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THE

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OF

**Practical Divinity**

WHICH HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE ENGLISH TONGUE.



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LATE FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD.



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A

**DISCOURSE**

CONCERNING

**COMPARATIVE RELIGION;**

OR

THE TRUE AND SOLID GROUNDS

OF

***PURE AND PEACEABLE THEOLOGY:***

A SUBJECT VERY NECESSARY,

THOUGH HITHERTO ALMOST WHOLLY NEGLECTED.



Vol. XIII.

B





THE  
PUBLISHER OF THE TRANSLATION  
TO  
THE READER.

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“THE wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable.” How far the Christian world is at this day from exhibiting these Divine qualities is but too visible. Men have so transformed the Christian Doctrine by their glosses, that it is now hardly to be found among them in its truth and simplicity. The doctrine of JESUS CHRIST, as it is delivered unto us by his Apostles, is not now to be considered as the standard of Christianity, so much as the *Shorter and Larger Catechisms, the Westminster Confession, or the Trent Creed and Canons*; in defence of which, men relinquish and reject the true spirit and essence of Christianity, the Love of GOD and their Neighbours, and frame to themselves such a doctrine as will flatter their corrupt nature, and foster their pride and envy. In some nations, it has been the great idol of differing families and tribes, to keep up

their feuds and enmities among themselves, and to prosecute them to the last extremities in the destruction of one another. Such a bloody and irreeconcilable disposition, though it has been justly esteemed barbarous in them, is yet looked upon to be a gracious and a holy zeal in the several tribes and parties of Christians, every one contending so earnestly, and disputing with such heat and concern, that they may maintain their own sect and set of opinions in opposition to all others. And the generality of the respective spiritual Heads and Guides are so far from doing their duty in restraining these barbarities, that they will not hear of any principles or proposals that may tend this way; but if any thing be offered that may sweeten the minds of men toward one another, they make it their business to treat the proposers as common enemies, and to give such characters, both of them and of their sentiments, as may lead the people to abhor them.

The prejudices which arise from false representations of religion to the true interest thereof, and to the souls of men, are innumerable; and how hurtful they are to societies and commonwealths, the present, as well as former ages, affords a sufficient evidence. The factions in the state can never find fitter tools for carrying on their designs than those of the church; who are ready to sacrifice both the liberties and wealth of their country, with the life of religion itself, to the little interests of their parties: so that we are all concerned, both as we are men, and as we are Christians, in this our day “to know the things that belong to our peace, before they be hid from our eyes.”

The following Discourse was originally intended by the Author, to form in the minds of those youth, whom he

was to train up in theological studies, such just and adequate notions of religion in all its parts, as might raise their concern for those things in it that are absolutely necessary and essential, and preserve them from a blind, ungovernable, and furious zeal for those other things, which are either merely circumstantial, or at least not necessary, nor of the essence thereof, although they are now become the pillar and ground of most, if not all, of the unhappy and unaccountable contentions that are abroad in the Christian World. And a written copy thereof falling into the hands of some persons, for whose judgment the Author has a great esteem, they obtained his permission to make it public: and since some persons have been ready, since the publication thereof, to give ill impressions of it to those who do not know the Latin tongue, it has been thought fit to publish it in English, that such might peruse it with their own, and not with other men's eyes.

That this Discourse may, by the blessing of God, contribute to lead men to the true knowledge and love of God, in CHRIST JESUS, and to mutual peace and charity with one another,

Is the earnest prayer both of the

AUTHOR and PUBLISHER.



A

**DISCOURSE**

CONCERNING

**COMPARATIVE RELIGION.**

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*The Introduction. The Ground of the Distinction of Theology into Absolute and Comparative. Both are described. Inconveniences arising from the Ignorance of Comparative Theology. The Heads of the following Discourse.*

ALTHOUGH all the parts of the Christian Religion do agree in this, that they are revealed and enjoined by God, and also, that they are directed to the glory of God, and the salvation of men, yet they are not all of the same weight and importance; but being weighed in the balance of a sound judgment, some of them are found to be more weighty than others. The Prophets tells us, that Mercy, the Knowledge of God, and Obedience to his commands, are more acceptable to him than Sacrifices and Burnt-offerings; (1 *Sam.* xv. 22, *Hos.* vi. 6;) and our blessed LORD calls "Judgment, Mercy, and Truth," compared with "Tithes of mint, cummin, and anise," the "more weighty things of the law;" *Matt.* xxiii. 23. From this consideration there ariseth a distinction or division of that skill, knowledge, or understanding, which is conversant about Religion, and which is commonly called Theology or Divinity, into Absolute, and Respective or Comparative. Absolute Theology, or that knowledge of religion which I call absolute, considers its object only as revealed

and enjoined or instituted by GOD ; and its business is to find out those things which are proposed to us in the Scriptures to be believed or practised, and to discern and distinguish them from all others. Again, Comparative Theology, or the respective knowledge of religion, ponders the weight or importance, and observes the order, respect and relation, of things belonging to religion, whether they be points of doctrine, or precepts, or sacred rites, and teaches to distinguish between the Accessories of religion and the Principals, the Circumstantials and the Substantials, the Means and their Ends.

2. In a preliminary discourse to our Divinity-Lectures of the last year, speaking of the differences about the Christian Religion, that are in the Christian Church, I touched on this distinction by the bye ; and among the proper remedies of this evil, I mentioned the Doctrine of Comparative Theology. And indeed the oftener I reflect upon this matter, and the more narrowly I consider it, I am the more convinced and confirmed in my opinion of the great usefulness and necessity of this doctrine. Nor do I much question but that you will be easily persuaded to be of my mind, when you shall perceive that the corrupt and dangerous state of the Christian Church at present is, in a great degree, owing to the want of this Comparative Knowledge of Religion, or of a due regard to it. For, that among all sects and parties of Christians true Piety is neglected, and Divine Charity and brotherly Love are waxed cold ; that they are remiss in rooting out the lusts and depraved affections of corrupt nature, when, in the mean time, they lay themselves out with zeal and application for the propagation of some opinions that are either obscure or uncertain, but in no way necessary, and for the suppression of others of the same nature which are not hurtful ; that some religious rites and ceremonies are pertinaciously retained by some Christians, and as obstinately rejected by others ; that they are at peace with vice and vicious persons, while they wage war only with error and erring persons ;—these things are not so much

to be imputed to the want of an Absolute Knowledge of Religion, as of that which is Comparative. No more can this be attributed to their being ignorant of any Christian precept, or of any absolute Divine truth that is of any import to salvation; but it is because the generality of Christians either do not know, or will not consider, how much repentance, self-denial, mortifying of the flesh, charity, and humility, are of more weight than mere orthodoxy, or a sound belief, and sin and vice more hateful than error;—the *essential principles* of religion being excepted, in both cases. Since, then, the use of Comparative Theology is of so large extent, both for ordering the lives and manners of private Christians aright, and for settling the public affairs which concern the peace of the churches within themselves, and their mutual concord with one another; I presume it will be a good office done, and nothing disagreeable to my hearers, if I shall furnish you with a key, by which you may enter into the most remote and intricate recesses of this Theology.

3. I shall comprise what I have to say under three general heads: I. I shall give a rude draught and general idea of this Theology. II. I shall descend to a more particular description of it. And, III. I shall lay down some Conclusions, which naturally flow from this Doctrine.

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## SECT. I.

*Wherein Comparative Theology is handled in a general way. The state wherein Man was created. Man's duty in that state. The reason of the prohibition concerning the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. The Fall of Man occasioned the enlargement of religion. A general idea of this Theology.*

As to the first, it is to be considered, that the *essence* of religion, or of the duty which man owes to God, or



which God requires of man, in whatsoever state, whether that of integrity and innocence, or of restoration after the fall, or of consummate felicity, doth solely consist in the LOVE of GOD, as our Saviour teacheth us, *Matt.* xxii. 37, where he says, that the first and greatest command of the Law is, to “love the LORD our GOD with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength.” For GOD being self-sufficient, and independent of all other beings, did not in the least stand in need of the creatures and their service. But being determined by a most free, unconstrained, and unnecessitated act of his good pleasure, to take his delight with something without himself, he did for that end, after the creation and fall of the Angels, make man in his own image, (that is, of a nature like his own,) with whom he might live in friendship, and have all things in common, by offering himself, with all his glorious and amiable perfections, to be deliciously enjoyed by man, and by receiving from him the grateful return of a reciprocal love and affection. And because man is a creature made up of a soul, a spiritual substance, and of a body, which is material; GOD created this visible and corporeal world,—furnished it with innumerable objects for delighting the outward senses, and recreating those faculties which belong to the soul, as it is united to the body,—and made man lord over it, to this end, that as the soul had GOD, the infinite good, fitted and proportioned to its vast capacity, so the body also might not be without suitable and delightful objects. And to this design of GOD, in the creation of the world, the history thereof doth excellently agree; wherein we read, that this whole visible world was at first created and finished, as a magnificent palace richly provided with all kinds of furniture, and that after this, Man, who was designed to be its lord and master, was made and invested with the dominion of it.

2. For so great favours, so liberally dispensed unto man, GOD required, or rather expected, no other testi-

mony of a grateful mind but LOVE. And that his love might be noble and free, generous and unlimited, not necessitated, forced, or restricted, it was the will of GOD that man should be at his own disposal; and therefore he endued him with a free power of determining the acts and exercises of his faculties to these or to other objects, of adhering to GOD by love, or of departing from him. And provided that he still continued to love GOD, and to place his delight in him alone, nothing was forbidden to him; all things were lawful unto him, and he was master of power most free to dispose of all his faculties, and of the creatures subjected to him, at his pleasure, and that without any offence to GOD. As for the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, concerning which the Scriptures inform us, that GOD charged ADAM not to eat of it; this was not done out of envy, as if GOD had grudged him that pleasant fruit, (as he was slandered by the Devil,) or intended in the least to diminish or infringe the full and free right and power which he had bestowed upon him of using his faculties, and all things under his command, at his pleasure, provided always that he used them without prejudice of the love which he owed to his Maker. But it is not improbable, that GOD by this symbol designed to keep man mindful that he held all the rest, whereof the free use was allowed to him, by right of vassalage, and only with a dependence upon GOD, the Supreme Lord of all, to whom, on that account, he owed the greatest love.

3. After that man had abused the liberty bestowed upon him, by transferring his love from GOD to the creatures, and had thereby violated the law of his creation; and the league of friendship that was contracted with GOD, and had also lost the love of GOD, and with it the blessed presence and company of the Deity, who dwelt in his soul, and filled it with light, and joy, and peace, to which succeeded darkness, anguish, and disquiet;—after, I say, that man had made defection from GOD, and GOD was

determined to restore man, then did the confines of religion begin to be enlarged; and besides the *love of GOD* which was lost, and still holds the principal place among the Divine precepts and duties of religion, several other things were revealed, prescribed, and instituted to be observed by man, as being some of them useful, and others necessary, for recovering the Love of GOD that was lost, and for bringing back man, that was gone astray, into the road of his duty.

4. Out of what hath been already said, this succinct and general idea of the doctrine of *Comparative Theology* doth arise; namely;—In the state of *nature's integrity and innocence*, the *love of GOD* made up the whole of Religion; nor was there any other duty incumbent on man, but “to love the LORD his GOD with all his heart.” Again, in the state of *nature depraved*, and considered as it is to be repaired and renewed, the same *love of GOD* still makes the first, the chief, and the capital part of religion, which alone is desired for itself, and for whose sake all the other things belonging to religion are enjoined: so that the Love of GOD, being compared with the remaining parts of Religion, is the End to which they all refer and lead, as so many Ways and Means.

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## SECT. II.

*Wherein this Theology is more distinctly and particularly explained. A Scheme of the Christian Religion, shewing the weight and importance of all the parts thereof. Two particulars in it worthy of observation.*

FOR a more particular explication of this doctrine of *Comparative Theology*, thus summarily proposed, we are, in the next place, to shew how, and in what order, all the other Precepts and Institutions of Religion do respect *charity* or the *love of GOD*, and serve for kindling up again that heavenly flame in the hearts of men.

2. First then, inasmuch as man had unworthily violated the league of friendship into which GOD had vouchsafed to admit him, and by transferring unto the creatures that love and affection which are due to GOD only, had drawn upon himself GOD's displeasure, and exposed himself unto eternal death; it was impossible that he could be restored unto his former state, without the *mercy* of GOD, pardoning his offence, and allowing him both a competent time, and all such grace and other helps as were necessary, for his recovery to the love and service of GOD.

3. For obtaining this mercy, the *intercession of a Mediator* was necessary; one who might procure this by his *merit* and *favour* with GOD. I shall not make it my business here to enquire into the causes and reasons, why GOD would not be reconciled to fallen man without the intervention of a Mediator. That he would not, is evident from this, because for want of a Mediator the fallen angels were precluded from any access to the grace and favour of GOD. The virtue and efficacy of his incarnation, together with what he did and suffered in the flesh, began to take place immediately after man's fall; whence our blessed Saviour is called, "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," *Rev.* xiii. 8.

4. To this mean of salvation which is placed without us, and hath no dependence upon us; those which answer on our parts are *love and gratitude* to JESUS CHRIST, who became our surety to GOD; and *faith*, whereby we ascribe to him those hopes of salvation which he hath purchased for us, and rely on his merits and intercession for the pardon of our sins, the acceptance of our services with GOD, and the obtaining of every thing that is good for us.

5. Because the pardon which CHRIST procured for fallen man is only conditional, and the conditions which GOD requires of us in order to our being restored to his favour, (namely, that being unfeignedly penitent for our sins we should return to GOD by JESUS CHRIST, and resolve to

seek that grace by which we may restore unto him the full possession of our hearts, and both begin and ever continue to love him with all our soul,) are such as cannot directly, immediately, and at once be performed by us, because of the thick clouds of ignorance and corrupt affections, wherewith sin hath filled our minds; therefore some *means* must of necessity be prescribed and made use of for this end, by which, as by steps, we may gradually ascend to the perfect love of God, which is seated, as it were, upon the high throne of religion. Such means hath God prescribed in his word, and by so doing hath adopted them into the family of religion.

6. It is clear and evident in itself, that in returning to the love of God, we must take a course quite contrary to that by which man departed from it. Seeing then that man lost this love of God, not by enjoying the creatures, nor by taking his divertisement with them, (both which he might lawfully do,) but by uniting his heart unto them by love, it follows, that if we would have this Divine fire to descend upon the altar of our hearts, we must of necessity extinguish and put out the impure and muddy love of the world, and of the creatures: for the love of God, and such love of the creatures, cannot subsist together in one and the same subject, but do mutually expel each other out of the heart of man: for "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," as St. JOHN affirmeth, 1 *John* ii. 15; because God requires that the heart of man be offered unto him whole and entire: "My son," (saith he,) "give me thy heart," *Prov.* xxiii. 26. Nor can he allow a rival with him in man's love; as soon as man admits any rival loves into his heart, God forsakes it as polluted and defiled. But such are the good-will and mercy of God in CHRIST JESUS towards straying man, that no sooner is the heart of man offered unto him whole and entire, than he is willing to re-enter and dwell in it, and to fill it with Divine light and joy. And to this mean of recovering the

love of GOD do all those precepts of religion belong, which forbid to love, covet, or seek after the world, its riches, honours, pleasures, or any created thing.

7. Again, as in order to the recovery of the love of GOD, the impure love of the creatures must be laid aside; so likewise, that man may be freed from this love of the creatures, it is needful that he abstain, as much as may be, from the converse and use of the creatures, and of those especially that are grateful and pleasing to the flesh. For, besides that it appears unjust and unreasonable that rebels and traitors should presume to meddle with the divertisements that were provided for dutiful and obedient children; so unsteady and frail is human nature, since it was depraved by sin, that it cannot view nor enjoy those delights, without being inveigled in their love. And therefore it behoveth us in our food, clothing, and other means of life, to rest contented with things necessary, and industriously to avoid such as are merely delightful.

8. That which makes this part of our duty the more easy, is the cursing of the earth, and the defacement of at least this sublunary world, which by the wise and just providence of GOD was the consequence of ADAM'S fall; by reason of which the world, as it now is, differs as much from itself as it was before the fall, as a vile dungeon does from a royal and magnificent palace. Concerning this corruption of the world, the Apostle speaks in *Rom. viii. 20, 21*, where he says, that "the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly," and that "at last the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption." If men be passionately in love with this wretched carcass of a world, what would they have done, if they had seen and possessed it in its primitive perfection of splendour and beauty?

9. Furthermore, because self-love is no less an enemy to the love of GOD, than the love of other creatures, and does usually raise trophies to itself upon the other's ruins, it must of necessity be put off also; and to effectuate this, we must keep up a constant warfare with our corrupt

nature, all whose thoughts, counsels and desires, are, by the verdict of GOD himself, *Gen. vi. 5*, “only and continually evil.” Whatever it desires must be denied it, and the things for which it hath an aversion must be forced upon it. We must do nothing to gratify it, but its motions must still be resisted; to the end that, being brought into subjection, it may never more obstruct or retard the operations of GOD’S SPIRIT, renewing man in the heart. And because all these things are hard and grievous, and very unacceptable to our corrupt nature, we shall never be thoroughly inclined to put them in practice, until the mind, being duly affected with a sorrowful sense of sin, and of its own misery, do first groan under the burden thereof, and aspire after deliverance from it. And these means, which serve to extinguish the sinful love of the creatures in the hearts of men, are the same which CHRIST and his Apostles so frequently inculcate in the holy Scriptures, when they enjoin repentance, self-denial, renunciation of the world, crucifixion of the flesh, taking up of the cross, and putting off the old man.

10. Moreover, as it is only the gracious and immediate presence of the Deity, filling the soul with light and joy, that can beget therein the true love of GOD, which is the perfection of all religion; so the other means of salvation, which I have already named, spring from a higher and far more noble principle than our nature. For seeing that the human nature, as it is depraved by sin, is blind, and seeketh itself and its own advantages in all things, always, and every where, and seeing that the precepts of religion, of which we are speaking, are most displeasing and hateful unto it, it is evident that a compliance with them cannot be expected without the assistance of Divine Grace: and that assistance must be both internal, which acteth upon the mind immediately, instructing, alluring, persuading, and exciting it; and also external, which worketh by the mediation of the outward senses: so that it is not without ground that the Apostle says, “It is

GOD that worketh in us both to will and to do ;” *Phil.* ii. 13. For the obtaining of this mean, which is only in GOD’S power, there is required on our part continual prayer, and a ready compliance with the inspirations of the HOLY GHOST. “ Ask,” saith our LORD CHRIST, “ and ye shall receive :” *Matth.* vii. 7. “ And grieve not the holy SPIRIT OF GOD,” saith the Apostle, *Eph.* iv. 30.

