronged conscience, forgotten all obligations upon us, regarded nothing that stood in our way of compassing our designs?

12. How little do we examine the fruits of God's promises in our own souls! The "exceeding great and precious promises are given, that we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust; that we might purify ourselves, even as God is pure." But do we look for those ends to be attained by the promises in our souls? Do we look not only for a change from looseness to civility, but a thorough sanctification in body, mind, and spirit? Alas! which of us can say, "Having these promises, we cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and perfect holiness in the fear of God?"



CHAPTER XVII.

Their Abuse of Providence.

ABUSE of Providence is another branch of ungodliness. God is to be honoured, not only as the chief good, and as the supreme truth and authority, but as the First Cause that giveth being to all things, and therefore ordereth and disposeth of all things as he pleaseth: but, O how is God

dishonoured by abusing his providence ! The blind world are not only guilty, who do not acknowledge God at the other end of causes, as swaying all things by his wisdom and power, but set up an idol called Chance ; but even professors, eminent professors of religion, are herein very guilty.

1. How seldom do we observe God's providence ! The finger of God is in all the creatures ; not only we, but all creatures, "live, move, and have their being" from God, and in God. The whole course of nature moves as it is turned by the hand of God, and directed by his counsel ; it is not with the work of God, as with the artificer's clock, which, put into a frame, and hanged with weights, will go, though the artificer be off from it ; but though God set all creatures in frame, yet the motion of every wheel depends on God. There is not a drop of rain falls, "until God utter his voice, and cause the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth." Yet how is God not minded ! We see not his footsteps ; he passeth this way and that, and we see him not. Our eyes are held to second causes : we look when the wind, or moon, will change, but we are so short-sighted that we reach not God. How seldom do we consider, that though God's providence doth deliver up his choicest friends into the hands of his and their enemies, yet doth it not deliver them up unto their will ; they cannot do what they please, but only what pleaseth God. Such are still "engraven on the palms of his hands," though turned over into the hands of the ungodly ; they are God's favourites still, though the wicked say, "Persecute them, and take them, for God hath forsaken them." How little do we mind that our times are in God's hands ; and that as SATAN is in a chain, so are his instruments. We fear men more than God. O when shall we hear that word of God,—
"Say not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy ; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid : sanctify the LORD of Hosts himself ; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread."

2. How little are we affected with the continual course of Providence, though it guards and keeps us every moment ! The stars in their courses would fight against us ; the sea would break in as a devourer ; the beasts of the field would arm against us, if GOD did not check them, and bind them ; yea, one man would eat up another, were it not for the LORD, who sets bounds to the rage of all the creatures. It is the eye of jealousy that is still wakeful for us ; it is the LORD that “ puts the hook into the nose,” and the bridle in the lips, of the Sennacheribs of the world ; and yet how little are our hearts affected ! How little are they comforted, how little do they cleave unto the LORD !

On the contrary : How distrustful are we of GOD’s providence, in a time of seen dangers, though we are wonderfully delivered from invisible ones every day ! Who can number the legions of devils ? So many deliverances hast thou by GOD’s providence every moment ; and yet how diffident are we upon all new imminent outward dangers ! How little do we believe that GOD will bring in good to us, by such providences as are ungrateful to sense, to flesh and blood ! Though nothing is more usual than GOD to take away some comforts, and lay in better comforts ;—to take away an Abel, and make it up in Seth ;—to deprive Noah of the comforts of the whole world for a while, and then to wash it from its filthiness, and to deliver him the possession of it, with manifest proofs of his singular care of him and his family, whilst all the rest of the creatures perished in the waters ;—to deprive Mary and Martha of their brother Lazarus, and to return him from the dead with advantage ;—to deprive Job of his children and estate, to make his last days better than his first, and to give him “ twice as much as he had before : ” yet how little can we trust Providence in such cases ! How hardly were the disciples persuaded, that the absence of their LORD should be supplied in the SPIRIT ! And yet, saith CHRIST, “ Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away ; for if I go not away,

the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send him to you. CHRIST in his SPIRIT, dwelling in our hearts, is better than CHRIST in the flesh, dwelling in our houses.

Nothing more usual with GOD than to make the loss of one comfort, the means of enjoying another with advantage, yea, with the advantage of the hundred fold : But, alas ! most fear they shall be losers by CHRIST and for CHRIST. GOD seldom proceeds in a direct way to his ends, *i. e.*, in a right way to our apprehensions, in such a way as we would have him go in ; but he leads us about, as he did Israel, and yet that was the right way indeed ; though the means seem to oppose the end ; yet he works to the praise of his name : He can write right by a crooked pen, and bring honey out of the carcase of the lion : But O, how little do we trust Providence when the means are not probable to effect our expected end ? Who believes there shall be light in the evening ? And that SARAH “ shall have a posterity as the stars in the firmament for multitude, and as the sand on the sea-shore, which is innumerable ? ” Who will think that the sun and the stars should bow to JOSEPH, when he lies in the pit, or is in the dungeon of the heathen King ? How unseemly is the behaviour of many, if Providence thwarts them in taking away a child, an husband, an estate ? How discouraged and cast down are we, as if GOD in his Providence had pulled down that which he could never build again, or rooted up that which he could never plant again ? O how few believe that if GOD pull down their brick-houses, that he will build them again of hewn stones, and that if he consume their fir-trees, he will build again with cedars ? Whence is all our dejectedness under cross-providences, but from our not believing that all things are disposed by the wise and gracious Providence of GOD ? We believe not enough that the eyes of our loving Father run to and fro throughout the earth, to show himself marvellous for our help in a time of need and danger. Few can say, “ GOD is our refuge and strength ; a very present help in trouble.

Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." Few believe that if the LORD be pleased to lay a great burden upon their shoulders, he will give great strength to bear it, and if he gives but little strength, he will surely proportion the burden to it. Whence are all our uproars of spirit, and disquietness of heart, but from our not trusting Providence? When God is working desolation, did we see it his work, we would be still. DAVID was so, when provoked by SHIMEI. God hath bid SHIMEI curse. ABISHAI was not so much concerned in the affront, as DAVID; but he sees not God in the lips of SHIMEI, and therefore his spirit is inflamed.

All revenge in the hearts of men one against another may be attributed to man's blindness and injudicious view of things; they see not the wicked to be God's sword to let out their corruption; they do not believe that God intends to pursue gracious designs by such instruments. How silent should we be, yea, how full of praises, if by an eye of faith we saw the end of God in all his Providences? "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now I keep thy word:" "I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou hast afflicted me in faithfulness. He for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness."

3. How oft have we made Providence an argument to justify our actions? That because God doth not punish us, therefore he loves us and approves of our way? Whereas the Scriptures and experience show, that there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongs his life in wickedness: Sometimes God's not punishing, is the greatest punishment. JEROME observes, that God deals with us as parents with children, whilst there is any hope of reclaiming them, they are corrected; but otherwise they are let alone, to do as they list. Or, as Physicians continue their applications, whilst there is any hope of the patient's life; otherwise, they let them alone. How do some bless themselves, that they never fasted and prayed as others,

and yet they ride on horseback, whilst others go on foot. But what saith the Scripture: DIVES had his good things here, and LAZARUS evil: DIVES fared deliciously every day; his misery is reserved to hereafter: as LAZARUS's comforts are reserved till death. It is a considerable passage of a very learned man, in weakening the late position of some, 'that GOD had borne testimony to their cause, by the many victories which he had given them.' 'This concluding of yours, will, by the same reason, infer that Christianity is not, and that Mahometanism is, true religion; because, when the Turks asserted one, and the Greek Church the other, and that difference begat a war betwixt them; the Turks were successful, and the Greek Church subdued; and so, remains to this hour in that captivity.' Do not all things come alike to all? And yet good men have been stumbled at these dispensations: When they see the wicked walk on every side, (go where they please, and do what they please,) they are apt, either to doubt of GOD's Providence, whether He governs the world, or to call in question whether they have any relation to GOD's special care. But do not we know, that the child is oft beaten, whilst the servant or stranger is spared? Do not we know, that "judgment begins at the house of GOD," yea, and stays long there, and all that while the tents of ungodliness may be free? They may wax old, and grow in wealth; their seed may be established. But all this they have with the curse of GOD.

4. 'The more Providence hath favoured us, have not we the less rolled ourselves on the Covenant of Grace?' Hath not GOD had the less of our dependance and faith? Have not the promises lain more neglected? So that GOD hath been even necessitated to draw in his hand of bounty, that, 'when destitute, we may trust to him. The cisterns leak apace, that the fountain may be in great request.'

5. 'How discontented are we to this day, with GOD's providential administrations toward us?' How do we prescribe to GOD? Some would be richer than they are; others, more honourable: Some covet to be above others.

We have bad memories, or else we cannot but remember how ill some of us improved our talents of power and honour when we had them. Is it reasonable that God should be charged for an hard master, for not entrusting ten talents in our hands, when we have been so unfaithful to our former allotments? Jeshurun-like, we waxed fat, and never were more beast-like, than when we were in the greenest pastures. God would be charged even with indiscretion, if he should commit more talents again to thee, till thou art humbled for thy former unfaithfulness.

6. 'How do we take God's work out of his hands?' How careful are we in many things, though we should be careful in nothing? Though we cannot add one cubit to our stature by all our cares; yet what solitudes eat into our hearts, and cut them in twain? We should serve Providence in the use of means, but should have nothing to do with the issues and events of the means we use, but leave them to God. That which is not under our power, should not be under our care. All things are ordered by the deliberate counsel of God. "I returned and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all."

7. How commonly do men neglect the Providence of God, and betake themselves to their own shifts, to extricate themselves from their miseries? Is man wiser than God? And yet men hope rather to help themselves by their own wiles and endeavours, than by leaning to the Providence of God. O! how have men run to extraordinary courses to deliver themselves out of their miseries? For this, God may "make our land desolate, and a perpetual hissing" of derision: He may justly "scatter us as with an east wind before the enemy, and show us the back, and not the face, in the day of our calamity."

8. Have not we been partial in viewing the Providence of God? Have not we taken some one Providence, and fixed our eye upon it so long, until our hearts have been even

overwhelmed with sorrow? But we have not viewed the Providences of God in their contexture, nor in their relation to gracious ends for our good. Some take more notice of smiling Providences than of frowning; of what in Providence makes for them, and their courses, than of what makes against them; but others take more notice of frowning Providences than of smiling; of what makes against them, than of what makes for them. In this we have shown ourselves fools; for “who is wise shall understand these things:” Who? That is, few or none are such. And then there is an earnest wish or desire of the Prophet: “O that men were wise to understand these things.” “The ways of the Lord are right,” though men think them not so.



CHAPTER XVIII.

Their Hypocrisy.

HYPOCRISY is another piece of Ungodliness, which like leaven, hath diffused itself far and wide. It is the greatest ungodliness that can be, to rob the Lord of his dominion over the conscience. God is not honoured unless he be acknowledged as having the supreme authority, not only over the life, but the heart; and therefore his authority is never more undermined than by a mere form of godliness.

In how many hath the tongue prayed, when not the heart? These have been much in fasting and prayer, and thought themselves much wronged that they were not heard: But God gives them a reason: Ye shall not fast as ye do, to make your voice to be heard on high. The Hypocrite may lift up his voice strongly, and yet never be heard: His voice, for want of the heart therein, may never come up to God's dwelling-place. How many tell God

that they love him, yea, that they love him with all their hearts : whereas, they flatter God with their lips ; they delight not in his presence ; yea, all the while they are serving their turn on God ? Fain they would partake of God's bounty, of God's protection, and God's pardons, but they love neither God nor his image : when God puts them to express their love by self-denial, then you shall see the graves to be full of rottenness ; they hate " to spend and to be spent, for God." How many tell God that they are troubled for offending him, when they are only troubled that he is displeasing them, and about to correct them for their abuses of him ? They will cry out in prayer, O my carelessness ! But, alas ! it is not sin, but the consequence of sin, that disturbs them. How will many tell God they fear him, and his judgments, when indeed they fear neither ; witness their frothy, light spirits and conversation ? How will they tell God that all the world is but as a drop of a bucket in comparison of his majesty ; and yet they fear the wrath of man more than the wrath of ALMIGHTY GOD ? How many will tell God that they are contented with all his will, and yet their hearts are full of inward risings against the Providence of God ? How many tell God they believe in him, trust to his mercy, depend on CHRIST, and all their cares are cast on CHRIST ; when God knows their care and work, like bees, is to get honey to their hives : " they mind earthly things," and are scraping the dust of the valleys to themselves, as if they thought it their wisdom rather to lean to their own providing, than to be beholden to the LORD ? How earnest are some in their cries to God for victory over sin ; but secretly hate it not ? And doth it not appear in this, for that having directed their prayers to the LORD, they do not look up, to see whether the corruption be more mortified, and their love to it abated, yea or no ?

How much Hypocrisy hath appeared in our declaimings against others' sins ? O ! we must not suffer this ; the house of God must be kept clean, it must not be made a den of thieves. a cage of uncleanness : And all this while

their zeal is nothing but revenge ; a secret grudge there is against the delinquent, and now that an advantage offereth, they will have their pennyworth out of him.

How many are always finding faults, blaming Magistrates, Ministers, all but themselves ? This man wants courage, and another wants another grace ; whilst they themselves want all grace, as being mere pieces of pageantry. How many whining Hypocrites have we, that will, in all companies, especially where Ministers are, be crying out against the baseness and treachery of their own hearts, and the wickedness of their own lives, and rest in their lazy complaints, but reform not ?

How severe are some in their censures of sin in others ; as JUDAH against TAMAR : she must be burnt ! Who will now suspect JUDAH to be unclean ? How ready have we been to judge and censure others, rather than ourselves ? To behold a mote in others, but not the beam in ourselves ? How many censure others for being talkative, and therefore would impose silence upon others ; because they have neither heart nor tongue themselves, to vindicate God, and to promote religion ?

How many are full of persuasions of the love of God, and of the grace of God, and are yet ignorant of the first principles of Christianity ; neglectors of family-prayer, or closet-duties ? They think well of themselves, because in their duties before men, they are devout and zealous ; but in their closets they are straitened, and put the LORD off with a short collect. How many are neat and cleanly when walking in the view of others ; but if you follow them home to their houses and chambers, how offensive, how foul are they ? How many are there whose religion lies in their face, habit, gesture ; seem demure, humble, walk with their eyes looking downwards, bow with ABSALOM to the people, and yet their hearts full of pride and loftiness ?

How hath Hypocrisy followed thee from the corners of the streets to the very closet ? Thou hast shut thy door, as if thou wouldest shut out the world and devils, and

there hast fallen asleep, or (which is as bad) parleyed with the Devil, and pampered thy lusts. Hypocrisy, like the frogs of Egypt, hath crept into thy most secret retirements.

How few can pretend to uniformity in their obedience ! How many will be ashamed, because they respect not all GOD'S commandments ! Still they clip the law ; still some reserves ; they will let go profaneness, so they may but reserve covetousness ; they will pray and hear, so they may extort from their neighbour ; or they will be strict to rules of justice and equity among men, but they will rob GOD of his honour. Some of them are punctual to a day, to a farthing ; (blush, Reader, if thou art short of the hypocrite's stature ;) but they will rob GOD of his due,—of his due in the closet, and in the family too.

How frequently do we hear some desiring to know the least measure of saving grace ; and why ? Because they would sit down therewith. There is not a surer note of an unsound heart, than to be contented with the least degree of grace, and not to press forward.

How generally do men hate to be examined about their state ! This is a sure sign of a painted Christian. Paint will not endure the fire : hypocrites hate lancing and piercing work. How many continue in a course of religion, and yet their hearts are hardened more and more, and they know it, and yet will hardly consult with Ministers about their sad condition ; or if they do, yet practise nothing more than before.

O what a controversy hath GOD with England for its great hypocrisy ! We have called ourselves “the holy city,” and have “made mention of the GOD of Israel,” but “not in truth, not in righteousness.” Though you have passed for saints in the account of short-sighted men, yet you are but devils in CHRIST'S account. Of all devils, none are so bad as the professing devil. O when will ye “put on the new man, which after GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness ?” Believe it, if thou art a whited wall,

GOD will smite thee. If you deny GOD your hearts, never expect his ear. Quails you may have, but with a vengeance, with leanness in your souls. That which GOD desireth and looketh for is, "truth in the inward parts."



CHAPTER XIX.

Their Sabbath-Sins.

WHEN you remember the evil of your ways, of your ungodly ways, you may not omit your Sabbath-sins. GOD hath appointed the Sabbath; he hath sanctified it for special and entire communion with himself. The law of the Sabbath was given before the fall: but since the fall, this rest is of more absolute necessity, for that we cannot now apply our minds entirely to matters of so different a nature as heavenly and earthly things are. The Sabbath is many ways honourable: it was anciently set apart by GOD; it was written with GOD's own finger on the tables; GOD rained manna on that day; it is called an everlasting covenant, by way of eminency, as if nothing of GOD's covenant were kept, if this were not; yea, GOD puts a "Remember" on this day, and no other: "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath Day." If a friend sendeth to you, that he will come and solace himself in your company such a day, and tells you the set time when he will come, will he not take it ill if you neglect him then? If you are full of employments, and other guests, and have no leisure to attend communion with him? Thus saith GOD, 'Remember such a time; I will set it apart on purpose to feast you; you are on other days clogged and cumbered with earthly affairs, so that I can have but broken communion with you; but pray remember to lay

aside all other business, that I and you may freely converse together." But instead of this,

How little preparation do we make for the observing this day unto the LORD, though "Remember" be a watch-word of solemn preparation for it! "Remember it," think of it before it come, that thou mayest be ready to sanctify it, without any distraction by worldly business. Which of us dispatcheth his worldly business seasonably on the six days? Nay, is it not a wicked custom to engross more business into our hands and hearts the day before, than on any other day of the week? Do not greedy ones sit up later on Saturday night than any night? Hereby their hearts are cumbered with the world, and their strength and spirits wasted and spent, so that they cannot with a free spirit wait upon God. Such is the reverence that is due to the solemn and public duties of devotion, that they require, not only a surcease from other works and thoughts for the time of the performance, but also a decent preparation beforehand; that we "look to our feet," that so our thoughts and affections (which are naturally bent upon the world, and not easily withdrawn from it) may be raised to a disposition becoming the day. God alone knows how oft the Devil and our own hearts have entangled us with occasions on the Saturday, whereby our minds have been distracted on the Sabbath; yea, have we not at times even secretly wished that the Sabbath were over, or might be adjourned, that we might pursue some worldly design, which is obstructed by its interposal? The Sabbath is the saint's market-day, or fair-day. You know what preparations are made by worldlings for their days of gain: would to God we had learned wisdom from carnal men, so to prepare for the advantages to our souls we may reap upon God's day!

How have we curtailed the Sabbath! Have not we risen later on the LORD's day than on any other? and gone sooner to bed on that day than on any other? When will the Sabbath be gone? Do not we make it the shortest day of the week? O if God had reserved all the

days to himself save one, how diligent would you have been to take all the day to your worldly business ! This is a clear evidence, that your minds are more on your profits and pleasures, than on the service of CHRIST.

How lowering are our countenances, and how lumpish and heavy are our hearts, in the beginning of a Sabbath, much more than upon any other day ! Doth not this prove the day to be no way pleasing to us ? And how cheerful are some of us when the Sabbath is ended ! The heart is not so well pleased all the day as then ; yea, do not some cheat and delude themselves hereby, as if they had joy in the LORD, and had received comfort from the word, and other ordinances ? whereas they are glad that the yoke of ordinances, the burden of the word of the LORD, and the burden of the day of the LORD, are taken off their shoulders.

How quieted are some when they have attended the public service ! Do they, betwixt and after those solemn duties, refrain their lips from worldly talk, from impertinences, from such discourse as bears no proportion with the holiness of the day ?

How many neglect to do all their works on the six days, though the LORD so expressly chargeth them so to do, that they may have a pretence of necessity to do much servile work on the Sabbath ! How common is it to dress meat on the Sabbath, more than on any other day, when there is not the least pretence of weakness ! Hereby not only servants, but the whole house are too much in labour and distraction, and hindered, if not from the solemn assemblies, yet from family and closet-worship.

How do many gossip, compliment, and feast away (abroad) the day of the LORD ! Or else eat to excess at home, and thereby make themselves fitter for a bed than to wait in the sanctuary, to hear CHRIST'S voice, to meditate on his love, and to feed in his pleasant pastures.

How careful are we to keep ourselves and ours from pilfering from our neighbour ; but not from stealing from GOD his time : yea, are not some governors so upgodly

and unmerciful, that they will allow their people no time but the Sabbath to recreate themselves from their labours? If they need recreation, you have more time than God hath reserved; sure you should not steal from God to pleasure them.

In the discharge of the works of mercy to man and beast, do not we respect more our own commodity, than the will of God, than the dispensation of God, and the creature's necessities? Are these works of mercy attended with such spiritual meditations as they would afford us if our hearts were holy?

How few bless God for giving them one day wherein they may lighten their hearts of all worldly cares, and throw off all griefs and secular cumbers, and may seek relief and comfort in their God!

Perhaps the master observes a day unto the Lord; but how careless is he that his sons and daughters, and all within his gate, honour the day of the Lord! Do not many governors of families let them sleep away the Sabbath, that they may be fitter for their drudgeries the following week? O when will governors be as diligent that their servants and household serve the Lord, as that they serve themselves? You have been careful that your work were done in the week, but careless whether God's work were done by them on the Sabbath; careless whether your servants profited by the Sabbath or no? When will God's glory and the good of your people's souls be nearer to you than your worldly advantages? You ask your servants what work they have done for you every day, and call them to frequent accounts for your gain's sake: and what! never reckon with them about their spiritual work? O how little is the love of God in your hearts!

How justly may God be angry with us, until he hath consumed us, for our defiling the day of the Lord! It was God's law, that "every one that defileth it, should surely be put to death." When the people were weary of the Sabbath, when they said, "When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn; and the Sabbath, that we may set forth

wheat? the LORD sware by the excellency of JACOB, Surely I will not forget any of their works. Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation. Behold, the days come, saith the LORD GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the LORD. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the North even to the East; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it."



CHAPTER XX.

Their Miscarriages about Self-Examination.

THE more the LORD of heaven chargeth us with a duty, the more inexcusable are our neglects of it: There are few things more commanded, than to try our hearts and lives. We are apt to be strangers to ourselves, to cheat ourselves with vain hopes, to rest in notions; therefore "examine yourselves," take an experimental knowledge of yourselves. We are apt to prove others, and censure them; therefore "prove yourselves:" begin at home, try your state, try your actions, bring your metal to the touchstone, see whether it be sound or counterfeit: try your faith, whether it be temporary or saving; prove your repentance, whether it be thorough or superficial; examine your love, whether it be sincere or hypocritical; and your obedience, whether it be universal or partial. "Know therefore, and consider in thy heart;" make a return or answer to thine heart: "Commune with thine own heart;" hold intelligence with it: "Let a man examine himself: Let us search and try our ways." But yet, notwithstanding these injunctions,

1. How many are there that never set about this duty?

They will pray and read, but will not be persuaded to look inward; they are as great strangers to their own, as to others' hearts. They are at no pains to try in what state they are: They will not try whether they are new-born or not; whether sanctified, or not; whether a saving change hath past upon them, or not. They never examine what justification, and justifying and saving faith be; and whether they are justified, and shall be saved; like "Gallio, little caring for these things:" They re-examine which way they may be greater in the world, but not how to prepare for eternity. You ask one another, What news from navies, from armies, from court, from country; but when did you spend one hour, to ask your hearts this serious question: O my soul! what will become of thee, when thou leavest this earthly tabernacle? We travel any where, but where we should: We are better read in any book, than in the sealed book of our own hearts: we are not at all for a personal treaty with our own consciences; we are too much prying into other men's hearts, but our eyes turn not inward; we know not how it is with our souls, and what will become of them; and we have no mind to know such matters.

As we commune not with our hearts about our states, so we do not commune with them about our actions, neither before nor after the doing them: Before we act, we do not advise with our consciences, whether what we be about to do, be lawful or unlawful; and if lawful, whether expedient or inexpedient: After we have acted, whether our actions be good or evil. How many are content, so the matter be good, but examine not themselves about the manner, principles, ends, and motives! Alas! how many wholly neglect this necessary duty! If all were like these, God might take up his old complaint, "No man cried out, what have I done?" Or, O my heart! what hath God done for thee!

2. If we do examine our hearts, yet not by the word of the Lord. God would have us to try and prove ourselves; then there must be some measuring line, some

standard, some rule, to try ourselves by; but herein we are hugely defective. We try ourselves by some sudden pangs, or by the good opinion of others concerning us, or by the lives of others, (we being in an hospital, where every one almost is lame and defective,) or by some other easy rule, that we ourselves frame unto ourselves, and so miserably cheat ourselves. O how loath are we, that the light of God's word should be let down into the dark cells of our hearts! How loath to try states or actions by the Scripture; though thereby they must be tried at the last day. He is a good text-man, that compares Scripture with Scripture; and he is a good Christian, that compares the Scripture and his own heart together; that credits his own heart only, when it hath the consent of the Prophets and Apostles.

3. How superficial are many in examining themselves by the word! How few examine their state or their actions fully! Though our hearts be very great impostors, "deceitful above all things," great supplanters, full of guile; though there be thousands and thousands of lusts that be hid in our hearts, and deceits, like the sands on the sea-shore, yet how carelessly do we set upon this work: We take no pains in it.