II. But inasmuch as the inward manifestations of the HOLY GHOST do require a calm and composed mind, and the soft whispers, the sweet and gentle voice of the HOLY SPIRIT, teaching and admonishing in the bottom of the heart, cannot be heard and observed by unregenerate men, because of the obstreperous noise and din of blustering and tumultuous passions and lusts ; therefore it became necessary to call in the assistance of a gross and corporeal way of teaching, such as might make its way to the mind through the external senses. For this reason GOD sent the Prophets, (to whom he had first manifested himself, partly by visions represented to their fancies, sometimes when they slept, and sometimes when they were awake, and partly by a voice and outward signs,) that they might warn and admonish other men in his name, concerning those things that belonged to their salvation. And whereas from ADAM’S fall downwards, mankind growing still worse, breaking out into divers kinds of sins, and adding new crimes to their old vices, wandered still farther from GOD, it became expedient that GOD should warn them of their danger, by new advertisements from time to time, and that he should multiply his precepts according to the diversity of the sins, whereby men ignorantly and inconsiderately strayed from the way of salvation ; until, at length, the wickedness of men being risen to an extraordinary height, and the revelations of the Prophets not being able to put a stop thereunto, the only-begotten SON OF GOD, in his great love to mankind, putting on our mortal nature, with all its infirmities, (yet without sin,) vouchsafed to dwell among men, that he might perfectly instruct them in all that



concerned their salvation, and that in a frail and mortal body, like that which we bear about with us, he might lead such a life as is necessary to be led by all who shall be saved; that so, by a sensible experiment, he might convince us that a Christian life is not impossible to our frailty, when fortified with the aids of divine grace; and, finally, that he might lay down his life for the expiation of the sins of men.

12. The whole doctrine of religion, comprchending the discourses and deportment of JESUS CHRIST, together with the revclations of the Prophets and the Apostles, is also recorded in the Scriptures, as in public registers, that by this means it may be far and near diffused throughout the world. The Scriptures therefore are necessary, that the precepts of religion, and the means of salvation already named, may be made known unto men.

13. But these are not yet all the expedients that GOD hath made use of, for rendering man's return to his love, and his way to salvation, the more plain and easy. Though all which men are concerned to know and practise, in order to their salvation, be so fully and plainly delivered in the Scriptures, that all who are desirous to learn it, may, with a due application, easily there discover it; yet there are many who do not apply themselves to the reading of the Scriptures: many, blinded with prejudice, are slow to understand that which they do read: others are remiss and negligent in performing what they do understand: and even they, who have begun to tread in the paths of life, at many times through inadvertency step aside, or by the violence of temptations are hurried into the way of sin, and having once fallen into it, do sleep securely in it. To remedy these evils, the following expedients were provided. Pastors were appointed, whose office it is to instruct, admonish, reprove, and comfort. Religious Societies of Christians, or Churches, were instituted for this end, that Christians might be helpful to one another in promoting the common work of their salvation, by instructing the ignorant, reclaiming such as

err from the truth, raising up those that are cast down, quickening the lukewarm, rebuking those that commit sin, and avoiding such as be contumacious. Religious Assemblies, also, Public Worship, and Sacraments, were instituted; which, though they greatly contribute to the promotion of Christian faith and holiness, do yet, notwithstanding, manifestly suppose Pastors and Christian Societies, and may be considered by us as sanctions of those laws whereby Pastors and Churches are authorized, to which we must give obedience, or be deprived of the benefit of Publick Worship, and of the comfort of the Sacraments. And last of all, to the end that the public affairs of every Church might be rightly administered, that is, that every thing might be done decently and in order, and that communion might be kept up, and peace and concord maintained among the Churches, Church-Government was appointed.

14. Thus have I, link by link, turned over the whole chain of religion; beginning at the highest degree thereof, namely, *the love of GOD*, which alone is sought and enjoined for itself, and descending from this to the immediate means whereby it is attained, and from them to such as are more remote, until at last we come to the most remote of all. This account, which I have given of religion, furnisheth us with a key, whereby any one that is but indifferently versed in Theological Studies, may easily discover what place each part holds in the system of religion; how one part stands related to such other parts as are above, as a mean to the end, and to such as are below it, as the end to the means; and in what degree of necessity every part ought to be held. But for the sake of beginners, I shall propose one or more of those things in this scheme, that deserve the greatest consideration.

15. The first is the remarkable difference between Charity, or the Love of God, and all the other parts of religion; among which it hath the pre-eminence, because it alone is desired for itself, and all the rest are instituted

for its sake, that by their means and subserviency, mankind, who were fallen from the pure and chaste Love of GOD into the strange and adulterous love of the creatures, may again be reduced to the love which they owe unto GOD. And thus Charity is related to the other parts of religion, as the End is to the Means; agreeably to the Apostle's plain instruction, "The end of the commandment is charity;" 1 *Tim.* i. 5. Now as the wooden frames and scaffolds, that are used in building, are taken away when the work is ended, being no longer useful; so, when the Love of GOD shall be finally perfected in the hearts of those that are to be saved, then Sacraments, Pastors, Churches, the holy Scriptures, Renunciation of the world, Mortification of the flesh, Repentance, Faith, and all the other parts of religion that are distinct from charity, shall cease; as the same Apostle teacheth us, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 8. "Charity," saith he, "never faileth; but whether there be Prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be Tongues, they shall cease; whether there be Knowledge, it shall vanish away; when that which is perfect shall come, then that which is in part shall be done away: now abideth Faith, Hope, and Charity, but the greatest of these is Charity."

16. Another thing, that is to be diligently observed in this scheme, concerneth those parts of religion that are distinct from Charity; their Difference among themselves as they stand related to it as to their End. And, in this respect, they are classed in a three-fold Difference. They are all Means for recovering Charity: but (1.) some of them are necessary, and withal sure and infallible; (2.) others are indeed necessary, but not sure and infallible; and (3.) others are neither sure and infallible, nor *absolutely, indispensably, and universally* necessary. In the first rank, are Faith in JESUS CHRIST, the Mediator; Repentance; the mortifying of the corrupt nature, or the Old Man; the renouncing of the world, with all its pomps and vanities; and, finally, the weaning of the heart from the impure love of the world, and of all the

creatures, which being once rooted out, the Love of God succeeds, and is kindled up, and shed abroad in the heart, by the HOLY GHOST. All these are indispensably necessary for recovering the Love of God; and they have a sure and infallible connection, mediate or immediate, therewith.—In the second rank, stand the Holy Scriptures, which, for reasons already expressed, are simply necessary, that men may attain to the knowledge of such things as it concerns them to know and practise, in order to their salvation.—But though the Scriptures be necessary, yet are they not sure and infallible means of salvation, seeing very many of those who have them, and read them daily, come short of it; not for any fault in the Scriptures, but in the persons themselves, who take no care to order their lives and manners according to the precepts in them delivered.—In the third rank of means of salvation, which are neither *absolutely, indispensably,* and *universally* necessary, nor sure and infallible, are included Pastors, Religious Societies, or Churches, Sacraments, Public Worship, and Ecclesiastical Polity, or Church Discipline, and whatever else is instituted by God for this end, that men may be excited to learn, or keep in mind, or practise, those duties of religion which are fully and clearly delivered in the Scriptures. That these have no sure and infallible connection with the salvation of men, is more evident than to want either proof or illustration: and although Christians ought not to neglect or despise, but to make use of them when they can be had, as well because they are prescribed by God, as because in the right use of them, many excellent advantages may be reaped, yet this will not make them *absolutely, indispensably,* and *universally* necessary to salvation; for it is *possible* that such as have the Scriptures, if they carefully and diligently peruse them, with prayer, may both discover the way of salvation marked out in them, and, having found it, may begin to walk in it, and, by the assistance of God's grace, may constantly persevere therein, until at last they work out their salvation,

although they live in a corner of the world, where they have *no opportunities*, either of Preachers whom they may hear, or of Churches to which they may join themselves, or (by consequence) of Sacraments of which they may partake.

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### SECT. III.

*Wherein several material Propositions and useful Corollaries are deduced from the preceding descriptions of this Theology. How to discern betwixt the fundamental principles of religion, and such as are not fundamental; and betwixt damnable, dangerous, and harmless errors.*

HAVING laid down the general idea of this Theology, together with the more distinct and particular explication thereof, I come now to the many and weighty propositions, rules, and conclusions, which may be deduced from this doctrine. And indeed so various and manifold is the use of this Theology, both in a private life, and also for the right ordering of the Church, and it abounds with so many rules and instructions for every kind of life, that it would be hard to reckon up all that might be deduced from it, by serious and attentive meditation. I shall instance only in a few.

2. First, then, by this doctrine of Comparative Theology it plainly appears, that the precepts of the Christian Religion have proceeded neither from the mere arbitrary will of GOD, nor from his wrath and displeasure, but from his love, favour, and good-will toward fallen man. And the reason why GOD hath imposed the hard laws of repentance, self-denial, and the renunciation of the world, as necessary to be observed by all that would be saved, is not, that he might exercise his authority over men, or be avenged on them, but because there is no other way of raising them to a true and lasting happiness, besides that which the precepts of religion prescribe. GOD might,

indeed, by virtue of his omnipotence, have restored man, who was fallen into sin and misery, unto his original holy and happy state, without the intervention of a medicinal penitence. But recent experience, and the notable instance of instability and inconstancy, which ADAM had given, evidently discover, that nothing was to be expected in this way, but that ADAM, having lightly escaped so great a danger, would have been the more presumptuous to offend again: Or, if his experience had made him more cautious and wary, yet his children would readily have relapsed into his sin and misery; so that if this method had been taken for recovering fallen man, it is probable that ADAM only would have been saved by it. For this reason, it was more agreeable, both to the wisdom and goodness of GOD, to grant unto fallen man regress and return unto his first state of happiness by the way of penitence only; which, though it be the more difficult, yet it is the most safe and infallible. For as those who come to great fortunes, either by succession to their parents, or by the bounty of their prince, are more inclined to squander away their wealth, than others, who have acquired riches by their own industry and labour, after they have felt the pinching difficulties of want and poverty; so it is not to be doubted, but that those men, who have with difficulty struggled out of the deep gulf of sin and misery, and have come to happiness by the rough, uneasy, and narrow way of penitence, are likely to prove far more constant in the love of their Creator, and more firm and resolute in sustaining and repelling the assaults of temptation, than either ADAM was, who was created in a state of felicity, or than his posterity would have been, in case that happiness had been by succession transmitted to them from ADAM.

3. If it shall here be inquired, might not GOD have restored man immediately after his fall, and, after his restoration, have confirmed him also in grace and holiness, and put him out of all danger of falling again any more, so that he should have been afterwards no more

obnoxious unto sin than the glorious Angels? I answer, that a confirmed state of grace and holiness is both the fruit and reward of a previous and tried constancy and firmness in the love of GOD;—that upon no other conditions was it granted to the Angels, who persisted in their duty and fidelity; nor would it have been given unto ADAM, supposing he had not sinned, till after a competent time of trial faithfully spent in the love of GOD:—and finally, that it is not possible that a reasonable creature can attain to a consummate state of perfection, by any other way, without infringing its liberty, which GOD will have preserved safe and inviolate.

Indeed, after good or evil habits have received their proper and suitable improvements from GOD,—that is, after he has fortified and established the good, by renewed measures and communications of his grace, and has plied the evil with repeated endeavours, and all to no purpose, to reclaim them,—when he resolves that the graces of his SPIRIT shall not be any more prostituted to the scorn and contempt of those who are rooted in sin, and when he rewards the godly for the good use that they have made of their liberty with more plentiful measures of grace, and takes the government of their free will (after they have freely resigned it) into his own hands;—then follows the final, unchangeable, and endless obduration of the wicked in sin, and the establishment of the godly in grace and holiness. But rational and free creatures can neither be established in a state of grace, nor hardened into a state of sin, without infringing their liberty, except the free use and exercise thereof, in good or evil, (which in good, at least, must be habitual) have gone before it.

4. Secondly, This doctrine of Comparative Theology discovers the ground of that which the Apostle delivers in *1 Cor. xii.*, where he declares that those parts of religion which are commonly most esteemed, such as, much knowledge in divine things, orthodoxy, faith, and the suffering of persecution for the true religion even unto

death, will all be unprofitable to salvation without Love ; because these, and all other things pertaining to religion, are for this end ordained and enjoined by GOD, that by them men may be brought to Charity, or the love of GOD ; so that if they do not attain to that End, they become vain and unprofitable. Wherefore, they are far deceived, who conceive good hopes, and entertain a good opinion of themselves, and of their own spiritual condition, because they belong to this or the other party of Christians, or because they are diligent and assiduous in hearing, reading, praying, and communicating ; all these being too weak supports whereupon to build a solid hope of salvation. For, unless men will denounce war against their corrupt nature, renounce the world, and deny themselves, they shall never recover the true and sincere love of GOD ; and without the unfeigned love of GOD, they shall never come into his presence, nor into the dwelling-place of the Blessed.

5. Thirdly, This Theology teacheth us, how to distinguish between the *essential* or *fundamental* Principles of Religion, and those that are *not fundamental*. And here I take the Essence of Religion, not strictly, for all that which belongeth to religion always, and in all states, (in which sense the *love of GOD* alone makes up the whole essence of Religion,) but more largely for all those things which are necessary for men, when considered in a state of corrupt nature, that they may be fitted for, and brought into, the enjoyment of eternal happiness. Now whereas some parts of religion are means of salvation, both necessary, and sure or infallible,—others are necessary, but not sure,—and others are indeed means of salvation, but neither sure nor *absolutely* necessary ;—it is evident that the precepts and institutions of the third class do by no means belong to the fundamentals of religion, properly so called. A Fundamental is that, the knowledge whereof is necessary to salvation *directly*, and *of itself*. Now all the precepts and institutions of the first class, and they only, are in that sense necessary. From this, it does



appear that the whole family of the *Fundamentals* of religion is contained within the limits of the first class. But because men can by no other means come to the certain knowledge of religion, than by the Scriptures, therefore to know the Scriptures, and to acknowledge them for a sure and infallible rule of faith, may be called a *secondary Fundamental Principle* of Religion.

6. Fourthly, This Theology teacheth also the difference of Errors; that some are *damnable* and *pernicious*, some *dangerous* only, and some *harmless*.—All those errors touching faith and religion, which do necessarily subvert some *fundamental* principle of religion, and that in the opinion and judgment of the erring person, or that cannot subsist at the same time, and in the same mind, with the belief of the fundamental principles of religion,—these, and these only, are to be looked upon as *destructive* and *damnable*, and as such, are with great care and diligence to be expelled out of the confines of the Church. For the Christian Religion is like a bridge, by which alone men can go from this valley of miseries to the blessed regions of light and peace; and the *fundamental Principles* of Religion are so many arches, which, joined and united together, do make up this bridge: And therefore those errors, which overturn any of the fundamental principles of religion, do, as it were, cut out an arch from the bridge, whereby a breach is made in it, and the passage by it into heaven is thus cut off and obstructed.

7. Again; those errors are to be avoided as *dangerous*, whose tendency is to make men remiss and negligent in the business of their salvation. Of this kind is that error ascribed to ORIGEN, concerning the punishment of the Devils and Damned, that after a long course of time it shall come to an end, and that the Damned themselves shall at last be translated into the habitations of the Blessed. By this doctrine, it is evident, that the fear of Hell, and the force thereof to restrain men from sin, is in a great measure weakened and infringed.—Finally, those errors may be tolerated as *harmless* whereby a Christian,

who is in the way of salvation, is neither hindered nor retarded in his course; such was the error of ST. CYPRIAN concerning the Re-baptization of Heretics; and another of IRENÆUS, who writes, that our Saviour was fifty years old when he suffered.\*

8. From hence, in the fifth place, we may draw rules and principles for directing, not only private Christians, how far they may entertain or refuse *external communion* with the different, yea adverse, sects and societies of Christians into which the unity of the Christian Church is miserably divided and rent asunder, but Church-Governors also, in making and abrogating ecclesiastical laws. For the end and design of those Christian Societies, which we call Churches, is, that by their help, every private Christian may be forwarded in a course of piety, and assisted in working out his salvation. It is therefore plain, first, That a Christian, who lays the work of his salvation to heart, ought (if his circumstances will permit him) to join himself unto, and associate with, those Churches wherein the best helps to piety are to be found:—Next, That he must abstain from the communion of those Churches, whose fellowship is apt to hinder or retard his progress in true piety,—either because the purity of the Christian Doctrine is therein corrupted by evil principles, and such as flatter corrupt nature,—or because the force and efficacy of sound and wholesome doctrine are impaired and enervated, by the mischievous examples of a worldly life,—or finally, because the privilege of communion is annexed to something that is unlawful, as a necessary condition thereof:—And thirdly, That the communion of that Church whereof he is a

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\* *Comparatively*, at least, *such* errors may be harmless, if held soberly and peaceably, so as not unduly to divert the person who holds them from more important subjects, and not made occasions of unsettling the minds of others, or of disturbing the Church of Christ.  
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member already, and whose fellowship, though it be little useful to piety, yet is not prejudicial to it, should be continued in, in case it cannot be forsaken without some great inconvenience.

9. For the same reason, also, it becomes the duty of all those who are promoted to the Government of Churches, to make use of their power and authority for Edification, and not for Destruction ;—not enjoining any thing that is not conducive to the advancement of Christians in true piety ;—nor requiring any thing as a necessary condition of external communion, but that which any sober person in his right mind, and who is actuated by a serious and sincere desire after holiness, may perform with a good conscience ; lest they chance to debar from the external communion of their church those whom CHRIST hath honoured with inward and spiritual communion with himself, and with the saints, that is, with the invisible church ;—and finally, constraining no persons, against their mind and conscience, to an external communion with any church.

In this corollary we may behold, as in a glass, the deplorable state of the Christian World at this day, wherein almost every sect of Christians, at least the ruling part among them, do require the belief and profession of their peculiar and distinguishing doctrines, which are some of them obscure, others doubtful and uncertain, and others false, as a necessary condition of communion ; sowing by this means the seeds of discord, and division, and hatred among Christians, instead of that unity, and love, and concord, which our Saviour so earnestly recommended to his disciples. Nor is this all ; but they do what in them lies to force all others, by mulcts, banishments, and corporal punishments, to embrace their communion, and to fulfil the conditions thereof ; and by so doing, instead of making men Christians, they only make them hypocrites,—of all sinners the most hateful in the sight of God.