4. How seldom are we in this work. Some defer it until a sacrament, and then perhaps the house is searched for the leaven; whereas we should keep a petty sessions in our hearts every day, and do what we can to know the bottom of the projects, devices, and workings of our hearts. When going to prayer, we should examine ourselves, whether we have clean hands and pure hearts; whether we are double-minded: if so, there is no drawing nigh to God. And when we come off from the duty, we should confer with our hearts, what enlargements, quickenings, meltings, humblings, we had in the duty; what promises, what threats, were applied by the SPIRIT; whether we saw the face of our Beloved, or not? When going to a sermon, we should examine in what posture we are to meet with God; what oil we want, that we may be supplied. When going to our

beds, we should examine our hearts, how the day hath been spent, what sins were committed, what duties done, and how discharged : what temptations were resisted, what mercies received, and what growth and increase of grace we have obtained ? When going to visit, this duty should be taken up before and after : Before, thus,—Wherein may I honour the LORD my GOD in such company ? What are their wants, that I may endeavour to supply them ? What are their temptations and discouragements, that I may labour to support them ? What are their graces, that I may profit by them ? After, thus,—O my heart, what good didst thou do or receive in that company ? Wast thou “eyes to the blind, feet to the lame ?” Didst thou labour to bring thy friends nearer to JESUS CHRIST ; or hast thou more estranged and prejudiced them, from and against the way of truth ? O my heart, didst thou take heed to thy ways, that thou didst not sin with thy tongue ? Didst thou keep thy mouth as with a bridle, when going into the shop or field ? Yet with ISAAC thou art to meditate there, and confer with GOD and thy heart ; thus, O my heart, for whom dost thou labour, for thyself, or for GOD ? Whose servant wilt thou be to-day, the world’s or CHRIST’S ? How many snares are there in the world, and how great is thy danger, if GOD prevent not by special grace ! O my soul, what need hast thou of almighty power to keep thee, that thou mayest retain thy sweetness in salt waters.

But, alas ! how seldom do we reflect on our words, or silence ; on our speaking or hearing ; on our behaviour abroad, or at home. When do we consider, what our affections were most set upon, in such a place, in such an hour : and what our demeanour toward GOD, and toward our neighbour, was ? We do not believe BERNARD, who tells us, ‘If we would examine ourselves as oft as we need, we must do it always.’ And CHRYSOSTOM’S paraphrase and counsel on Psalm iv. is of as little credit with us : ‘Let this account be kept every day ; have a little book in thy conscience, and write therein thy daily transgressions,

and 'when thou layest thee down on thy bed, bring forth thy book, and take an account of thy sins.'

5. Do not we grow weary of this work, before it be brought to any considerable issue? We flag before we come to the upshot. Still some were learning, and never came to the knowledge of the truth : And so some pretend at least to be always trying ; but they hold not fast : They try their hearts, as some did truths, until they be wholly sceptical ; as ignorant, whether converted or no, as ever : They know not more this year, than they did seven years since ; but hang betwixt heaven and hell, in a dubious state, for want of skill or pains to decide this matter. We are not resolute and peremptory enough to have an account of our souls, yea, such an one, that we may have boldness in the presence of CHRIST. We should commune until we know, whether we be natural or spiritual ; and accordingly be humbled greatly, or greatly rejoice in God our SAVIOUR. Reader, could I but prevail with thee to set in good earnest upon heart-examination, and solemn meditation, and self-trial, I should bless the LORD as long as I breathe for this enterprise of mine. The Searcher of hearts knoweth, that I took pen in hand on this design, to labour with thee in order to inside duties, that thou mightest not be contented with a form of godliness, and rest in the external part of religion, that more work might be done within doors, in closets, and hearts. O that you would reform, nor pass on to another chapter, till you have engaged your slippery, inconstant hearts, to attend on this necessary duty ! Take a few considerations to impel you.

1. The very heathen will rise up in judgment to condemn you, if you neglect this duty. A Roman Philosopher, every night before he slept, would examine himself thus, 'What sin hast thou opposed? Wherein art thou bettered?' CATO also, would daily, at evening, call to mind whatever he had seen, read, or done that day. 'I use,' saith SENECA, 'every evening to plead my cause with myself :

When the candle is gone, and all silent, I review all that I have said and done in the day ; I hide nothing from mine own scrutiny ; I pass by nothing.' PYTHAGORAS gave also this severe rule to his scholars, that ' they should no night suffer sleep to seize their senses, until they had three times recalled the accidents and passages of the day ; What evil have I committed, what good have I omitted ? ' Now " except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees," (may not I say of the Heathen,) how can you hope for salvation ? How hath thine heart cheated thee with vain confidences ? How hast thou cried, " The temple of the LORD ; I have ABRAHAM to my father ;" whilst moral Heathens have been better acquainted with their hearts than thou art !

2. You yourselves will be judges of yourselves. You take the glass, and what is amiss in the hair, in the face, in the body, you rectify by it : And what, no observation to be made of the faces of your souls ? O take the word of GOD, and make use of this glass, which now is in thine hand ! Doth it discover no spots, no neglects, no failings ? O view thyself, and humble thyself, reflect on thyself, and confer with thyself, until thou art ashamed, until thou abhorrest and loathest thyself before the LORD !

3. You have a sure sign of hypocrisy on you, whilst this duty is neglected ; for all the upright are careful to commune with their hearts, to search their hearts, to make diligent search, lest any lust should be covered, as RACHEL covered her idols. Nothing is more desired by a sincere soul, than to be thoroughly searched ; " Examine me, O LORD," as artificers do, whether their gold be weight or no ; " and prove me," as artificers do their silver in the fire ; " try my reins and my heart," the most inward motions of my soul ; search me more deeply and thoroughly than the world can do. Unsound hearts have one DELILAH, so that they cannot endure to be examined and found out ; they are loath to search too far, lest they should see what they are unwilling to see ; and so be put upon judging and con-

denying themselves for that which they love above an eye or an hand.

4. But observe the sad consequences of the neglect of this duty. By this neglect, your hearts will become careless, for that they are not called to account; as servants and factors are wont, when their masters neglect to examine them. Hereby, sins will grow bolder with you, and the more easily beset you; for that you examine not wherein their strength lies, and which way they oftenest prevail over you. Hereby the work of repentance will be obstructed; for that innumerable sins, which you are daily guilty of, will pass away unobserved, with those circumstances attending them which make them of the greatest magnitude. And how can you “walk before God with an humble heart,” when you know not what your heart are? How can you “serve him with an upright heart,” whilst a stranger to this duty? Like the foolish virgins you will not know your undone condition till it be too late: you lie deceived in matters of the highest concernment; you are cheated hitherto in things of eternity. You are vexed when deceived by a friend, when supplanted by a neighbour: O how will it pierce your souls, to be cheated by yourselves! Here is one that lies in thy bosom and thou and it go to cheat each other continually. “Let no man deceive himself.” It seems we are apt to do so. But O how great will your confusion be, when this deceit shall be manifested, when you shall see yourself frustrated of all your hopes, and the glory your heart promised you! How will you be confounded, when you shall say, ‘We looked for heaven, but behold hell; we looked for salvation, but behold destruction.’

5. If you be loath to see how it is with you now, how will you be able to behold what shall be seen in the day of judgment? Though you will not now know your hearts yet God is coming with his fan: The books must be opened, and every page of thy heart will be unfolded, for God will bring to light every hidden work of dishonesty

Thy inward parts, which are very wickedness, shall be made manifest : ” And then thou shalt be speechless, as if thou hadst a muzzle put upon thy mouth, as the word signifieth. Well, seeing the secrets of the soul must be brought forth, is it not better, by judging ourselves, to prevent the terror of the last day ? Judged we must and shall be ; is it not then thy wisdom to judge thyself here in thy closet, that thou mayest be judged by GOD with a judgment of absolution, and not of condemnation ? Is it nothing to have all thy unrepented and unforgiven sins published on the house-top, made known to all the world at the great day ? How will thine heart endure then, when the LORD shall come to deal with thee ? You will not see ; but you shall see : You will not retire ; the world lies in your hearts, business comes in, and takes up all your time and spirits : GOD is about to strip you, to ease you of your callings, you shall come naked to the bar of GOD, you shall have no family-business to distract you ; a fair trial there shall be, but a sad one for thee : “ Your sin shall find you out.” You have had many calls : Once more I call upon you, in the name of CHRIST, to examine your hearts by the words of this book, which you have, or shall read ; and be sure of it, if you will not try yourselves by the word, GOD will try you by your works.



CHAPTER XXI.

Their Pride.

BEHOLD, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom : And is not this devilish sin become our national sin ?

1. With what a bold and impudent face have we come and appeared before GOD ? Who hath sensibly expressed himself in ABRAHAM'S words, “ Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD, which am but dust and

ashes." Instead of a reverential fear of God, our haviour has been stout against God, and we have trembled in his presence; no, not whilst we have been terribly threatened by God, yea, when his dreadful threatenings have been terribly executed upon us; even in such times we have irreverently rushed into his presence.

2. How have our wills risen up against the will of God? The humble soul stoops to God's preceptive and providential will; but we have wretchedly thwarted God in his counsels and dispensations: The great controversy betwixt God and man, is, Whose will shall stand, God's or man's? O how impudently have we contended with the LORD about this! We have even thought ourselves too great to be crossed. How many think it a disgrace to be still and silent under the hand of God, but they may be clamorous, and speaking against the very heavens. They are ready to say, 'This was not well done by God. He might have given or continued us this and the other mercy.' They mislike many of God's dispensations of providence: They cannot heartily say, that God holds the reins best, and guides all his affairs with the greatest wisdom: They think if they were the orderers of matters in the world, things would be better governed: Like ABSALOM, who wished he were in DAVID's stead, they wish they were in God's stead. A proud man would have others under him; yea, he would have the great and glorious God subject to his will. Whence are all your disputings and quarrellings with God, save from the pride of your hearts? The humble soul cries, "Not my will, but thine be done:" "It is the LORD, let him do what seemeth him good." But so overgrown are we with the opinion of our own wisdom and worth, that we must lord it over the Holy One, and order him to rule the world: We must stoop to our prescriptions, or else we swell and burst with discontent. O is not God wiser than man? "Shall the clay say to the potter, Why hast thou shamed me thus?" "Rather let the potsherds strive with potsherds," worms with worms, about the pre-eminence

of wills, than we contend with **GOD**. O when will your proud hearts stoop to **GOD**? When shall His will be the rule? When will you be willing to be dealt with as **GOD** pleaseth?

3. How loath are we that **GOD** should have any glory in the world, unless we share in it, or unless we be the immediate instruments of exalting him? We are willing **GOD** should have some glory, so we may share with him: We are willing **GOD** should be exalted, so it be by ourselves; else we are discontented. O think with yourselves, how many good motions, tending to the edification of the body of **CHRIST**, have miscarried on this account, because others should not have the honour of beginning them? Whence can it be, save from the pride of our hearts, that we have so little rejoiced when **GOD** hath been advanced by others, and we had no hand therein? We are afraid that others' glory will eclipse ours.

4. How unthankful are we? A proud man is always an unthankful man; and an unthankful man is always a proud man: He thinks he deserves all that is conferred on him. The humble man counts himself less than the least of all **GOD**'s mercies; but the proud man reckoneth all he enjoyeth too little. Do we not think **GOD** is beholden to us for our duties and services, more than we are to him for life, breath, and all our possessions?

5. Do we not think **GOD** hath punished us above our deserts? Do we not hence cry out more of our pain, than we do of our sins and provocations? Were we humble, we should bless the **LORD**, that he hath restrained his rough wind in the day of his east wind: We should wonder that it is so well with us, that we are not in a worse condition: We should cry out, "It is of the **LORD**'s mercy that we are not consumed:" "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" How loath are we to confess our iniquities have deserved all that we suffer, and a great deal more! How do we endeavour to hide our sins from **GOD**, man, and ourselves!

6. How apt are we to boast of any good we do! Of our valour in the field, of our discourses in such and such company; how wisely we discharged such a service, how well we behaved in such an action! ‘Come, see my zeal for the LORD.’ Look to your hearts: you will find them unduly transported, as with the thoughts of your gifts and graces, so with what you do through the gift of grace. Our very graces are often an occasion of boasting. It is a rare thing to see a man rich in gifts, and poor in spirit: Even “knowledge puffeth up.”

7. Doth not any thing of ours swell us? Are not some puffed up with their fine clothes, ribands, dressings, yea, with their very spots? Their feathers, their hair, the excrements of beasts and men, make them fly high. Are not some puffed up with their birth? Hence they boast, that they have the blood of Kings, or Nobles, running in their veins; or else that they are the stock of ABRAHAM, descended from parents eminent for piety. How many are swelled with their estates? That they have shops full, houses full, and bags full, puffeth them up. How are others puffed up with the smiles of great men? And yet how soon may the sun be overcast? Then they are no more heeded than the dial is when the sun is in a cloud. How doth the bodily strength and perfections of others swell them, though every moment they are going down into the dust? “What is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth a little time, and then vanisheth away.” How are others swelled with their church-privileges? “The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, are we.” Others with their revelations and high enjoyments? PAUL was in danger of being exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations; therefore “was given to him a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of SATAN, to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure.”

8. How little suspicion have we of ourselves? Of our baseness and sinfulness, the deceits and treachery of our own hearts? With how much confidence do we trust

ourselves in wicked men's company, and fear not to be leavened with them? How little do we suspect that we shall fall from the grace we have, or seem to have? We are high minded, and therefore fear not: We do not suspect that there are worse abominations within than yet are discovered. How do we pretend to bless God that our hearts are good? We fear not the worst of ourselves. If others be overcome with uncleanness or passion, we are confident we shall never so dishonour God.

9. How glad are we if others take notice of our actions! And how are we pleased if they commend us for them, and yet we would not have them think so. We discommend our prayers for deadness, straitness; and ourselves for want of parts. How few are troubled at the praises of their friends, more than at flashes of lightning in their faces?

10. How magisterial have we been! What dictators to others, as if all were bound to dance after us! We will not abate at all, but every poor MORDECAI must do obeisance to our opinion.

11. How few will confess their faults to others? Perhaps they will reform, but hate to acknowledge their trespasses to others, whom they have trespassed against. How many have you injured by tale-bearing and backbiting? Must not God work a miracle to persuade us to make restitution, to go to the parties wronged, and then confess the wrong there, and then to go from house to house to vindicate and clear the party there, where before we had stained and aspersed him? This makes me cry out, "LORD, who shall be saved?" LORD, "many are called, but few are chosen."

12. What a stir do we make to vindicate ourselves when aspersed and calumniated! Whereas the humble soul would never stir to clear himself, as knowing how much guilt and sin there is within, were it not for the honour of God, and the edification of the LORD's people, which may be hindered, if prejudices be not removed.

No wonder if for these things God make us "a shame,

and a derision, a proverb, and a by-word to all nations round about us.' Our pride testifies to our faces ; we are guilty of what brought down fire on Sodom. This is the sin that God setteth himself in battle-array against : so the word for resisting, in that Scripture, " God resisteth the proud, signifieth. It is that which makes God abhor us, and our offerings. " Every one that is proud in heart, is an abomination to the Lord." Believe it, God's eyes are upon the haughty, that he may bring them down, and he watcheth his opportunity to do it. " The Lord knoweth the proud afar off." When God meets with a spectacle that he cannot endure to look upon, he turns from it, whilst it is afar off. Pride is the first of those seven things which are " an abomination to the Lord." And no wonder that God so loatheth it, whilst it crosseth the great design of God in the Gospel, which is to humble the mountains, "that no flesh should glory in his presence ; but that he that glorieth, should glory only in the Lord."



CHAPTER XXII.

Their Intemperance in Eating.

THOUGH Pride was the first spark that blowed up the glory of Sodom, yet there was also fulness of bread, that made the flame greater. Their pride was evidenced in their fulness of bread, as the cause in the effect. The word σωφρονεῖν, which signifieth to be temperate, is (as one well observes) applied frequently to the mind, in opposition to pride ; because sobriety proceeds from an humble sense that nothing is ours, but all that we have is God's ; and all intemperance is commonly the issue of a proud spirit, which makes men look on themselves as owners, and all creatures as their proper goods, which are perfectly at their disposal. Hence the Crown of Pride, and the

Drunkards of Ephraim, are both names for the same persons. And is not our pride evidenced in our fulness of bread? Sodom's intemperance in eating (not to insist on intemperance in drinking) was very great; but I fear England's hath exceeded Sodom's. I will not say, "All the labour is for the mouth," (as SOLOMON complains,) "and yet the appetite is not filled;" but this I say, That some live to eat,—some sacrifice all to the belly,—to some the belly is a god. Few can displease their appetite: like profane ESAU, they part from their heritage, from the blessing of the first-born, for a mess of pottage,—for a little pleasure to the taste. How will we deny ourselves in respect of life, when we cannot deny ourselves in respect of a little meat. As heaven and GOD are low, very low, with them that cannot deny themselves in a little Indian smoke, in a pipe, in a cup of liquor, but be immoderate in these, though thereby they hazard the displeasure of GOD; so are they very low with us, if we cannot deny ourselves in our morsels. All our ruin came in at this door,—that ADAM ventured the displeasure of GOD, to eat a little pleasant fruit. A man would think, that the wounds we received by the mouth, should make us check our appetite all our days.

1. How have we been guilty of eating too much! A little would content nature. How have "our hearts been over-charged with surfeiting! How have we forgot CHRIST's charge against this sin, even to his own disciples! Have we not hereby been disabled to perform the service we owe to GOD? As some have been strong to drink, so others to eat; both have been unfitted to wait upon GOD thereby. The end of our eating should have been to fit us, not to indispose us, for the service of GOD. We should measure our cheer by that which nature requireth, and not by that which appetite desireth. We divest ourselves of man, of reason, that should guide us, when we are led by a sensual appetite; and yet, alas, when we have eaten enough, and perhaps more than enough, a new dish, at the second course, makes us fall on again.

Serving divers lusts and pleasures is the high way to damnation. This way sin entered into the world ; and in this way, O how many are posting to hell ! If you would adopt yourselves children of wrath, then “fulfil the desires of the flesh.” When TERTULLIAN gives an account of the Christians’ feasts, ‘In our feeding,’ saith he, ‘we remember that we are to pray at night : prayer is the first and last dish of the feast ; and when we depart, our behaviour is so religious and modest, that one would have thought we had rather been at a sermon than a supper.’ Blush, O Reader, to consider how far short we fall of these Christians ! Believe it, intemperance and luxury are national sins,—the sins of England. It was spoken of our nation, ‘That we build as if we should live for ever, and eat as if we should die presently.’ O when shall we imitate that great Apostle ? “All things,” saith he, “are lawful for me ; but I will not be brought under the power of any.” It is a base thing for a man to be under the power of drinks, apparel, or meats,—to be a vassal to those things over which the LORD hath given him dominion. ‘He that loveth any thing too much,’ saith AQUINAS, ‘is in a sense servant thereunto.’ And what saith the Apostle, “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey ?” How many serve not the LORD JESUS CHRIST, but their own bellies ! How many are like the men of the old world, “given to eating :” so the word in the original properly signifieth.

2. How have our tables been unsuitable to the times we live in ! Whether Zion wear the garments of joy, or of heaviness, all is one ; the belly must be served : our dishes must not abate. Thou farest deliciously every day ; all times are alike to thee : this is a great sin, and I cannot but charge many professors of religion with it. Respect is not had to the tokens of GOD’s wrath. We eat without fear ; without fear of the wrath of GOD, that is ready to break forth upon us. “In this day doth the LORD of Hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth : and behold, joy and glad-

ness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep," (actions lawful enough at another time,) "eating flesh and drinking wine. And it was revealed in my ears by the **LORD** of Hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you until ye die."

3. How little respect have we had to the necessities of our brethren? If there were any true love to **GOD**, to religion, or to the Church of **GOD**, we should abate of our worldly comforts, we should cut ourselves short of what we were wont to lay out, not only in clothes, but in house-keeping, meats, and drinks; we should not give such liberty to the satisfying of the flesh, that we might be in the greater capacity to promote pious and charitable designs. But, alas! "iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxeth cold."

4. Do not we eat without a holy fear of **GOD**? The Elders of Israel did eat their bread before the **LORD**. But so have not we; so do not we eat as in the presence of **GOD**. Have not some been so eager upon pleasing the flesh, and gratifying their sensual appetites, that they have (secretly at least) been troubled at a long grace (as it is called) before meat? Have not some fallen to their meat without invoking **GOD** at all? How unlike are such to **CHRIST**, whose usual practice it was, to lift up his eyes to heaven, and crave a blessing upon the creatures, before he partook of them! How distracted have been the thoughts of others that have prayed, in that short time! How were their thoughts on the meats and drinks! How hastily do men, after a blessing is craved, run to the dish, without any the least pause or consideration whether **GOD** heard them or no, when they called upon him! How commonly do we erase our petitions; I mean, contradict all our prayers! We pray our discourses may be heavenly, and they are altogether earthly. Few can say, as blessed **DOD** was wont at the close of the meal, 'Blessed be **GOD**, not one word of worldly things since we sat down.' We pray we may eat for **GOD**, and we eat for ourselves. We have not so good a plea to make as some,—“ We have eaten and drank

in thy presence." This is not written over our tables,—
 "Thou **GOD** seest." We can seldom call our table **Penuel**,
 because we have seen **GOD** in this place. How little do
 we consider that they are **GOD**'s creatures! "She did not
 know that I gave her corn;" and that as the meat is
GOD's, so it is he who gives us appetites, and strength and
 ability to put every crumb into our mouths; "for in him
 we live and move." How little do we believe that we
 must account for every bit and drop! How little do we
 consider that **GOD** stoops the creatures to us, that we may
 stoop to him, and lay down our lives as willingly for
GOD's honour, as **GOD** caused the creature to bleed and
 die for our use! How little do we think of the heavenly
 banquet, that our Father is preparing for us, where the
 cloth shall never be taken away,—where we shall hunger
 and thirst no more, but be fully satisfied, and that for ever
 and ever! Examine your spirits at your tables, whether
 the fear of **GOD** be before your eyes; whether you stand
 in awe of him. It may be found that you never more
 forget **GOD**, than when **GOD** is mostly remembering you.
 When his goods are most in your hands and mouths, your
 mouths are so full that they cannot show forth his praise;
 your eyes are so held to your belly-gods, that you forget
JEHOVAH. Are there not some that will crave a blessing
 before they eat, that yet fail to return thanks afterwards?
 though **JOEL** saith, in his prophecy to **GOD**'s people, "Ye
 shall eat and be satisfied, and praise the Name of the
LORD your **GOD**."

5. Have not we fed without a Christian fear of scandalizing others, upon our eating profusely? What saith the drunkard? 'Why may not I toss the can, (in plain English, be drunk,) as well as such and such gormandize? Gluttons harden and justify drunkards. **ST. JUDE** will tell you, that sensual persons are the spots of a christian society. O my brethren, "it is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, or any thing else whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or made weak."

6. Do not we eat without a prudent fear of the snares

that are in our dishes? In eating there ought to be much caution. **JOB** was afraid of the entertainments of his children. He was a wise man, and knew that there were more guests than were invited. I wish we knew it too. We think, if the sons of **GOD** come together, the Devil will not come with them, though the Scripture assures us he will. It would be some check when we sit at the table, to consider, that the first immoderate sop is handed over by the Devil, and in he goes with it into our souls.

7. How have we had low, base, earthly, and sensual ends in our eating! Not to refresh our bodies, but our palates; not to glorify **GOD**, but to pamper the flesh. Yea, have not some men fed on such and such dishes on purpose to provoke their lust? Sure our enemy is strong enough; we had need beat down the body, and keep it under, and not put weapons in our enemies' hands. What saith the wise man? "When thou sittest to eat with a Ruler," (such keep plentiful tables,) "consider diligently what is before thee, and put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite," *i. e.*, bridle thine appetite by diligence. yea force; be as circumspect as if thou wert under the razor; or, "consider diligently what is before thee, else thou putttest a knife to thy throat, *i. e.*, thou endangerest thy life, yea, thy soul, shouldest thou give way to thy appetite. What saith the Apostle? "Whether you eat or drink, let all be done to the glory of **GOD**." Why doth the Apostle name those actions of eating and drinking, but because we commonly eat and drink to please the appetite, not to fit for **GOD**'s service? When we have taken as much as serves this end, yet we must have one bit more, or one dish more, and so **GOD** and the Devil must part stakes.

To shut up this: I believe many men dig their graves with their teeth, and their hells with their tongues,—their liquorish tongues. Among the millions that are now in the grave or hell, their inordinate appetite hastened most thither. I say not but we may please our palate at some times especially; a great liberty is indulged to the sick;

but if we have not a higher design than to please the appetite, our belly is our god. Little do many think that they are setting up another god at their tables. The Babylonians had BEL for their god, a god of brass; but these men have a god of flesh.

Repent, O England! Repent of thy abuse of the good creatures of God, and thereby of thy sacrilegious robbing God of his worship and time. How often have ye so crammed yourselves that you have been unfit for any acts of worship! Your heads have been heavy, and spirits dull, and so God hath had the carcase, but “excesses have taken away the heart.” I wish two things for you: 1. That you would be as ingenuous as AUSTIN was, who confessed he was no drunkard, but yet sometimes immoderate in eating. And 2. That you would be restless until God hath taught you what he did him: ‘LORD,’ saith he, ‘thou hast now taught me to use my meat, as my medicine, to repair, not to oppress, nature.’



CHAPTER XXIII.

Their Idleness.

A THIRD sin of Sodom was Idleness. This sin is the companion of the former. “When the belly is full, the bones would be at rest;” and when men have eat and drank to excess, then they rise up to play.

1. How are we guilty of idleness in our particular callings! Few have this for their motto, ‘Let us be working.’ How many at the great day will God upbraid with, “O wicked and slothful servant!” Every man hath a talent of time and strength; but it is hid, it is not employed, at least as it ought. God made not man to play, but to sweat out his living. It was God’s ordinance in Paradise, and since that we are enjoined to “labour

with our hands, and not to eat the bread of idleness." How many, "because they have not done good among their people, shall die in their iniquity!" Our land is full of drones; and no wonder, for we train up our children in idleness, and let them waste the first of their days in foolish pleasures and recreations. Foreigners breed their children (to our shame be it spoken) to work those toys with their hands, which our children must play away their time with. Hence, having inured themselves to idleness, they hate labour for the future. CHRIST saw "some standing idle:" here he might see many. He could not endure it. "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" O how many are idle all the days of their lives? How many gentlemen and their sons are there without a calling! They live as if God had sent them into the world to make their hands as perches for birds to sit upon; they are of no use to the public. In cities, how idle are the dames! They live as if God had given them reasonable souls, and the light of the sun, only to dress themselves, to view a glass, and adorn their carcasses. "There are some among you that work not at all, and yet busy bodies;" busy to invent ways to pass away time, though time be still running, and they are hasting into eternity. Doing nothing, (saith the Apostle,) and yet working every where, save where they should; busy to go from house to house to compliment friends, to devour others' time; busy to carry tales and news, but hating the work of their calling, wherein God hath set them.

The whole life of many is to eat, and drink, and sleep, and sport, and sit and talk, and laugh themselves fat; but there is leanness in their souls. A kind of vagrant people they are, that having little to do, the Devil is loath they should be idle, and therefore he hires them to devour time, to carry news and tales, to mis-spend others' time. "They learn to be idle;" they study which way they may mis-spend time, wandering from house to house, and yet they are not only idle, but busy bodies. These are at leisure to hear the Devil, and to observe his orders. He

that will not serve God at home, the Devil, rather than he shall stand out, will send him of his errands, and get him to put his sickle into another man's corn. 'Go,' saith SATAN, 'into that house, and rail against such a good man; carry his miscarriage from one to another, until his name stinks in their nostrils. Go to such a man's door; he is employed in reading the Scriptures and good books, or catechising his family; go, and divert him, eat up his time, that he may have no leisure for such works.' He goes; he is a busy body, and a tattler too. He must go whom the Devil drives; hence occasion is given to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

Let it be considered and lamented, how much precious time is devoured in the bed. Five hour's sleep will suffice for some constitutions; the utmost that Physicians allow is seven hours; but some bury themselves in their beds almost half their time. How little do many consider, that in the day of judgment they must give account, as for every idle word, so for their idleness in their bed-chambers! Sluggard, view the sun: he is running a race, whilst thou art tumbling on thy bed. View the wind and the air: they are in motion. View the waters, they stink and corrupt, unless running. Nay, view the dull earth: it is not so dull as thou art; it brings forth for the use of man. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard," yea, any where, consider the ways of all, save thyself, "and be wise." What! a professor of religion, and yet guilty of an unnatural sin? Nature puts all creatures into motion, and to provide for themselves. Thou art worse than an infidel; yea, worse than a beast. The poor infant cannot suck without labour, and yet thou wouldest live without labour. God hath not forbidden meat to be given to any other sinners, only these are not to be fed: let them starve and die, if they will not labour. Idleness hath brought much evil upon you, and bred many in you; it begets many diseases in the body, but many more in the soul. It exempts a man from the protection of angels, and it exposeth to God's wrath; it brought ruin upon Sodom, and the cities round about;

“and they are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”

2. How are we guilty of abundance of idleness in our general callings! And above all, spiritual sloth is most dangerous. I find some, with unwearied diligence, labouring to enlarge their possessions, and to raise their posterity; they rise early, and sit up late, and eat the bread of carefulness, but all is for their body; they do little or nothing for their precious souls. CHRIST and heaven stand by, and few regard them; few “work out their salvation with fear and trembling.” Some will not be at so much pains for their souls, as to perform the common outward duties of religion. They will go to the market, or be merry with friends, many a mile; but if a sermon be but a few paces from their thresholds, they count it intolerable to wet their feet, to expose themselves to the air. But if men are for some easy parts of religion, yet how few are for the difficult parts thereof! They cannot endure to watch their hearts,—to sanctify the LORD’s day so strictly, as “not to think their own thoughts, nor speak their own words, nor do their own deeds.” How many have so long given way to laziness,—have lain so long upon the bed of sloth, that when we press them to any painful and laborious duties, they say, “We have put off our coat, and loath we are to put it on;” hence self-examination, meditation, watchfulness against the first rising of sin, mortification of heart-sins, are totally laid by; and the longer we neglect them, the more ado there is to persuade us to take them up. All we have to uphold ourselves with is this, that the spirit is willing; when God knows to the contrary. We are willing to be rich, and therefore take pains; so we would in spiritual things too, if we were desirous of them. If we were willing to enjoy CHRIST in our closets, would we be asleep there upon our knees? If we were willing to know the way to glory, would we not take so much pains as to “go to the shepherd’s tents, and ask for the good old way?” It will cut you to the heart when you come to hell-gate, that you

missed of heaven, for not inquiring the way thither; and that you took more pains to be rich, and to damn your souls, than to save them. Had that time been spent in prayer, holy conference, and in self-examination, which was wasted in the bed, shop, or fields, you might have had an eternal rest; whereas hell will be, as intolerable to all so especially to them who have stood idle all the day long.



CHAPTER XXIV.

Their Unmercifulness.

THE fourth sin of Sodom was this,—“Neither did she strengthen the hands of the poor and needy.” That is they were unmerciful and inhuman. And are not some professors of religion even in England, very hard-hearted and cruel? “If there be among you a poor man, of one of thy brethren, within any of thy gates, in thy land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother; but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth. The poor we have always with us! But, when we make a feast, do we call the poor? Who invites the guests that CHRIST hath bid to our tables? Hear ye the word of the LORD: “He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy.” He shall have all judgment, pure judgment, without any mixture of mercy; unmixed wrath shall be his portion: CHRIST is so resolvèd to punish the unmerciful, that he will overlook any sinner, rather than him; yea, for the greater honour of the justice of God, the LORD seems to begin and end the great assizes, with the arraignment and sentencing of the unmerciful man. How few are compassionate! The proper, vital

act of mercy, is compassion. How few resent the miseries of others, as if they were their own! How few set to do good, to those who are miserable! Such, whatever they pretend, are indeed unmerciful; for mercy is an active, and a communicative thing. How few are merciful to others' souls; how few pity, and set themselves to help sinning souls; how few are merciful to the bodies of others; how many are there, that will not spare their superfluities, to clothe and feed the naked and hungry disciples of **JESUS CHRIST**! Men lay out more to adorn a cupboard, or the walls of their houses, than ever they gave to **CHRIST** and his servants all their days. **CHRIST** tells you, what kindness you show to his brethren, he counts as done unto himself: And believe it, all the scorns, and neglects you have cast on either his ambassadors, or poor saints, he will remember another day. Go to thy closet, and carry this with thee, "Whoso stoppeth his ear at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard." If you give, to whom is it? Is it not only to the poor of your own party? But hath not the **LORD** charged you, to "give to every man that asketh?" Hath he excepted any but idlers? Are not you to "do good to all, though especially to the household of faith?" And among them, should not your greatest charity have been to them who are become poor, by **God's** providence, or for conscience' sake? But, alas! how few can appeal to the heart-searching **God**, concerning their mercifulness! How few (if destruction from **God** be any terror to them) dare imprecate upon themselves, what **JOB** did in case of unmercifulness? How few dare say to **God**, "If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail, or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering, then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone."

CHAPTER XXV.

Their Unrighteousness, or Unfaithfulness in Trading.

INSTEAD of mercifulness, behold oppression, violence, deceit, fraud. This is a lamentation, and should be for lamentation. Instead of giving to others that which is our own, we deny them that which is their own: Instead of letting go our own right, and those dues, which by justice others are bound to pay us,—yea, instead of giving more of our own, to help them in their necessities, (which mercy calls for,) even not to require what others owe us when not only Providence hath disabled them to pay us but also to give them more to support their feeble state withal,—behold injustice. What defrauding is there one another! How do men, not only take all advantages from their brethren, to get what is due to them, as to seize on a mortgage, when the mortgage-money cannot be paid; to sue a bond, or turn a man out of his lease, when the day of payment is missed; but also take advantage from the necessities of the poor, to over-reach them, to get from them, either their houses or goods, to be sure what is not their own. Have not we grinded the faces of the poor? God will reckon for this speedily. Look over the Prophecies and see whether unmercifulness and unrighteousness ever went unpunished.

How few are there who mete to others, as they would have them to measure to themselves! The rule of CHRIST whereby peace among men would be preserved, is not heeded by us. We do not deal with others, as we would be dealt with; though CHRIST says unto us, “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do even so unto them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.”

How common but cursed a principle is it, that every man may get for his wares as much as he can. Hence men take advantage of others' necessities, or their want of skill: Hence bad wares are put into men's hands for good wares, or else unreasonable demands are

made to the prejudice of the buyer: Would we be so dealt with?

How commonly do men demand a far greater sum for their wares, than they will accept! Hereby they show an oppressing mind. if their customers would but comply with them. The Quakers will rise up in judgment to condemn this generation. O how do men mind profit more than their own honour and reputation, yea, (which is more inexcusable,) than the reputation of CHRIST and his Gospel! Is it not matter of lamentation, that some profess, they had rather deal with a Turk, or with a Jew, than with such and such a Christian? By reason of you "the name of GOD is blasphemed among the Gentiles." Wherein "doth your light shine before men?" They cannot dive into your hearts, they can only discern your actions: They know not what your love to GOD is, though you pretend much to knowledge; yet knowledge void of charity and honesty, is to them an abomination.

How few trade in fear, lest by getting an estate, they lose GOD, and a good conscience? When one told LATIMER, that he was cozened in paying for a knife double to what it was worth. 'No,' said he, 'he hath not cozened me, but his own conscience.' No wonder that tradesmen complain of deadness in their families and closets, and impute it to their callings, and thereby charge GOD implicitly: Alas! it is not their calling hath straitened and deadened their hearts toward GOD; but their oppression and deceit in their business hath provoked GOD to leave them. Hath not GOD expressly charged you, "Let no man go beyond or over-reach another in any matter, because that the LORD is the avenger of all such." The vengeance of GOD is upon thee, in the straitness of thy spirit in duties, and without repentance it will follow thee until it hath laid thee in the pit of hell!

How do men labour to engross all trade to themselves, by exclaiming against their neighbour, and by under-selling them at one time, that they may engage the buyer

to become their customer, of whom they will surely fetch out their penny-worths, in the next bargain.

When you have sold too dear, and so cheated your brother, though conscience, in times of sickness and danger, begins to contend with you about it, yet how loath are you to make restitution for the wrong you have offered ; how unlike are you to them in Nehemiah : “ Then said they, We will restore them, and will require nothing of them ; so will we do as thou sayest.” If one should say, “ So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out and emptied ; ” you would hardly say, Amen, and praise the Lord.

When men buy a commodity, how apt are they to discommend it, to bring down the price, to say, it is naught, when all the while they know it is offered on easy terms.

How do buyers take the advantage of the seller's ignorance of the worth of his own goods ! There is a cursed proverb amongst Englishmen in too great request : ‘ That a man may not only sell as dear, but buy as cheap as he can.’ Few like AUSTIN, that bought a book at an unskilful stationer's hands, for an inconsiderable price, and afterwards gave the value of it.

How often do buyers (even as sellers often say, they will not, they cannot take a penny less for such a commodity) answer, that they will not give a farthing more, for what they have cheapened, and yet all the while intend to come up to the seller's price.

How common is it for men to take up wares, and to promise payment at such a day, and yet fail ! Yea, how do they promise, though they know they shall not be able to be as good as their word. It were better for thee to beg thy bread, than thus to steal from thy neighbour. Thou art ashamed to beg, as he of old ; thou shouldest be ashamed to do much worse ; to defraud thy neighbour. “ The getting of treasures by a lying tongue, is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.”

How few are there, that in their buying and selling give a proof of their loving their neighbour as themselves; their neighbours' goods and welfare as their own?

O when will ye "be holy in all manner of conversation?" Holy in your trades, as well as in your church assemblies; holy in the shop, and in all secular employment: So holy, as to abide with GOD in your calling. When will ye "labour with your hands," that ye may be able to give, and not to receive only: When will ye trade in fear, and "be in the fear of the LORD all the day;" and that lest your shops should prove your bane, and whilst seeking after the mammon of this life, ye lose the true substance? Is this thy prayer before thou enterest upon thy calling? O that it were, 'LORD, help me to trade for thee, whilst for myself; and for the good of my neighbour's soul, body, and goods, as well as for my own!'

How few among all the several sorts of traders, "render to CÆSAR the things that are CÆSAR'S!"

How can you quiet your consciences to steal custom, as many of you do? What is it, save the law, that gives you right to all you have? And by the law, so much of your goods is the King's: It is alienated from you to his crown and revenue: How dare you cheat him, should you think it hard measure to pay so great a tribute? Have you forgotten what CHRIST (who came under the law) did? Though tribute was exacted of him, when the children were free, yet he would work a miracle rather than give offence in denying to pay it. Why do ye not take the safest course, if it be a disputable matter: To be sure you will not give offence to GOD, to the King, to your conscience, by paying customs; but you may to all by defrauding. Do you herein as you would be dealt with? If you were the political father, would you have your children cheat you? Do not you, by bribes and otherwise, tempt the King's officers to be false to their trust, and to damn their souls by perjury and treachery?

Lastly. Consider, that self-love and self-interest are prevalent, to bribe your judgments, and to enslave them


to your base passions. O consider how apt is every one to favour himself, and to suck in any absurd reasonings, whereby he may greaten himself? If you say, (as they of the silver shrines,) ‘ This brings in our gain,’ we cannot subsist without stealing customs? How else can we live? A father will tell you, It ill becomes a Christian’s mouth to ask, How shall I live? Not one that CHRIST called to forsake trades and professions, did ever answer him, I must not give over my gain. Till you can relinquish unlawful gains, you are none of CHRIST’s disciples. Those in the Acts, that burned their unlawful books, to the loss of thousands, showed themselves true converts, “ so mightily grew the word and prevailed.” When Tyre shall be converted, her trading and dealings shall be sacred, “ her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the LORD.”

Here give me leave to add the sin of Lying, too common among all sorts of traders, as well as others. And truly this sin comes not improperly under the head of injustice. Justice, even when it is not taken most largely, (so it is taken for all religion,) comprehends our whole duty to our neighbour, as to matters of right. Thus, by virtue of the Fifth Commandment, to do justly, is, to give to our parents their due honour, whether they be natural, civil, or spiritual. In respect to the Sixth, it is to preserve the life of our neighbour, and to have a care that we injure him not in his being. In reference to the Seventh, it is to preserve his just relations, and not touch them, or cause the violation of their faith to him. In reference to the Eighth, it is to preserve his estate, and not meddle with his goods. The Ninth requires, that we preserve his good name, and not defame them, nor do any prejudice to his credit, no more than we would to his estate: and by virtue of the Tenth, we are to moderate our very desires, so as not to envy him that which is his, nor to long to have it in our possession. And to be sure there is righteousness to be looked for in words, as well as in actions. But, alas! how doth the sin of lying abound among us! For this, God hath a controversy with the

land. Is there not need to take heed every one of his neighbour, and not to trust in any brother? Will not every one deceive his neighbour, and not speak the truth? Have they not taught their tongues to speak lies? If you are not cozening liars, or false-witness liars, yet are you not reviling liars? Do you not, upon every petty difference, speak of one another ye care not what? Do ye not spread lying defamations? Is not the fawning liar common among us? Their "words are the words of JACOB, but their hands are the hands of ESAU." "The words of their mouths are smoother than butter," but "war is in their hearts. Their words are softer than oil, yet are they drawn swords." Is there not also many a news-telling liar among us? They believe in their consciences, that it is false what they relate; and yet, "to promote an interest, to make hearts glad with lies," they will spread that which is false. How many officious liars have we, who tell lies for some good end, as they think? The highest end is GOD's glory: But will ye speak wickedly for GOD, and talk deceitfully for him? The Vulgate reads the text, *Numquid Deus indiget vestro mendacio*? What! hath GOD need of your lie? It is a dishonour to GOD to be thus helped. And if we must not speak evil, that good may come to GOD, sure then we may not speak evil, that good may come to ourselves.

How can you think you are GOD's children? GOD engageth himself for his people, that "surely they will not lie, surely they are my people, children that will not lie." AUSTIN, long ago, gave his judgment concerning lying, that "a man must not tell a lie to save the whole world: If it were (saith he) to save thy father or thy mother out of hell, if possible it could be, thou must not tell a lie; or if it were to save a kingdom from destruction." And yet to make a little mirth, or to gain a penny, or to prevent the frowns of a superior, how do some "teach their tongues to lie?" not considering, that "all liars shall have their portion in the burning lake;" that herein they

are like the Devil, who is the father of lies, and most unlike God, "who cannot lie." O then, put away lying, and speak the truth! Away with mental reservations and Jesuitical equivocations! Let thy tongue be the faithful interpreter of thy heart. Be faithful in your promises and engagements: be not "yea, and nay."



CHAPTER XXVI.

Their Covetousness.

IF there be so much unrighteousness, no wonder that there is also much covetousness. Covetousness is the seed of all unrighteousness, "the root of all evil." It was JEZEBEL'S covetousness that made her unjustly deprive NABOTH of his vineyard. If I cannot prevail with heaven, I will go to hell for an estate, is the voice of covetousness: Yea, this is that which will put men, not only on injustice to others, but to God himself; it will make them offer violence to religion, to divine honour, and whatever is sacred in the world. That man will stick at no abuse of God, whose god is his gain. And is not covetousness and earthly-mindedness an epidemical sin? This is the grave, which never saith, "It is enough;" but like SOLOMON'S horse-leech, it cries, "Give, give." O what boundless appetites have many, who can neither use what they have, nor put a period to what they desire: As in the sea one wave riseth above another, so here, every desire of having is outgone by a new desire of getting.

Are not your cares for Riches? Do not your thoughts run out, O how shall I thrive in the world, get more estate, custom? But not, O how shall I get the favour of God, and victory over my lusts? How solicitous are you, every day, for the world, but how flat in your desires to have the image of God renewed? How dejected are

you when you miss of a good bargain ; or when you meet with some loss by sea or land ? But how little troubled if you lose an opportunity of communion with the LORD ? How are men pleased with the earth, but find no more relish in CHRIST and his ways, than in the white of an egg ? What great journeys have you taken, even compassed sea and land, to gain riches ; and hardly can go a mile or two to meet with GOD ? How is every opportunity laid hold of to get more to the heap ? But do not you remain contented with the least measures of grace ? How oft have you left your meat to serve a customer ? But when to serve the LORD JESUS CHRIST ? How few aim at riches, as a means to carry them to a further end ? They should be but as the rounds of a ladder, not to stand upon, but thereby to ascend higher, even to glory. But, alas ! few desire the world in subordination to GOD, and as a means to glorify GOD : but the more they love the world, the less GOD is loved ; and the more their desires are carried out after riches, the less after GOD. How few pursue earthly things in obedience to GOD's call ? How many out of a desire of filthy lucre ? How few seek the world with an holy indifferency ? How few reserve their zeal, and hottest endeavours, for heavenly things ? Is not the general cry, " Who will shew us any good ? " We need no proof of this ; there are instances every where. How, for the getting of a penny, will some debar themselves of ordinances ? Is it not a sufficient excuse with some, for not attending on the worship of GOD, that they meet with a customer ? Doth not the clock strike too fast, whilst thou art selling to advantage ? Doth not time run away too fast ? Dost thou not wish thou couldest, with JOSHUA, cause " the sun to stand still " on a market-day, or on a fair-day, when trading is quick ? But when thou art in the worship of GOD, ' O when will the Sabbath be gone ? ' When will the duty be over, that we may sell ? How many hypocritical outcries are there against the world ? It eats up my time ; it eats up my spirits ; it robs me of communion with GOD. We say it is an enemy ; and yet we can

bosom this snake, lodge this enemy, that God would have us to kill.

How oft hath God charged thee against Covetousness ? Take heed and beware of it : Two words to the same purpose ; all little enough to take thee off from earthly pursuits. How apparently hath God withdrawn from thee, ever since thou wast taken with this DELILAH ? How hardly art thou pulled out of the deep pit, and miry clay, to duty, much more to God ? And wilt thou be rich ? Art thou resolved to run into the briers ? Then farewell to thee, not only in time, but to eternity. How many convictions and impressions of the blessed Spirit have your worldly cares choked ? How have your desires of riches puzzled your souls, and diverted them from minding and improving the counsels of God and conscience ? How unlike art thou to the primitive converts ? Paul, when converted, “ counts all things but dung in comparison of CHRIST.” And ZACCHEUS no sooner had a work of grace begun upon him, but down went the world faster than ever it went up : He parts from riches with more freedom than he sought them : “ The half of my goods I give to the poor ; and if I have wronged any man, I will restore four-fold.” But, alas ! our hearts are as cities without walls, the world hath a thoroughfare in them, and may come and go without any pass from heaven.

How hath this sin deadened you to all the worship of God ? How, by the interposition of this dark body of the earth, hath the light of heaven, yea, the light of God’s countenance, been darkened ? and how hath thy soul been benighted and clouded ? They say, if a knife be put into the earth, it will lose its edge. I am sure of this, that Christians, who were once lively and active for God, by engaging their hearts to the world, have lost their zeal, their keenness, and their lustre. When thou hast gained time from thy business to discharge duty, hast thou not missed thine heart ? Hast thou not left and lost it in the crowd ? How dost thou debase thyself hereby ? The curse of HAM is upon thee ; “ a servant of servants thou

art;" a slave to that which thou shouldest rule over. **GOD** did not give thee a reasonable soul that thou shouldest choose the serpent's curse, to crawl and feed upon the earth. O tremble to think what sad effects your covetousness may have upon you before you die! **DEMAS** left **CHRIST**, lost his soul, shipwrecked his faith, and all to embrace this present evil world. And if thou make haste to be rich, shalt thou be innocent? Whether thou place thy confidence and hope in thy gold, or in a golden calf, thou art guilty of idolatry, of having other gods besides the true **GOD**, and so dost highly offend the true **GOD**.

If you did glory in the cross of **CHRIST**, "the world would be crucified to you, and you unto the world. But, alas! to which of us is "one day in **GOD**'s courts better than a thousand!" **ST. AUSTIN** said, 'If one drop of the joys of heaven might fall into hell, it would drown all the bitterness of hell:' so would it drown all bitterness in the soul, and all the sweetness in the world. Worldly comforts would be too coarse, too flat, too low, to recreate your hearts. Did ye but know the honey and milk of Canaan, ye would not mind the onions of Egypt. What a miserable life dost thou live! This sin brings a hell with it: thou art the Devil's martyr. "They that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." Thou enjoyest neither **GOD** nor the world: Thou still desirest that which will never satisfy thy desires. The more thou hast of the world, the more thou wantest; the more thou drinkest, the more thou thirstest: a dropsy is upon thee, and thou knowest it not. Discontent is always the companion of covetousness. "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as you have." Why wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? Grace and godliness is substance. Why wilt thou let go the substance for a shadow? The things of the world are fancies, the things of **GOD** realities. What good is there to the owners of riches, saving the beholding them with their eyes? Do not you all this

while bear false witness against God ? Do not you proclaim to the world, that God is not enough to fill your desires, and that therefore you go after the creature ? It is nothing to you, to call God, who is "all-sufficient," who is "a fountain of living water," a barren wilderness ? No wonder, that for the iniquity of our covetousness, God is wroth, and smites us. We are greedy of more, but what have we done with our former talents ? Account we must for one, for two, for ten talents : The more we have, the greater will be our account. There is a reckoning day at hand. If thou art not a good steward, as sure as this book is in thy hand, thou wilt curse the time that ever thou hadst an estate, and wilt wish thou hadst been a beggar, for then thou hadst not had so much to answer for before God. It is certain that thou shalt carry none of thy estate away with thee ; nothing is to be carried away, save guilt, to hell ; if you have not rendered unto God "according to what you have received," the heaping up of wealth is but the charging of thy account : Thou must account how thou hast disbursed to a farthing.