10. Last of all, from this scheme of Comparative Theology, it does plainly appear, that Church-Government is

such a mean of recovering the Love of God, as is neither necessary, nor sure and infallible, and consequently, that it is not a fundamental principle, nor an essential member of the Christian Religion; and that in the body thereof, it holds the place, not of the heart, or other vitals, but of the more extreme part. This is a matter that ought to be well considered by all Christians, but especially by those among whom bitter envyings and strifes and contentions are kept up, discord and tumults raised, and animosities and hatred exercised, about *particular Forms of Church-Government and Discipline*, to the great reproach of Christianity, the scandal of the weak, and the woeful decay, or (shall I say) the utter ruin and subversion, of true piety. How much better were it, and more conducive to the honour of the Christian Religion, to piety, and to peace, that Christians should rather exercise a mutual forbearance in this case, by allowing every one free liberty to think, and speak, and act as they please, in these and other such like matters that are remote from the centre of religion, concerning which, sincere lovers of truth and holiness may differ in their judgments, and that without any prejudice to mutual love and the duties of charity, either among single persons, or among the societies of Christians and Churches.



### THE CONCLUSION,

*Wherein the Use of this Theology is more particularly declared. The inconveniency to which they are exposed, who are not acquainted with it. The character of one who follows its direction.*

FROM all that has been said, the notable use and necessity of this Comparative Theology does abundantly appear; for he who does not understand the various and differing

respects and relations of the several parts of Religion among themselves, which this Theology teaches, cannot but often stumble and fall, or wander in his way to eternal life. For either,—

First, He will consider all the parts of Religion as equal, and standing upon the same level, and so will apply himself to them indifferently, without order or choice, practising now one duty, then another, as his inclinations or circumstances shall prompt him. Thus he will not be unlike to an unskilful husbandman, that should take much pains in sowing, digging, tilling, and harrowing his ground, without any regard to the order or season that ought to be observed therein; for as this man would unavoidably fall short of the hoped-for reward of his labours, I mean, of a plentiful harvest, so the other would infallibly lose the gracious fruit and reward of a religious conversation, namely, holiness and eternal life. Now I make no doubt but there are many such to be found among the professors of Christianity, who considering only what is common to all the parts and precepts of their religion, that is, the stamp of Divine Authority, and not adverting to the proper and peculiar aims of every one of them in particular, are much taken up about religion to little purpose, and without making any considerable progress in it; like the men of *Sodom*, who “being smitten with blindness, wearied themselves in vain,” to find the door of Lor’s house. Such persons seem to be pointed out by the Apostle under the figure of “silly women, who are ever learning, and never able to come to the (saving and practical) knowledge of the truth.”—Or,

Secondly, He will prefer the lesser and lighter matters of religion, to such as are greater and more weighty; with which our Saviour upbraids the Scribes and Pharisees, who “paid tithes of mint, cummin, and anise,” but “neglected the weightier things of the law, judgment, mercy, and truth.” Of this fault the greater part of Christians are guilty, who put a higher value upon a right

belief and persuasion touching things less necessary, such as are almost all the *distinguishing* doctrines of every sect of Christians,—together with some religious rites, and particular rules and forms of Church-Discipline and Government, much controverted in these times, concerning which a man may think and act thus, or otherwise, (provided he act not against his conscience,) without prejudice to his salvation,—than they do upon “Holiness” of heart and life, “without which no man shall see the LORD,” (*Heb.* xii. 14,) being less solicitous for this than the other. For as, in their own practice, they study more to be orthodox than to be humble, charitable, mortified to the world, and self-denied; so they do with open arms receive into their communion all that agree with them in doctrine and worship, be their lives ever so sensual and worldly, but exclude as aliens and strangers all such as differ from them in these matters, be their lives otherwise ever so harmless and holy; seeking to gain disciples and followers rather to their own way and party, than to CHRIST and his religion; who, if, like the proselytes of the Scribes and Pharisees, they grow not worse, yet will certainly get little more by their change than an exchange of opinions, and of the modes and circumstances of external worship.—They do also split upon this same rock, who, neglecting the capital virtues of the Christian Religion, take up their rest in the means subservient thereunto, such as are Scriptures, Sermons, Sacraments, and the like, whose use is to instruct men in the essential duties of religion, to stir them up to them, and to assist them in the performance of them. In these we may observe many to be much employed, who think that, in so doing, they have tolerably well discharged their duty as Christians, though they never aspire after humility, the mortification of the flesh, the renouncing of the world, and the love of GOD and their neighbour; for the sake of which all those other things, wherewith they are so much taken up, were purely intended and appointed. These persons are not a whit wiser than one who, intending a journey to some remote

country or city, should employ all his time and care in providing and viewing horses, chariots, servants, provisions, and other necessaries for the journey, and, in the mean time, never stir one foot from home, to set forward on the journey.—Or,

Thirdly, He will slight and neglect the inferior, ministering, and subservient parts and duties of religion, and seek to come at those of the highest rank and degree without them; with no better success, than if a man should endeavour to get up to the top of a high tower without the help of the stairs that lead to it, by throwing out his arms, straining his body, and standing on tip-toe. And this fault is but too common among Christians, who imagine that they can attain to the internal virtues of contrition, humility, contempt of the world, self-denial, and the love of God, by meditation and thinking only, without practising the external good works that dispose and lead thereunto, and without avoiding the allurements and temptations to the contrary vices, such as riches, honours, pleasures, and the familiarity and friendship of worldly-minded men; acting in this with as little colour of reason as one, who, being shut up in a dark prison, or plunged in snow up to the chin, should expect to be enlightened and warmed by the mere force of his imagination, without coming forth into the bright and warm sun.—To these we may add some others, who boast of inward manifestations of the SPIRIT, communion with God, spiritual joys, and such like rewards and comforts of a pure heart, although they have not as yet purged out the old leaven of carnal lusts and earthly affections; embracing thus the shadow for the substance.

On the contrary, he who is acquainted with the doctrine of this pure and peaceable Theology, and will choose to follow its directions, considers Charity, or the Love of God, as the great End, and the other duties and virtues belonging to the Christian Religion as the Means appointed for attaining thereunto: and, accordingly, he makes the first his great aim and business, and the rest

he regardeth and useth only in consideration of their subserviency to this first. He reads the Scriptures, meditates, hears sermons, receives the Sacraments, and performs other subservient duties of Religion, not that he may rest in them, but that by their means he may be stirred up and helped forward to the contempt of himself and the world, and to the love of God, and of his neighbour for God's sake ; knowing that all the labour that is laid out in that way is lost, if it do not contribute to this end.

He is neither so fond, nor so afraid, of any religious rite or ceremony, or ecclesiastical custom, which is innocent, and being indifferent in itself, may be used for a good end, but that he can either use or abstain from it, as the peace of the church, or the edification of his neighbour, may require ; imitating the Apostle, who " to the Jews became as a Jew, that he might gain the Jews ; to them that were under the law, as under the law, that he might gain them that were under the law ; to them who were without the law, as without the law, that he might gain them that were without the law ; to the weak he became as weak, that he might gain the weak : finally, he was made all things unto all men, that he might by all means save some," 1 *Cor.* ix. 20, &c.

The necessary, fundamental truths of religion he finds to be but few, to which he firmly adheres, and lays them up carefully in his heart, but is less taken up with the rest, concerning which he loves not to debate with any person ; well knowing, that as few controversies were ever ended in this way, so the minds of men are thereby diverted from the study of holiness, and hatred, animosities, divisions, and persecutions are begotten and fomented ; and that a further progress and advancement in the saving knowledge of the truth is better attained by holy living, than by much disputing. He maintains an inward spiritual communion of love and affection with all that truly fear God, and sincerely seek him, however much they may differ from him, and among themselves,



concerning the matters of religion that are less necessary; being ready to entertain external communion with them, so far as the terms and conditions of external communion, which they require, will allow, and so far as they do not obstruct the love of God, and the mortifying of our corrupt nature. But he carefully avoids the company and familiarity of all wicked and worldly-minded men, as hurtful and contagious, although they agree with him in the profession of the same doctrine, and in outward worship.

These inferences ought to have been treated with more accuracy, and at greater length; but the shortness of the time allotted for this exercise hath obliged me to abridge them, and silently to pass over others of some consequence. Besides, I am afraid my hearers may already be weary of this discourse, which the great variety of matter, that of necessity must be crowded into its narrow bounds, hath rendered more profitable than pleasant. And therefore I shall here put a stop to it, heartily recommending the heads of it to you, my dear fellow-students, to be further digested, amplified, and enlarged by you, in your more retired thoughts and private meditations; and to the Father of Lights, to be by Him plentifully watered with the blessing of heaven.

To the all-good, all-wise, and all-mighty LORD our GOD, FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT, be praise and glory for ever. *Amen.*

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THOUGHTS ON RELIGION,  
AND  
OTHER SUBJECTS.

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BY MONSIEUR PASCAL.

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Had that incomparable Person, Monsieur PASCAL, been a little more indulgent to himself, the world might probably have enjoyed him much longer: whereas, through too great an application to his studies in his youth, he contracted that ill habit of body, which, after a tedious sickness, carried him off in the fortieth year of his age. And the whole history we have of his life, till that time, is but one continued account of the behaviour of a noble soul struggling under innumerable pains and distempers.—*Spectator*, Vol. II. No. 116.

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THE  
P R E F A C E.

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MONSIEUR PASCAL was born in the year 1623, and died in 1662. Having taken an early leave of the Mathematics, of Natural Philosophy, and of other human studies, he began, about the thirtieth year of his age, to apply himself to things of a more serious and more elevated nature, and to turn his whole thoughts, so far as his health would permit, on the Scriptures, the Fathers, and Discourses of Practical Christianity.

But though his excellency in these latter studies, no less than in the former, has been already testified by such works as are accomplished in their kind, yet we may affirm, that if it had pleased God to have granted him a longer space for the carrying on of his general design, on the Truth of Religion, in which he had resolved to employ the residue of his life, this performance would have been far superior to any that we have received from him; because his views, in this respect, infinitely exceeded those which he had attained of all things beside.

I believe this is no more than any one will admit, upon the sight of these few Papers, with all their imperfections; especially when he shall be acquainted with the methods by which the Author prosecuted his undertaking.

M. PASCAL had laid the scheme of this work many years before his death; and yet we ought not to wonder

that he began so late to commit any part of it to writing; for he had always accustomed himself to think very maturely of things, and to arrange them in his mind, before he suffered them to venture farther; carefully weighing which ought to be placed first, and which last, and what order of the whole might seem most conducive to the desired effect. And then being master of an excellent, or, as we may truly say, a prodigious memory, so as to have often declared that he never forgot any thing which he had once imprinted in it, he was under no apprehension of letting those thoughts, which he had at any time formed, afterwards escape him; so that it was usual with him to tarry very long before he set them down on paper, either for want of leisure, or because the state of his health could not support a more laborious application.

This was the reason, that, at his death, we lost the greatest part of what he had conceived in pursuance of his design. For there was scarcely any thing left in writing, either as to the principal arguments which he proposed to insist on, or as to the grounds and foundations of the whole work, or as to the method, which could not but be very considerable. All these were so habitually fixed in his mind, that having neglected to write them, while, perhaps, he was able, he at length found himself incapable of going through the task, when he would gladly have entered upon it.

Yet there once happened an occasion, ten or twelve years since, which obliged him, not indeed to write, but to deliver himself in conversation, on this subject; which he did in the presence, and at the request, of many great persons. To this company he opened in few words the plan of his whole undertaking; he represented the subject-matter; he gave an abstract of the principles; and pointed out the intended order of things. And these gentlemen, who are indisputably qualified to be judges, aver, that they never heard any thing which discovered more beauty or more strength. They declare themselves

to have been charmed with the discourse, and say, that the idea which they were able to form of the main design, from a narrative of two or three hours, delivered thus *off-hand*, gave them the pleasure of considering with themselves what the work might one day prove, if fully executed, and carried to its last perfection, by an Author who had used himself to be so indefatigably laborious in all his compositions ; who was scarcely ever satisfied with his first thoughts, how happy soever they might seem to others ; and who had been known, on many occasions, to new-model, not less than eight or ten times, such pieces, as any person but himself must have pronounced admirable after a single trial.

He began the design with giving the Picture of a Man, under which he omitted nothing that might distinguish or illustrate him, either without or within, even as to the most secret motions of his heart. In the next place, he supposed a person, who had lived hitherto utterly indifferent with regard to all things, and to himself especially, to come and view himself in this Picture, and by it to examine what he is. The person cannot but be surprized to discover here an infinite variety of things, which never yet entered into his thought ; nor can he without astonishment and admiration reflect on what he now learns and feels of his dignity and his baseness, of his advantages and his infirmities, of the small glimmering of light which remains within him, and of the miserable darkness with which he is, almost on all sides, encompassed ; in a word, of all the prodigious contrarieties which appear in his nature. After this it is impossible that he should continue his indifference, if he have but the least spark of reason ; and how insensible soever he has hitherto been, he must now of necessity desire to be informed whence he derives his original, and what fate abides him hereafter.

Having brought his Man to this disposition, of seeking to be instructed in so important a doubt, he sends him

first to the Philosophers ; and having rehearsed to him the sum of what their greatest Professors have delivered on the subject of human nature, he makes him discover so many failures and weaknesses, so many falsities and contradictions, in all that they advance, as to judge very easily that these are not the men who must give him satisfaction.

At the next remove, he leads him the whole circuit of all nations and all ages, so as to give him a view of the almost endless variety of Religions in the world ; but at the same time lets him understand, by the strongest proofs, that all these Religions are so full of vanity and folly, of error and extravagance, as to afford nothing in which his mind can acquiesce.

At length he bids him fix his eye on the people of the Jews, where the circumstances, with which he is presented, are so extraordinary as to engage his whole attention. Having let him into all that was singular in this nation, he stops him to take particular notice of one Book, which contains the sum of their Religion, their History, and their Law. Upon the first opening of this Book, he is informed, that the world is the work of God, and that it was the same God who created man in his own image, and endowed him with all advantages of mind and body, suitable to so high an estate. This truth, though it doth not at present convince him, yet fails not to please him; his bare reason being sufficient to discover a greater probability in supposing God to be the author of the world, and of mankind, than in any of those accounts which men have framed by their own fond invention. The only thing which gives him any doubt is, that he observes man, according to the Picture he so lately viewed, to be very far from possessing all those advantages, which must have attended him, when he came out of the hand of his Maker. But he soon gets over this difficulty ; because upon looking a little farther into the same Book, he discovers, that after man had

been thus created by GOD in a state of innocence and perfection, his very first act was to rebel against his Creator.

M. PASCAL proceeds to inform his Novice, that this crime having been, in all its circumstances, the greatest that could be committed, received its punishment, not only in the first man, whom, from his state of excellency and happiness, it plunged, at one stroke, into misery and weakness; but likewise in all his descendants, to whom he communicated his corruption, and will continue to communicate it through all ages.

And now obliging him to peruse several other parts of the Book, he makes him observe, that there is scarcely any thing recorded of man, but what bears a regard to this his condition of infirmity and disorder;—that it is often said, that all flesh have corrupted themselves;—and that men are described as abandoning themselves to their senses, and as having from their very birth an inclination to evil. He farther lets him see, that this primitive defection is the source, not only of all those incomprehensible contrarieties in human nature, but likewise of numerous other effects in the things without us, of which he could never before trace the cause. In short, he exhibits to him such a portrait of Man, in the whole series of this Book, as, by answering to the Piece which he first beheld, cannot but satisfy him of its true and just resemblance.

Having thus brought him acquainted with his real condition, full of misery, he assures him, that by following the same Book, he will be led to comfort and deliverance. He points out to him the several passages, where it is affirmed, that the remedy of all our evils is in the hand of GOD; that to his assistance we ought to have recourse, for obtaining the strength we want; that he will be prevailed upon by our entreaty; and has already sent us a SAVIOUR, to satisfy for our offences, to repair our breaches, and to heal our infirmities.



After many other peculiar remarks on this Book, he engages him to consider, that it is the only Book in the world which has spoken worthily of the Supreme Being, or inspired a just idea of Religion. In order to this, having made him conceive some of the most sensible characters of a true Religion, he compares them with those which are here delivered; teaching him to reflect, with more especial attention, that this Religion placeth the perfection of divine worship in the Love of GOD;—a character altogether singular, and such as distinguisheth it visibly from all others, which are convicted of notorious falsehood by their want of this essential mark.

Thus far he leads the Man, whom by these insensible means he proposeth to make his Convert, without offering any arguments to demonstrate those truths which he has taught him to discover. But then, he has prepared him to receive them with delight, so soon as they shall be demonstrated to his understanding; and even to wish, that they may at length appear to be solid and well-grounded; because he finds that they supply so many assistances towards the clearing up of his doubts, and the ensuring of his repose. This, indeed, is the very desire which every rational man ought to entertain, upon the view of the several particulars which M. PASCAL has thus represented; and it was but just for him to think, that any person under such a disposition would yield a ready assent to the proofs he should afterwards allege, in confirmation of those important truths which he had before mentioned.

To speak a word or two concerning these proofs:—After he had observed in general, that the points, which he now asserted, were all contained in a written volume, the authority of which every man of sound judgment must own to be unquestionable, he insisted chiefly on the Writings of MOSES, where the said points are in a particular manner revealed; and he made it apparent, that it was alike impossible, either for MOSES to have

penned a whole series of falsities, or for the *Jewish* nation to have suffered the cheat, if he had been inclined to act it.

He argued farther from the *Miracles* recorded in this Book ; which as they are the highest evidence, if true, so he demonstrated, that they could not possibly be false, not only from the authority of these writings in which they are attested, but likewise from all the particulars which accompany them.

He proceeded to evince, that the whole ritual Law was purely figurative ; that all the dispensations and promises to the *Jewish* state were but the *shadows* of good things, which received their accomplishment from the appearance of the MESSIAS ; and that after the veil was once taken away, they visibly conspired, and were consummated, in the behalf of those who believed in JESUS CHRIST.

The next reason offered by M. PASCAL, for the Credibility of Religion, was taken from the *Prophecies*. As he had been very laborious in this enquiry, and had very particular views of the respective predictions, so he opened them after the most intelligible manner, explaining their design, and their event, with a wonderful facility.