I will suppose thou hast (by neglects of thy general calling, and by thy rising up early, and sitting up late) gained an estate. What will thy estate advantage thee, when the arrows of the Lord enter thy soul ? What will the world advantage thee, when the gout, fever, or burning pestilence, are upon thee ? What hast thou got but that which may stand with God's eternal hatred ? Never count thy gains, till thou hast got that which is inconsistent with God's wrath. Whilst you have bonds and bills upon others, do not you run into arrears with God ? And how will you discharge those suits which God will commence against you ? When you lie a dying, will ye not wish, that your time, your strength, your spirits, had been poured forth upon better things, than those of this life ? That you had traded for grace and glory, rather than for a little gilt clay ? O ye projectors for the world, I foresee the troubles and horrors, the doubts and fears, the anguish and amazements of your souls, which your

uncertainties, as to your future state, will put you into in your dying rooms. How will you take up such language as this: ‘Fool that I was, to cumber myself about many things, and neglect the one thing necessary! Fool that I was, to set my affections on things below, (none of which give me a drop of water to cool my tongue,) and to neglect the things above! O if I had never heard of CHRIST and glory, I had been more excusable for my earthly cares. O how have I disquieted myself in vain; I have heaped up riches, and know not who shall gather them. Had I been as faithful to CHRIST, as I was to Mammon, O with what joy might I have removed hence! What abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom might I have had!’ O labour to prevent the horrors of death, and the gnawing worm of conscience. It is sad, when the sting of death, and the worm conscience, bite the man together. “Riches avail not in the day of wrath; but righteousness delivereth from death.” Believe it, it will cut you to the heart, to think, that less pains would have served for eternal life than you have bestowed for temporal goods. This plague attends the covetous man,—The more he desires, and heaps up, the less he is desired, and the less he is lamented when he dies. So the covetous man doeth no good with his riches whilst he liveth; but when he is dead, his riches come to be disposed of. “The riches of a sinner are laid up for the just.” How can you choose but tremble at doomsday? You cannot desire the coming of CHRIST: If the Church cries, “Come, LORD JESUS, come quickly;” you cannot join in that prayer; for your hearts are glued to this present world: You prefer Paris before Paradise. It is to the saint’s loss to be kept so long from heaven; but you count it not so: You cannot say, “Thy kingdom come.” What will you do in that day, when all the estate and friends of DIVES cannot relieve? Riches are like briars and thorns; good to stop gaps, but not to lay in our beds, and set our hearts upon, lest we lie down in sorrow.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Their Envy.

ENVY is a sin seldom confessed, but yet much diffused among the professors of religion. “The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy.” And indeed, covetousness and envy are never asunder; they are sins against the same command. Such as long that what is their neighbour’s should be theirs, envy to him that which is his; and such as envy to him that which is his, long to have it to be theirs. How desirous are they to grasp all to themselves; and, therefore, how apt to be envious at the power, greatness, riches, if not goodness, of others? Doth not the experience that you have of your own hearts, testify, that this spirit is stirring and acting in you? The poor envy the rich, the base the honourable, as if they had the less, because others have so much. But sure, maligning the prosperity of others, is not from the SPIRIT of GOD. He that giveth freely to all, would not have us envy those to whom he gives more freely than to ourselves; and he that giveth us more, doth not envy us for what we have. If you have not so much as others, it is because you are unfit to receive, not because GOD is unwilling to give.

Is there not a greater readiness in us to detract from men’s worth, than to honour and exalt them? To write down their blots and imperfections, than their virtues and graces? How dull sighted are we, as to the virtues of our brethren; but quick sighted, as eagles, to discern their imperfections? The beams of virtue are not seen, not taken notice of; but a mote in a brother’s eye is soon espied.

Are we not more greedy to receive and spread any thing whereby our neighbour is obscured, than what tends to his praise? And is not this the reason hereof, the desire we have to shine alone, to have none to vie with, much less to excel us?

The beasts do not envy one another; but men do; yea, the devils envy not one another: some men are

herein worse than devils. No wonder if there have been hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, and heresies, whilst envyings have abounded amongst us. ‘Wrath is cruel, and anger outrageous, but who is able to stand before envy?’ The malignity of this sin appears, in that it strikes directly at the Providence of **GOD**, who disposeth of men’s conditions, according to his sovereignty and wisdom. It hath a tacit accusation of **GOD**, for raising up some so high, and laying others so low. It is deeply unsatisfied with **GOD**’s bounty to the children of men, that he gives so liberally to some, whereas he is not bound to any. Whilst others complain against **GOD**, for making the world no better, the envious man is troubled that he hath done so well for his creatures. No wonder the Apostle reckoneth envy among the gross sins of murder, uncleanness, idolatry, witchcraft; and concludes, heaven is no place for such: “They which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of **GOD**.” This is a sin so damnable, and so ugly, making you so much like the Devil, that it is high time you watch against it, mourn for it, and seek its ruin. O when shall we hear the exhortation: “Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another?” When shall we “in honour prefer one another?” When shall we, like **BARNABAS**, when we see the grace of **GOD**, rejoice? When shall Ministers reprove the **Joshuas**, that are envying for their sakes, in **MOSES**’s words; “I would to **GOD**, all the people of the **LORD** did prophesy?” When shall we, like **JOHN** the Baptist, be contented to decrease, so that **CHRIST** may increase; and to be laid by, if others, more able, may be substituted to do **GOD**’s work? When shall we rejoice if **GOD** useth others to convert sinners by them, more than by us? and say, with **MR. DON**, ‘I would to **GOD** that I were the worst Minister in England:’ his meaning was, that all should excel him in gifts and graces. O when shall we, instead of envying our brother, bless **GOD** for him? If he hath more than we have, more strength, parts, riches, honours, or graces, the

account he must pass with God is greater ; let us pity him, rather than envy him. Believe it, God is wiser than we are ; and if his distributions are various, we have as many talents as we can well improve. Let us look to our own duty in the places wherein God hath set us ; and pray for them that have ten talents more than we have, that they may serve the Lord ten times more than we can.



CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Sins of Family Governors.

How guilty are such of you as have families to govern, of not commanding your household to serve God ! Of how few can God say, as he did of ABRAHAM, “ I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord. By your authority, you should command them to subject their hearts, wills, and consciences, to the will and pleasure of JEHOVAH : but, alas ! how many of you have been careless in this ? Your children and servants, yea, wives, must know your authority upon worldly accounts : you command them imperiously enough to fulfil your will and pleasure ; to serve you : but how Gallio-like are you ; little caring whether they obey the Lord ?

2. How much passion have you discovered when children and servants, yea, and wives too, submit not to your will and pleasure : But when do they see so much zeal against their neglect of God’s work, as they find in you when they neglect your commands ? These passions may well make your inferiors believe, that you value more your authority than God’s ; the having your own will obeyed, than that God’s should be observed.

3. How many Governors are there, that show great care for the bodies of their families, but not for their souls ?

meat, and drink, and clothes, or money to buy them, they shall have ; but none or little instruction.

How little do you catechise your families ! How seldom do you ask them any questions concerning the first principles of the doctrine of CHRIST ! If you do catechise your children as you ought, in obedience to those divine commands, “Train up a child in the way wherein he should go ;” “bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the LORD ; yet how few of you catechise the rest of your household,—your servants and wives, though they be but babes in religion, children in understanding, and this milk is appointed for children in understanding, as well as age. Neither doth the work of catechising them belong unto Ministers, but unto you ; for it belongs to all that have a charge of souls ; and you are charged not only with your children’s, but with your servants’, and with your wives’ souls. Whatever any of you may fancy, there never comes a wife, a child, or servant, into any of your families, but with this warrant from the great LORD of heaven and earth : ‘Keep the soul of this wife, this child, this servant ; for if it be missing amongst the number of my sheep at the great day, through thy neglect, thy soul shall go for it.’ Hence not only should your children be taught by you, but your wives and servants. The wife is commanded “to learn of her husband at home,” and the husband to walk with her as a man of knowledge. And your servants should be trained by you in religion, as ABRAHAM’S servants were.

How seldom do you converse personally with every one in your families, concerning the practical part of religion ! How seldom do you ask them any questions how it is with their souls ; and what they think will become of them to eternity. Are you not as great strangers to the state of their souls, as you are to the souls of the Indians ? If their bodies be in danger, meat, physic, attendance, are procured ; but their souls may perish in formality or carelessness, for any help you afford them. Some governors never treat with their households about their spiritual

estate from one year to another. Hence comes the great apostasy of our times. The LORD humble us, and deliver us from blood-guiltiness ! Many a husband may cry out, ' My wife's soul is like to perish, through my default.' Many a parent, ' I am verily guilty of the blood of my child ; ' and many a master may impute to his own account, all the disorders of his servants ; for that they have no personal conference with them about original corruption, regeneration, justification, sanctification, or glory. Perhaps thou prayest in thy family every day, but not knowing the inward workings of their hearts towards God or sin, thou knowest not how to pray as thou oughtest ; thou knowest not what to confess, and what to pray for, nor what to bless God for.

4. Have you walked with that gravity before your wives, children, and servants, as ye ought ? Have you not made yourselves vile by lightness or unseemly carriages ? Governors of families are the viceroys of God ; they are in the place of God, and therefore should keep up their authority, and not run into such vanity or familiarity with their inferiors, as to breed in them a contempt of the ordinance of God.

5. You have given your children and servants time to work for yourselves ; have you afforded them time to serve God in ? Too many use their inferiors as they use their beasts : they work and feed their beasts, but never instruct them ; no more do they instruct their inferiors. When do you call your wives, children, servants, into your closet, and not only press them to look after their souls, and in order thereunto, to spend some time in prayer, reading, and meditation ; but tell them how God wrought on you,—how he awakened you,—what corruptions prevailed with you, and how God helped you to crucify them ? How do you know but the same motives might melt and turn their hearts too ?

6. Have not you miscarried as to the time for the management of your religious work in your houses ? Some governors pray in the morning too early ; so early, with a

small part of their family, whilst others are in bed, or in the service of the world, that they worship not God together as they ought; and this is passed over with silence; but if they miss of their servant in the shop or field, how angry is the governor! He cries out, 'I shall be undone by the unfaithfulness of my wife, children, servants;' but sees not a greater danger, a more probable ruin falling on him, for not having his family to worship God with him.

Others defer morning prayer until it be almost noon. They will adventure into all worldly employments (as we say) without fear or wit: they see no need of God to protect them from outward or inward dangers; no need of God's blessing, until they are ready to dine; and then some Collects must be said, some short prayers perhaps run over with more haste than the boy that saith his lesson, that they may rise up to eat, drink, and play.

And as some are unseasonable in their duties in the morning, so others at evening. Whilst their strength lasts to serve the world, they attend it; and then, Come, let us go to prayer; when the poor wife, children, and servants had rather be in bed. The governor prays dully enough, and that while the poor family sleep, or nouseate the duty: and so, like ELI's sons, these sons of Belial "cause their people to abhor the offering of the LORD."



CHAPTER XXIX.

The Sins of Husbands and Wives.

HUSBANDS and wives are called to reflection on their miscarriages, jointly, severally.

Jointly, For their not being so careful of their choice as they should have been; not seeking God enough in a matter of so great consequence, wherein the souls of each

other were so highly concerned. "Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers : for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?" They came together upon low, earthly motives, for profit, pleasure, beauty, rather than to further the kingdom of CHRIST. They did not, by prayer and fasting, try to live unmarried, though the Apostle told them of the advantages of serving CHRIST thereby. "He that is unmarried, careth for the things that belong to the LORD, how he may please the LORD."

Severally, Husbands, ye have not loved your wives as CHRIST the Church; though the command be express. But though you have not been adulterers in any gross act, yet how oft have you wished the bond of marriage were broken? And have not you had eyes full of adultery? Hath not your love to others degenerated into secret lust? CHRIST is patient to his Church, but hath "your love suffered all things?" Upon light matters, what frowns, I will not say, what sharp words! Hath not family prayer been neglected through your wrath? CHRIST gives no occasion of jealousy; but have not some of you? The LORD searcheth hearts. CHRIST's love is bountiful : how short have you kept your wives, contrary to your engagements to endow them "with all your worldly goods?" CHRIST keeps company with the wife of his bosom : but have not some of you been more abroad than at home? CHRIST edifieth his Church : do ye dwell with your wives as men of knowledge? CHRIST doth communicate secrets to his spouse : are not ye strangers to the hearts, though perhaps not to the bosoms, of your nearest relations? CHRIST doth confer often with his Church about the mysteries of God : I wish you did so. I fear some of you are silver-tongued abroad, forward to speak of CHRIST, but dumb at home, even to your wives as well as children. The woman learns not, though she ask her husband at home. CHRIST gives the sharpest rebuke to his offending spouse privately, and when he gets her alone : but do not you

reprove before servants and children? Hereby they learn frowardness, when brought into this relation, and at present slight the wives of your bosom. **CHRIST** doth not blaze his wife's infirmities; but so have ye. **CHRIST** puts the best construction on what his spouse doth: "the spirit is willing, though the flesh be weak:" but do not you put the worst? When your desires are quenched, your love is gone. **CHRIST** doth pity his Church as the weaker vessel: if ye did so, the family would be the better governed. **CHRIST** doth sympathize with his Church; in all her afflictions he is afflicted: but how fretful, churlish, and Nabal-like are you, when the hand of God is heavy on your nearest relations! **CHRIST** doth vindicate his spouse, and is greatly displeased when she suffers from the world: but do not some of you deride your wives, and not frown when they are wronged and abused? **CHRIST** doth not upbraid his spouse with her low condition before he put honour on her: but, alas! how oft have ye upbraided what the condition of your wives was before you cast your eyes upon them! **CHRIST** gave his life for his Church: what hast thou done and suffered to save the soul of thy wife? **CHRIST** rules his Church, "not with a rod of iron, but with a sceptre of love." Is your dominion exercised with discretion and love? Are all things done in charity? Is she to thee "as a loving hind or roe?" **CHRIST** doth not count his spouse as a servant, but a friend; he doth not domineer over his Church: but how many husbands use their wives hardly better than servants! **CHRIST** notwithstanding keeps up his authority over his Church: but do not many husbands lose it through too much uxoriousness? and make themselves contemptible by yielding to their wives, as **ADAM** to his, whence came at first all sin and misery into the world. When **CHRIST** doth command his wife, his Church, he doth it mildly: "We pray you in **CHRIST**'s stead:" but many husbands imperiously enough, God knoweth, when for love's sake they should rather entreat. **CHRIST** doth love his spouse, though he gains nothing by her: but, alas! how many are severe enough

to their wives, when they fail of that estate they expected from them !

As husbands fail, so do wives. Even as the “ Church is subject unto Christ, so should ye have been to your own husbands in every thing : ” but how have ye affronted your light ? The true Church of CHRIST loves him inwardly, as well as outwardly : so should ye have loved your husbands ; but, alas ! how little have ye showed the union betwixt the Church and CHRIST by your affections ! The Church loves CHRIST more than angels : “ Whom have I in heaven but thee ? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. ” But how many wives are commending others’ husbands more than their own ! If my husband were thus and thus. Thy husband should be to thee the most precious of all persons, the most lovely in thine eyes. Not parts and gifts, but the good pleasure of God should be the ground of this special love. The Church honours CHRIST above all other persons in the world : but have not some of you mean and low thoughts of your husbands ? The Church is subject to CHRIST in all things : but will not some of you wear what you please, go where you please, eat what you please, and employ yourselves in what you please ? yea, though contrary both to your husbands’ commands and entreaties ! The Church fears CHRIST : so should wives. I say not either should with a slavish, but both should with a reverential, fear. Remember MICHAL : “ she despised her husband in her heart, ” (she did not express her slighting of him, as many do, in words,) and she had no child unto the day of her death. God took the husband’s part, and put a mark of displeasure upon her. The Church loves CHRIST more and more : but O the decays of women’s affections to their husbands ! Partly through levity, and partly through age, and partly through cross Providences. The Church doth commend CHRIST : but seldom are wives careful herein to imitate the Church of God. How many do blazon their infirmities, rather than commend their graces ! The Church is careful to please CHRIST in all things : the

married woman should care (study) to please her husband, by her attire, behaviour, words. She should go, speak, and so do, as may render her most acceptable in his sight, in every thing. How many cross wives are there, that love to vex rather than to delight their husbands? The Church bears patiently rebukes from CHRIST : So should wives, as SARAH was commended for her meekness. "The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit is, in the sight of GOD, of great price." Perhaps the wife will tell me, these are but trifles that I cross my husband in. I must tell thee, to break the order of GOD for trifles, will greaten thy sin at the day of accounts. What, wilt thou, darest thou, for so slender a matter, tread down the law of GOD, and hazard the ruin of thy soul? O consider this! and turn not your duties to your husbands into matter of talk and pastime, as the manner of most women is.



CHAPTER XXX.

The Miscarriages of Parents and Children.

PARENTS, how little do you plot for the good of future generations! How little do you care whether GOD hath a name when you be dead and gone! It is through your default, that the name of CHRIST is not had in everlasting remembrance: If you were faithful, how would the generations to come bless the LORD in your behalf! If you were active and diligent, you might convey holiness down to your posterity. The world would soon mend, the Church of CHRIST would soon regain its ancient lustre, if ye did but faithfully discharge your duties to your children. You might "suffer little children to come to CHRIST;" yea, you might fill the kingdom of heaven; but do not you rather fill the kingdom of hell? And as JEROBOAM "made Israel to sin," do not you, instead of leading them the way to heaven, lead

them the way to hell? O consider seriously and sadly, how far you are guilty with respect to the souls of your children.

1. By giving them bad examples. HAM's not covering his father's nakedness, was a sin conveyed down to all his race. Your pride, sensuality, carelessness in the worship of God; your passion towards your wives, and wives towards their husbands; your frowardness towards servants,—teach your children so to carry themselves towards others. One checked his son, and said, Never parent had so wicked a child; Yes, said the son, My grandfather had.

2. By humouring your children: Teaching them early to be proud of their fine clothes, and to revenge. Come, give me a blow, saith the mother to the child. Many, like apes, kill their children with hugging them. AUSTIN tells a sad story of one CYRILLUS, who loved an only son immoderately, and let him do (without correction) what he would. Afterwards, this son, in a fit of drunkenness, offers violence to his mother, killed his father, wounded mortally two of his sisters, and would have ravished another. Through foolish pity, parents, especially mothers, give the reins to their children when they are young, and thereby they grow headstrong, and are a shame to the mother that bore them. The sparing of the rod is the ruin of the child. Do not you reprove your children as old fond ELI did? Thereby he brought a plague upon himself and upon his posterity. What saith one, 'Never cease convincing or correcting, until thou hast subdued the spirit of thy child, if he contends with thee.' You pretend such harshness is inconsistent with love; but I say from the LORD, such fondness is consistent with hatred: and I am sure the LORD is on my side in this. "He that spareth the rod, hateth his son: he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." Is it love to suffer a wound in thy child to fester, rather than to apply a painful corrosive for the cure? But what saith the fond mother? If the child should be the worse for my correction, it would be a trouble to me whilst I live. O that such a doting mother would hear the LORD him-

self! "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest, yea, he shall give delight to thy soul. Withhold not correction from the child; for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it out."

3. By not acquainting them with the **LORD**, and his ways, and that betimes. Hath not **GOD** commanded, "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." And is not childhood and youth the time wherein **SOLOMON** adviseth, the children of men should be trained up "in the way wherein they should go?" O parents! if **GOD** be worth your own acquaintance, is he not worth the acquaintance of such as are so near and dear unto you? Can you, without trembling, think that as soon as death breaks up your house, you may ascend to heaven, and your children must be sent to hell, and that through your default? But if you should die in this neglect of instructing your children, you will be miserable as well as they: And O what a greeting will there be hereafter, between ungodly parents and children! What a hearing will it be to your tormented souls, to hear your children cry out against you: 'All this that we suffer is because of you; you should have taught us better, and did not:' What an addition will such outcries be to your misery!

4. By not redressing the disorderly carriage of your children towards one another. How few **REBECCAS** are there: she was careful to remove jars and mischiefs that might arise between her two sons.

5. By not praying for your children's souls, and against those very particulars which their natural constitutions lead them most to.

6. By not correcting them aright: As to time, not early enough: "He that loveth him, correcteth him betimes." Not whilst the fault is fresh in his thoughts, with all the aggravating circumstances thereof. Not with compassion enough. 'You have reason,' saith **MR. DOD**, 'to be angry

with yourselves, rather than to be bitter to your children ; for you correct your own sin in your children. If the child be froward, hath he not seen his parents brawling and contentious ?' Not ushering correction with prayer, that God would bless the word and the rod. Commonly, parents correct in a passion, whereby prayer is hindered, and the medicine becomes invalid.

7. By being angry without a cause, or above the desert. Anger must be according to the nature of the offence. If parents be always chiding or correcting, they make their children resolute. "Provoke not your children to wrath." Some parents want natural affections, and are too severe : But correction, like physic, if too frequent, will work no more with children, than our meat with us.

8. By loving your children more than God : Loving them as they are yours, not as they are God's ; as they bear your image, not God's ; for their beauty and parts, rather than for their graces : loving a beautiful child that is void of grace, more than a deformed child, though eminent in grace : loving one excessively, as JACOB, JOSEPH ; hence, JOSEPH is envied by the rest. Prodigal favours to some, especially if without reason, are offensive to others who are less respected. Loving so, as loath to let them go when God calls for them. You cannot say as ELI, "It is the LORD, let him do as seems him good." God pulls and you pull ; and you quarrel with God about the gourd, and you think you do well to be angry. JOB blessed God, when God took all away at once by one blow.

9. By not devoting them to some honest callings, but letting them live in idleness, and so they grow up monuments of your neglect. But if you do provide a calling for your children, is it not what is most gainful, rather than what will be most useful to the soul ? Had you not rather have them rich factors among idolaters, (where they learn the manners of the Heathens,) than to have a meaner calling at home, where the Gospel is preached in power and purity.

10. By not matching them to godly persons, but rather

to the rich : Hereby ye show that the silver shrines are in higher repute than grace and godliness.

11. By giving all to your children, though the Church of God hath more need of it. Hereby you evidence that you prefer not Zion before your chief joy : that you love the outward grandeur of your children more than the prosperity of the Church. 'It is a wonder,' saith MR. BAXTER, 'how so many, seemingly holy, can quiet their consciences in such a sin as this is. If one of you have two or three hundred pounds per annum, it is a wonder if you leave a hundred pounds a year of it to pious or charitable uses. Nay, do not parents leave all to their children, when they have apparent proofs that they will spend it in the service of hell? O let parents tremble! What, wilt thou enable and strengthen thy children to rebel against God? Put fuel to the fire; put swords into their hands to fight against the Most High?'

Parents, I beseech you, look diligently to your duties; be humbled for these and such like miscarriages. O look about you, and you will see a sad apostasy in children! Parents civil, the children debauched; parents godly, the children formal or loose; parents eminent for grace, children notorious for lewdness. Let your bowels turn within you to see so great a degeneracy. Double your diligence, that there may be an holy seed. Knock off the chains of hell from your children while you may. Lay not out all your time how they may be rich. It is no time to seek great things for yourselves: seek them not. Pity the souls of your children, that are slaves to the Devil. How can ye mind your trades, fields, bodies, whilst the souls of your children are perishing? How can ye see the Devil driving your children to sin and hell, and ye stand still with a Gallio-spirit? Go to your closets, and ask your hearts, whether the soul be not the principal part of the child? And whether that needs not your care more than the body? Do not throw away the blade to preserve the scabbard. God hath set you to watch their souls, to train up their souls, to provide for their souls: if you do not,

what is your love more than a Pagan's, a Turk's, towards your children? You think you should be unnatural if you should not lay up for your children: but here is the best laying up, to lay up a stock of prayers for them, and a stock of counsel and instruction in them. O Parents! once more, I beseech you, put on bowels of compassion. Pity the perishing souls of your own children. Command your children to keep the way of the LORD: suffer them not to fashion themselves according to the course of the world. Connive not at them in practising what you think is abominable in the worship of GOD. Remember they are GOD's children more than yours. "All souls are mine." GOD claims a special right in them: "Thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me." If you neglect your duties, you and your children are like to have sad greetings, when you meet before the LORD another day. How will your children lay their hells and torments to your doors! How will they curse the day they were born of such fond women, who indulged them in their neglect of GOD! Cursed be the day that ever I saw the passion, the pride, the formality of my father, or of my mother; for thereby I learned to sin against the LORD. O your examples undid me! I had not come to this place of torment had it not been for you.

Children, are not you also greatly faulty towards your parents? If children be richer than their parents, how irreverent are they; how over familiar with their parents; as if they had forgot "the first commandment with promise." How disobedient are they to their lawful commands: Though the command of GOD be express, "Children, obey your parents in all things;" and it is added, "for this is well pleasing unto the LORD. Children, obey your parents in the LORD, for this is right. Honour thy father and thy mother, (which is the first commandment with promise,) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." Was CHRIST subject to his parents, and should not you be subject to yours? Sure you should obey them as far as could be without sin, though

their commands crossed your natural desires. How stout and rebellious are children when corrected ! How few can say, "We have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence !" This sin so provoked **GOD**, that he made it capital in the days of old. "If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them ; then shall his father and his mother lay hold of him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and shall say, This our son is stubborn and rebellious ; and all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die : so shalt thou put evil away from among you." How rebellious are children in refusing the callings which parents have appointed for them ! If the parent be bound to bring them up to a calling, are not the children bound to attend that calling ? "Brethren, let every man wherein he is called, therein abide with **GOD**." **CHRIST** probably was brought up in his reputed father's calling : "Is not this the carpenter ?" How disobedient are children in their marriages ! Children are their parents' goods : so **GOD** reckoneth them ; yea, so the **Devil** reckoneth them. When the **Devil** had commission to meddle with **JOB**'s goods, he falls on the children. Some are worse than **ISHMAEL** : Nature and civility made him submit to his mother for the choice of his wife. If children must obey their parents in little, much more in weighty matters. How little have you requited your parents. This you are bound unto : "To show pity at home, and to requite parents, is good and acceptable before the **LORD**." Your parents took care of you when you were as beasts ; you had your life and education from them ; and do you slight them when old or weak ? How are you degenerated from your parents' commands and examples ? There are few true **Rechabites**, who forbore wine from generation to generation. It makes my heart ache when I read, that "The people served the **LORD** all the days of **JOSHUA**, and all the days of the Elders that out-lived **JOSHUA**, who had seen all the great

works of the LORD, that he did for Israel ; but there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD." In vain will ye trust in your baptismal relation to God, that " you have ABRAHAM to your father : " God's judgments will be more heavy on you than on others, when " the children of the kingdom shall be cast out." You will be ready to curse the day you came of such parents, that ever you had such holy instructions and examples to no purpose, save to greaten your condemnation.



CHAPTER XXXI.

The Sins of Masters and Servants.

FIRST, you Masters, see how guilty you are.

1. Should not your eyes, like DAVID's, " have been upon the faithful of the land, that they might dwell with you ? " How curious should you have been in this particular ? Ye would not buy a horse, a house, a field, but ye would try them : But how careless have ye been whether your servants were godly or no. If they were strong to labour, was not that all ye looked after ? You looked that they should be diligent in your work ; but have you looked for such as walked in a perfect way, to serve yo ? Hence many have been taken into your families, who were found wanton and unclean, and thereby religion hath suffered exceedingly : Yea, hence the children are corrupted by evil example, they being more apt to imitate the servant in his wickedness, than the parent in his holiness. If you had been wary in this particular, and had procured holy servants, by their zeal, forwardness, and care of the children, what families might you have had !

Should not you have removed wicked servants, as soon as your counsels would not take effect on them ? DAVID did so. " He that worketh deceit, and telleth lies, shall

not tarry in my sight.” You, on the contrary, keep them as you do horses, if good for labour. It will never be said to your glory, ‘The Church in your house ;’ but may it not be said, ‘There is a nest of snakes, a cage of devils, in your house.’

2. Are not you too rigorous towards your servants? Do not you too much frown upon them? Do not you use words of reproach to them? “Whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire.” Do not you strike them unnecessarily or immoderately? Have you forgotten the commands from heaven? “Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour, but shalt fear thy God.” “Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven. And ye masters, forbear threatening, knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.” Do you herein as you would be dealt with? Would you have God deal with you, as you deal with your servants? Remember, you and your servants have one and the same Master, to whom you are both accountable; you for your rule, and they for their subjection.

3. Have not you neglected to give that direction to your several servants as is proper for them, so that they intrench upon each other’s work, and the painful work lies neglected? How few mistresses, yea, or masters, are like SOLOMON’S virtuous woman, of whom it is said, “She looketh well to the ways of her household!” Every one should know his place and work in the family, that all things may be done decently, and in order. But in how few families is it thus!

4. Do you give your servants examples of diligence? So did that virtuous mistress: “She riseth also whilst it is night; she girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms; she layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff; she maketh fine linen; she eateth not the bread of idleness.”

5. What love do ye show to your servants that are godly? Do you receive them as beloved brethren? As

PAUL would have **PHILEMON** receive his servant ~~after~~ his conversion : "Receive him not now as a servant, but above a servant, as a brother beloved." A christian servant should be in the place of a beloved brother, and should be preferred before a lewd son. "A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame ; and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren." How seldom do you show them good, as well as receive good from them ! When they are sick, how little attendance and necessaries have they, as to diet, fire, and physic ! How are many poor servants cast off by them, when sick, as unprofitable burdens !

6. Do you pay your servants their wages ? Do you pay them fully ? Hast thou not forgotten that the Israelites were required, when they set any servant free, not to let him go away empty ; but "thou shalt furnish him liberally out of that wherewith the **LORD** thy **GOD** hath blessed thee." Hast not thou abated them of their dues, for the time of their sickness, or the time they have spent in the service of **GOD** ?

7. Do not you deny liberty to your servants to speak unto you ? **GOD** hath set masters over servants ; but he hath not given them liberty to trample them under their feet. Servants are under their masters' power, but not their lusts. You show yourselves Nabals by this churlishness and austerity. "He is such a son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him."

8. Do not you suffer one servant to tyrannize over another ?

Secondly, You servants that profess religion ; I have somewhat in charge against many of you.

1. Your pride, sauciness, familiarities with your governors, make me think that you would easily swallow the error of old ; That we are to be subject to none but **CHRIST** : as if your freedom by **CHRIST** had exempted you from all subjection to men. By your refusing the yoke of your master's commands, you reflect more upon your Master in the heavens, than upon your earthly

governor. What saith the Apostle? "Let as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. Servants, be obedient to them that are your Masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto CHRIST. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward."

But, alas, how saucy are servants! May not your master say, "If I be a master, where is my fear?" How fearless are you of your master, especially if your masters be not rich and honourable in the earth! Who respects God's ordinance? Hence many servants stand covered in their master's presence, sit before them, bow not to them, nor rise up before them.

2. Do not you, when you meet together, blazon the infirmities of your masters? Do not you carry yourselves as spies rather than as servants? You do not herein as you would be dealt with.

3. Are not you disobedient to your master's commands, unless in what pleaseth you? You are the servants of your lusts, rather than your masters' servants: you do not obey in singleness of heart; yea, you are not obedient at all. The Centurion could say to his servant, "Go, and he went." The heathen servants excel some that pretend to great religion. He is the master that must have his own way: judge, then, whether you abide in the place wherein God hath set you.

4. As some by silence, so others dishonour their masters by answering again. They should not answer by way of contradiction, or reluctance, as servants are apt to. Some will even brag how they gave word for word; perhaps two words for one. Hereby their governors, if ungodly, fall foul upon religion. Is this the fruit of your prayers; running after Ministers?

5. How lazy are some servants! Diligent only when under their master's eye. Few serve their masters, as JACOB, LABAN, "with all their might." The command

is, that you should “obey in singleness of heart, not with eye service, as men pleasers.” Mark, eye service stands not with uprightness of heart. As you would not be branded for hypocrites, work behind your masters’ backs, as if their eyes were upon you. Consider how short you fall of this, and mourn before the LORD in secret for your eye-service.

6. How imprudent are some servants, as to the timing their duties ! Some, when never so urgent business is to be dispatched, will then go in secret to call upon God ; whereas going to bed later, and rising earlier, would prevent much straitness as to time and spirit in that great duty. Some will fall a talking of the things of God to their fellow-servants very unseasonably, not when they are at leisure, but when they are most busily employed for their masters, to the hindering their work.

7. How many cheat and defraud their masters ! Some cheat them of their time, by idling it away, being tattlers, and busy bodies, or gossiping it away. Others cheat them of their money or goods, hiring others secretly to do their work, and paying them with their masters’ money or goods.

8. How many are improvident for their masters’ goods ? They will see things spoil before their eyes ; they will give what is not their own to give ; they make no conscience to eat and drink what their masters do not allow them ; they will steal small matters, and yet whatever they take, though but little, is the breach of the Eighth Commandment : and the less the temptation, the greater the sin, that they will break God’s law for trifles. What saith MR. DOD ? ‘If ever they look for sound peace of conscience, they must make restitution of all such things. “How much soever they steal, so much they must restore, and the fifth part thereto.” If they keep it, they keep God’s curse with it, and a woe unto their consciences.’

9. How do many murmur under reproofs and corrections ! What saith the Apostle ? “Servants, be subject to your masters, not only to the gentle, but to the froward ; for this is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience towards God, endure grief, suffer wrongfully : for what glory is it,

if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently? But if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with **GOD.**”

10. How unfaithful are many to their masters' children! Not heeding them, and providing meat, and other necessities for them, in their masters' absence.

11. How many ways do you fail towards your fellow-servants! Do not you seek to undermine them in the respect their masters bear them? Do not you labour to supplant them? Do not you envy them? Are not you unfaithful to one another's souls? Do not you waste time in idle and impertinent discourses? Are not you evil examples to each other? Do not you suffer sin to rest upon each other? Are not you guilty of not easing and relieving them, when they are overcharged with business? Do not you carry yourselves proudly and magisterially towards apprentices? Do not you join in a confederacy to tell tales against your governors? And do not you charge your fellow-servants with secrecy therein, whereby the name and authority of the master is lost?



CHAPTER XXXII.

Their Miscarriages with Reference to the Ministers of CHRIST.

How little have you esteemed them! Though they were the Ambassadors of the **LORD** of heaven, and should have had respect, according to the rank of their Master that sent them; yet how little did you honour them in your hearts? Did you “know them and esteem them highly, for their work's sake?” Have you not very much slighted both their persons and message? How many have thought they knew as much as their Ministers? How many Ministers have been slighted for their mean

parts ? as if the efficacy of the ordinance depended on the rhetoric of the Preacher ; as if no dainties could be brought them in a homely dish, no treasure in an earthen vessel ; as if God could not speak out of the mouths of babes ; as if the using Jordan were too contemptible a means. I have feared the unsoundness of many hearts, from the itching of their ears. PAUL was careful to preach “not with enticing words, with the wisdom of words ;” though he could speak with “tongues more than all ;” yet he desired “to speak rather to edification.” A sermon full of plain naked Scriptures would not go down in our last times. It is observed by an historian, that before the great massacre in France, the Protestants were for a luscious kind of preaching. How unworthily have the Ministers of CHRIST been slighted by even such as, a little before, pretended to have had their life and growth from them, and that they were the seals of their ministry ! Have not many been ready to entertain reports against their Ministers ? And have not they lost their esteem of them for one real or supposed weakness of theirs ? Though you have been under so many engagements to them, for your spiritual life ; yet if you have seen a little failing or miscarriage in them, have not you forgot all their worth, and all their many years’ labours and cares for your eternal welfare ? Have not you been so far from esteeming the messenger for the message, that you have slighted the message for the messenger ? Hath not this been the language of your hearts, if not of your mouths ; ‘What, nothing but this preaching ?’ Have not those who at first admired, afterwards made nothing of this heavenly manna, because of the commonness thereof ? Have not you considered only the matter, and not the stamp of the coin ? Have not your Ministers oft complained to God, of the contempt you have put upon them, and how much their embassy hath been undervalued by you ? It may be, you have thought it no great matter to slight them and their counsels : but know, therein you have slighted CHRIST himself. “He that despiseth you, despiseth me.” May

you not fear, “ it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for you ? ”

2. How full of prejudices have your hearts been against your Ministers ! And you have not had the honesty to examine the grounds. When they have delivered truths of a sublimer nature than ordinary, or delivered any thing more obscurely than at other times, how rarely have you conferred with them about it ! Have you not gone among your companions, and filled your own and their hearts with prejudices against them ? Let me publish that to thine eye, which was once whispered in the ear ; “ Take heed what thou doest ; this man is a Roman.” Should not you much more have taken heed of filling your own and others’ hearts with prejudice against your Ministers, seeing they were the Prophets of the Most High : These men were men of God ; they were the special Ambassadors of heaven ! I think he said well, that prejudice against the Preacher, is great prejudice to the hearers. This fever of prejudice hath made many, like the full stomach, to loathe the honey-comb. Hath not God met with repulses, whilst your Ministers have been entertained with prejudice ? So long as you have been prejudiced, though you have been convinced of many duties, yet you have not been persuaded to obey the truth.

3. How little have you blessed God for the Gospel Ministry which you have enjoyed ? This distinguishing mercy did not affect your hearts as it ought. Some there were (but very few) who would say, ‘ Brown bread, and the Gospel, is a feast.’ Few, like the Christians at Constantinople, cried out, ‘ Better the sun not shine, than CHRYSOSTOM be silenced.’ You could bless God for health, and estate ; but not for these luminaries of glory, who were appointed to guide you to the heavenly Jerusalem.

4. How little did you pray for them ! How little have you prayed for gifts and abilities to go through their whole work, for preservation for them, and for a sanctified use of all God’s dispensations toward them ? How little

did you supplicate, that their mouths might be kept open, and “that utterance might be given unto them, that they might open their mouths boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel?” Have not they oft begged your prayers, in the words of PAUL, “I beseech you, brethren, for the LORD JESUS CHRIST’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me, in your prayers to GOD for me, that I may be delivered from them that do not believe?” And yet, have not you neglected to call upon GOD for their deliverance?

5. Have not you made sorry excuses for not hearing them? How little have you believed that word, “He that heareth you, heareth me?” And by consequence, that not hearing them, was not hearing CHRIST himself. What slight excuses have been deemed sufficient to keep you from the shepherd’s tents? The Apostle would have us “swift to hear.” Swiftmess notes diligence in taking the first occasion; but how have you, to compliment with a friend, to indulge the flesh, for fear of a little rain, for fear of wetting your feet, for fear of losing a customer, declined opportunities of attending the ambassador’s GOD sent you?

6. How did you miscarry, both before, and in, and after hearing! How slender was your preparation to attend upon these deputies of CHRIST! How little did you meditate on the word you were to receive at their lips! Did you thus consider: The Gospel that I am about to hear, will be “the savour of life unto life, or the savour of death unto death?” I shall be nearer heaven or hell by this sermon I am going to. If the Gospel be always hid, I am a lost soul, and shall perish. Is my soul hungry? This is the bread of heaven. Is my soul thirsty? This is the water of life: This is the milk whereby I must grow up unto eternal life. This messenger of heaven will be for the fall, as well as the rising of many in Israel. If he be not instrumental for my salvation, he will be for my damnation. How little did you consider the excellency and necessity of

the word that you were to partake of? That the truths your Ministers taught you, were of as much worth as your souls, as heaven, as salvation?

How little did you pour out your souls in prayer unto God before you went to hear your Minister! Either for your Ministers, that God would open their mouths, to speak the word truly, sincerely, powerfully, seasonably, and suitably, to your condition; or for your own souls, that God would open your hearts, to entertain the word, so as to profit by it; that you might not have open ears, and shut hearts; that you might not have ears, and yet hear not, as knowing that the hearing ear, and seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them.

How careless were you to purge your souls before you came to hear the word! MOSES, before he was to hear God speaking, put off his shoes, to intimate that you should put off your earthly affections before you come to hear God's word: But have not you rushed out of your worldly employments to many a sermon? How careless were you to "lay apart all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness," that you might "receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls?" If you have not come without habitual, have you not neglected actual, preparation?

When you have been actually under the ministry, have not you heard irreverently, without awful apprehensions of God's majesty and presence? Have you said of the place where any Minister of CHRIST hath preached, as JACOB of Bethel, "How dreadful is this place?" Have you, in your hearing sermons, set yourselves in the presence of God, as CORNELIUS did, when PETER was preaching unto him?

Have not you evidenced your irreverence in hearing carelessly, dully, drowsily, sleepily? Have not you lent a more attentive ear to a tale, to a fable, to a romance, to a ballad, to a stage-play, than to a sermon? Have not you come to church as to an apothecary's shop, for a recipe to sleep? Hath not the Gospel come unto you "in

word only, and not in power?" When the Minister threatened you from the LORD, could you say, "My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments?" When your Ministers came with tidings of peace, were their feet beautiful? When they declaimed against your sins, did you so mind what they delivered as to be any whit troubled? Did not you harden your hearts as an adamant? Were you not so far from being troubled for your sins, that it was your only trouble you could not commit them without control? Were not you even troubled with admonitions and counsels, commands and threatenings, that crossed you in your sins? Can you say, that you "received the word with all readiness of mind?"

Have not you heard heartlessly? Without a real sense of your want of the word, and without an appetite to it? Had you such vehement desires after the treasure your Ministers were bringing you, as covetous men have after the treasures of the earth? Could you ever, with DAVID, say, "My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times?"

Have not you heard unbelievably? Not crediting your Minister's doctrine, and not applying it to, but shifting it off from, yourselves? Have not their sermons been unprofitable to your souls, because "not mixed with faith?" Can you say, that you received their word as the word of God? That you applied it to your souls? May not we say, with grief of soul, as our LORD hath said already, "You have not heard his voice at any time!" When you heard the word, which is God's word, did you hear God himself speaking his own word unto your hearts?

Have not you been cautioned by the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and by his Ministers, "Take heed how you hear?" And yet, how oft have you heard the Ministers of CHRIST carpingly! Not with a willingness to be judged by the word, but to judge it, and the Preacher for it. Have not you let slip the most material passages of the sermon, and pitched upon the weaknesses or impertinences of the

Minister? How oft have you, when you could not blame the subject-matter, found fault with the method, and the manner of delivery, and overlooked that wherein your souls were especially concerned.

Have not you heard disobediently? Have not you been untractable and unteachable? Have not you heard proudly, not humbly? With hard hearts, and not with hearts of flesh, ready to receive the impression of the word, and willing to be moulded and fashioned according to it? When could you say to any of **GOD'S** Ministers, as **CORNELIUS** to **PETER**, "We are all here present, to hear all that is commanded of **GOD**?" His ear and heart were open to every command: So were **JOB'S**, "That which I see not, teach thou me." Have not you had your exceptions? If Ministers have enjoined you to pray in your families, perhaps you heard them therein; but if they enjoined from the **LORD** that you pray in your closets, and that you examine yourselves, that you fill your hands with both the tables, they could not be heard; one reserve at least: Whereas the right hearer cries out, "**LORD**, what wilt thou have me to do?" I will do any thing, **LORD**, actively, or passively, to get hell out of my soul now, and to keep my soul out of hell hereafter.

After hearing the ambassadors of heaven, how faulty have you been, in not examining what you have heard by the written word? The **Bereans** consulted with the oracles of **GOD**, brought the measuring line of the sanctuary; but so have not you. How many were there, to whom the reputation of the teacher, was sufficient proof of his doctrine, receiving all that was stamped with his tongue? Have not you called such and such a Minister, your Father on earth, in the same sense in which **CHRIST** forbids it? Have not you had the persons of men in admiration? No wonder that errors have abounded. Men, that through an over esteem of the Minister, take all upon trust, or, through sloth, will not examine doctrines, are like to be deceived.

May not **CHRIST** check you rather than the Disciples.

with, ‘Why do you not remember?’ Have not you heard the word, and instantly forgot it? Hath not the word gone in at one ear, and out at another? Have not you let slip the word? The word *παράρρυσμέν* is metaphorical, taken from a sieve, or leaking vessel, when the liquor runs out as fast as it is put in. Have not you hereby been “ever learning, but not come to the knowledge of the truth?” Your memories should be like the ark, wherein the pot of manna was kept; but alas! when you heard the word, then came “the wicked one, and caught away that which was sown in your hearts.” And was not the word, and the labours of CHRIST’S Ministers, fallen so low, that you were contented, at least little troubled, thus to be pillaged of this heavenly treasure?

Have you not neglected meditation upon the word you have heard? It was one special way, whereby, in time of the law, the clean beasts were known from the unclean, chewing the cud. But how few ruminate upon what they have heard and received? They do not, with MARY, keep the sayings, and ponder them in their hearts. “Blessed are they that hear the word, and keep it.” How few retire into their closets, and reflect on the word, for the nourishment of their graces, for the destruction of their sin! How few consider whether they have met with GOD in a sermon or no! You should gather up the words of CHRIST’S Minister, as CHRIST said of the fragments, so as none should be lost; or as the goldsmith looks after the very dust of gold: But as soon as conscience was quieted, did you ever think more of it?

How few have gone from the church to the closet, there to pour out their souls for a blessing upon what they have heard! If when your sin was discovered, you had gone into your chambers, and begged humiliation for it, and victory over it; and if when neglected duty was pressed in public, you had retired, and prayed to GOD to incline your hearts to keep GOD’S statutes; would it not have been better with you than it now is?

Have not you neglected to talk of what you have heard?

Have not some, as soon as dismissed from the sermon, fallen into impertinent discourses about news and trifles; or into worldly business; and so the thorns choked all the convictions which they received? They consider not, that the word they heard hath been “the savour of life or of death;” and that every one that goes from a sermon, goes off either with **GOD** or the Devil in his company.

Have not you been hearers of the word only, and not doers of it? Have not you so deceived your own selves? Your Ministers have pressed you to secret prayer, and to constancy in it; but have not you gone away, and continued in the neglect of that, wherein the power of godliness mainly consists? “Blessed are they that hear the word of **GOD** and keep it;” *i. e.*, that are good practitioners; that have a care to regulate heart and life according to what they hear and know. They are rather blessed than the mother of **CHRIST** was, for bringing him into the world. But, alas! let it be for a lamentation, that so many professors have been for hearing, but for doing only what they listed. Have you been cast into the form of the doctrine which ye have received? Have you “obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine delivered to you?” Hath your profiting appeared answerable to the many months and years you have sat under the dews of heaven? What do you believe, love, and hope for, more than you did? Have your hearts stooped more and more to this sceptre of **CHRIST**? Believe it, if sin be not more odious, and **CHRIST** more precious, after you have heard, you have lost your hearing hours; yea, contracted more guilt to your souls. That you have not been “changed from glory to glory,” is a great ground of sadness to the poor Ministers, who fear they have laboured in vain. If you had come down from these mounts with your faces shining,—if you had received more of **GOD** upon your hearts and lives, you had more credited the ministry, and put to silence foolish men.

7. Have not you greatly miscarried, as to consulting with them? Though one great work of your Ministers

was to deal personally with your souls, yet how little weight have you laid upon their judgment !

Have not you more credited the Physician's opinion of your bodies, and the Lawyer's about your estates, than you have your Ministers concerning your souls ?

If you have consulted with your Ministers, have not you delayed going to these Physicians ? When the wound was newly given, and bleeding, you should have repaired to them ; but, like **FELIX**, you have dismissed your convictions to some other opportunity. How hath **SATAN** befooled many, persuading them that there needs not so much ado,—that the Minister is too legal,—that he will drive to despair,—that (as **AHAB** thought of **MICAH**) he will not speak one comfortable word,—or that he will blazon the secrets of their souls, and so they shall get a blot by unbosoming themselves.

8. How oft have you invited them to your houses only to feast them, and to show outwardly your respect unto them ; but have not put the opportunity to such uses as **MARY** did **CHRIST**'s coming to her house ! How light, vain, unserious, have you been in their company ! It had been more your wisdom, as well as duty, to have proposed some necessary queries to them, with respect to eternity. You should have drawn out their gifts and graces by proposing such questions as these :—

How, Sir, shall I know the difference between the assisting and the inhabiting presence of the **SPIRIT** ? How shall I know whether the Gospel hath had a saving efficacy on mine heart ? How shall I know **SATAN**'s temptations from the suggestions of mine own heart ? How shall I know when **SATAN**, and when the **SPIRIT** applies promises ? How shall I discern the motions of the **HOLY GHOST** from the impulses of **SATAN**, “transforming himself into an angel of light ?” How shall I know the teachings of the **SPIRIT** from the teachings of men ? How shall I get assurance that my sins are pardoned ? How may I obtain victory over the world ? How may I be delivered from spiritual sloth ? What shall

I do, that I may retain the influence of ordinances upon my spirit? How may I be more useful to all my relations? How may I bridle my tongue, so as to speak evil of no man? How shall I do to work the works of God? What shall I do to get a trembling heart under the word and works of God? How shall I get a soft heart, to mourn for my own and others' sins? How shall I know what is my constitution-sin? How shall I know whether my courage be from natural temper, or the grace of God?

Such questions as these should have been seriously debated with your Ministers; but, alas! when you and your Ministers have spent hours together, have not you contracted guilt, and made yourselves unfit for secret duties; nay, perhaps have had not time for the discharge of them?

9. Have not you been a trouble to their souls? Your Ministers were so affectionately desirous of you, that they were willing to have imparted to you, not the Gospel only, but their own souls, because ye were dear unto them; and is this your kindness to your friends, to break their hearts, who were glad to spend and be spent for you? How proudly have you carried it towards them! God threatened the Israelites, that "the Canaanites should be pricks in their eyes, and thorns in their sides." Surely it better became Canaanites to be thorns to the Israelites, than for you to be thorns to your Ministers. How oft have you grieved them, to see your stoutness and rebellion against all their counsels! May not your Ministers say as DAVID, "I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word?" May not they say, We have seen your lukewarmness, your sloth, your earthliness, and our souls were troubled? You should have been, like the Thessalonians, "the crown of our rejoicing," but you have been crowns of thorns, which have pierced, not our heads, but hearts. You should have refreshed our bowels, been as cordials after all our wearisome labours; but have not you dealt unkindly with us? And the more we have loved you, have not we had the less love from you? I cannot but think of a passage of holy Mr.

SHEPHERD : ‘The Jews,’ saith he, ‘did long for CHRIST, and when he came they crucified him. And you would have Ministers, and you had them ; and though you did not immediately cast them out of their places, yet you so wearied their spirits, and grieved the Spirit in them, that you made them glad to bury themselves, and leave their places.’ How little did you “obey them that ruled over you, and submitted yourselves, that they might give their account with joy, and not with grief!”



CHAPTER XXXIII.

Want of Love among the Professors of Religion.

“As touching brotherly love,” saith the Apostle PAUL to the Thessalonians, “ye need not that I write unto you ; for ye yourselves are taught of GOD to love one another, and indeed you do it.” But may not I say to you, ‘As touching brotherly love, you need that I write to you, for you are not taught of GOD?’ ‘The fire of brotherly love,’ saith one, ‘is almost ready to go out, scarce any spark of it yet remaining among us ; but instead of the fire of love, the wild-fire of passion rageth, and is predominant. Many live as if they had been born on the mountains of Bether,—the mountains of Division ; and as if they had been baptized in the waters of Meribah,—the waters of strife.’ “O that my head were waters, and my eyes fountains of tears, to weep day and night” for the want of love in the Christians of this generation one towards another. How common hath it been to confine our love to our own party ! We have not loved all the saints. How few BUCERS are there ! How few love all, *in quibus aliquid CHRISTI vident*,—in whom they see any thing of CHRIST ! Many even hate those that differ from them, though but in circumstantial ; or, they “love in word and in tongue only,

but not in deed and in truth.” In order to the convincing us of our guiltiness herein, O that our consciences may be suffered to give in full answers to the following queries:—

1. How have we called for fire from heaven, when we have thought ourselves dishonoured, in that others have not given such a reception to our ways and practices in religion, as we expected! Have not we wished those that divided from us in some circumstances of worship, even banished? Have not we been glad, when such were put out of all offices and places of profit? Even at this day, if men scruple the lawfulness of some ceremonies and gestures in the service of God, they are thought worthy to be cast out of the Church.