At length having run through the Books of the *Old Testament*, and intermixed upon occasion, many convincing remarks, he entered on the consideration of the *New Testament*, in order to complete the argument by the truth of the Gospel.

He began with our LORD, whose character and commission, though invincibly attested by the Prophecies, and by all the Figures of the Law, which had their perfect consummation in him alone, he yet farther illustrated by evidences drawn from his Person, his Miracles, his Doctrine, and the circumstances of his Life.

Hence he descended to the Character of the Apostles ; and that he might establish the certainty of that faith which they preached, having laid it down for a principle,

that they cannot be accused of falsehood, but upon one of these two suppositions, either that they were themselves deceived, or that they were engaged in a design of deceiving others,—he made it evident, that both these suppositions were absurd and impossible. And though, in a single discourse, he wanted time for the full improvement of so vast a subject, yet he offered enough to evince that all this could not be the contrivance and achievement of men; and that it was GOD alone who was able thus to guide the issue of so many different occurrences, as to make them all conspire in giving an irresistible testimony to that Religion which he himself came to settle amongst men.

This was the substance of M. PASCAL's conversation, which he proposed only as a sketch of his undertaking: and it was by the favour of one of the Gentlemen there present, that we have obtained these short memorials of it.

In the fragments here published we see something of the vast design conceived by our Author; yet we see but little; and even this little comes to us in so imperfect a manner, that it can afford us but a very obscure idea of the perfection which he would have given to it, in his finished performance.

The Reader will not think it strange, if in these few relics, the disposition of the subject is not made according to the primitive method. For there being so little found which had any dependence or connexion, the Publishers thought it utterly useless to be confined to this intended series, and therefore were satisfied with keeping as near as they could to such an order as seemed most convenient in respect of the Fragments themselves.

For M. PASCAL fell, soon after this conversation, into a languishing distemper, which held him during the four last years of his life; and which, though it did not oblige him to be a prisoner in his bed, yet very much incommoded him; and, in a manner, rendered him incapable of applying himself to business of any kind; insomuch that the chief care of those about him was to hinder him

from writing, and even from speaking, of any thing which required intensity and force of spirit, and to entertain him only with indifferent things, and such as could in no way disorder or fatigue him.

Yet it was in these four years of weakness that he framed and penned all that he left behind on this subject. For though he waited till his health should be re-established, to commit exactly to writing what he had digested and disposed in his mind; yet when there occurred to him any thought, any view, any idea, or even any turn of expression, which he saw might one day prove serviceable to his design, the condition he was now under not suffering him to attend to them so closely as before his illness, nor to fix them with so much strength and steadfastness in his memory, he chose to preserve them by the help of some short notes. In order to this, he took the first remnant of paper that came to hand, and entered what he was then meditating, in a very few words; for he wrote purely for his own use, and therefore was content to perform it very slightly, and so as not to discompose his temper; barely setting down those hints which were necessary for recalling to his mind the ideas which he had once conceived.

This was the way in which M. PASCAL penned his THOUGHTS. And I believe there is no man, who, from these slight beginnings, these feeble essays of a sick person,—who wrote only for himself, and wrote those things only which he was afraid might otherwise be lost, and which he never afterwards touched or revised,—will not make some guess what the entire work must have been, had the Author perfectly recovered:—an Author, who had the art of placing things in so goodly an order, and in so fair a light; who gave so particular, so noble, and so elevated a turn to all that he said; who designed that this performance should be more laboured than all his former pieces; and who had resolved to employ in it his whole strength of genius, and all the talents which GOD had given him.

It being well known that M. PASCAL had thus engaged himself in the cause of Religion, great care was used at his death to collect all his writings on this subject. They were found all together, tied up in several bundles, but without order or connexion; because, as we before observed, these were but the rude expressions of his thoughts, which he set down in broken papers as they occasionally offered. And then, the whole was so imperfect, and so very ill written, that it seemed no ordinary labour barely to decypher it.

The first thing that was done, was to get the papers copied. But when this was performed, and the Fragments perused, they appeared at first view so indigested, so little pursued, and, for the most part, so obscure, that it was very long before the parties concerned were brought to entertain any design of printing them.

At length they found themselves obliged to give way to the desire which almost all the world seemed daily to express. And they were the rather prevailed upon to give their consent, because they hoped the Reader would distinguish between a finished performance, and the first lines of a piece, and would guess at the beauty of the work, by the rudest and most imperfect draught.

The Publishers have selected, from the whole number of scattered THOUGHTS, such as they judged to be the most finished, and the most intelligible; and these they have presented to the world without addition or alteration; excepting that whereas they lay before confusedly dispersed, they are now put into some kind of method, and reduced under common heads, agreeably to their respective subjects. As for all those which were too imperfect or obscure, it was determined entirely to suppress them.

Some may be surprised to find in this collection so great a diversity of Thoughts; many of which seem very remote from the subject that M. PASCAL undertook to illustrate. But it ought to be considered, that his design was really of a larger extent than we may imagine, and not levelled barely against atheistical persons, nor against

those who deny some fundamental article of faith. The great love and singular veneration which he had for Religion made him impatient, not only when he saw it directly struck at, but when it was in the least degree corrupted or impaired ; insomuch that he opposed himself to all those who attacked it, either in its Truth, or in its Holiness ; that is, not only to Atheists, Infidels, and Heretics, who refuse to submit to the evidence of faith, but even to such Christians, as though they continue within the pale of the Church, yet do not conform their lives to the purity of the gospel-maxims.

This was his design ; and this was great and ample enough to take in the main of what is here collected. Yet the Reader will meet with some Observations which have no dependence on it, and which, indeed, were never conceived under such a relation ; as for instance, the greatest part of those in the Chapter of *Miscellaneous Thoughts*, which were likewise found amongst the Papers of M. PASCAL, and which were therefore permitted to accompany the rest, because the book is not now given to the world barely as a Refutation of Atheism, or a Discourse upon Religion, but as a Collection of M. PASCAL'S *Thoughts on Religion, and other Subjects*.

I think there is nothing behind in this Preface, but to say somewhat of the Author. A brief relation has been already given of the manner in which he passed his childhood ; of the vast progress made by him, with the greatest celerity, in all the parts of human and profane knowledge, especially in the Mathematics ; of the surprising method by which he was taught this last science at the age of eleven or twelve ; of the little works which he then composed, and which always appeared far above the strength and capacity of those years ; of the prodigious and astonishing force of his genius, discovered in his Arithmetical Instrument, which he invented between nineteen and twenty ; and, in fine, of his curious experiments performed at *Roanne*, in the presence of the most considerable persons of that city, where he resided for

some time, while his Father was employed there in the King's service, as *Intendant of Justice*. I shall not repeat what was then said ; but only represent, in a few words, by what means he was at length induced to despise all these things, and with what kind of spirit he passed his concluding years ; by which he no less evidenced the greatness and solidity of his piety, than he had before demonstrated the force, the extent, and the admirable penetration of his judgment.

He had, by the particular Providence of God, been preserved from those vices into which young gentlemen are so often betrayed ; and, what seemed very extraordinary in so inquisitive a genius, he was never disposed to scepticism in religious matters. He has often said, that he owed this obligation, amongst many others, to his excellent Father, who, having himself the most profound veneration for Religion, took care to instil the same into him from his infancy.

These instructions, frequently repeated to him by a father, for whom he had the highest respect, and in whom he observed a general knowledge, joined with a strong and piercing judgment, made so deep an impression on his spirit, that he was never inclined to the least doubt by the discourses which he heard from libertines ; whom he looked upon as men guided by this false principle, that human Reason is above all things, and as those who were utter strangers to the nature of Faith.

But having passed his youthful days in such employments as appear very innocent to the eyes of the world, it pleased God so to touch his heart, as to let him perfectly understand, that the Christian Religion obligeth us to live for God only, and to propose no other object or aim. And this truth appeared to him so evident, so useful, and so necessary, that it made him enter on a resolution of retiring and disengaging himself, by degrees, from all his worldly dependences, to attend wholly on this one design.

He had, indeed, taken up such a desire of privacy, and

of devoting himself to a more holy life, while very young ; and this had before moved him entirely to abandon all profane studies, in order to the giving himself to those only which might be serviceable to his own salvation, and to that of others. But the continual illness, into which he fell, diverted him for many years from his purpose, and retarded the full execution of it till he arrived at the age of thirty.

It was then that he began to labour in it with all his force ; and that he might the more easily obtain his wish, and cut off all his engagements at one stroke, he changed his lodgings, and soon after removed into the country ; whence returning after some time, he so well testified his resolution of forsaking the world, that the world forsook him. The conduct of his privacy he established on these two principal maxims,—to renounce all pleasure, and all superfluity ; on these he ever fixed his eye, studying to make nearer advances towards them, and to attain every day new degrees of perfection.

It was his continual application to these two noble maxims that enabled him to sustain, with so exemplary a patience, all his sickness and sufferings, which scarcely left him free from pain during his life. It was this that enjoined him to practise so rigorous a mortification towards himself, not only denying his senses whatever was agreeable to them, but taking without uneasiness, and even with joy and satisfaction, any thing that might seem distasteful, when it was proper either as nourishment or as physic. It was this that engaged him to retrench, every day, what he judged not absolutely necessary, either in clothes, food, or furniture, or in any other accommodation. It was this that inspired him with so great and ardent a love for poverty, as to make it the ruling thought of his mind, so that he never undertook any thing till he had first asked himself, whether poverty was consistent with such a proposal ; and on all occasions he expressed so much tenderness towards the poor, as never to refuse an alms, and many times to bestow very largely,



though out of his own necessary subsistence. It was from this, that he could not bear any nicety in providing things for his convenience or use; and that he so much blamed the humour of searching after curiosities, and the desire of excelling in all things, as of employing the very best artists, and of having every thing made in the newest fashion. To conclude, it was this that prompted him to perform a great number of most remarkable and most christian actions, which I forbear here to relate, that I may not seem tedious, and because I attempt not to compose a Life, but only to convey some idea of the piety of M. PASCAL to those who had not the happiness of his acquaintance. For, as for those who knew him, and who were admitted to his company during his latter years, as I do not take upon me to inform them by what I write, so I doubt not but they will testify in my behalf, that I might still have enlarged on many particulars, which I have now chosen to pass over in silence.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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*THOUGH, from the bare reading of any paragraph, it might with ease be determined, whether it be a continuation of that which preceded, or whether it belong to a new design; yet, for the greater convenience, it was judged proper to make use of some particular mark of distinction. Those paragraphs, therefore, which have an asterisk (\*) prefixed to them, will be known to be such as are entirely separate from the foregoing. And those which want this mark will as easily be known to make but one and the same discourse, and to have been found in this very order and method amongst the Author's original Papers. .*

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# MONSIEUR PASCAL'S

## THOUGHTS.

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### I. *Against an Atheistical Indifference.*

IT were to be wished, that the enemies of Religion would at least bring themselves to apprehend its nature, before they opposed its authority. Did Religion make its boast of beholding GOD with a clear and perfect view, and of possessing him without covering or veil, the argument would bear some colour, when men should allege, that none of the things about them do indeed afford this pretended evidence. But since Religion, on the contrary, represents men as in a state of darkness and of estrangement from GOD; since it affirms him to have withdrawn himself from their discovery, and to have chosen, in his word, the very style and appellation of an hidden GOD; lastly, since it employs itself alike in establishing these two maxims,—that GOD has left in his Church certain characters of himself, by which they who sincerely seek him shall not fail of a sensible conviction, and yet that he has, at the same time, so far shaded and obscured these characters, as to render them imperceptible to those who do not seek him with their whole heart,—what advantage is it to men who are negligent in the search of truth; to complain so frequently that nothing reveals and displays it to them? For this very

obscurity under which they labour, and which they make an exception against the Church, does itself evince one of the two grand points which the Church maintains, (without affecting the other,) and is so far from overthrowing its doctrines, as to lend them a manifest confirmation and support.

If they would give their objections any strength, they ought to urge, that they have applied their utmost endeavour, and have used all means of information, without satisfaction. Did they express themselves thus, they would indeed attack Religion in one of its chief pretensions. But I hope to shew, in the following Papers, that no rational person can speak after this manner; and I dare assert, that none ever did. We know very well, how men, under this indifferency of spirit, behave themselves in the case. They suppose themselves to have made the mightiest effort, when they have spent some hours in reading the Scriptures, and have asked some questions of a Clergyman concerning the articles of faith. When this is done, they declare to all the world, that they have consulted books and men without any success. I shall be excused, if I refrain not from telling such men, that this neglect of theirs is insupportable. It is not a foreign or a petty interest, which is here in debate: we are ourselves the parties, and all our hopes and fortunes are the depending stake.

The Immortality of the Soul is a thing which so deeply concerns, so infinitely imports us, that we must have utterly lost our feeling, to be altogether cold and remiss in our inquiries about it. And all our actions or designs ought to bend so very different a way, according as we are either encouraged or forbidden to embrace the hope of eternal rewards, that it is impossible for us to proceed with discretion, otherwise than as we keep this point always in view, which ought to be our ruling object and final aim.

Thus is it our highest interest, no less than our principal duty, to get light into a subject on which our whole conduct

depends. And therefore, in the number of wavering, unsatisfied men, I make the greatest difference imaginable between those who labour with all their force to obtain instruction, and those who live without giving themselves any trouble, or so much as any thought, in this affair.

I cannot but be touched with a hearty compassion for those who sincerely groan under this dissatisfaction ; who look upon it as the greatest of misfortunes ; and who spare no pains to deliver themselves from it, by making these researches their chief employment and most serious study. But as for those, who pass their life without reflecting on its issue, and who, for this reason alone, because they find not in themselves a convincing testimony, refuse to seek it elsewhere, and to examine to the bottom whether the opinion proposed be such as we are wont to entertain by popular credulity, or, though obscure in itself, yet is built on solid and immoveable foundations, —I consider them after quite another manner. The carelessness which they betray in an affair, where their person, their interest, their whole eternity is embarked, strikes me with amazement and astonishment. I speak not this as transported with the pious zeal of a spiritual and rapturous devotion. On the contrary, I affirm, that the love of ourselves, the interest of mankind, and the most simple and artless reason, do naturally inspire us with these sentiments ; and that to see thus far, is not to exceed the sphere of unrefined, uneducated men.

It requires no great elevation of soul to observe, that nothing in this world is productive of true contentment ; that our pleasures are vain and fugitive,—our troubles innumerable and perpetual ; and that, after all, death, which threatens us every moment, must, in the compass of a few years, (perhaps of a few days,) put us into the eternal condition of *Happiness*, or *Misery*, or *Nothing*. Between us and these three great states no barrier is interposed, but life, the most brittle thing in all nature ; and the happiness of heaven being certainly not designed for those who doubt whether they have an immortal part to

enjoy it, such persons have nothing left, but the miserable chance of Annihilation, or of Hell.

There is not any reflection which can have more reality than this, as there is none which has greater terror. Let us set the bravest face on our condition, and play the hero as artfully as we can, yet see here the issue which attends the goodliest life upon earth.

It is in vain for men to turn aside their thoughts from this eternity which awaits them, as if they were able to destroy it by denying it a place in their imagination. It subsists in spite of *them*; it advanceth unobserved; and death, which is to draw the curtain from it, will in a short time infallibly reduce them to the dreadful necessity of being for ever nothing, or for ever miserable.

We have here a doubt of the most affrighting consequence, and to entertain which, therefore, may be well esteemed the most grievous of misfortunes: but, at the same time, it is our indispensable duty not to lie under it, without struggling for deliverance.

He then who doubts, and yet seeks not to be resolved, is equally unhappy and unjust. But if, withal, he appears easy and composed, if he freely declares his indifference, nay, if he takes a vanity in professing it, and seems to make this most deplorable condition the subject of his pleasure and joy, I have not words to fix a name on so extravagant a creature. Where is the very possibility of entering into these thoughts and resolutions? What delight is there in expecting misery without end? What vanity in finding one's self encompassed with impenetrable darkness? Or what consolation in despairing for ever of a comforter?

To sit down with some sort of acquiescence under so fatal an ignorance, is a thing unaccountable beyond all expression; and they who live with such a disposition ought to be made sensible of its absurdity and stupidity, by having their inward reflections laid open to them, that they may grow wise by the prospect of their own folly. For behold how men are wont to reason, while they

obstinately remain thus ignorant of what they are, and refuse all methods of instruction.

—“ Who has sent me into the world I know not ; what the world is I know not, nor what I am myself. I am under an astonishing ignorance of all things. I know not what my body is, what my senses, or my soul. This very part of me which thinks what I speak, which reflects upon every thing else, and even upon itself, is yet as mere a stranger to its own nature, as the dullest thing I carry about me. I behold these frightful spaces of the universe with which I am encompassed, and I find myself chained to one little corner of the vast extent, without understanding why I am placed in this seat, rather than in any other ; or why this moment of time, given me to live, was assigned rather at such a point, than at any other of the whole eternity which was before me, or of all that which is to come after me. I see nothing but infinities on all sides, which devour and swallow me up like an atom, or like a shadow, which endures but a single instant, and is never to return. The sum of my knowledge is, that I must shortly die ; but that which I am most ignorant of is this very death, which I feel myself unable to decline.

“ As I know not whence I came, so I know not whither I go ; only this I know,—that at my departure out of the world, I must either fall for ever into nothing, or into the hands of an incensed God,—without being capable of deciding which of these two conditions shall eternally be my portion. Such is my state, full of weakness, obscurity, and wretchedness. And from all this I conclude, that I ought to pass all the days of my life, without considering what is hereafter to befall me ; and that I have nothing to do, but to follow my inclinations without reflection or disquiet, in doing all that, which, if what men say of a miserable eternity prove true, will infallibly plunge me into it. It is possible I might find some light to clear up my doubts ; but I shall not take a minute’s pains, nor stir one foot, in the search of it. On the contrary, I am



resolved to treat those with scorn who labour in this inquiry ; and so to run, without fear or foresight, upon the trial of the grand event ; permitting myself to be led softly on to death, utterly uncertain as to the eternal issue of my future condition.”—

In earnest, it is a glory to Religion to have so unreason-able men for its professed enemies ; and their opposition is of so little danger, that it serves to illustrate the principal truths which our Religion teaches. For the main scope of Christian Faith is to establish these two principles, the Corruption of Nature, and the Redemption by JESUS CHRIST. And these opposers, if they are of no use toward demonstrating the Truth of the Redemption, by the sanctity of their lives, yet are at least admirably useful in shewing the Corruption of Nature, by so unnatural sentiments.

Nothing is so important to any man as his own estate and condition ; nothing so great, so amazing, as eternity. If, therefore, we find persons indifferent to the loss of their being, and to the danger of endless misery, it is impossible that this temper should be natural. They are quite other men in all other regards ; they fear the smallest inconveniences ; they see them as they approach, and feel them if they arrive ; and he who passeth days and nights in chagrin and despair for the loss of an employment, or for some imaginary blemish in his honour, is the very same mortal who knows that he must lose all by death, and yet remains without disquiet, resentment, or emotion. This wonderful insensibility, with respect to things of the most fatal consequence, in a heart so nicely sensible of the meanest trifles, is an astonishing prodigy, an unintelligible enchantment, a supernatural blindness and infatuation.

A man in a close dungeon, who knows not whether sentence of death has passed upon him, and who is allowed but one hour's space to inform himself concerning it,—that one hour being sufficient, in case it have passed, to obtain its reversal,—would act contrary to nature and

sense, should he make use of this hour, not to procure information, but to pursue his vanity or sport. And yet such is the condition of the persons whom we are now describing; only with this difference, that the evils with which they are every moment threatened infinitely surpass the bare loss of life, and that transient punishment which the prisoner is supposed to apprehend: yet they run thoughtlessly upon the precipice, having only cast a veil over their eyes, to hinder them from discerning it; and divert themselves with the officiousness of such as charitably warn them of their danger.

Thus not only the zeal of those who heartily seek God demonstrates the truth of religion, but likewise the blindness of those who utterly forbear to seek him, and who pass their days under so horrible a neglect. There must needs be a strange turn and revolution in human nature, before men can submit to such a condition, much more before they can applaud and value themselves upon it. For supposing them to have obtained an absolute certainty, that there was no fear after death, but of falling into nothing, ought not this to be the subject rather of despair than of jollity? And is it not therefore the highest pitch of senseless extravagance, while we want this certainty, to glory in our doubt and distrust?

And yet, after all, it is too visible, that man has so far declined from his original nature, and as it were departed from himself, as to nourish in his heart a secret seed-plot of joy, springing up from these libertine reflections. This brutal ease, or indolence, between the fear of hell and of annihilation, carries somewhat so tempting in it, that not only those who have the misfortune to be sceptically inclined, but even those who cannot unsettle their judgment, esteem it reputable to take up a counterfeit diffidence. For we may observe the largest part of the herd to be of this kind, false pretenders to infidelity, and mere hypocrites in atheism. There are persons whom we have heard declare, that the genteel way of the world consists in thus acting the bravo. This is that

which they term "throwing off the yoke," and which the greater number of them profess, not so much out of opinion, as out of gallantry and complaisance.

Yet, if they have the least reserve of common sense, it will not be difficult to make them apprehend, how miserably they abuse themselves by laying so false a foundation of applause and esteem. For this is not the way to raise a character, even with worldly men, who, as they are able to pass a shrewd judgment on things, so they may easily discern, that the only method of succeeding in our temporal affairs is to prove ourselves honest, faithful, prudent, and capable of advancing the interest of our friends; because men naturally love nothing but that which in some way contributes to their use and benefit. But now what benefit can we in any way derive from hearing a man confess that he has eased himself of the burden of Religion; that he believes in no God, as the witness and inspector of his conduct; that he considers himself as absolute master of what he does, and accountable for it only to his own mind? Will he fancy that we shall be hence induced to repose a greater confidence in him hereafter, or to depend on his comfort, his advice, or assistance, in the necessities of life? Can he imagine us to take any great delight when he tells us, that he doubts whether our very soul be any thing more than a little wind and smoke?—nay, when he tells it us with an air of assurance, and a voice that testifies the contentment of his heart? Is this a thing to be spoken of with pleasantry? Or ought it not rather to be lamented with the deepest sadness, as the most melancholy reflection that can strike our thoughts?

If they would compose themselves to serious consideration, they must perceive the method in which they are engaged to be so very ill chosen, so repugnant to gentility, and so remote even from that good air and grace which they pursue, that, on the contrary, nothing can more effectually expose them to the contempt and aversion of mankind, or mark them out for persons defective in parts

and judgment. And, indeed, should we demand from them an account of their sentiments, and of the reasons which they have for entertaining this suspicion in religious matters, what they offered would appear so miserably weak and trifling, as rather to confirm us in our belief. This is no more than what one of their own fraternity told them, with great smartness, on such an occasion ; “ If you continue ” (says he) “ to dispute at this rate, you will infallibly make me a Christian.” And the gentleman was in the right : for who would not tremble to find himself embarked in the same cause with so despicable companions ?

And thus it is evident, that they who wear no more than the outward mask of these principles, are the most unhappy counterfeits in the world ; inasmuch as they are obliged to put a continual force on their genius, only that they may render themselves the most impertinent of all men living.

If they are sincerely troubled at their want of light, let them not dissemble the disease. Such a confession could not be reputed shameful ; for there is no shame, but in being shameless. Nothing betrays so much weakness of soul, as not to apprehend the misery of man, while living “ without God in the world.” Nothing is a surer token of extreme baseness of spirit, than not to hope for the reality of eternal promises. No man is so stigmatised a coward, as he that acts the bravo against heaven. Let them therefore leave these impieties to those who are born with so unhappy a judgment, as to be capable of entertaining them in earnest. If they cannot be *Christian Men*, let them, however, be *Men of Honour* : and let them, in conclusion, acknowledge, that there are but two sorts of persons, who deserve to be styled reasonable, either those who serve God with all their heart, because they know him ; or those who seek him with all their heart, because as yet they know him not.

If then there are persons who sincerely inquire after God, and who, being truly sensible of their misery,

affectionately desire to be rescued from it ; it is to these alone that we can in justice afford our service, for their direction in finding out that light of which they feel the want.

But as for those who live without either knowing God, or endeavouring to know him, they look on themselves as so little deserving of their own care, that they cannot but be unworthy of the care of others : and it requires all the charity of the Religion they despise, not to despise them to such a degree, as even to abandon them to their own folly. But since the same Religion obliges us to consider them, while they remain in this life, as still capable of God's enlightening grace, and to acknowledge it possible, that, in the course of a few days, they may be replenished with a fuller measure of faith than we now enjoy, and we ourselves, on the other side, fall into the depths of their present blindness and misery ; we ought to do for them, what we desire should be done to us in their case,—to entreat them, that they would take pity on themselves, and would, at least, advance a step or two forward, if perchance they may come into the light. For this end it is wished, that they would employ, in the perusal of this piece, some few of those hours which they spend so unprofitably in other pursuits. It is possible they may gain somewhat by the reading ; at least, they cannot be great losers : but if any shall apply themselves to it with sincerity, and with an unfeigned desire of knowing the truth, I despair not of their satisfaction, or of their being convinced by so many proofs of our divine Religion.

## II. *Marks of the True Religion.*

The true Religion ought chiefly to distinguish itself by obliging men to the Love of God. This is what natural Justice requires, and yet what no Institution besides the Christian has ever commanded.

It ought likewise to have some apprehension of the innate concupiscence of man, and of his utter insuffi-

ciency for the attainment of virtue by his own strength, and some skill in applying the proper remedies to this defect, of which prayer is the principal. Our Religion has performed all this, and none besides has ever begged of God the power of loving and of obeying him.

\* To make out the truth and certainty of a Religion, it is necessary that it should have obtained the knowledge of human nature. For our true nature and true happiness, true virtue and true religion, are things, the knowledge of which is reciprocal and inseparable. It should also be able to discern the greatness and the meanness of human condition, together with the cause and reason of both. What Religion, the Christian only excepted, could ever pretend to be thus knowing?

\* Other Religions, as those of the heathens, are more popular, as consisting only in external appearance; but then they are unqualified for moving the judicious. Should any Religion reside altogether in the inward spirit, it might be fitter to work on parts and genius, but could hold no influence over the gross of mankind. Christianity alone is proportioned to all capacities, being duly composed and tempered of the internal and external way. It raises the most ignorant to inward and spiritual acts, and, at the same time, abases the most intelligent, by pressing outward performances, and is never complete but when it joins one of these effects to the other: for there is the like necessity that the people should understand the *spirit*, which is veiled under the *letter*, and that the learned should submit their spirit to the letter, in complying with exterior practices.

\* No Religion, except the Christian, has known man to be the most excellent of visible creatures, and, at the same time, the most miserable. Some having apprehended the reality of his excellence, have censured, as mean and ungrateful, the low opinion which men naturally entertain of their own condition. Others, well knowing the unhappy effects of his baseness and misery,

have exposed, as ridiculously vain, those notions of grandeur which are no less natural to men.

\* The Divine Nature being removed from human thoughts and discovery, every Religion which does not confess it to be so, is false; and every Religion which does not shew the reason why it is so, must be barren and unedifying: our Religion has performed both parts.

\* That Religion, which consists in believing the Fall of man from a state of glory, and communication with God, to a state of sorrow, humiliation, and estrangement from God, together with his Restoration by a MESSIAS, has always been in the world. All things are passed away, and this remains for which all things were: for God, in his wisdom, designing to form to himself a holy people, whom he should separate from all other nations, should deliver from their enemies, and should settle in a place of rest, was pleased expressly to promise, not only that he would accomplish this merey, but that he would come himself into the world for its performance; foretelling, by his Prophets, the very time and manner of his coming. Yet, in the mean while, to confirm the hope of his elect through all ages, he continually afforded them the pledges of types and figures, and never left them without assurances, as well of his power as of his inclination to save them. For immediately after the first creation, ADAM was the witness and depository of the promise concerning a Saviour, to be born of the seed of the woman; and though men, while they stood so near to their own originals, could not forget the gift of their being, the shame of their fall, or the divine promise of a Redeemer, yet since the world, in its very infancy, was over-run with all sorts of corruptions, GOD was pleased to raise up holy men, as ENOCH, LAMECH, and others, who, with a peculiar faith and patience, waited for the author of their deliverance. After this, when the wickedness of men was arrived at its pitch, we read of GOD's sending NOAH on a special commission, and of his reseuing him from the common destruction; a miracle which testified at

once the power of GOD to save the world, and his will to perform this, by raising up to the Woman the Seed which he had promised. This signal act of omnipotence was enough to strengthen the expectation of mankind; and the memory of it was still fresh, when GOD renewed his promises to ABRAHAM, (who dwelt in the midst of idolaters,) and opened to him the mystery of the MESSIAS that was to come. In the days of ISAAC and JACOB, the abomination was spread over the whole earth; yet these holy Patriarchs lived in faith, and the latter of them, as he blessed his children before his approaching death, refrained not from crying out, with a pious transport which interrupted his discourse, "I will wait for thy salvation, O LORD."

The *Egyptians* were besotted with idolatry and magic, nor did the People of GOD escape the infection of their example; yet MOSES, with other excellent persons, saw him whom they saw not, and adored him, and had respect unto the eternal recompence which he was preparing for them.

The *Greeks* and *Romans* introduced a new multitude of fictitious deities: the Poets advanced their repugnant systems of theology: the Philosophers broke out into a thousand different sects: Yet were there always in the little corner of *Judea* chosen men, who foretold the coming of the MESSIAS, unknown to all but themselves.

He came at length in the fulness of time; and ever since his appearance, notwithstanding the numerous births of schisms and heresies, the revolutions in government, and the utter change in all things, the same Church, whose glory it is to adore Him who has been ever adored, still subsists without interruption. And what must be owned to be incomparably excellent, wonderful, and altogether divine, this Religion, which has ever subsisted, has ever been opposed. A thousand times has it been on the very brink of universal ruin; and as often as it has been reduced to this estate, so often has it been



relieved by some extraordinary interposal of almighty power. It is astonishing, that it should never want a miracle to deliver it in extremity; and that it should be able to maintain itself, without bending to the will of tyrants and oppressors.

\* Civil States must infallibly perish, if they did not many times permit their laws to give way to necessity: but Religion has never suffered this violence, though it has never stooped to this compliance. Yet there must be such accommodations and submissions, or else there must be a miraculous support. It is no wonder, that Empires and Governments should procure their safety by thus bending and bowing; and it is indeed improper, in this case, to say that they maintain or uphold themselves. Yet we see that they, at length, find an utter dissolution; nor has any one amongst them been so long-lived as to reach the period of fifteen hundred years. But that Religion should have always kept its ground, by always continuing unalterable and inflexible,—this is truly great and providential.

\* Thus has the belief in the MESSIAS been derived down by a constant series, and uninterrupted course. The tradition from ADAM was fresh and lively in NOAH, and even in MOSES. After these, the Prophets bore testimony to him; at the same time predicting other things, which, being from day to day fulfilled in the eyes of all the world, demonstrated the truth of their promises in this behalf. They unanimously declared, that the legal ordinances were but preparatory to the Messiah's Institution; that till such a time the former should subsist without intermission, but that the latter should endure for ever; and that by this means, either the Law of MOSES, or that of the MESSIAS, which it prefigured, should always continue upon earth;—and, in fact, there has been such a continuance to our days. JESUS CHRIST came agreeably to all the circumstances of their predictions; he performed miracles in his own person, and by the hands of his Apostles, whom he appointed for the conversion of

the Gentile World; and the prophecies being thus once accomplished, the MESSIAS is for ever demonstrated.

\* That Religion, which alone is contrary to our nature in its present estate, which declares war against our pleasures and inclinations, and which, upon a slight and transient view, seems repugnant even to common sense, is that alone which has subsisted from the beginning.

\* It is necessary that the whole current of things should bear a regard to the establishment and the grandeur of Religion; that there should be implanted in men sentiments agreeable to its precepts; and, in a word, that it should so visibly be the great object and centre towards which all things tend, that whosoever understands its principles may be thence enabled to give an account, as of human nature in particular, so, in general, of the whole state and order of the world.

It is upon this very foundation that profane men are wont to build their blasphemous calumnies against the Christian Religion, only because they misunderstand it. They imagine, that it consists purely in the adoration of the Divinity, considered as great, powerful, and eternal. This is properly Deism, and stands almost as far removed from Christianity as Atheism, which is directly opposite to it. Yet hence they would infer the falsehood of our Religion; because (say they) were it true, GOD would have manifested himself under its dispensation by so visible tokens, that it should have been impossible for any man not to know him.

But let them conclude what they will against Deism, they will be able to draw no such conclusion to the prejudice of Christianity; which acknowledges, that since the Fall, GOD does not manifest himself to us with all the evidence that is possible,—and which consists properly in the mystery of a Redeemer, who, by sustaining at once the divine and human natures, has recovered men out of the corruption of sin, that he might reconcile them to GOD in his divine person.

True Religion, therefore, instructs men in these two principles, that there is a God whom they are capable of knowing and enjoying; and that there are such corruptions in their nature, as render them unworthy of him. There is the same importance in apprehending the one and the other of these points; and it is alike dangerous for man to know God without the knowledge of his own misery, and to know his own misery without the knowledge of a Redeemer, who may deliver him from it. To apprehend one without the other, begets either the pride of Philosophers, who knew God, but not their own misery; or the despair of Atheists, who know their own misery, but not the author of their deliverance.

And as it is of equal necessity to man, that he should obtain the knowledge of both these principles, so is it equally agreeable to the mercy of God, that he should afford the means of such a knowledge. To perform this, is the office, and the very essence, of Christianity.

Upon this footing, let men examine the order and economy of the world, and let them see, whether all things do not conspire in establishing these two fundamentals of our Religion.

\* If any one knows not himself to be full of pride and ambition, of concupiscence and injustice, of weakness and wretchedness, he is blind beyond dispute. And if any one, who knows himself to labour under these defects, at the same time desires not to be rescued from them, what can we say of a man who has thus abandoned his reason? What remains then, but that we preserve the highest veneration for a Religion, which so well understands the infirmities of mankind; and that we profess the heartiest wishes for the truth of a religion, which engageth to heal those infirmities by so happy, so desirable a relief?



III. *The true Religion proved by the Contrarieties which are discoverable in Man, and by the Doctrine of Original Sin.*

THE greatness and the misery of man, being alike conspicuous, it is necessary that the true Religion should declare, that he contains in himself some noble principle of greatness, and, at the same time, some profound source of misery. For the true Religion cannot answer its character otherwise, than by searching our nature to the bottom, so as perfectly to understand all that is great and all that is miserable in it, together with the reason of the one and of the other. Religion is farther obliged to account for those astonishing Contrarieties which we find within us. If there be but one Principle, or efficient Cause, one Author of all things, and himself the End of all things, the true Religion must teach us to make him alone the object of our worship and our love. But since we find ourselves under an inability, as well of adoring him whom we know not, as of loving any thing but ourselves, the same Religion, which enjoins on us these duties, ought also to acquaint us with this inability, and to instruct us in its cure.

Again, in order to the accomplishment of man's happiness, it ought to convince us that there is a GOD; that we are obliged to love him; that our true felicity consists in our dependence on him, and our only evil in our separation from him. It ought to inform us, that we are full of gross darkness, which hinders us from knowing and loving him; and that our duty thus obliging us to love GOD, and our concupiscence turning our whole affection upon ourselves, we are notoriously unjust. It ought to discover to us the cause of that enmity and opposition which we bear to GOD, and to our own happiness. It ought to teach us the remedies of this infirmity, and the means of obtaining them. Let men compare all the

Religions of the world in these respects, and let them observe whether any one, but the Christian, is able to afford them satisfaction.

Shall it be the Religion of those Philosophers, who proposed no other good, but what they would have us **find** in our own persons? Is this the true and sovereign good? Or have these men discovered the remedy of our evils? Was it a proper method for the cure of man's presumption, thus to equal him with GOD? On the other hand, have those succeeded better in restraining our earthly desires, who would bring us down to the level of beasts, and present us with sensual gratifications for our real and universal happiness? "Lift up your eyes to **GOD,**" said those of the former tribe; "behold him who has stamped you with his image, and has made you for his worship. You have not only a capacity of being like him, but Wisdom, if you follow its directions, will even render you his peers." While those of the latter herd **cried, with no** less earnestness, "Cast down your eyes to the ground, base worms as you are, and look on the beasts, your goodly partners and fellows." What then is to be the fate of man? Shall he be equal to GOD, or shall he not be superior to the beasts? How frightful, how shocking a distance this! What shall we be then? What Religion shall instruct us to correct at once our pride and our concupiscence? What Religion shall disclose to us our happiness and our duty, together with the infirmities which stop us in so desired a course, the proper help of these infirmities, and the means of obtaining this help? Let us hear what answer we receive, upon the whole enquiry, from the Wisdom of GOD, speaking to us in the Christian Religion.