2. To facilitate this, have not we blotted out the reputation of their holiness, and represented saints as devils? ‘It is utterly a fault among you,’ said one of our English worthies formerly, ‘that the difference in judgment and practice about ceremonies, hath caused such strangeness and alienation of mind and affection between such as truly fear God, both Ministers and people. We are so far from receiving, esteeming, loving, and maintaining society one with another, notwithstanding this difference of judgment, that we are apt to despise and judge one another for it, and doubt whether there be any truth of grace in them that differ from us in these things. Thus do both sides grossly and dangerously err, and sin against their brethren; “and when ye sin so against the brethren, ye sin against CHRIST.” For the experience of all times proveth evidently, that there be of both sides that fear God unfeignedly, and in the whole tenour and course of whose conversation, the life and power of true godliness doth appear. And if thou dost not see this, (whoever thou art that art violent on either side,) then art thou certainly thyself most wilfully blind. And I do assure thee, in the name of the LORD, and by good warrant out of his word, that if thou canst not unfeignedly love every one that truly feareth the LORD;—if thou canst not bewail and strive against these hard conceits thou hast been wont to

entertain against such, thou canst have no comfort at all in thine own estate before God.'

Thus far he that was in his time England's best Preacher. And is the matter any whit amended now! O how many have spoken all manner of evil against those that have differed from them in circumstances? Have not they publicly railed one at another? What names have they given one another? Have not we been cooled and blunted, and lost our zeal in matters of greatest moment, by letting out our zeal against the supposed errors of our brethren?

3. How little have we heeded the commands of God against backbiting! "Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among the people. Cursed be he that smiteth his neighbour secretly." When the Apostle would set forth the great abominations of the Gentiles, he saith, they were "whisperers and backbiters." Were there love, it would cover all sins. Whom we love, we are wont to commend; but instead of this, how do we speak against those that differ from us, behind their backs? Whom we love, we would have others to love; but by backbiting we seek to draw off others also from their duty. Herein, how do we serve the Devil, who is the great mediator of differences! I have oft thought upon the artificial kind of backbiting in BERNARD's time: 'When they slander, they will fetch deep sighs, as if they were much grieved that others should be so and so guilty; yea, they will say, "I am exceedingly sorry for such an one, that he should commit so heinous a crime;" when perhaps it was all the while but a base lying report. Besides, they will charge the tale-bearer with the greatest secrecy, when they will take liberty to asperse as far as they have opportunity. They tell the fault only to a friend, that will tell nobody of it. But why may not he have forfeited the gift of keeping counsel, as well as thyself? Why shouldest thou think that the hearer will conceal, when thou, the teller, canst not? And if thou hast a mind the brother's infirmities should be hid, why dost

not thou hide them? If a man of a different persuasion live so, that we are forced to commend him, yet we will surely bring in one calumny or other, that shall blot the person, and weaken all our encomiums of him. When we have been forced to speak of others' good actions, how commonly do we lay in a but; something or other, to abate the esteem that is due: 'It were well done, if the ends were right; if they acted from good principles:' And by these insinuations, we restrain others from loving proportionably to the merit of the person.' At feasts, if not in more solemn meetings, what liberty have we taken to speak against our brethren! When **DIONYSIUS** feared **PLATO** would revile him in the academy among his companions; 'God forbid,' saith **PLATO**, 'that there should be such scarcity of matter to talk of in the academy, that they should talk of thee.' Believe it, we had spent our time better, to warm one another's hearts with the love of **CHRIST**, than to inflame the spirits of each other against our brethren.

4. How easily have we entertained a report, and credited it against brethren of different persuasions! The love of mothers makes them incredulous as to any charges laid against their children; but how seldom have we driven away a backbiting tongue with an angry countenance! How have we been tale bearers; how have we encouraged the backbiter to open his pack; how have we received all the defamations he would bring us! How have we credited reports upon hearsay, without any examination! How apt are we to censure and judge before he, who is the accused, have the accuser face to face! This was the Roman's law: I wish it were the Christian's. Some of you learned long ago, that it is injustice to determine without hearing both parties. Have we loved our neighbour's name and credit as our own? May we not conclude that God will measure to us, as we have to our brethren! Is it our wisdom to believe every word? Would not **DAVID** cut off those whom we embrace? We pretend we are not the first reporters; but are not we glad the report is spread? Are not we glad that others' good names are

stolen away? Do not we harbour the stolen goods? When others set our neighbours' names on fire, do not we look on, and cry, Aha! so would we have it! But when do we go to the defamed neighbour to hear what apology he can make for himself?

5. How have we aggravated the offences of differing parties beyond their due proportion! For fifty have not we set down an hundred? Have not we represented that as done against light, which was done ignorantly? And that done with deliberation, which was done rashly? We have not made a difference between sins and human frailties; between sins repented of, and not repented of. How have we been guilty of drawing consequences from our adversaries' assertions, and fastening such opinions on them, as their souls abhorred! And yet hardly hath one of a thousand retracted these unjust charges, or humbled himself for this great iniquity before God or man.

6. Did we begin to stop breaches betimes? Did not we suffer our wounds to be kept open too long? And how few yet are there that endeavour to compose the jars and differences that are among us! When there were bickerings concerning MOSES, the Law, Circumcision, and Sacrifices, how doth PAUL beseech EUODIAS and SYNTYCHE! How few are like one of the Fathers, who was so much affected with the divisions of Christians, that he professed himself ready to let out his heart's blood to cement them together. Few entreat for peace, and those few that do endeavour to hinder the strife of brethren, fare no better than MOSES. He is thought to carry on a design for a party that sues for peace, and desires brotherly and amicable conferences. Many cry for peace and commend it; but they will not be at cost for it. The cursed principle is still harboured, that it is a dishonourable thing to yield first; but that others must begin to stoop to us: whereas, it is God's honour that he stooped to us first. We are loath to sue for peace, and to beg reconciliation with those that have been more in the offence than we. I find little condescending to remove mistakes and prejudices. If we

have once offered terms of peace and reconciliation, we satisfy ourselves therein ; but have not pursued and followed after peace : we have not used means upon means. This is a clear evidence of our too much indulging our discords and animosities.

7. Have not our differences come to that height, that we condemned those actions of our brethren, which, before they dissented from us, we approved and commended? DEMETRIUS of Alexandria liked ORIGEN's making himself an eunuch, until they fell out, and then he wrote against it. Yea, have not we discommended some very good enterprises, merely because they had an hand in them? Thus some confessed that they had liked many of LUTHER's reformatiions, but that so contemptible a monk should have the honour of beginning them. When men are highly inflamed for some one thing, they will dislike all the party doeth. Besides, have not we been apt to quarrel with, and mistake whatsoever is done by a whole society, if we are fallen out with one of that society.

8. How strong are our memories (even to this day) to retain all bitter and unchristian passages of one party towards another ! And if some have buried them, yet are there not some of the Devil's agents that are raking them out of the dust, to exasperate spirits afresh, and widen our difference ?

9. How have we suffered sin to rest upon others ! And why ? They are not of our church. Thou shouldest not deal with a Turk, as thou hast dealt with Christians ; nor with a beast going astray, as thou hast with thy brother's soul. Into what times are we fallen ! that the Jews were kinder to beasts than we are to one another. If any go astray, we help them not to return into the right way : If they perish, let them perish, for any care we take to reclaim them : If not of us, they must not be regarded. " Thou shouldest not hate thy brother in thy heart, but reprove him ; " and not foolishly confine brotherhood to any particular congregation, and suffer others to be damned, when thou by a faithful reproof mightest have saved them.

Instead of reproving a Christian that differs from us, according to the rule of CHRIST, for any miscarriage that we are privy to, have not we let him run on, and then told on the house-top what was done in secret? O how have we uncovered that which humanity should have concealed! Can you talk so of your friends that are most dear to you?

10. Have not we restrained prayer for such Christians as have differed from us? Whom we love we pray for: But have not our differences been so great, that we have excluded one another out of our prayers? How seldom are we earnest in wrestling with God for others, if in some things divided from us! If we had counted them enemies, we should have so loved them, as to have prayed for them. O that ABRAHAM should pray so vehemently for the Sodomites, and not we for saints! That SAMUEL should pray for SAUL, and not we for the LORD's anointed ones! Have not our differences interrupted not only civil, but religious communion? Yea, have not we neglected to pray, not only for dissenting brethren, but for the reconciling of them? Should we not have been encouraged to pray for that which CHRIST so affectionately desires? Will not petitions be welcome to heaven for that, which would be the joy of all the heavenly host to see effected? "Peace on earth" among the saints, would be the joy of God, who is the "God of peace;" of CHRIST, who is "the Prince of peace." May we not confidently pray for what CHRIST sweat and bled?

11. How hath the spirit in us lusted to envy! Whom we love, we rejoice at their gifts and enjoyments; but hath not a spirit of CAIN prevailed among us? Have not we envied, if others had greater acceptance with God than ourselves? Have we rejoiced at the gifts and graces of differently persuaded brethren, as if they were our own? Or, have not we (secretly at least) repined at their being praised? Have not we been afraid that we and our party have been obscured thereby? Hath not this been evident in our being more backward to speak of their graces, than

of their imperfections? If we know one of a differing congregation from ours, that hath a blemish, our mouths are full of him ; but others' graces, and heavenly walks, we can pass over in silence.

12. Have not we refused to help such Christians? We help what we can, those whom we really love. But are we not like spectators in a tragedy, who mourn much to see a sad story acted, but let the play go on? True love would express itself by the hand as well as the tongue. We read of "the labour of love:" Love is bountiful. We pretend to love all our brethren; but what do we for those that are of different persuasions? If such an one be in prison, do we visit him? If naked, do we clothe him? If hungry, do we feed him? If we remember all the LORD's people, that are in bonds as if we were bound with them, then do we really love them. Love will suffer any pains for the sake of the beloved: So PAUL loved all the saints, that "he was willing to spend and to be spent," to waste himself for their good. Which of us hath so spent himself? Love will counsel the beloved, especially in any strait; but GOD knows how little others have been beholden to us even this way: Possibly we have afterwards told them, this you should have done; but as we found them in a ditch, so we left them, and directed them not to a way of deliverance. The best counsel we can give is for the soul; but let the divided parties, yea, and others, consider seriously how backward they have been, and are to this day, to advise to the best way for peace, holiness, and glory. If we believe such an undertaking will impair our neighbour's name, estate, or soul; yet how slow are we to interpose for the dissuading him from it. I should hardly think that parent loves his child well, that sees him run over a cliff, and withholds him not what he can.

13. Have not we been so far from helping them, that we have not sympathized with them? How little have we laid to heart the afflictions of any of GOD's people! Have not we been unconcerned in their sufferings in Germany

and France ? How seldom have we had any great conflict for those whose faces in the flesh we never saw !

Now, when these things are amongst us, shall we sit still in silence and stupidity, and suffer the sweet and soft fire of love quite to expire, and the wild fire of passion and contention to spread and prevail, without moving a tongue or hand towards the repressing the one, and reviving the other ? This were enough to make the dumb to speak ; and therefore may justify my writing, yea, my expatiating a little, in venting my thoughts about this great evil.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we are in a special manner guilty of disobedience to JESUS CHRIST ? That all Christians would love one another, was our LORD JESUS's dying charge, which he frequently inculcated, sweetly insinuated, and powerfully enforced as a commandment, not a bare advice and counsel. It is a commandment of CHRIST's own prescribing : " A commandment I give unto you. " It is a commandment given as a special love-token, in his last will and testament. It is a new commandment ; " A new commandment I give unto you. " It is a most excellent commandment, in a new edition corrected and amended from the false glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees, and enlarged from his own example. Before, it was only, " Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself ; " now it is, " Love one another, as I have loved you. " This new commandment is not once only given but again and again, by our dying LORD, to intimate that as he had one disciple who went by the name of the disciple whom JESUS loved ; so he would have a favourite commandment, and that this should be it, " Love one another : " Yea, he calls it, " These things, " as if this one thing were all things, and disobedience to this commandment were disobedience to all.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby as much as in us lies, we make the prayer of CHRIST of none effect ? CHRIST knew the evil of heart-burnings and divisions, of wrath and bitterness, against one another ; and therefore, having preached up love among his disciples on earth, he sets upon

praying down union from his Father in heaven ; and what he insisted most upon in his sermon, that he enlargeth most upon in his prayer. “ And now I am no more in the world ; but these are in the world, and I come to thee : holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are : That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us : That the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them ; that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one ; and that the world may know, that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we throw off CHRIST's distinguishing livery ? “ By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” He doth not say, Hereby you shall be my disciples ; but, hereby it shall be known. Nor doth he say, Hereby shall I know ; nor, hereby you shall know ; but, hereby shall others know. Nor doth he say, Hereby they shall conjecture ; but, hereby they shall know, as by a sure and infallible sign. Nor doth he say, Hereby some, a very few, shall know this great secret ; but, hereby all men shall know. Nor doth he say, Hereby all men shall know, that you seem to be my disciples ; but, that you are so indeed.

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we make the Jews and Heathens look on CHRIST as an impostor ? How can they look upon him otherwise, whilst they see his coat so full of seams, yea, his body so full of rents ? Hereby we hinder the world from being convinced that CHRIST is sent of GOD. CHRIST therefore prayed, that his “ might be one, that the world may know that GOD sent him.”

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we make, as much as in us lies, the cross of CHRIST of none effect, and his blood to be shed in vain ? CHRIST not only preached up love, and prayed for it, but also paid for it. As he went from preaching up love on earth by his sermon, to pulling it

down from heaven by prayer ; so he went from praying to paying for it, and the price which he laid down for it was his blood. “ For he is our peace, who hath made both one ; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace : And that he might reconcile both unto God, in one body, by the cross.” Shall CHRIST die to break down partition-walls ; and will we dare to keep them up ? Shall he shed his blood for peace ; and shall we employ our wit and interest to blow the trumpet to war ?

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we grieve our LORD JESUS, and the ever blessed SPIRIT ? May not we easily imagine what a grief it is to the Head, to see the members of his body, rending and tearing each other ; to see heirs of the same hope, whose names are on his breast, and whom he presents before his FATHER together in heaven, to be thus broken asunder on earth ? Methinks if we had any love to JESUS CHRIST, we should study to be of one affection. What LUTHER said once to the Ministers of Nuremberg, is very considerable : ‘ Suppose,’ said he, ‘ you saw JESUS CHRIST standing bodily in the midst of you, and thus bespeaking you, What do you, O my dear Children, whom I have redeemed by my blood, that you might mutually love one another ?—There is no danger in your difference, but there is much in your dissension : Do not thus sadden my spirit ! Do not thus spoil the holy angels of their joy in heaven ! Am not I more to you than all your matters of difference ?’ How can we expect the company of the Spirit of grace and peace, whilst such contentions are amongst us ? Were the Disciples quarrelling when the HOLY GHOST fell upon them ? No ; “ They were all with one accord, in one place.” Where men dwell together in unity, there the LORD commands the blessing for ever. ‘ God will not,’ saith a learned man, ‘ sow the precious seed of his grace and love among briers and thorns, the enemies of peace.’

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we make real saints, the pillars of the world, weary of staying in the world, to

support it any longer? It was the sight of the divisions among Christians, that made GRYNÆUS, MELANCTHON, STRIGELIUS, those precious souls, weary of earth, and to wish and desire the “wings of a dove, that they might fly away, and be at rest,” as from all other evils, so from this of divisions and dissensions among brethren. It was the conjecture of one, that as God’s first judgment against the old world was by water, against the heat of lust; so his last judgment upon the world that now is, will be by fire, against the coldness of love: If this be true, how do we hasten the great and terrible day, by our coldness in love one towards another?

Is it nothing to us, that hereby we gratify the Devil, rejoice the hearts of the wicked, and justify their reproaches? The great stratagem of hell is to promote our differences, and to keep us from union: The Devil knows that societies of Christians are immortal, if they do not kill themselves by division. Divide them, and rule them, is a maxim in hell, and among the anti-christian party. Why should we be employed in the Devil’s work? Hath he not instruments and tongues enough of his own? O how doth Antichrist get round by the animosities and divisions among Christians? Certainly, what TACITUS saith of some in his time, we may of the Papists, and all our foreign enemies, *Nihil spei, nisi per discordias habent*. All their hopes of ruining us, arise from our home-bred discords and divisions. Were all the arrows in one bundle, they would find it next to an impossibility to break them. Methinks the proud boasts of the man of sin should make us bury all our discords. Were we but of one heart before God, and uniting our prayers, the mountains would become plains, yea, the seven hills among the rest. Surely we do not consider where, and among whom, we are. Are we not in the world, where SATAN rules? Shall the children quarrel in their enemies’ quarters? ABRAHAM sues for peace upon this consideration, that “we are brethren, and the Perizzite dwelt in the land.” Wicked men are spectators of our discords. The very Heathen have calmed

the mutinies of their soldiers, by saying, ‘ Your enemies yonder behold your mutinous behaviour.’ What one said prophetically some years ago, I cannot but recall : ‘ That unless God did stir up some in the Protestant Churches, and clothe them with a mighty spirit to accommodate our differences, the end of them may be, that our enemies will laugh when we shall weep.’ Have we not enemies enough, but must we be cruel to one another ? We say, the fire burns the hotter for the cold weather : would to God that the cold abroad, the oppositions against us, may intend our affections the more to God, to his ways, to his people. And are not the wicked justified in their reproaches, whilst they do but write after our copy ?

Lastly. Is it nothing to us, that hereby we hinder the forgiveness of our own iniquities ? How can we hope we shall be forgiven, if we forgive not one another ? How can we look that Scripture in the face ; “ If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you : But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses ? ”

I shall conclude this Chapter with beseeching, yea, conjuring you, in the words of the Apostle PAUL to the Philippians : “ If there be therefore any consolation in CHRIST, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the SPIRIT, if any bowels and mercies ; fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.”



CHAPTER XXXIV.

The Faults of Church-Members towards those of their particular Congregations.

YOU have professed in your creed to believe “ the Communion of Saints : ” You have been admitted to the privileges of this communion : You thought it not safe or

good for man to be alone ; to live retired from the society of Christians : You have been enrolled among them ; and yet what an unprofitable hermit hast thou been in Zion ? Thou art no way serviceable to the body. It is a wonder to me, how Christians can content themselves with the privileges of God's house, and neglect the mutual duties that are incumbent on them. The Apostle tells us, that "the meanest members in the Church are necessary." But, alas ! how many are there, who immure themselves within their own walls ; who are so involved in worldly business, and have so little care and zeal for the house of God, that they no way profit, no way edify, their brethren ! How can you overlook those plain Scriptures ? "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. Wherefore, comfort (or exhort) yourselves together, and edify one another. From whom, (*i. e.*, CHRIST,) the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. Let every one of us please his neighbour, for his good to edification." "Exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. And let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and unto good works : Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another ; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." None are excluded : It is every man's work. "Look diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled." If they do not overlook, how dare they condemn all these commandments of our LORD JESUS CHRIST ? How can they look upon themselves as

no way concerned in these duties ? It is a lamentation, that so many church-members, through spiritual sloth, through a loathness to displease, through want of pity to the souls of their brethren, suffer them to perish in carelessness, sensuality, formality; rather than they will labour to quicken, restore, and save them. An engrosser is hateful to men : but of “ how much sorer punishment shall ye be thought worthy,” who engross your graces, your gifts, your experiences, wherewith the Church of CHRIST might be edified ! Every man is a steward ; but you are stewards in an especial manner : You are stewards of the gifts of the SPIRIT, which are given “ to profit withal.” How dare ye “ hide your talents in a napkin ? ” You have a greater trust committed to you, than others have. You have souls committed to your care : for church-members are to care even naturally one for another. What, are you afraid you shall have the less light, the less grace, the less comfort from CHRIST, for that others share with you ? Know, the more useful you are, the more you yourselves will be enriched and supplied ; and whilst you are dividing your loaves, God will act at a wonderful rate for you. The bread will multiply ; you shall receive, whilst you are disbursing. Your light and heat will increase by your disbursing it.

2. How is Godly Conference neglected even among church-members ? What, are you ashamed of your God ? Is the speaking of grace and glory some kind of disparagement to your tongues ? When you come together, precious time is devoured in backbiting, in censuring absent persons, who are not capable of making their defence ; or else in impertinent discourses of worldly matters. Few, like the disciples in their journey to Emmaus, discourse of such matters, as CHRIST himself joins with them in, and causeth their hearts to burn. When do you warm one another’s hearts, and fit each other to enter into communion with God in secret ? How do many complain of you, that their hearts are estranged from God by converse and intimacies with you, and that they lose their affections

by keeping up correspondences with you ; and therefore, count it their wisdom to retire into their closets, rather than mis-spend precious hours in foolish communication ? How many weak Christians are there, who are not acquainted with the wiles of SATAN, and they sit down pensive and dejected, thinking no condition like theirs, and conclude hereupon that they are none of God's children, whom (if you were spiritual, pitiful, active, and free to acquaint them with your own experiences) you might succour under their temptations, and comfort them with the comforts wherewith you have been comforted, and ease them by hearkening to their doubts and complaints, and showing them a way how to deliver their souls ? Were you of a CHRIST-like spirit, you would not break these bruised reeds ; but labour to scatter those mists which overcloud their souls ? You should be eyes to the blind ; but you are not. You should be of a merciful spirit to all souls ; more especially to the souls of all good men, most especially to the souls of those to whom you are particularly related ; but you are not. In the old law God took care of asses : if they lay under a burden, Israel was to help them. Doth God take care for beasts ; and will not ye for men, for " the Redeemed of the LORD ? " God requires of you, that you " comfort the feeble-minded." " The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." CHRIST expects his own with increase. " They that feared the LORD spake often one to another ;" (to comfort one another with the promises of God made to his people, against the flourishing of the wicked, and the overflowing of ungodliness ;) " and the LORD hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him." The LORD booked that good service. He put it upon record. But though the LORD hearkeneth and heareth, yet he seldom finds us so employed." Our neglects are sealed up in his bag. I pray God we may lay it to heart, repent, and reform. BERNARD's complaint may justly be revived : ' Not a word of the Scriptures, nothing of the salvation of the

soul ; but trifles and toys, laughter, and words as light as the wind, eat up the time.' Let us give the ministry their due ; and yet not neglect to build up ourselves " in our most holy faith." Mutual duties should be exercised between Christian and Christian : The Apostle is express for it in the places already quoted : I shall add one more, " Let the word of CHRIST dwell in you richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another. O if God would be with me so far, as to make me an instrument to prevail with you, to go and visit one another, and stir up one another, that, " knowing the terrors of the LORD, you may persuade men !" O bewail thy unserviceableness, thy private spiritedness, thy want of love and bowels to others ; especially now, when there is so great an apostasy. Sure, there is no time wherein Christian fellowship is more called for, and wherein it may be more profitable, than at this time : But, alas ! how few are there like JONATHAN and DAVID, How few enter into a brotherly promise to exhort one another, to call one another to account, to tell one another their fears, to know of one another their growth in religion !

3. How is fraternal correction neglected, or spoiled in the managing ? Some totally neglect reproving their brethren. They little care for these things ; they are little concerned whether God be honoured or dishonoured.

Others delay admonition. The flesh is backward to this self-denying work, and so the many weighty circumstances which should bring the offender to repentance, are forgotten : The offender is also hardened in his sin. He thinks by thy silence, thou art altogether like him. It is much easier to fetch out a spot of ink from a cloth the day it is stained, than afterwards. Sin, like a mole, will quickly bury itself ; and the longer let alone, the harder it is to be dug up. The longer a disease is let alone, the harder it is to be cured. Besides, if you neglect the reproof this day, or hour, perhaps by the next he will commit the same sin again : for either he knows it not to be a sin, or in case he knows it, yet every new act doth strengthen the habit.

It is the nature of sin to blind the mind, to stupify the conscience, and to harden the heart. "Exhort," therefore, "one another daily, while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." If the sinner add sin to sin, put that to your account for neglecting the ordinance of God for his reducement; if he loseth the favour of God, and neglects hereupon all private communion with the Lord, put that to thy account; if at length he becomes impudent in sin, so that he feels not the pricks of sharp admonition, put all this to your account, because you have delayed to cure, to heal, to save the soul of your brother! A timely reproof might have saved a soul, "and covered a multitude of sins." Besides, have you time at your command, that you will do your duty "at a more convenient season?" Mayest not thou die, or the offender die, and both in sin, (thou in the sin of omission, and he in the sin of commission,) before the day comes, wherein thou art resolved to tell him of his fault? Why art thou not trembling with fear of blood-guiltiness? Is soul-murder no sin with thee? Or have you the HOLY GHOST at command? Without the HOLY SPIRIT'S assistance your labour will be vain; you will get a blot by reproofing; the delinquent will fly in your face, and hate you for telling the truth; he will add sin to sin, and perhaps put you into a flame too. And must the HOLY GHOST be always in attendance on you? If you observe his hour, you must go presently, whilst the wound is fresh and bleeding; but if ye neglect his call, it is a question whether your hour will be God's.