— "It is in vain, O men, that you seek from yourselves the remedy of your miseries. All your lights extend to no farther discovery than this, that you cannot, from your own stores, be supplied with happiness or truth. The Philosophers, who promised all things, could perform

nothing in your behalf: they neither apprehended your true estate, nor your real good. What possibility was there of your receiving benefit from their prescriptions, who had not skill enough to understand your disease? Your chief infirmities are pride, which alienates you from God, and concupiscence, which fastens you down to earth; and *their* constant employment was to caress and entertain one or the other of these disorders. They who presented God to you, as the sole object of your contemplation, did but gratify your pride, by vainly insinuating, that your nature was constituted under a parity with the Divine: and as for those who saw the extravagance of such pretensions, what did they but set you upon the other precipice, by tempting you to believe, that your nature was of a piece with that of the beasts; and by inclining you to place all your good in sensual delight, the portion of irrational creatures? These could never be the means of discovering to you the injustice of your proceedings. Do not therefore expect instruction or consolation from men: it was I that first made you to be; and it is I alone who can teach you the knowledge of your being. You are not now in the estate under which you were formed by my hand: I created man holy, innocent, and perfect: I replenished him with light and understanding: I communicated to him my wonders and my glory: then it was that the eye of man beheld the majesty of God. He did not then labour under this darkness which blinds him, or under this mortality, and these miseries, which oppress him: but he was unable to sustain so great degree of splendor, without falling into presumption: he was disposed to make himself the centre of his own happiness, and altogether independent of the divine succours: and when he had withdrawn himself from my dominion, and affected an equality with me, by presuming to find all happiness in himself, I abandoned him to his own guidance; and causing a general revolt amongst the creatures that were his subjects, I made

them his enemies. Man himself is now become like unto the beasts, and removed to such a distance from me, as scarcely to retain some scattered rays and confused notices of his Author; so far have all his discerning powers been either extinguished or disturbed. His senses being never the servants, and very often the masters, of his reason, have driven him on the pursuit of unwarrantable pleasures. All the creatures, with which he is surrounded, either grieve and torment, or tempt and seduce him; thus ever maintaining a sovereignty over him, either as they subdue him by their strength, or as they melt him with their charms, which is the more imperious and more fatal tyranny."

\* From the principles which I have here laid open to you, you may discern the spring of those wonderful Contrarieties, which, while they astonish all men, do no less distract and divide them.

\* Observe again all the movements of greatness and glory, which the sense of so many miracles is not able to extinguish, and consider whether they can proceed from a less powerful cause than original nature.

\* Know then, proud mortal, what a paradox thou art to thyself. Let thy weak reason be humbled; let thy frail nature compose itself in silence: learn that *man* infinitely surpasseth *man*; and let thy own history, to which thou art thyself an utter stranger, be declared to thee by thy Maker and thy Lord.

\* Had man never fallen into corruption, he would proceed in the enjoyment of truth and happiness with an assured delight; and had man never known any other than this corrupted state, he would, at present, retain no idea of truth and happiness. But so great is our misery, (greater than if we had never tasted any thing lofty or noble in our condition,) that we may preserve an idea of happiness while we are unable to pursue it; that we discern some faint image of truth, while we possess nothing but lies, being alike incapable of absolute igno-

rance and of accomplished knowledge. So manifest is it, that we once stood in a degree of perfection, from which we are now unhappily fallen.

\* What then does this eagerness in coveting, and this impotence in acquiring, teach us?—What, but that man was originally possessed of a real bliss, of which nothing now remains but the footsteps and empty traces, which he vainly endeavours to replenish with all the abundance that surrounds him, seeking from absent enjoyments the relief which he finds not in such as are present, and which neither the present nor the absent can bestow on him; because this great gulf, this infinite vacuity, is only to be filled up by an object infinite and immovable.

\* It is most astonishing to reflect, that of all mysteries, that which seems to be farthest removed from our discovery and apprehension, I mean the transmission of Original Sin, should yet be so necessary a point of knowledge, as that, without it, we must remain utter strangers to ourselves. For it is beyond doubt, that nothing appears so shocking to our reason, as that the transgression of the first man should derive a guilt on those who, being so vastly distant from the fountain, seem incapable of sharing in the impure tincture. This transfusion is looked upon by us not only as impossible, but as unjust, could we suppose it to be possible. And yet without this incomprehensible mystery, we are, ourselves, incomprehensible to our own mind. The clue, which knits together our whole fortune and condition, takes its turns, and plies, in this amazing abyss; insomuch that man will appear no less inconceivable without this mystery, than this mystery appears inconceivable to man.

\* Original Sin is “foolishness” to men. It is granted to be so: wherefore, Reason ought not to be accused as defective in this knowledge, because it pretends not to be such as Reason can ever fathom. But then this “foolishness” is wiser than all the wisdom of men: for without this how would it be possible to say what man is? His whole estate depends on this one imperceptible point.



Yet how should he be made acquainted with this by his reason, when it is a thing above his reason, and when reason, instead of introducing him to it, carries him the farther from it, the more it is employed in the search ?

\* This double temper and disposition of man is so visible, that there have not been wanting those who imagined him to have two souls ; one single subject appearing to them incapable of so great and sudden variety, from an unmeasurable presumption to a dreadful abasement and abjectness of spirit.

\* Thus the several Contrarities which, in appearance, should most alienate men from the knowledge of all Religion, are those very things which should, indeed, most effectually conduct them to the true.

For my own part, I cannot but declare, that so soon as the Christian Religion discovers to me this one principle, that human nature is depraved and fallen from God, this clears up my sight, and enables me to distinguish throughout the characters of so divine a mystery. For such is the whole frame and disposition of nature, as, in all things within and without us, to bespeak the loss of God's more immediate presence, and more favourable communications.

Without this divine information, what would be left for men to do, but either immediately to exalt themselves by the remaining sense of their former grandeur, or no less immoderately to abase themselves by reflecting on their present infirmity ? For not being in a capacity of absolute truth, it is impossible they should arrive at perfect virtue. Some looking on nature as indefectible, others as irrecoverable, they must of necessity fall either into vanity or idleness, the two great sources of all vice. For they could not but either abandon themselves through negligence, or cure their negligence by flattering their pride. If they knew the excellency of man, they would be ignorant of his corruption, so as easily to escape the danger of remissness and sloth ; but, at the same time, would lose themselves in haughty conceit. Or, if they

were sensible of the infirmity of nature, they would be strangers to its dignity, so as easily to refrain from being transported with presumption ; but, at the same time, would plunge themselves into despair.

Hence arose the various sects of the *Stoics* and *Epicureans*, of the *Dogmatists* and the *Academics*, &c. It is the Christian Religion alone, which has been able thoroughly to cure these opposite distempers ; not so as to drive the one out by the other, according to the wisdom of the world, but so as to expel them both by the simplicity of the Gospel. For while it exalts the good and pious even to a participation of the Divinity itself, it lets them understand, that, in this their sublime estate, they still retain the fountain of all corruption, which renders them subject to error and misery, to death and sin. And at the same time it assures the impious, that they are not yet incapable of sharing the grace and blessing of a Redeemer. Thus speaking, not without terror to those whom it justifies, nor without comfort to those whom it condemns, it so wisely tempers hope and fear, in regard to this double capacity of sin and of grace, which is common to all mankind, that it abaseth infinitely more than unassisted reason, yet without despair, and exalts infinitely more than natural pride, yet without puffing up ;—hereby demonstrating, that being alone exempt from error and vice, it can alone challenge the office of instructing and of reforming men.

\* The mystery of the *Incarnation* discovers to man the greatness of his danger, by the greatness of those methods which he stood in need of for his relief.

\* No doctrine is so justly suited to the condition and to the temper of man, as this ; which makes him acquainted with his double capacity of receiving and forfeiting grace, as a fence against the double danger to which he is always exposed, of despair and of pride.

\* The Philosophers never furnished men with sentiments agreeable to these two estates. They either inspired a principle of pure grandeur, which cannot be the

true condition of men ; or else of mere abjectness, which condition is as ill proportioned as the former. We ought to preserve a sense of humiliation ; yet not as the character of our nature, but as the effect of our repentance ; not such as should fix us in desperation, but such as should dispose and lead us on to greatness. Nor ought we to be less affected with the motions of grandeur ; yet of such as proceeds from grace, not from merit, and such as we arrive at by the discipline of humiliation.

\* No man is so happy as the true Christian ; none is so rational, so virtuous, so amiable. With how little vanity does such an one reflect on himself as united to GOD ? With how little abjectness does he rank himself with the worms of the earth ?

IV. *It is by no means incredible, that GOD should unite Himself to us.*

THAT which renders men so averse to believing themselves capable of an union with GOD, is nothing else but the thought of their baseness and misery. Yet if this thought of theirs be sincere, let them pursue it as far as I have done, and let them confess our baseness to have only this effect, with respect to GOD, that it hinders us from discovering, by our own strength, whether his mercy cannot render us capable of an union with him. For I would gladly be informed, whence this creature, who acknowledgeth himself so weak and contemptible, should obtain a right of setting bounds to the divine mercy, and of measuring it by such a rule and standard as his own fancy suggests. Man knows so little of the divine essence, as to remain ignorant of what he is himself ; and yet, disturbed at this imperfect view of his own condition, he boldly pronounceth, that it is beyond the power of GOD to qualify him for so sublime a conjunction. But I will ask him, whether GOD requires any thing else at his hands, but that he should know him and

should love him ; and, since he finds himself, in his own nature, capable of knowing and of loving, upon what ground he suspects that the Divine Nature cannot exhibit itself as the object of his knowledge and his love ? For as he certainly knows, at least, that he is somewhat, so he no less certainly loves somewhat. If then he sees any thing under the present darkness of his understanding, and if amongst the things of this world he can find somewhat which may engage his affection,—should God be pleased to impart to him some ray of his essence, why should he not be able to know and to love his divine Benefactor, according to the measure and proportion in which this honour was vouchsafed ? There must therefore, no doubt, be an intolerable presumption in these ways of reasoning, though veiled under an appearance of humility. For our humility can neither be rational nor sincere, unless it makes us confess that, not knowing of ourselves even what we ourselves are, we cannot otherwise be instructed in our own condition, than by the assistance and information of Heaven.

#### V. *The Submission and Use of Reason.*

THE last process of Reason is to discover that there is an infinity of things which utterly surpass its force. And it must be very weak, if it arrive not at this discovery.

\* It is fit that we should know how to doubt where we ought, to rest assured where we ought, and to submit where we ought. He who fails in any one of these respects, is unacquainted with the power of Reason. Yet are there many who offend against these three rules ; either by warranting every thing for demonstration, because they are unskilled in the nature of demonstrative evidence ; or by doubting of every thing, because they know not where they ought to submit ; or by submitting to every thing, because they know not where to use their judgment.

\* If we bring down all things to Reason, our Religion will have nothing in it mysterious or supernatural. If we stifle the principles of Reason, our Religion will be absurd and ridiculous.

\* Reason, says ST. AUSTIN, would never be for submitting, if it did not judge, that on some occasions submission was its duty. It is but just, therefore, that it should recede, where it sees an obligation of receding, and that it should assert its privileges, where, upon good grounds, it supposeth itself not engaged to wave them.

Some men reproach us with a superstitious submission of our faculties. And we should be guilty of the charge, if we required men to submit in things which are not the proper matter of submission.

Nothing is so agreeable to Reason, as the disclaiming of Reason in matters of pure Faith; and nothing is so repugnant to Reason, as the disuse of Reason in things that do not concern Faith: the extremes are equally dangerous, either wholly to exclude Reason, or to admit nothing but Reason.

\* Faith says many things in which the Senses are silent, but nothing which the Senses deny. It is always above them, but never contrary to them.

## VI. *Faith without Reasoning.*

MIGHT we but see a Miracle, say some men, how gladly would we become Converts? They could not speak in this manner, did they understand what Conversion means. They imagine, that nothing else is requisite to this work, but the bare acknowledgment of GOD; and that his service consists only in paying to him certain verbal addresses, little different from those which the heathens used towards their idols. True Conversion is to abase, and, as it were, to annihilate ourselves, before this great and sovereign Being, whom we have so often provoked, and who every moment may, without the

least injustice, destroy us. It is to acknowledge, that we can do nothing without his aid, and that we have merited nothing from him but his wrath. It is to know, that there is an invincible opposition between God and ourselves; and that without the benefit of a Mediator, there could be no transaction or intercourse between us.

Never think it strange, that illiterate persons should believe without reasoning. God inspires them with the love of his justice, and with the contempt of themselves. It is he that inclines their hearts to believe. No man ever believes with a true and saving faith, unless God inclines his heart. Of this DAVID was sensible when he prayed, "Incline my heart, O LORD, to thy testimonies."

\* That some men believe without having examined the proofs of Religion, is because they enjoy a temper and frame of mind altogether pious and holy; and because what they hear affirmed by our Religion is agreeable to such a temper.

They are sensible that one God is their maker. They are inclined to love nothing but him, and to hate nothing but themselves. They are sensible of their own weakness and impotence, that they are of themselves utterly incapable of coming to God, and that, unless he is pleased mercifully to come to them, it is impossible they should maintain any communication with him. And they hear our religion declaring, that God alone ought to be the object of our affection, and ourselves alone of our detestation; and that, whereas we are by nature corrupt, and under an incapacity of uniting ourselves to God, God has been pleased to become man, that he might unite himself to us. There needs no more to persuade men, than this disposition of heart, together with this apprehension of their duty, and of their incapacity for its discharge.

\* Those whom we see commencing real Christians, without the knowledge of Prophecies, or of the like evidences, do yet judge of their Religion no less than the

masters of that knowledge. They judge of it by the heart, as others judge by the understanding. GOD inclines their heart to faith, and his grace is the most effectual conviction.

I confess, one of these Christians, who believes without the common methods of proof, is not qualified to convince an Infidel, who pretends to want nothing but proof. But those who are skilled in the evidences of religion can with ease demonstrate, that such a believer does truly receive his faith from the inspiration of GOD, though he is unable to prove even this of himself.

VII. *That there is more advantage in believing, than in disbelieving, the Doctrines of Christianity.*

UNITY joined to Infinity increases it not, any more than a Foot-measure added to an infinite Space. What is finite vanishes before that which is infinite, and becomes pure nothing. Thus our understanding in respect of GOD's; thus human justice compared with the Divine.

Nay, the disproportion between Unity and Infinity, in general, is not so vast as that between man's righteousness and the righteousness of GOD.

\* We know that there is an infinite; but we are ignorant of its nature. For instance; we know it to be false, that numbers are finite: there must, therefore, be an infinity in number. But what this is we know not. It can neither be equal or unequal, because unity added to it varies not its condition. Thus we may very well know that there is a GOD, without comprehending what GOD is; and you ought by no means to conclude against the existence of GOD from your imperfect conceptions of his essence.

For your conviction, I shall not call in the testimony of Faith, which gives us so certain an assurance; nor even make use of the ordinary proofs, because these you are

unwilling to receive. I shall argue with you upon your own terms ; and I doubt not but, from the method in which you reason every day concerning things of the smallest importance, I can make it appear after what manner you ought to reason in the present case, and to which side you ought to incline in deciding this question, of the highest consequence, about the existence of God. You allege, then, that we are incapable of knowing whether God is. Yet this remains certain, that either God is, or is not ; and that there can be no medium in the case. Which part then shall we choose ? Reason, say you, is not a proper judge in this point. There is an infinite gulf, or chaos, fixed between us : we play, as it were, at cross and pile, for an uncertainty thus infinitely distant. What will you wager ? Reason can affirm neither the one nor the other event : Reason can deny neither the one nor the other.

Do not be forward then in accusing those of error who have chosen their side. For you confess yourself not to know whether they have, indeed, made an ill choice.—“ No,” you will say, “ but I shall take the freedom to censure them still, not for making this choice, but for making any : he that takes cross, and he that takes pile, are both in the wrong ; the right had been not to wager at all.”—Nay, but there is a necessity of wagering ; the thing is placed beyond the indifference of your will ; you are embarked in the cause ; and by not laying that God is, you, in effect, lay that he is not. Which will you take ? Let us balance the gain and the loss of sticking to the affirmative. If you gain, you gain all ; if you lose, it is mere nothing that is lost. Be quick, therefore, and take this side without demur.—“ Well ; I confess, I ought to lay ; but may not I lay too much ?” Supposing the chance to be the same, you would not refuse to stake one life against two. And in case there were ten for you to win, you must be much more imprudent not to hazard one life against ten, at a game where the cast was even. But there is an infinite



number of lives, infinitely happy, to be won, upon an equal throw; and the stake you venture is so petty a thing, and of so very short continuance, that it would be ridiculous for you to shew your good husbandry on this occasion. For you say nothing, when you urge, that it is uncertain whether you win, and that it is certain you must venture; and that the infinite distance between the certainty of venturing, and the uncertainty of winning, makes the finite good, which you certainly expose, equal to the infinite, which you uncertainly pursue. This is all deception: every gamester stakes what is certain against what is uncertain; and yet his venturing a finite certainty for a finite uncertainty never disparages his reason. Again, it is false that there is an infinite distance between the *certainty* of what we venture, and the *uncertainty* of what we hope to win. Indeed, the *certainty* of winning, and the *certainty* of losing, are infinitely distant. But as for the *uncertainty* on the winning hand, it is such as fairly balanceth the *certainty* of what we venture, according to the usual proportion in games of chance. Suppose, therefore, there are as many chances on one side, as on the other, the game is even; and thus the certainty of our venture is but equal to the uncertainty of our prize: so far ought we to be from supposing an infinite distance between them. So that, upon the whole, if we stake a finite, when there is a plain equality as to winning or losing, and where that which may be won is infinite, the argument cannot but be of infinite force. We seem here to have a demonstration before us; and if men are not incapable of all truth, they cannot remain insensible of this.

You say, "I own, and confess it; but still might there not be some means of seeing a little clearer into this matter?"—Yes, this is to be done by the help of Scripture, and by the other infinite proofs of Religion.

"O," say you, "men who may entertain the hope of salvation are very happy in this respect; but is not the fear of hell a very unfortunate counterpoise?"

Which, I beseech you, has most cause to be afraid of hell; one that is under ignorance, whether there be a hell or not, and under certain damnation if there be; or another who is certainly persuaded that there is a hell, but is encouraged to hope that he shall be delivered from having his part in it?