Others miscarry in reproofing. Some reprove, but not privately, though CHRIST be so express for it: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Though the law of charity binds us to cover our brother's nakedness as much as we can,—“Love covereth all sins;” yet some, Doeg-like, backbite their neighbour, and tell it to every one save him who should hear it. How few modestly, affectionately, and humbly, in the most private manner, communicate their

fears of sins, decays, and infirmities, to the supposed delinquents ! Are not most too forward to divulge their suspicions to others, whereby the names of some suffer, souls lie neglected, prejudices are promoted, schism is made in the body of CHRIST ? Though the law of wisdom binds us not to use more means than needs must ; if private reproofs will reclaim, not to blazon infirmities ; yet many through pride, envy, want of charity, at least want of wit, publish on the house-top what is done in a corner. Herein we do as we hate to be dealt with ; hereby we make the offender hate us. It will be hard to make him believe thou comest to heal his soul, if thou hast already wounded his name. Have not some been for bringing it immediately to the Church ? Hereby innumerable evils ensue ; many are grieved, many offended, the party that is impeached stands on his guard, pleads for his sin, extenuates it, or is strengthened in his sin by the uncharitable proceeding of the brother, who first took cognizance of the miscarriage.

Other busy bodies would be thought very tender of CHRIST'S honour ; "they tithe mint and anise ; they reprove such things as are disputable, and neglect to reprove where there are just accusations. They will be very severe in censuring their brethren for some controverted points ; and yet let them alone to live in worldliness, sensuality, lukewarmness, pride, sloth.

Others are so magisterial in their reproofs, as if they had forgotten that they were in the body,—as if they had no corruption in them. They have forgotten the Apostles' advice : "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness." O how haughtily do some carry it towards offending brethren ! I wish you would fling the first stone at yourselves. If you are not guilty of the same offence, yet you are of others ; at least you have the seed of the same sin within you. Let them see that it is only conscience of duty that brings you to them, and that it is love to their souls that puts you upon such displeasing work. But, alas, how

few will condescend ! The work is not managed with that humility it ought, and therefore no brother is gained.

Others are so light and unserious in this business, that they spoil all. They do not invoke God to accompany them in the work ; they do not cry out, “ Who is sufficient ? ” They forget how abortive such labours have been ; they do not set upon it with that fear and trembling which they should. Few “ rebuke with authority,” as having God’s glory, and men’s everlasting salvation, in their eye. And hence, when they come off from this work, their conscience smites them, that they have been no more serious and fervent in a matter that concerns life and death.

Few continue their admonitions, and follow them until the delinquent ~~be~~ brought to confession and amendment. We soon tire, and put the ill names of dogs and swine upon our offending brethren, to excuse our sloth. We should “ in meekness instruct them,” though they “ oppose themselves.” We should bear with their present stubbornness and abuses, and wait “ if God peradventure will give them repentance.” We forget how many years God waited on us, though we were stubborn and refractory.

4. How few behave themselves christianly under reproof ! When men come to you from the great God, to discharge the duties they owe to your souls, your behaviour is such, that none will meddle with such patients, to dress their wounds, if the Lord had not charged them with this commission.

How few receive a reproof kindly and affectionately ! It is a great mercy to be reproofed : “ As many as I love, I rebuke.” To sin against reproof, is aggravated wickedness. It is an argument of hatred not to reprove : “ Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour.” Yet how are they accounted turbulent, pragmatical, rigid, and censorious, who will not let them go on in their sin ! Others seem to hearken to the reprove, and give him verbal thanks for

his plain dealings; but from that day their hearts boil inwardly, and they are filled with prejudice, which will express itself, when it meets with a fair opportunity. How few engage some friend to be a faithful monitor to them, to be open-hearted to them, in telling them their faults! We are so over-run with self-love, that we think no stander-by can discern so much as we; and we are so unwilling to be censured, that we stand aloof from such a looking-glass. Few, with DAVID, would count it a kindness for the righteous to smite them.

How few amend upon a solemn, serious reproof! How few retire to their closets, and there upon their knees bless God for emboldening any to tell them of their sins, and beg pardon and strength to reform, and vow by the grace of God to amend whatever is amiss!

5. Most seek to please themselves, and not their neighbour. A man would think they never read, "We ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one please his neighbour for his good to edification." Many are self-willed; they will walk to the utmost of their liberty; and if others be offended, they little care. But what saith the Apostle? "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth." "A firm and full knowledge of our liberty in things indifferent, (saith a learned man,) if it be separated from charity, is apt to swell the mind with pride, and make men to despise doubting and scrupulous brethren; but charity is careful to avoid what may stumble the weak, and cause them to fall into sin: and therefore "judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block, or occasion to fall, in his brother's way. Hast thou faith" concerning the lawfulness of things indifferent? (for of them the Apostle speaks,) "have it unto thyself before God;" make not a vain publication thereof, to the grieving or stumbling the weak, who may, by thy example, even against conscience, use the same liberty; and so, "through thy knowledge, shall thy weak brother perish." You may think this is no great matter; but

the same Apostle informs us, that you hereby “sin against **CHRIST**; you destroy the work of **GOD**,” the soul of thy brother, and no man on earth can privilege you from the wrath of **GOD**, if you destroy them with your meats” (with the use of your liberty) “for whom **CHRIST** died;” and therefore the Apostle professeth, “If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.” O that men were so humble as **PAUL**: but, alas! all men seek their own things. If they are satisfied concerning the lawfulness of the things, they look no farther; they little mind the souls of their brethren; but are securing themselves some outward peace, and earthly advantages. Few naturally care for the good of others, for the glory of **GOD**, and the edification of their brethren.

How are Christians valued and preferred by externals, rather than by internals! By outward honours and privileges, rather than by their graces. They who should have most of your love and respect, have least. A rich formalist’s company is more prized, than a humble, mortified, poor Christian’s. The miscarriage that was in the Apostles’ days is descended to this age: “My brethren, have not the faith of our **LORD JESUS CHRIST**, the Lord of Glory, with respect of persons.” How are men’s judgments blinded by external glory, so that a little in a great, rich, honourable man, is counted much; and much grace in a poor man is despised, overlooked, and accounted but little. You do not value men by their eminency in grace, but in parts and worldly endowments; as if gold did set men off more than grace. When you should fix your affections where you see most grace, you are taken where you see either most of the world, or most gifts. good breeding, prudence, or learning. This having men’s persons in admiration, over-reverencing men for worldly things, is a great disparagement to the grace of **GOD**, as if riches were more excellent than religion. “My brethren, if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, and there cometh also a poor man in vile

raiment, and you have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, are not you partial in yourselves?" Have not you made a difference, a groundless difference, a difference grounded on carnal respects, and not upon solid reason? "Are not ye become judges of evil thoughts?" Have not you made your judgment of such persons according to the dictates of your own evil thoughts, and not according to the rule of the word? O how seldom do we value and respect as GOD doeth! Let rich men be sick, what ado is there! what running to them, what sending after them, what endeavours to comfort them! But O, how are the poor of the Church despised! Little sending to them, though they want necessities for their bodies, in the time of their visitation, and their souls are ready to sink for want of a word in season. Your frequent visiting of some, when under GOD's hand, and seldom resorting to others, when in the same extremity, evidenceth that "you despise the poor."

7. How do they who account themselves Christians, who have had great acquaintance with CHRIST and his ways, who have had a long experience of CHRIST's sweetness, and SATAN's deceits, keep by themselves, with the neglect of the lambs, of them who know little of the mind of GOD! Whereas all grace "is given to edify the body of CHRIST," the eye is not for itself, but for the blind members, to lead them in paths of righteousness. Your care should be like GOD's; his care is for the least fly, as well as for the greatest of the creatures. CHRIST did not will the salvation of one more than another: he died equally for all; all believers stand alike justified through the blood of CHRIST: CHRIST knocks at the poor man's door, as well as the rich; if CHRIST makes any difference, it is in this: The poor weak Christian hath more expressions of his love and affection than the strong have: He shows most pity to the greatest objects of pity; to those that are in greatest want. I wish there were more of this among Christians. It is lamentable to see how little honour is bestowed upon the weaker vessels, and how few there

are to be found, that "carry the lambs in their bosoms," (next their hearts,) "and gently lead those that are with young."

8. How little compassion is showed to fallen brethren ! To such as are overtaken with a fault ; yea, with many faults. We do not labour to pull the brands that are half burned, out of the fire. To save ourselves this labour, we deem them cast-aways ; as if there were no hope of their restoration and salvation, we never more look after them. We carry it, as if we held that sins committed after conversion were unpardonable. Art thou a stranger to thy own heart ? If not, thou knowest God pitieth thee, though thou fallest ; and it ill becomes thee, who hast been so often holpen out of the deep ditch, to deny help to thy brother that lies there, and perhaps will perish, if none be more merciful than thyself. Are there no solemn engagements upon thy soul towards thy neighbour ? Will not God take thee by the throat for thy unmercifulness ? "O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all thy debt, because thou desiredst me : shouldest not thou have had compassion upon thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee ?" Verily the LORD is wroth with you, and if this be not amended, "He will deliver you to the tormentors, till you pay all that is due unto him." O repent of this. Multitudes are departed from their former profession ; some of them are become scandalous. Their sins will lie at your doors, and their blood too, if you, through unfaithfulness, or through negligence, or through fainting, endeavour not to restore them. "Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one." Are ye all carnal ? Are none of you spiritual ? If there be one, here is work for him, as he will answer the contrary at his peril.

9. On how insufficient accounts do many withdraw from the communion of their brethren ! What, have not they read or heard, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is ?" It was then dangerous not to separate ; but it was more dangerous to separate. Not to separate was dangerous to the outward

man; but to separate was dangerous to the inward man. It is no wonder to hear a house is robbed, that stands alone from neighbours. "Two are better than one." The Church of God is compared to a city; the weaker walls of the houses therein would never endure a blustering wind; but by their neighbourhood and contiguity, they succour each other; but when one stands divided, the next news you may expect to hear of is a fall. And yet, alas! upon every prejudice and discontent, if one brother falls out with another, presently the whole congregation is threatened with the loss of the prejudiced party's company, and condemned for the miscarriages of one; and perhaps the supposed offender hath not the liberty to know his offence, in order to his repentance.



CHAPTER XXXV.

Their Miscarriages towards Sinners.

MAY not too much familiarity with profane men be justly charged upon us? I know man is a sociable creature; but that will not excuse Christians as to carelessness in the choice of their company. Is it not thus with thee? Is it not all one, whether thou art with a child of God, or with a child of the Devil? Are not those fit companions for thee, who slight and rebel against God every day.

O how few believe the Scripture, setting forth the enmity of wicked men against God's people? The Scripture tells us, "They eat up God's people as bread;" which implies a strange inclination in them to devour the saints, and that they take as great delight therein as a hungry man in eating. Wicked men will break through all natural, civil, and moral obligations, to ruin God's people. The HOLY GHOST calls them "implacable men,

fierce and headstrong ;” they are like the hot oven for fury, like the sea for boundless rage ; yet who hath believed this Scripture report ?

Did we believe what enemies all wicked men are unto all real Christians, we should not lean to our own prudence and discretion to secure us from any danger by these men. We should get an ark to secure us from the deluge of their wrath. If any time we were cast among them, and delivered, we should bless God, with the three children, that the fiery oven did not consume us ; we should not wonder when we hear of any of their barbarous cruelty, but rather wonder at God’s restraining them every day ; we should be suspicious of receiving hurt when cast among them ; we should shun their company, as we do lions and scorpions ; we should never commit any trust or secret to their hands ; we should not be light-hearted whilst in their society ; we should not rely on their promises any more than on the promise of the Devil, their father ; we should not count any true Christian secured from danger, though related to any great wicked man ; we should not twist ourselves with them, by matching ourselves and children to these sons and daughters of Belial ; neither should we make choice of devils to be our servants.

How few believe what a quarrel God hath with wicked men ! And that not only with the loose, but the formal also. If we did, we should tremble as much to be among them, as to be in a house that is falling ; we should endeavour to save ourselves “ from this untoward generation.” The Apostle would not so have adjured them, so charged, so entreated them, had he not known the danger of wicked company. How was the Apostle afraid to be in the bath with CERINTHUS ! “ Depart,” saith God by MOSES, “ from the tents of KORAH, DATHAN, and ABIRAM, lest you be consumed in all their sins.” Will you put God to work miracles to save you from your ungodly company ? It is dangerous being in the road with thieves, whilst God’s hue and cry of vengeance is at their backs. “ A companion of fools shall be destroyed.”

How few believe their own experience ; what they have suffered by the company of the ungodly ? It had been better we had gone to the pest-house, and eat and drank with persons infected with the plague, than to accompany with wicked men : our bodies would have been endangered only by the one ; but our souls are by the other. Is not “ the poison of asps under their tongues ? ” Doth not the Devil act them ? Doth he not “ work effectually in the children of disobedience ? ” Doth he not inform them ? Is there any breath, that is not infectious coming from their lips ? We are insensibly ensnared and defiled by wicked men, as we are discoloured by lying long under the scorching sun-beams. Do not we yet know and feel how “ a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump ; ” and that one sinner destroys much good ; and that those that were mingled among the heathen, learned their ways ? Have not you found after such company, how your hearts have been dead, dull, straitened, and unwilling to come into God’s presence ? And how suddenly after your refreshments in your closets, have you lost all your spiritual fervour, and have instantly cooled by going forth into cold and corrupt air ? When one hath been in private ravished with the love of God, and afterwards meets with company, which neither doth, nor can speak one word of such matters, what a damp is it to him ? Nay, is not that true which one saith, that ‘ The people of God generally lose more by worldly men, (that are of a blameless conversation before men,) than by wicked and profane men ? ’ How oft hath communion with carnal men been at least an occasion of deadening your soul, whilst you have omitted the duties of admonition and reproof, when there was a call thereto ? You hold the wolf by the ear, whilst among them : If you reprove them, you get a blot ; if not, you wound your own soul. I will acquaint you with an observation of mine : When I have seen a Christian fall into an intimacy with vain company, I have counted it a sure mark of a backsliding heart.

How few consider, how they harden wicked men, by an

intimacy with them ; whereas withdrawment from them might be a means to make them ashamed ? Whilst we are cheerful with them, we make them believe their condition is not deplorable, their danger is not great ; whereas, if we shunned them, as we would a bowed wall, whilst they remain enemies to the LORD, this might do them good, for the startling of them, and rousing them out of their unhappy security, and strong delusions.

Secondly, May not neglect of discharging the duties owed to wicked men, whilst in their company, be also justly charged upon us ? It is an iron age, and men's hearts are strangely hardened, as to any pity to the multitudes who are in a natural and damnable condition. Methinks you should reflect on the misery of an unconverted state, whilst you yourselves were so lately in it.

Are not you convinced, that those with whom you converse daily, have immortal souls, capable of eternal life or misery ? Have not they the same common nature with you ? Are there not many civil bonds, wherein you stand related to them ? Doth not their misery call aloud for your compassion ? Are they not "in the gall of bitterness, and bonds of iniquity ?" Have they yet any part or fellowship in the pardon of their sins ? The endeavouring to heal the backslidings of Christians, though a very necessary work, is not more necessary than to endeavour to open the eyes of these poor blind wretches, and "to turn them from the power of SATAN unto GOD." Would you not make more haste to cure a man, that is taken with a swooning fit, than one that hath a little swelling in his finger ? I wonder you are no more affected with the miseries that attend your unregenerate friends and acquaintance, who must suddenly be converted, or damned. Methinks you should pity them the more, because they pity not themselves. Methinks the value that CHRIST hath put upon souls, by bleeding for them, the ransom that he hath given for miserable man, and the unwearied pains he takes for the reducement of fallen man, should teach us to open our lips, to give some counsels to them who are within a

step of hell. And yet how are GOD's people straitened towards these forlorn and miserable, undone, condemned creatures ! Though they are under the curse of the Law, though the sentence of death be passed against them, and is ready to be executed every moment, yet you exhort them not to "fly from the wrath to come." If they will perish they may perish, for any help you afford them.

It grieves me to see how GOD's people eat up their own and other's time, with unprofitable words ! When they should be speaking some rousing, startling words of hell and damnation ; of the necessity of regeneration ; of eternity ; of the foolish choice men make in preferring "the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season," before eternal joys ; of the deceits of the heart, of the cheats of the Devil, of the malignity of sin, of the curse of the Law, they are talking of this fashion, or that ; they are perhaps censuring one another, but endeavouring nothing for the undeceiving their deluded companions. You cannot but know what advantages you have by your intimacies with them, to deliver that to them, which they will receive from you, when SATAN perhaps hath imbittered them against your Ministers. Besides, you are in private with them, and you know by yourselves, how backward you were to apply the truths of GOD to your own souls ; but you, as NATHAN to DAVID, may go and say, "Thou art the man." You may hear their pleas for themselves, and so have an opportunity to confute them : And yet, how do you neglect all these opportunities of serving the necessities of your friends. You pretend love unto them : but how can ye see the blind before your eyes, tumbling into the lake of hell, and yet not call them to return and live ? Can you have the Divine nature within you, and yet be void of compassions to these miserable objects, who lie wounded before you, wherever you go or come ? Methinks, when you enter the house of an unregenerate man, you should thus meditate ; 'Now have I an opportunity to save a soul from hell, to make a greater conquest than CÆSAR or ALEXANDER could boast of : Now

may I show myself a friend of God, by pleading his right to the creature : Now may I have an occasion to make all the angels of heaven sing, by saving a lost soul.'

Will you see these wounded in your way, and pass them by with an unmerciful spirit? If you see your brother have need of outward things, (much more of grace, of peace with God,) "and shut up your bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in you?" You have some pity left, when you see a man fallen under his horse, or struggling for life upon the waters, or in a house on fire : But, alas ! here are they that are dropping into the lake of fire every moment ; that are dragged up and down, from one lust to another, by the Devil ; and yet you do not pity them. O go "over to Macedonia, and help them !" It is a grief to my soul, to consider how dull, how useless Christians are, in the towns and villages where Providence hath cast them. If they meet with a man, they will not so much as ask, whether he be bound for heaven or hell? whether he knows the necessity of the New Birth, or no? Whether he hath forsaken sin, as his greatest burden? Whether he be willing to accept of CHRIST, and salvation by him, upon his own terms? Nay, we will not so much as counsel them to read a good book, or lend them one, if he be poor and unable to buy. We will be at no cost to save a soul, that is really of more worth than a world.

How is it, that you account yourselves Christians, whilst you have no higher esteem of souls? Or, how can you have any assurance that you hate sin, whilst you labour not to remove it in whomsoever you find it? If you see men trifling away their time, why do you not put them upon redeeming their time? If you find them lovers of pleasures, why do you not invite them and press them to look after the true pleasures, that are at God's right hand? If you are the subjects of CHRIST, how can you endure treason against him, and not suppress it? I will never believe, that man ever mourned for his own sins, that doth not mourn for the sins of others ; or, that he ever hated sin in himself, that doth not endeavour to destroy it in others' souls, as well

as in his own. Be ashamed at your pretensions to have hearts of flesh, when you have hearts of stones ; the hearts of tigers, the hearts of infidels ; or else you would pity miserable unconverted souls. And what, if they desire not your help ? The more need you have to pity them. The less awakened they are out of their cursed security, the more miserable and dangerous is their state. O put on the bowels of JESUS CHRIST ! Carry not yourselves in a high, proud way ; in a lofty, magisterial way, towards these poor souls. Do not think thou hast discharged thy duty towards them, by running into a corner, and back-biting them for blindness, hardness, and contempt of CHRIST ; but rather help them to some of your eye-salve, that they may see. Consider, you have talents, and account you must for them ; and bethink yourselves, whether you may not give a better account, by endeavouring to reduce these poor souls, that are straying to hell, than by letting them alone to damn themselves. Consider sadly, what answer you will make, when CHRIST shall arise and plead with you ; when CHRIST shall say, “ Where is thy brother ? ” Will CAIN’s answer serve, “ Am I my brother’s keeper ? ” Will not CHRIST reply on you, “ Did not I come from heaven on purpose to redeem these perishing souls ? Did not I charge you to exhort one another daily ; to do good to all ? Did not I furnish you with wisdom and experience, that you might be able and ready to help others ? Did not I by wonders of providence prolong your days, that you might be useful ? Did not I give you an interest in the affections of your neighbours, that you might be as the dew, and as the rivers of waters to the parched ground ; that you might be the light and salt of the earth ? And is this your answering all my designs and expectations, to rail at the ungodly, and not endeavour to make them better ? ”

O consider how sad your case will be, if the blood of thousands of souls shall be laid at your doors. How do you know, but a few words of yours might have been as forcible as JONAH’s to Nineveh ? Is this to “ love thy

neighbour as thyself?" Dost thou love thyself, and not regard thy soul? And canst thou love thy neighbour, and not endeavour to save him from perishing; to pull the brand out of the fire? Have you so learned CHRIST? When our LORD dwelt among us, was he dumb before sinners as you are? When he saw the multitude wanting bread, did not he deal forth the bread of life to them? Did not he prefer this work before his meat and drink? Had not He compassion upon the ignorant; did not He enlighten poor ignorant souls, and reprove others? When he went into the publicans' houses, did not he preach of the kingdom of God unto them? And hath not he given you an example, that you should do as he hath done? Should not you make it a matter of conscience to write after so great, so safe, so glorious a copy? And withal, what stumbling-blocks you have laid in the ways of sinners! How many have been offended by our conversation? And will you send so many to hell, and not endeavour the conversion of some? You pretend the want of parts; but, alas! you want bowels, you want affections, you have not a real sight, and deep sense, of eternal matters. If you had, you would, with tears in your eyes, beseech your neighbours to mind their perishing souls.

Have not you cause enough to say to your neighbours, Repent and pray, if perhaps your sins may be forgiven. Go into thy closet, and there mourn over thy hard-heartedness, and unmercifulness to the souls of thousands, of whom thou mightest have been an instrument of conversion. O could you not have gone and besought your Ministers to lay to heart the perishing state of such a man or woman! Or might you not have entreated those souls to consult some Minister about their everlasting state? You have not done what you could. You pretend you cannot convert them; but you will not try whether you can bring them over from sin to God. You say they are dead in sins and trespasses, they have hearts of stone, as insensible as stones, as stupid, as impenetrable as stones: And wast not thou so some years ago? Hast thou forgotten

“the rock out of which thou wast hewn ? ” Nay, is there not still too much stone in thy heart, that thou canst see God so dishonoured, CHRIST so reproached by those who are baptized in his name, and yet not endeavour to pull them out of the fire ? Thou comfortest thyself with the mercy thou showest to the bodies of the poor that beg at thy door : These things thou oughtest to do ; but not to lay aside the spiritual alms that were due unto them. Thou shouldest have counselled them, admonished them, enlightened them ; and now if they perish in their ignorance, will not their blood be required at thy hands ? O tremble at your blood guiltiness ! The LORD of heaven and earth, who says, “All souls are mine,” hath charged thee, “not to hate thy brother in thine heart, not to suffer sin to rest upon him, but to reprove him : ” And yet thou lettest him alone, to perish in his iniquity !

You are so taken up with yourself, that you little regard what becomes of others to all eternity. O that you would be prevailed with, to help, counsel, and direct others to heaven ! If you have found the way thither, show others the way to life, the way to glory. O pity them, as CHRIST pitied you ! CHRIST hath led you out of the wilderness of sin and trouble : Be thou eyes to the blind ; direct them the right way to the “land of promise ; ” tell them what course you took ; declare unto them what God hath done for your souls. Do not you see how industrious CHRIST’S enemies are to diffuse their poison ? Do not Turks and Papists endeavour to proselyte ? Will they not compass sea and land to spread their leaven ? Do not all people, besides you, labour to win to their gods ? Do not unclean persons and drunkards entice others to the same wickedness ? Shall SATAN’S vassals be filling hell, and will you not labour to fill heaven ? Is it not your honour to bring many sons and daughters unto God ? What will become of the next generation ? How few servants, if any, will CHRIST have, if others take no more pains than you do ! I fear CHRIST will take up the old complaint, “The foxes have holes, and the birds have nests, but the SON of

Man will not have where to lay his head." How hath a dumb devil possessed you! O that yet you would commune with your own hearts, whether you are willing that thousands should go to hell? And if they answer, No; ask them a second question, Why do not you use the means to prevent it: namely, exhortation, reproof, and counsel? You have covered over your want of zeal and tenderness, with the pretence that you have not the gifts of Ministers. But have not you been told, that God can work by small means as well as by great; and that by things that are not, God can bring to nought the things that are? Is not this like the pretence of not being eloquent? Do you not know, have you not heard, that the event depends on the blessing of the LORD, rather than the work itself? Cannot God bless a few words in thy mouth, as he did in CHRIST's, and the Apostle's? Canst not thou say, Follow CHRIST? And may not presently a MATTHEW, a publican, leave his sinful courses? Canst thou not say, "Repent and believe, that your sins may be blotted out?" And may not God concur with thee, as he did of old times? "Is the LORD's hand shortened, that it cannot help? And if Israel be not gathered, yet thy reward is with the LORD;" if thine heart were upright, and could testify that night and day thou hast not ceased to warn, to rebuke, and counsel. Certainly your memories are not so bad, but you must remember the weight of sin, and of the wrath of God. You have seen the wonders of the LORD in the deeps. You that have escaped to the shore, can tell of the rocks and shelves, and storms, which you have been delivered from: and will you let others shipwreck their souls, rather than hold out your light unto them? What shall I say to humble you? There is more charity in hell, than you can afford. Blush, blush, and be ashamed to have less zeal, love, and pity to perishing souls, than DIVES in hell had! He would have had his brethren saved from the valley of Hinnom.