A man who is respited (suppose for eight days) from the sentence of death, should he not be inclined to think that there is somewhat more in all this than a mere hit of chance, must have utterly abandoned his senses. But now were we not miserably enslaved by our passions, eight days and an hundred years would, upon this view, appear the same thing.

What damage are you like to sustain by embracing the affirmative? Why, you are engaged, by this principle, to be faithful, honest, humble, grateful, beneficent, hearty, and sincere. It is true, you will not be in possession of base and infamous pleasures, of fading glory, of empty delight. But is not their room to be supplied by more desirable enjoyments? I tell you, you will be a gainer, even in this life; and every step you take in the way to which you are now directed, you will discover so much certainty of a future advantage, and so much emptiness in what you hazard, as at length to find, that you have trafficked for a sure and infinite reversion, and yet, in effect, have given nothing for the purchase.

But, you say, you are so made as to be incapable of believing.—At least, then, endeavour to understand this your incapacity, and to find what it is that debars you of faith, when reason so manifestly invites you to it. Labour in your own conviction, not by increasing the proofs of a Deity, but by diminishing the power of your passions. You are willing to be brought to Faith, but you know not the way: you would be cured of your infidelity, and you desire to be informed of the proper remedies. Learn them from those who were once in your condition, but are at present clear from all scruple. They are acquainted with the path which you would

gladly find : they have recovered from a disease which you wish to overcome. Observe the method with which they began their cure : imitate their external actions, if you are, as yet, unable to transcribe their inward dispositions : banish those amusements which have hitherto entirely possessed you.

You say, "O! I should soon bid adieu to these pleasures, were I once but master of Faith." And, I say, on the other hand, you would soon be master of faith, had you once bidden adieu to these pleasures. It is your part to begin. Were it in my power, I would oblige you with the gift of faith. This I am unable to do, and, consequently, to make out the truth of what you suppose: but you may easily abandon your pleasures, and, by consequence, evince the certainty of what I affirm.

VIII. *The Portrait of a man who has wearied himself with searching after GOD by his bare Reason, and who begins to read the Scripture.*

WHEN I consider the blindness and misery of man, and those amazing contrarieties which discover themselves in his nature ; when I observe the whole creation to be silent, and man to be without comfort, abandoned to himself, and, as it were, strayed into this corner of the universe, neither apprehending by whose means he came hither, nor what is the end of his coming, nor what will befall him at his departure hence ; I am struck with the same horror as a person who has been carried in his sleep into a desolate and frightful island, and who awakes without knowing where he is, or by what way he may get out and escape. And, upon this view, I am at a loss to conceive how so miserable an estate can produce any thing but despair. I behold other persons near me, of the same nature and constitution : I ask, if they are any better informed than myself ; and they assure me they are not. Immediately after this, I take notice, that these

unfortunate wanderers, having looked about them, and espied certain objects of pleasure, are contented to seek no farther; but swallow the bait, embrace the charm, and fasten themselves down to the enjoyment.

For my own part, I can obtain no satisfaction or repose in the society of persons like myself, labouring under the same weakness, and the same distress. I find they will be able to give me no assistance at my death: I shall be obliged to die alone; and, therefore, I ought to proceed, in this respect, as if I lived alone. Now, in a condition of solitude, I would entertain no projects of building; I would perplex myself with none of the tumultuary affairs of this life; I would court the esteem of no person; but would devote myself, and my pains, to the discovery of truth.

Hence reflecting how probable it seems that there may be something else besides that which now presents itself to my eye, I begin to examine, whether that supreme Being, who is talked of by all the world, has been pleased to leave any marks or footsteps of himself. I look round on all sides, and see nothing throughout but universal obscurity. Nature offers no consideration, but what is the subject of doubt and disquiet. Could I no where discern the least token of DIVINITY, I would resolve not to believe at all: could I in every thing trace the image of a Creator, I would rest myself upon a sure and settled belief. But while I see too much to deny, and too little to affirm the question with any certainty, my condition renders me an object of pity; and I have a thousand times wished, that if nature have indeed a Divine Author and Supporter, she would present us with the lively draught and uncontested characters of his being, but that if the marks which she bears about her are fallacious, she would entirely conceal him from our view; that she would either say all, or say nothing, so as to determine my judgment on either side. Whereas, under my present suspense, being ignorant as well of

what I am, as of that which is expected from me, I remain an equal stranger to my condition and my duty. In the mean time, my heart is absolutely bent on the search of real and solid good, such as, when found, may complete my hopes, and regulate my conduct. I should think no price too dear for this acquisition.

I observe a multitude of Religions in all countries and times. But they are such as neither please me with their morals, or move me with their proofs. Thus, I would, without distinction, at once reject the Religion of MAHOMET, or of the *Chinese*, of ancient *Egypt* or *Rome*, upon this single reason, because neither of them being able to produce more signs of truth than another, neither of them affording any thing to incline and fix our thought, reason cannot shew a greater propension to one mode than to any of the rest.

But while I am making reflections on this strange and unaccountable variety of manners and of belief in different countries and periods, I find in one little corner of the world a peculiar People, separated from all the nations under heaven, whose registers exceed, by many ages, the most ancient stories on record. I discover a great and numerous race, who worship one GOD, and are governed by a law which they affirm themselves to have received from his hand. The sum of what they maintain is this: that they are the only persons whom GOD has honoured with the communication of his mysteries; that all other men, having corrupted themselves, and merited the divine displeasure, are abandoned to their own sense and imagination, whence arise the endless wanderings and continual alterations amongst them, whether in Religion, or in Civil Discipline, while their nation alone has preserved an immovable establishment;—but that GOD will not for ever leave the rest of the world under so miserable darkness; that a common Saviour shall at length arrive; that the sole end of their polity is to prefigure and proclaim his arrival; and that they were formed

and constituted with express design to be the heralds of his great appearance, and to give warning to all nations, that they should unite in the blessed expectation of a Redeemer.

My adventure amongst this people, as it gives me the greatest surprise, so it seems to me deserving of the highest regard and attention, on account of the many wonderful and singular curiosities discoverable in their frame.

They are a people composed entirely of Brethren : and whereas all others have been constituted by an assemblage of almost infinite races and bloods, these, though so prodigiously fruitful, have descended all from the same man ; whence, being as one flesh, and as members one of another, they form the most compacted strength of one undivided family. This is most peculiar and distinguishing !

They are the most ancient people that fall under our knowledge and discovery ; a circumstance which, in my judgment, ought to procure for them a particular veneration, especially in regard to our present inquiry ; because, if God has, at any time, vouchsafed to reveal himself to mankind, these are the persons from whose hands we are to receive the tradition.

Nor are they only considerable in point of antiquity, but no less singular in their duration, from their original to this day. For while the several people of *Greece*, of *Italy*, of *Sparta*, of *Athens*, and of *Rome*, together with others which sprung up long after them, have been extinct for many ages, these have always subsisted ; and, in spite of the various designs of many great and powerful princes, who have a thousand times attempted their destruction, (as historians testify, and as it is natural to infer, from the ordinary changes and revolutions of things,) have maintained themselves during so vast a course of years, and stretching themselves from the earliest to the latest memory, have caused the annals of

their own nation to be co-extended with the history of the world.

The Law, by which this people is governed, appears, in all respects, to be the most ancient and most perfect that has obtained amongst men, and the only one which was able to endure without change or interruption in any State; as PHILO the *Jew* has demonstrated on many occasions, and JOSEPHUS, most admirably, in his Discourse against APPION, where the same excellent Author observes it to have stood so high in respect of antiquity, that the very name of *Law* was not known in other countries till a thousand years after, insomuch that HOMER, though obliged to speak of so many different nations, has not once used the word. And as to the perfection of this Law, we may easily make an estimate of it from the bare reading; by which we shall discern it to have disposed all things with so much wisdom, justice, and equity, that it is no wonder the famed legislators of *Greece* and *Rome* should borrow thence their principal Institutions, as we find they did by the Laws of the *Twelve Tables*, and by other evidences which JOSEPHUS has produced at large.

Yet this Law is, at the same time, severe and rigorous beyond all others; obliging its votaries, the better to secure them in their duty, to a thousand peculiar and painful observances, under a capital penalty: whence we cannot without astonishment reflect, that it should for so many ages be preserved inviolable, amongst a rebellious and impatient people, such as we know the *Jews* to have been; while all other states have, from time to time, changed the body of their laws, though (on the contrary) mild, and gentle, and easy to be obeyed.

The same people are still no less to be admired for their great sincerity. They preserve, with the utmost faithfulness and zeal, the very Book in which MOSES has left it recorded, that they were ever stubborn and ungrateful towards GOD, and that he foresaw they would

be more perverse after his death ; that he, therefore, calls Heaven and Earth to witness against them, as to the sufficiency of the warning which he had given them ; and that, finally, God being incensed by their transgressions, should scatter them through all lands, and as they had “provoked him to jealousy, by serving gods which were no gods,” he also should “provokc them,” by calling “a people which were not a people.”

To conclude : I find no reason to suspect the authority of the Book which relates all these particulars ; for there is the vastest difference imaginable between a book composed by a private hand, and dispersed amongst a whole people, and a book of which the people themselves seem to be the joint-authors, as well as the common subject. In this case, the antiquity of the Book and of the People is confessedly the same.

It is no inconsiderable recommendation of these writings, that they were composed by Authors cotemporary to the facts which they record. All histories compiled by persons, not equal in age to the actions described, are suspicious ; as the books of the *Sybil*s, of HERMES TRISMEGISTUS, and many others, which having for a while passed with credit in the world, have been detected as forgeries by succeeding times. Cotemporary authors are neither capable of this fraud, nor liable to this censure.

### IX. *The Injustice and Corruption of Man.*

\* HUMAN Thought is a thing naturally excellent and noble. It must have prodigious defaults before it can be exposed to contempt ; and yet such it has, that nothing is indeed more ridiculous. How great does it appear in its genuine nature,—how little under its corruption and abuse !

\* If we believe a God, the duty of loving him, and not the creatures, will be necessarily inferred. The reasoning of those profane Epicures, described in the



Book of Wisdom, was grounded on the denial of God's existence. Upon this hypothesis, they resolved to take their fill of the creatures; but had they known the falseness of their principle, they would have concluded the quite contrary. And this is the conclusion of the wise and the good:—there is a God; the creatures, therefore, ought not to engage our study, or attract our desire. Every thing which incites to an union with the creature is evil, because it either hinders us from serving God, if we already know him, or from seeking him, if as yet we know him not. But now we find ourselves to be full of these incitements, and to be wholly made up of concupiscence. We are, therefore, full of evil; and if so, we ought to detest ourselves, together with all that which allures or endears us to any thing but to God alone.

\* If at any time we endeavour to fix our thought upon God, how many things do we feel which divert us from him, and tempt us to muse on other subjects? All this cometh of evil; but of such evil as we bring with us into the world.

\* It is utterly false, that we deserve the esteem of men; and it is injustice to covet it. Were we born masters of reason, and with some knowledge of ourselves, we should not entertain such a desire. And yet this very desire accompanies our birth. From our very birth, therefore, we are unjust; while every one of us sets up himself as the great mark of all that he acts or thinks. This is contrary to the order of nature. Our inclinations ought to stand towards the public: and this bias towards ourselves is the first spring of all disorder, in war, in politics, in economics, &c.

\* Whosoever does not detest, in his own heart, this instinct which prompts him to affect a pre-eminence above all persons and things, is most wretchedly blind; because nothing has a greater repugnancy to justice and truth. For, as it is false, that we deserve such a preference, so is it unjust (and, indeed, impossible,) to arrive at it, because all are ready to put in their claim to

the like supremacy. This, then, is a manifest piece of injustice, such as attends our birth, such as we are obliged to correct, and yet such as, humanly speaking, is above our correction.

Nevertheless, of all Religions, except the Christian, none has informed us, either that this is a sin, or that we are born under its power, or that we are bound to strive against it; none has once thought of prescribing a method for its cure.

### X. *The JEWS.*

ALMIGHTY GOD, intending to shew to the world that he was able to form a people spiritually good and righteous, and to fill them with eternal glory, was pleased to represent by the goods of nature what he proposed to accomplish in those of grace; that men might learn to acknowledge the invisible effects of his power, by their experience of the visible.

Thus he saved his People from the Deluge, in the person of NOAH: he caused them to spring from ABRAHAM: he redeemed them out of the hands of their enemies, and established them in rest and peace.

The design of Providence in rescuing them from the common ruin, and in deducing their nation from one stock, was not barely to conduct them to a land of plenty. But as nature is the image and resemblance of grace, so these visible miracles were symbols and pledges of the invisible, to be performed in their season.

\* The *Jews* were accustomed to great and splendid miracles; and, hence, looking on the wonders of the Red-Sea and of the Promised Land only as an abridgement of the mighty things of their MESSIAS, they expected from him still more illustrious and surprising performances, of which all the acts of MOSES should seem but an imperfect specimen.

When they were now grown old in carnal errors, JESUS CHRIST actually came, at the time foretold, but not

with that outward splendour which had possessed their thought ; and hence they apprehended him not to be the MESSIAS. After his death, ST. PAUL was sent to instruct men, that all these things happened in Figure ; that the Kingdom of GOD was in the spirit, not in the flesh ; that their enemies were not *Babylonians*, but their own lusts and passions ; that GOD delighted not in temples made with hands, but in a pure and humble mind ; that bodily circumcision was unprofitable, but the circumcision of the heart greatly necessary and important.

\* GOD having not thought fit wholly to disclose these truths to so unworthy a people, and yet designing to foretel them, that they might hereafter gain the more easy belief, signified the time of their accomplishment in express terms, and sometimes clearly imparted the things themselves ; but generally represented them under shades and figures, to the intent, that those who loved the representation might fix on it without looking farther, and that those who loved the reality might be able to discern it through the representation. Agreeably to this design, we see the nation dividing itself at the MESSIAH'S appearance : the spiritual part received and embraced him ; and the carnal part, who rejected him, remain his witnesses to this day.

\* The carnal JEWS understood neither the greatness nor the humiliation of the MESSIAS, foretold by their Prophets. They did not know him in his greatness and exaltation : as when they were assured, that he should be DAVID'S LORD, though his *Son*, and that he preceded ABRAHAM, and had seen him, they conceived him not so great, as to have been from all eternity. Nor did they less mistake him in his humiliation and death. "CHRIST" (say they) " abideth for ever, and this man professeth of himself that he shall die." They neither believed him therefore to be mortal, nor yet to be eternal : they considered him with no other regard, but to worldly pomp and state.

\* Men indisposed to believing are wont to have recourse for shelter to the unbelief of the *Jews*. If matters (say

they) were indeed so clear and notorious, what should hinder those who were the eye-witnesses of them from being perfectly convinced? Whereas, their infidelity is really one of the foundations of our faith. Had they been indifferent persons, their obstinacy might have increased our aversion, and have given us a better colour for jealousy and distrust. But here is the miracle, that the same people, who were so violent lovers of the predictions, should be no less violent haters and opposers of the accomplishments; and that this very hatred and opposition should itself be one of the chief predictions.

\* To procure authority and reputation to the MESSIAS, it was necessary that certain Prophecies should precede his appearance, and should remain in the custody of unsuspected persons, such as were eminent for diligence and fidelity, and, above all, for zeal, and such as were remarkably known to the rest of mankind.

That things might succeed accordingly, GOD was pleased to make choice of this carnal people, and to give them in charge the predictions concerning the MESSIAS, which described him 'after the manner of a temporal deliverer, and a dispenser of sensible goods, such as their hearts were particularly affected with. Hence, as they received the Prophets with the greatest demonstrations of affection and reverence, so they communicated to all nations those Books of the Prophets which foretold the coming of the Mighty One; assuring them, that he would most certainly come, and in the very manner expressed by their records, which they kept open to the view of the whole world. But being finally deceived by the meanness of his condition on earth, they became his greatest opposers. So that we have now a people, who of all mankind can be least suspected of partial favour towards us, thus lending their assistance to support our cause, and, by the zeal which they shew for their Law and their Prophets, preserving, with the most exact fidelity, our evidences and their own condemnation.

\* Those who rejected and crucified our LORD, being offended at him, are the same people with whom those

Writings still remain which testify concerning him, and which affirm, that he shall be rejected by them, and shall be a rock of offence. Thus has their refusal added an eminent mark to the truth of his credentials ; and he has been equally demonstrated to be the MESSIAS by the righteous part of the *Jewish* nation who embraced him, and by the wicked part who despised him ; the one event, no less than the other, having been long before prophetically declared.

\* The reason why the Prophecies were conceived with a double sense, a remote and spiritual, to which this people were strongly averse, under an obvious and carnal, to which they were eagerly inclined, seems to have been this : had the spiritual sense been entirely disclosed to them, it being such as they were unable to love, to embrace, or even to bear, they would have had very little zeal to preserve their Writings and Institutions ; or, if they could have relished these spiritual promises, and had therefore kept their Books uncorrupted till the time of the MESSIAS, then their evidence must have suffered in its force, as being the testimony of friends. We see therefore, on the one hand, the necessity of concealing the spiritual sense ; yet, on the other hand, should this concealment have been too deep for all light and discovery, the great evidences of the MESSIAS had been suppressed. What expedient, therefore, was applied ? The spiritual sense was, as to the main, disguised under the carnal ; yet, in some places, was expressly delivered without the least covert or shade. Again, the time and state of the world were so exactly, and with so many circumstances, described and determined, that the sun is not clearer at noon-day. And there are some passages in which the spiritual import is so apparently taught, that no less degree of blindness than that which the mind suffers, when entirely oppressed and enslaved by the body, can withhold us from discerning it.

See then, the admirable disposal of Providence ! In an infinite number of places, the spiritual sense is covered over with another ; yet in some (though rarely occurring)

it is openly revealed; and this in such a manner, as that the passages in which it is suppressed are capable of both senses, but those in which it is declared can agree only to the spiritual.—So that this proceeding can by no means be accused, as tending to lead men into error; nor could by any, but by a people whose heart was to entirely carnal, have been perverted or misunderstood.

Thus when good things were promised them in great abundance, what could hinder them from interpreting this promise of true and real goods, but their covetousness, which determined their apprehension to earthly riches? Whereas, those who placed their only treasure in heaven would have referred the promise to GOD alone. For there are two principles which divide the wills of men, Covetousness and Charity. The former employs itself in using GOD, and enjoying the world; the latter, in using the world, and enjoying GOD.