Your silence will make others think that sin is not so evil and bitter a thing: that to lie under God's wrath,

is not so great a misery ; whilst you are slow and backward to warn your friends and acquaintance that they flee from these, and take sanctuary in the true city of refuge, the LORD JESUS CHRIST. O if you know the worth of a soul ; pity the multitude, with whom the day is not broken, whose forlorn souls are under a continual massacre, from the bloody butcher of hell ! Besmear your souls no longer with the guilt of their blood. I shall bless God for ever and ever, if this your negligence of the souls of those who are without, may be cordially bewailed, and you for the future double your diligence for their conversion. Though SATAN, and thy own lazy heart hath told thee, thou art unfit to set upon this work, yet better do it meanly, than wholly omit it. What God did by illiterate fishermen, by PRISCILLA, he can do by thee. The LORD pardon thy former unmercifulness to the souls of men. But if thou continue careless and cruel, if thou wilt not by prayers for them, and counsels to them, seek their reducement, as sure as thou art reading, “the voice of thy brother’s blood is crying against thee from the earth.”

By your example before, if not since, you believed, you have been the cause of the destruction of souls : of how many who can tell ? And, as “JEROBOAM made Israel to sin,” many years after he was in his grave ; so your sin, your wicked examples, may propagate sin from generation to generation, until CHRIST shall come to judgment. Tremble, tremble at the thoughts of it ; if thou hast not the heart of a beast in thee ! O how many souls are crying in hell against thee, cursing the day they knew thee, for that by thee they learned to sin the more, and were strengthened in their wickedness ? And now, are not you bound to do your utmost to make restitution ? To labour to save them that are alive ? Is it not reasonable that you should labour to win souls to God’s, as you have to the Devil’s service ? And to have many blessing God in heaven for you, that ever they were in the company of such an active, zealous Christian, who by his word and life was instrumental to bring them to the

knowledge of themselves, and of their God. And is it not a glorious work, to hold forth such light to the world, that they seeing your good works, may glorify God, and you may be propagators of zeal and holiness, from generation to generation, until CHRIST shall appear to judge the world, and to reward you for all the services you have done to his name? O how welcome shall that man be to CHRIST, who hath fed, and clothed, and visited them which he hath purchased with his own precious blood! CHRIST will own thee for his own benefactor.



CHAPTER XXXVI.

What Use the Professors of Religion should make of this Gospel-Glass.

AND now to all thy former sins, do not add this great abomination, that, having had the glass of the word, faithfully revealing many of thy sins to thee, thou shouldest go away and straight forget what manner of man thou hast been. Let not SATAN tempt thee to quarrel with the enterprise; for that the glass is not broad enough to show thee all thy stains and deformities: Know here are enough presented to thy view, to lay thee low enough in hell without repentance. Perhaps also thy corrupt reason may suggest that thou canst plead for one or two particulars, or bring it under debate, whether they are stains or not: Yet know, here are spots, unquestionable spots, discovered, and such as are not the spots of God's children. But wouldest thou improve this, or any other such glass for the good of thy soul? Let God's honour, and thy precious soul's everlasting welfare persuade thee to receive in meekness and love the following counsels.

1. Reflect on all the particulars, that thou mayest see what are thine iniquities. Do not behold only, and so

go away. Be not contented with slight apprehensions ; but muse, that the fire may burn. Consider how oft in the bill of attainder, thy conscience tells thee thou art guilty. O ponder these things in thine heart ! Recoil upon thyself : Let the LORD hear thee crying out, What have I done ! How have I provoked the LORD ! By meditation retain the memory of thy sins, with all their aggravations, as much as thou canst. Set past sins in present view, and possess the sins of thy youth, as if they were just now committed. Now track the abominations of your lives. Charge this duty upon thine own soul, as that which must be done, as thou wilt answer it at thy peril before God and his angels. Perhaps hitherto you have forgotten your corrupt lives, and hearts, as you have your natural faces forthwith ; but let it be so no more, for CHRIST'S sake ! Consider not only how many of these sins you have been guilty of ; but how frequently, and for how many days, or years, thou hast lived in some of these abominations, in the same sin ; though perhaps thou knewest it to be a sin, and hast prayed and resolved against it. And because the particulars may seem little sins ; (though in truth there is no little sin, because there is no little God, and sins have their aggravation from the person who is affronted ;) yet because it is with sin as it is with stones, you may carry this stone and that stone without trouble ; but when many little stones are heaped together, they become weighty and heavy to bear : Therefore, I advise, that by serious meditation, you sum them up jointly, until your hearts be broken, and you take up the language of the Prophet : " My sins are passed over my head, they are become too heavy for me to bear." Reflect not only on thy pride, and carelessness, and other particular miscarriages ; but put all into one main sum, that it may humble thy heart.

2. Away now, and present thyself before the great and holy God, whom thou hast provoked by these, by all these great abominations, and upon thy knees give glory to him by confessing to him as many of thy sins as thou canst

remember, with all their aggravating circumstances. It is the same advice, that JOSHUA gave to ACHAN; tell God what thou hast done, add what thou hast left undone, hide it not from him: confess to God all thy low and unworthy thoughts of him, all thy enmity against him, his laws, and people. Go and confess what envy, what malice, what rancour, hath lain in thy heart against thy neighbour. Confess to the Lord how oft thou hast spoke evil of dignities, of the favourites of heaven, of the sons and daughters of the Most High. Many times thou hast boasted with the Pharisee what sins thou hast not been guilty of; now confess what thou hast been guilty of. I know thou art loath to bring it forth; thou thinkest it will be a shame to thee; but let me tell thee, it is a shame that thou art guilty of so much sin; but it is no shame to acknowledge it. Only in your confessions take this advice: Set your sins in order: enumerate the several sins you have been guilty of; and though every thought and act of sin is not possible to be cited; yet give diligence to find out as many as thou canst, and spread them before the Lord.

Bring forth especially, that sin, or sins, which are thy special sins, whereby thou hast most provoked God. DAVID gave a touch at all his sins in the beginning of his penitential psalm: but his adultery and blood-guiltiness lay most upon him; and he is never at ease till he hath confessed them.

Be sure then, that upon a review of this, or any better catalogue, thou cry unto thy heart, as SAMUEL to JESSE, "Are here all thy children?" Are here all thy sins? He that doth not confess a sin, hath a mind to commit that sin again. But certainly it is extreme folly to impose upon God; for he knows every thought of thy heart, yea, he knows thy thoughts before thou knowest them. He knew what Israel would have in the wilderness. I meet with many who will confess such sins as are most in fashion, viz., their dulness under ordinances, their formality, their vain thoughts in duty; but when did you hear them con-

fessing their envy at the gifts, graces, and privileges of their brethren ?

Bring forth the aggravating circumstances, and lay them before the LORD. Some confess sin, but their confessions are accompanied with strange excuses and extenuations : *viz.*, it was done through the instigation of the Devil ; it was done inconsiderately. Such are not for shaming themselves before the LORD ; but like lawyers, plead as well as they can for a bad cause. Avoid all extenuating confessions : lay not thy own sins upon the Devil, lest thy account swell even for wronging SATAN, when indeed thou wast enticed and drawn aside by thy own lust. Beware of this folly : for know, that extenuating sin aggravates it before the LORD.

Let thy confession be ingenuous and free. Sometimes conscience, like an over-charged stomach, doth so over press men, that they cannot hold, but must out with their uncleanness. Thus it is especially when the horrors of death have compassed them round. This confession of sin proceeds not from a hatred of sin, but from fear of punishment. They hope if they confess sin, any way, they shall obtain mercy, and this makes many throw up what otherwise they would hide for ever. I know what you will do upon perusing this sad catalogue, if GOD do not sanctify the book unto you : You will confess sin, but not your own : You will fall a censuring the person or party you do not love ; crying out, how guilty are such and such before the LORD ? How is GOD dishonoured by them ? How doth religion suffer by them ? Yea, but how much hath GOD's name suffered by thy lightness, pride, sensuality, backsliding ! O run with tears, and confess all thine own sins before GOD ! GOD requires it : " Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy GOD ;" and GOD tells you it is a means of obtaining remission : " If ye confess your sins, he is faithful and just to forgive." If you had rather be damned than be shamed, thou lovest thy name better than thy soul.

The **LORD** be merciful to thee, or else thou wilt lose both, when **CHRIST** shall come to judge the earth; for then whatsoever is hid shall be published.

Let your confession be frequent, yea, constant, at least till **GOD** hath done away thy sin. It may be, you may fear your heart is so hard, that you shall but sin by a formal, dull confession, or enumeration of your sins; but yet do it as well as thou canst, and if thy heart be hard, go, and complain of it to **GOD**, and beg of him to take away the heart of stone: Let the sight of this hardness drive thee the sooner and the oftener to the throne of grace; and there lie before the **LORD**, till he cleave the rock, that the waters gush out.

3. Labour to get your' hearts broken for all your rebellions against **GOD**, for all the impurities of your hearts and lives. **GOD** hath been exceedingly dishonoured by falsehood, breaking of vows, backbiting, murmuring, neglect of his worship. Should we then make mirth? Have not we great cause, even more cause than ever people had, to tremble, not only at the dreadful judgments of **GOD** that hang over our heads, but the hellish impieties that swarm in our hearts? View not only this imperfect catalogue, but look from *Genesis* to the *Revelation*, and whatever filthiness was found in men or kingdoms, may be found upon our skirts. And shall not we refuse to be comforted? Shall not we lie prostrate before **GOD**, and weep till we can weep no more? Tremble, O my heart, under all these provocations: and let your hearts be as the leaves of a tree that is shaken by the whirlwind. What so many hellish lusts to swarm in thy heart! What, guilty of so many iniquities against the **GOD** of heaven; and yet art thou secure, light, and vain? If I did not know what a stone I have within, I should wonder all the day long how it is possible we can stand under so much guilt, without shrieks, cries, and lamentations. I should wonder how you eat, and drink, and sleep; how you can laugh or sing, whilst **GOD** is so provoked. Can I think that man lives, who is not moved by the weight of a mountain on his back? Thou hast that

which is heavier than mountains of lead upon thy soul ; and yet thou hardly feelest it. Thou dost not groan under that which drew not only tears of water, but of blood, from the eyes and veins of JESUS CHRIST. I wonder how you can call GOD, Father, or CHRIST, Redeemer, whilst you have so little love to him, and whilst you were never pricked at the heart, for all the injuries that you and others have done him. Whom you love you are troubled for, if he be injured, by yourselves or others : But where is your trouble for your own or other men's sins ?

How can you trade with so much guilt upon you ? You have had your pleas for your covetousness, and inordinate affections to the world, that GOD bids you provide for your own : But what thinkest thou of thy soul ? Is that no part of your own ? O provide for thy soul ! Thy soul cannot be safe whilst stained with so many impurities, which were never mourned over to this day. O let sorrow enter into the very inwards of thy heart ; and let the insupportable pressures of sin, sink thy very soul ! Mourn as the tender mother for her only son. Be in bitterness, so as thou canst not relish those things which thou hast hitherto followed with so much eagerness. Let the loathsomeness of thy sins be continually before thine eyes : So it was with repenting DAVID : " My sin is ever before me." In order to the promoting of this godly sorrow, I importune thee, with the highest fervency I can, that thou separate some extraordinary time to humble thyself, by fasting and prayer, that GOD would give thee repentance, for thine own and other men's sins : perhaps to this day thou hast never observed one in order to the getting of a broken heart. O that I could now prevail with thee, for this is the means that GOD hath blessed again and again : on such days, GOD hath softened many a heart, and cast out the devil of security and hardness, which could not be cast out in ordinary times of waiting upon GOD. Let thy main request on that day be for a deep consideration of all thy sins, with their several aggravations, and a deep humiliation for them. I beseech you, if you have any love to

CHRIST, to the credit of religion, to your perishing souls, break through all business and impediments, and retire, and fall down at the footstool of **GOD**, more solemnly than ever you did. If you are, by the consideration of your provocations, humbled in the dust, be sure to keep conscience tender; let not your convictions die; strike again and again; "smite on the thigh," again and again, whilst the iron is hot: This fire may be kept alive, by bringing new fuel to it. Labour exquisitely to afflict your souls, that you should be so foolish, so vile, as under **CHRIST**'s livery to commit so great abominations. Take words and say, 'O the light that I have abused! O the means of grace that I have slighted! O the little service that I have done to **CHRIST**! O the many disservices!' Let these things cut and afflict, and humble thy soul exceedingly from morning to evening, and from evening to morning, till **GOD** be pacified towards thee. Beware lest the motions of a lazy heart, cause thee to desist sooner. A patient that hath had a long disease, must continue in the use of the prescriptions, till it is thoroughly cured.

4. Let your sorrow be accompanied with detestation. See all your sins; and loathe them and yourselves too. How much sin have we confessed, which yet we have secretly hugged in our hearts! Labour to have your hearts rise against your pride, hypocrisy, anger. Hate sin, not only for hell, but as hell; yea, hate yourselves for your sins; yea, hate yourselves, that you can hate your sins no more. O that my hatred of my lusts might be greater than ever my love was unto them! Labour for such sorrow as **DAVID** had, when he was wounded in his heart for sin. Though **NATHAN** told him his sin was forgiven; yet he continued his sorrow for his great transgressions. Labour, I beseech you, for tears of hatred and indignation; be greatly displeased with yourselves, because you have so foolishly and wretchedly dishonoured **GOD**, and ventured your eternal undoing. And if yet thine eyes be not like the fishponds of Heshbon for thy sins, take words, and lament before **GOD** thine hardness of heart, that thou shouldest so

grievously offend and provoke so good, so gracious a God, and that notwithstanding thine heart should remain unbroken.

5. Let there be added hearty cries to God, for pardon of all these and all other abominations. Who forgives him that scorns to sue for remission? Here is your work, in this day. The Devil and a false heart will put you upon other work; but this is your present work. O do not leave the work that God sets you about! I know it is your duty to provide for the bodies of your children; but consider the danger of thy soul, and give the Lord no rest till he hath blotted out all thy sin, and thou art assured that he will remember it no more. Comfort not thyself with the free grace and mercy of God, whilst thou neglectest to cry to God for grace and mercy. "He will be sought unto by the house of Israel." Prize thy condition, that thou art alive to pray: (thou mightest have been in hell, there to howl for ever and ever.) "Seek the Lord while he may be found." Seek in time, before it be too late. And if thou doubttest whether thou hast an interest in Christ and the promises, because of thy transgressions; yet, remember the gracious words that fell once from the mouth of Christ to the Samaritan: "If thou knewest the gift of God, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Though thou art unworthy of children's bread, and hast deserved to be cast forth among the dogs; yet thou hast to do with a bountiful and merciful Lord; and, therefore, be not cast down, so as to be discouraged from waiting on the Lord. Rather say, 'Lord, I am unworthy to be the object of thy mercy, unworthy to live; because thou didst call, and I did not hear, therefore, if I call, thou mayest justly turn me off in thy fury: thou mightest answer me by terrible things in thy righteousness. But deal not with me according to my deservings. O make me the great instance of the power of thy grace! Let thy mercy in pardoning be great, exceeding great, O God!'

Do not delay the suing out thy pardon. Away quickly

to the throne of grace. There is danger in delays, lest your sense of sin and sorrow for it vanish and decay. Blow up the sparks of grace, lest they go out and die again. Take the first advantages of the grace of God. Hast thou an inclination to humble thyself, to pray, to seek God's face? Improve it quickly, lest the wrath of God break forth upon thee. Do not you know that you have lost the sense of the love of God? But have you also lost all sense of God's wrath? Do not you wonder you escape? That you are yet alive? That you are not free among the dead? Will you, dare you, go on in your hardness of heart? Will you "treasure up wrath against the day of wrath?" O God forbid! Lay by the world, thy false friend, thy treacherous JOAB, that hath smitten to the earth with its kisses, and its smiles! Here is a business on which thy life, the life of thy precious soul, depends. "Prepare to meet thy God!" Wrath is gone out from the LORD: howl, weep, cry; it may be you shall be hid in the day of the LORD's wrath; it may be, your sins shall be forgiven. Though the law be a looking-glass, to show you your spots; yet it cannot cleanse you: It is the Gospel alone that pardons. Away, ye wandering sheep, to the great Shepherd of your souls. Great he is in love to his flock. He hath laid down his life for you; he hath purchased you with his own blood. NATHAN'S parable of the ewe-lamb is most true of CHRIST and his beloved flock: he hath nourished you up, and he is willing to lay you in his bosom. View your great Surety this day. He came under an arrest for you: he hath discharged the debt of all that come by faith to him. "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." If there be "repentance towards God," let there be "faith towards the LORD JESUS CHRIST." If he hath given you the forerunner, you have his pledge that he will forgive you. Do not say, GOD heareth not sinners, whilst there is "a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness." All thy sins cannot shut it, because it is opened to wash away sin.

6. Add to supplication, resolution. How can you pardon your own child, that will not promise to do so no more? Let it be the purpose of your heart to neglect meditation no more, to keep up bitterness among Christians no more. Enter into an holy vow against your sins. Be a thorough Protestant; protest against the world, the flesh, and the Devil! It will be thus if your hearts be thoroughly humbled for your sins, and truly inflamed against them. O say, What have I to do with idols any more? O that you were resolute! Come life, come death, come heaven, come hell; yet I will change my course: I will not (through God's grace helping me) do as I have done; omit, as I have omitted. If you are not very peremptory to resist SATAN and sin, not to yield unto temptation, you encourage the enemy to tempt you. That woman is in danger of new solicitations to uncleanness, who doth not resolutely bid defiance to the first temptation. Perhaps you wonder, that after so many prayers, your sin still prevails: 'But know,' saith one, 'sin will be your conqueror, if you be not resolved to be its enemy.' Till resolution against all sin be wrought in you, God will hate all your prayers for the pardon of your sins. He hath a forehead of brass, that dares go in before God; and say, 'O LORD, I beseech thee to pardon my worldliness, and earthly-mindedness; for I am not yet resolved to be heavenly-minded. O LORD, pardon my envy, and I trust thou wilt do it; for I am yet unresolved to part from it. Pardon my rebellions; for I am not yet resolved whether I shall cease to be a rebel.' Believe it, whilst you do not resolve to hate sin, it is a clear sign you have not a spiritual knowledge of its evil. Did you in the light of the Spirit see sin in its nature, and in its bitter effects; did you see it as utterly inconsistent with all real happiness, and as the unavoidable precipice into eternal damnation, this would make you hate sin, and be irreconcilable to it.

But here I must give this caution, that you raise not your resolutions on your own strength. When you bind yourself by a vow against such a sin, take CHRIST into

the bond to be surety for you, to give you help and strength to perform in the hour of temptation. And then make haste, friends : your sands run fast, and no stop is put to them. You may not expect that the shadow will go backward ten degrees : it may rather go forward. You may hardly have one hour's warning before you must remove hence. How suddenly hath God cut down the cedars and the thistles amongst us ! O in that day it will be as scalding lead to thee, that death and judgment surprised thee, when thou hadst not so much as resolved to leave thy rebellions against thy God.

7. See what becomes of your resolutions : how they are made good. Thou hast purposed not to offend : yea, covenanted with thy God for better obedience ; yea, thou hast sworn to keep his righteous judgments. But hast thou dealt uprightly with thy God ? Be not satisfied with purposes and resolutions ; but look to the performance. Blessed are ye of God, if all the sins you have been convinced of, and have engaged against, be now put away : If there be no more pride, covetousness, contention, self-seeking, returning with seven worse devils upon you. I pray God we may see some real and permanent effect of all your confessions, sorrows, and resolves. How would it rejoice my soul, to see an effectual alteration in your faces, and lives, and conversations ! How shall I bless God for ever, if by seeing your faces in this imperfect glass, you be transformed into new obedience ! Among all the sights in the world, none is sadder than to see multitudes, that had their faces Zionwards, now facing about to the vanities of the Gentiles. O how glorious, how desirable a sight will it be, to see these returning with weeping and supplication !

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Motives to make such Use thereof.

AND now to hasten to a conclusion. O that it would please GOD to make my words as a hammer, to break the rocks! O that somewhat may be hinted, that may, through the blessing of GOD, break your hearts for and from sin! That may promote your repentance, for your own, and other men's sins! And, indeed, unless your hearts be broken for sin, they will never be broken from sin: but the more bitterness of spirit you are in for sin, the more probability there is you will not return to it. That is certain, either a man's sin will make an end of his mourning, or his mourning will make an end of his sin. Yea, if your hearts be not broken for other men's sins, they are not kindly broken for your own sins. The truth is, the sins of others become thine if thou knowest them, and mournest not for them. Consider, therefore, by the help of this glass, their sins, as well as thine own, to help on thy brokenness of heart, for and from sin. Behold, with DAVID, the transgressors, and be grieved; because they keep not GOD's word. How can you evidence, that you are translated from death to life, because you love the brethren, whilst you are not troubled to see them wounding and damning their souls? You are grieved to see any friends of yours in danger by sword, by sickness, by fire; but the souls of your friends are in the greatest danger, yet you lament not the sight of these deplorable spectacles. But to lay before you some considerations, that may, set home by the SPIRIT, draw water out of the flint:—

1. Should not your hearts be broken for and from your sins, seeing so long as you are impenitent, all you do and suffer for GOD is abominable in his sight? Hardness of heart is like a leprosy, that makes all to shun a man. If you had such a disease that all would abhor you, would it not humble you to the very dust? Your impenitency

makes you neither fit company for God, nor his people. You are loathsome in the sight of both, whilst you are under so much guilt, and yet insensible of it. A tender, broken-hearted Christian, is lovely in God's, and his people's eyes ; but how ugly a sight is it, to see a daring, bold, insensible sinner, persisting in a course of sin, without repentance ? “ If the wicked turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes ; in his righteousness that he hath done shall he live. But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live ? All his righteousness that he hath done, shall not be mentioned.” And is it nothing to you to lose the things you have wrought ? Is it nothing to suffer, and to suffer so many things in vain ?

2. Should not your hearts be broken for and from your sins, seeing so long as you are impenitent, God doth not only loath your services, but he cannot take any delight in your persons ; yea, you cannot be restored to his love and favour ? Without repentance there is no remission : “ Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.” What ! have you no mind to be forgiven ? Have you no will to be at peace with God, and to be restored to his love and favour ? Are you content that all these, and innumerable sins more, should be charged upon your account ? O then, beg of God to break your hearts for and from your sins ! A broken vessel, a broken heart, will hold best the oil of mercy. “ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit : A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”

Lastly, Should not your hearts be broken for and from your sins, even by what may be seen in this glass ; seeing now God gives you not only time to repent, but an opportunity of repentance, and such a one, as, if you neglect it, you may never have the like again ? Now, time and means meet together to effect your repentance. If this opportunity be lost, you may never have another : and if you

should never have any other, your case is desperate. Opportunities cannot be prayed or wept back again. In God's opportunity it is an easy thing to repent; but if this opportunity should be lost by you, it may be impossible for you to repent; God may justly give you up to judicial impenitency. It may be, God doth now by this treatise speak home unto thy soul; now, it may be, God warms thy heart; now, it may be, God works in thee good thoughts and desires; now is thy day of grace: But if thou let this day pass, thou mayest desire to have one of the drops of that blood that hath been offered to thee, and yet never have it; thou mayest desire to feel one drop of his SPIRIT, that hath knocked at thy heart, and yet go without it; thou mayest entreat for one dram of that mercy that hath been offered, and thou hast rejected; but it shall never be granted to thee: God may pass that fearful sentence upon thee; "Now, henceforth never grow fruit more on thee;" never repentance come into thine heart more. If now thou wilt not repent and be converted, the LORD may set it down in his decree, that from this day forward thou mayest never get victory over thy sins; thou mayest ever be mourning for thy corruptions, but never mourn aright for them; thou mayest blunder about repentance, but never do the work. "You shall not mourn, nor weep; but you shall pine away in your iniquities." There is many a soul, for contemning God, and not taking repentance while he may have it, upon whom this plague of God is come, That they are ever repenting, but never able to repent; ever poring upon their sins, but never able to come out of them: they pray and pray against them, but their prayers moulder away under them; for they shall pine away for their transgressions. What is the reason? Why, "because I would have purged thee, and thou wast not purged; thou shalt not be purged any more." May not God say to thee thus, "Because I have given thee line upon line, precept upon precept, call upon call, not only outward but inward calls; ordinance upon ordinance, providence upon providence; book upon book, motion upon motion: be-

cause I have used all means, fair means and foul means ; I have plainly showed thee thy sins, by my word and rod, and by this glass ; I have awakened thy conscience, and stirred up good desires in thee ; “ because I would have cleansed thee, and thou wast not cleansed,—thou shalt never be cleansed.” Is not this a fearful sentence ? Alas ! thy heart is very hard, and thy conscience very much seared, if the reading hereof doth not make thee quake and tremble. What shall I say ? “ Now is the axe laid to the root of the tree.” Thine opportunity is now : If thou pass by this now, thou art gone, for aught I can tell, for ever. O neglect not this present now, lest thou be cut off for ever ! Thou art in danger of being presently cut down, if thou dost not presently repent. “ Every tree which bringeth not forth [at the present] good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.” I shall conclude with the words of the Apostle : “ The earth, which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, received blessing from God : But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.” But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, such a repentance as cannot be separated from salvation, though we thus speak : Yea, therefore we thus write.

END OF VOL. XIX.