Again, the End which we pursue is that which gives names to things, and whatever hinders us in the prosecution of this, is said to be at enmity with us. Thus the creatures, which are good in themselves, do yet become the enemies of good men, when they divert them from GOD; and GOD himself is styled an enemy by those whom he opposes in their lusts.

Hence, the appellation of enemy changing its construction according to the different ends which men propose, good men by it understood their passions, and carnal men the *Babylonians*; so that this term was obscure only to the wicked. And it is on this account that ISAIAH tells us, CHRIST shall be “a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence;” though as our LORD himself declares, “Blessed are those who shall not be offended in him.”

The Prophet HOSEA evidently declares the same difference: “Who is wise, and he shall understand these things; prudent, and he shall know them? For the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them; but transgressors shall fall therein.”

Yet this Book of the Old Testament, which was in such a manner framed and compiled, as that while it enlightened

some, it no less blinded others, did, nevertheless, demonstrate in the latter the Truth which it discovered to the former. For the visible and temporal goods which they received from GOD were so great, as to testify his power of conferring all invisible and spiritual blessings, together with the end of all, the MESSIAS.

\* The time of our LORD's first coming was expressly foretold, but that of his second is not; because at his first coming, he was to appear in a private manner, and without any splendid marks of distinction, whereas, his second advent shall be surprising, public, illustrious, and visible to his greatest enemies. But though his first appearance was to be thus obscure, and discernible only by those who searched the Scriptures, yet were things so providentially disposed, that all this contributed to the making him known. The *Jews* were his witnesses by receiving him, because they were the guardians of the Prophecies; and they were no less his witnesses by rejecting him, because in this they very signally accomplished the same Prophecies.

\* The *Jews* were in possession of Miracles which they had seen performed, and of Prophecies which they had seen fulfilled. Again, the Doctrine of their law was comprised in the love and adoration of one GOD; and this Doctrine was perpetual: it had, therefore, all the marks of the true Religion. And so it really was; for we ought to distinguish between the doctrine of the *Jews*, and the doctrine of the Law of the *Jews*. The Doctrine of the *Jews* could not have been true, though we should suppose it to have had Miracles and Prophecies and Perpetuity on its side, because it was deficient in the main Principle, the loving and adoring of GOD alone.

The *Jewish* religion ought to be considered very differently in the tradition of holy men, and in the tradition of the vulgar. The morals it teaches, and the blessedness it proposes, are both ridiculous, according to the tradition of the vulgar; but they are incomparably great and excellent in the tradition of holy men. Its foundation is wonderful; it is the most ancient and most authentic Book in

the world : and whereas MAHOMET, to procure the establishment of his Writings, has forbidden them to be read ; MOSES, to confirm the authority of *his*, has commanded all the world to read them.

\* The *Jewish* religion is altogether divine in its authority, in its duration, in its perpetual obligation, in its morality, in its conduct, in its doctrine, in its effects.

This whole model and pattern was formed with resemblance to the truth of the MESSIAS ; and the truth of the MESSIAS was discovered and testified by this its model and pattern.

Under the *Jewish* Economy, Truth appeared but in Figure : in Heaven it is open and without veil : in the Church Militant it is so veiled, as to be yet discerned by its correspondence to the figure. As the Figure was first built upon the Truth, so the Truth is now distinguishable by the Figure.

\* He that takes his estimate of the *Jewish* Religion from the grossness of the *Jewish* multitude, cannot fail of making a very wrong judgment. It is to be sought for in the sacred writings, and in the traditions of the Prophets, who have given us sufficient assurance that they understood the Law not according to the letter. Our Religion, in like manner, is true and divine in the Gospels, and in the preaching of the Apostles ; but it appears utterly disfigured in those who maim or corrupt it.

\* The MESSIAS, according to the carnal *Jews*, was to come like a mighty temporal Prince. According to carnal *Christians*, he is come, to dispense with our loving God, and to give us sacraments which shall operate without our concurrence. This is no more the Religion of *Christians*, than that was properly the Religion of *Jews*.

\* The true votaries of both Religions agree in acknowledging a MESSIAS, who shall inspire them with the Love of God, and by that Love shall make them triumph over their enemies.

\* The carnal *Jews* fill the middle place between *Christians* and *Pagans*. The *Pagans* knew not God, and



therefore loved the world : the *Jews* knew the true **GOD**, and still loved nothing but the world : while we *Christians*, as we have received the knowledge of the true **GOD**, so we have renounced the love of the world. *Jews* and *Pagans* love the same world : *Christians* and *Jews* know the same **GOD**.

\* So long as there was a succession of Prophets to guard the Law, the people were entirely negligent as to its custody : but upon the ceasing of the Prophets, the zeal of the people supplied their room. And this, amongst others, is a Providence too remarkable to be overlooked.

## XI. MOSES.

WHEN the Creation of the world began now to stand at a remoter distance, **GOD** was pleased to provide a contemporary Historian, and to appoint a whole nation for the keepers of his history, as well that this register might be the most authentic in the world, as that all mankind might hence be instructed in a fact, which was so necessary for them to know, and yet so impossible otherwise to be known.

\* **MOSES** was a person of very great genius and capacity. This is on all hands confessed. Had he, therefore, written with an intention of deceiving, he would have executed it in such a manner, as not to be convicted of the deceit. His conduct we find to be quite different ; insomuch that had he delivered what was fabulous, there was not one *Jew* but could have detected the imposture.

Why, for instance, does he make the lives of the first men so vastly long, and so very few generations of them ? In a multitude of generations he might have sheltered himself from discovery ; but in a few this artifice was impracticable. For it is not the number of years, but of generations, which renders things obscure.

Truth never decays, or is impaired, but by the succes-

sion and change of men. And yet we find this Historian placing two of the greatest events that can enter into human thought, the Creation and the Deluge, so close together, as even to make them touch, by means of the few generations which he counts between: insomuch that, at the time of registering these things, the memory of them could not but be still fresh and lively in the minds of all the *Jewish* nation.

\* LAMECH had a sight of ADAM, SHEM of LAMECH, ABRAHAM of SHEM, JACOB of ABRAHAM, and MOSES of those who had seen JACOB. Therefore the Creation and the Deluge are indubitably true. This argument must be acknowledged as conclusive, by those who apprehend its process.

\* The longevity of the Patriarchs, instead of contributing to the decay of past memory, was in the highest degree serviceable to its preservation. For if we are sometimes hindred from being sufficiently expert in the story of our ancestors, it is because we have seldom lived in their company, or because they left the world before we arrived at the age of reason. But when human life ran out to such an extent, children enjoyed the means of conversing long with their parents. And what could be the subject of this conversation, but the lives and actions of their progenitors, since they comprised the body of Universal History, and since men were as yet unacquainted with Arts and Sciences, which now take up so large a share in our discourse? It seems evident, therefore, that the keeping exact Genealogies was the peculiar care, and almost the whole employment, of those earlier times.

## XII. FIGURES.

As there are some Figures clear and demonstrative, so there are others which seem less natural, and which prove nothing but to those who have discovered the same truths by other lights. The latter figures may seem to resemble

those invented by some men who build Prophecies on the *Revelations*, expounded according to their own fancy. But here is the difference: such persons have no infallible predictions to support the doubtful ones, which they would introduce: so that they are guilty of the highest injustice, while they pretend theirs to be alike well grounded with some of ours; because they have not others, which are incontestable, to prove them by, as we have. This is by no means, therefore, a parallel case; nor ought we to compare and confound things which agree in one respect, when they are so vastly distant in all others.

\* JESUS CHRIST, prefigured by JOSEPH, the Beloved of his Father, and by him sent to visit his Brethren, is the innocent person whom his brethren sold for a few pieces of silver, and who, by this means, became their LORD and Saviour, nay, the Saviour of strangers, and of the whole world; which had not happened but for this plot of destroying him, this act of rejecting him, and exposing him to sale.

Consider in both examples the same fortune, and the same innocence: JOSEPH is in the prison between two criminals, JESUS on the cross between two thieves: JOSEPH foretels deliverance to one of his companions, and death to the other, from the same omens; JESUS CHRIST saves one companion, and deserts the other, after the same crimes: JOSEPH could barely foretel; JESUS CHRIST, by his own action, performs what he had foretold: JOSEPH requests the person who should be delivered to be mindful of him in his glory; the person saved by JESUS CHRIST entreats his deliverer to remember him when he came into his kingdom.

\* The *Jewish* Synagogue never totally ceased, and became extinct, because it was the figure of the *Christian* Church: and yet, because it was only the figure, it was suffered to fall into servitude. The Figure subsisted till the arrival of the Truth; to the intent that the Church might be always visible, either in the shadow and representation, or in the substance and reality.

XIII. *That the Law was Figurative.*

To evince the authority of both Testaments at once, we have only to observe, whether that which is prophesied in the one be accomplished in the other.

\* If we would effectually examine the Prophecies, we ought first of all to be sure that we rightly understand them. For, supposing them to have but one sense, it is certain that the MESSIAS cannot yet be come; but, supposing them to have two senses, the MESSIAS is certainly come, in the person of JESUS CHRIST.

All the question, therefore, is, whether they are indeed capable of a double meaning?—whether they are figures or realities? that is, whether we ought not to seek something farther in them than what they immediately present? or whether we ought to acquiesce in that construction which offers itself to us at the first view?

If the Law and the Sacrifices are real, it is necessary that they should please God, and on no account be displeasing to him. If they are figurative, it is necessary that they should be pleasing and displeasing to God, in different regards. But now, through the whole series of Scripture, they are sometimes affirmed to please God, sometimes to displease him; and, by consequence, they are only figurative.

\* It is said, that the Law shall be changed; that the Sacrifices shall cease; that the people shall continue without a King, without a Prince, and without a Sacrifice; that a new Covenant shall be established; that a reform shall be made in the law; that the *Jews* received commandments which were not good; and that their sacrifices were abominations, and things which God required not at their hands.

It is said, again, that the Law shall abide for ever; that the Covenant shall be eternal, and the Sacrifices perpetual; and that the Sceptre shall never depart from Judah, because it is to continue till the everlasting King

shall commence his reign. Do such expressions evince all this to be real? No. Do they demonstrate it to be figurative? No. They only shew, that it must be either Reality or Figure. But the former, compared with these latter, exclude the Reality, and establish the figure.

All these passages taken together cannot be applied to the reality, but they may be all applied to the Figure: therefore, they were spoken in Figure, not in Reality.

\* Would we know, whether the Law and the Sacrifices are real or figurative, we ought to discover, whether the Prophets, in speaking of these things, had their eyes and thoughts entirely fixed on them, so as to look no farther than the old Covenant; or whether they did not carry their intention to somewhat else, of which all this was but the shadow and semblance; as in a picture we contemplate the thing represented. And in order to this discovery, we need only hear what they say.

Now when they speak of the Covenant, as being everlasting, is it possible they should mean the same Covenant, which they elsewhere testify shall be changed? The like may be observed of the Sacrifices.

\* We may illustrate this whole case by the familiar instance of writing in *cyphers*. Suppose we intercept a letter of importance, in which we discern one plain and obvious meaning, and are told, at the same time, that the sense is yet so obscured, as that we shall even see the words without seeing it, and understand them without understanding it;—what are we to judge, but that the piece has been penned in cyphers? and so much the rather, the more apparent contraricties we meet with in the literal construction? How great esteem and veneration ought we, therefore, to express for those who decypher this writing to us, and bring us acquainted with its secrets; especially if the key, which they make use of, be easy, agreeable, and natural? This is what was performed by our LORD and his Apostles: They have opened the seal, and rent the veil, and rescued the spiritual sense from the literal disguise. They have taught us, that our

enemies are our own carnal affections ; that our Redeemer is to be a spiritual conqueror ; and that he is to have a first and a second Coming, the one in humility, to abase the proud, the other in glory, to exalt the humble ;—in a word, that JESUS CHRIST is to be GOD, as well as man.

\* It was our LORD's chief employment to inform men, that they were lovers of themselves ; that they were sinners and slaves, blind, distempered, and miserable ; that hereupon it was needful he should deliver and heal them ; that all this was to be performed on their renouncing themselves, and their taking up each his cross, and following him.

\* “The letter killeth.” It was necessary that CHRIST should suffer ; that GOD should humble himself ; that there should be a circumcision of the heart ; a true fast, a true sacrifice, a true temple, a two-fold law, (as well as a two-fold table of the law,) a two-fold temple, a two-fold captivity. This was the difficult cypher presented to us.

We have, at length, been taught by our LORD to unfold the intricacy of these figures : we have been informed what it is to be truly free, to be a true *Israelite* ; we have been shewn the true Circumcision, the true Bread of Heaven.

\* In the promises of the Old Testament every one finds what he chiefly delights to seek, what is most agreeable to his own heart and affections ; spiritual goods or temporal, GOD or the Creatures ; but with this difference, that they who seek the creatures find them attended with numerous contradictions, with a prohibition to love them, and with a difficult injunction to love and worship GOD alone ; whereas they who seek GOD find him without the least repugnancy, and with a pleasing command to admit no other object of worship or of love.

\* The main sources of verbal contrarieties in the Scriptures are the mysteries of a GOD humbled to the death of the cross ; of a MESSIAS triumphing over death by dying himself ; of the two natures in JESUS CHRIST ; of his two-

fold Coming ; of the two estates and conditions of human nature.

\* As we cannot justly compose a man's character, but by accounting for all the contraricties in his humour or conduct ; and as it is not enough to pursue a train of agreeable qualities, without giving the resolution of those which appear to be opposite ; so before we can perfectly understand the sense of an Author, it is necessary that all the contrary passages should be reconciled.

Wherefore in order to a right apprehension of the Scripture, we ought to find out a sense in which all the scemingly opposite places shall agree. Nor is it sufficient to have an interpretation in which many consonant passages shall be united ; but we must have one in which the most dissonant shall meet and conspire.

Every Author either has one principal aim and purport, in which all the supposed differences will be found consistent, or he has no meaning at all. The latter cannot be said of the Scriptures and Prophecies. They unquestionably abound in good sense. Some one meaning then they will afford us, by which the several repugnancies in style may be adjusted and composed.

Their true sense therefore cannot be that which is given them by the *Jews*. But in JESUS CHRIST all the various dissonancies are reduced to perfect harmony.

The *Jews* had not skill enough to make the abrogation of the Royalty and Principality, foretold by HOSEA, accord with the prophecy of JACOB.

If we take the Law, the Sacrifices, and the Kingdom, for things really and ultimately designed, we shall not be able to reconcile all the passages of the same Author, nor of the same Book, nor, in many times, of the same Chapter ;—which sufficiently discovers the intention of the writers.

\* The *Jews* were not permitted to offer Saerifices, or so much as to eat the tenths, elsewhere than at *Jerusalem* only, the place which the LORD had chosen.

\* HOSEA foretold, that the *Jews* should be “ without a

King, without a Prince, without Sacrifices, and without images ;” which prediction we now see fully accomplished, no sacrifice being legally to be offered but at *Jerusalem*.

\* Whenever the Word of God, which is eternally true, seems to be false in the literal construction, its truth is preserved in the spiritual. “ Sit thou on my right hand :” —this is false, if spoken literally ; yet it is spiritually true. Such expressions as these describe God after the manner of men : and this, in particular, only implies, that the same honour which men intend in setting others at their right hand, God will also confer, in the exaltation of the MESSIAS. It is, therefore, a note of the divine intention, but affects not the precise manner of the execution.

Thus again, when it is said to the *Israelites*, God has received the odour of your incense, and will give you in recompence a fertile and plentiful land ;—the meaning is no more than this, that the same affection which men, delighted with your perfumes, would express by rewarding you with a fruitful land, the same will God express towards you in his blessings ; because you also entertain the like grateful disposition towards God, as a man does towards his superiors, when he thus presents them with sweet odours.

The sole aim and intention of the whole Scripture is *charity*. All that tends not to this end, is merely figure. For since there can be but one point and ultimate scope, whatever is not directed thither in express terms, must, at least, be couched under such as are ambiguous.

God, in compassion to our weakness, which variety alone can please, has so varied this one precept of charity, as to conduct us every way to our real interest. For one thing alone being strictly necessary, and yet our hearts being set on divers things, God has provided for the satisfaction of both these inclinations together, by giving us such a diversity as still leads us forward to the one thing necessary.



\* There are, and always have been, men who rightly apprehend, that the only enemy of human nature is concupiscence, which turns us away from GOD; and that GOD himself, not a fruitful land, is our only good and happiness. Those who fancy the good of man to consist in gratifying the flesh, and his evil in the disappointment of sensual desire, let them wallow in their pleasures, let them die in their enjoyments: but as for those who seek GOD with their whole heart, whom nothing can grieve but the being deprived of the light of his countenance, who have no desire but to enjoy his favour, no enemies but such as divert or withhold them from him, and whose greatest affliction is to see themselves encompassed, and even subdued, by such enemies, let them be comforted: for them there is a Deliverer, for them there is a GOD!

A MESSIAS was promised, who should rescue men from their enemies. A MESSIAS is come; but to rescue men from no other enemies than their sins.

\* When DAVID says that the MESSIAS shall deliver the people from their enemies, this, by a carnal expositor, may be applied to the *Egyptians*: and then, I confess, I am at a loss to shew him how the prophecy has been fulfilled. Yet it may be likewise applied to men's iniquities; since these, and not the *Egyptians*, are to be looked on as real enemies.

But if in other places he declares, as he does, (together with ISAIAH, and others) that the MESSIAS shall deliver his people from their sins; the ambiguity is taken off, and the double sense of *enemies* reduced to the single meaning of *iniquities*. For if these latter were chiefly in his thought, he might well express them by borrowing the name of the former: but if his mind was wholly bent on the former, it was impossible he should signify them under the appellation of the latter.

MOSES, DAVID, and ISAIAH, all speak of this victory in the same terms. Must we not therefore acknowledge, that these terms have the same sense; and that MOSES

and DAVID had but one intention, while both speak of men's enemies, and the latter visibly alludes to men's sins.

DANIEL, in his ninth Chapter, prays that the people may be delivered from the captivity of their enemies; but his eye was plainly fixed on their transgressions. And to shew that it was so, he proceeds to relate the sending of GABRIEL to him, with an assurance that his prayer was heard; that after the seventy weeks, the people should obtain deliverance from their iniquity; that transgressions should then have an end, and the Redeemer, "the most holy," should "bring in" (not legal, but) "everlasting righteousness."

When we are once let into these secrets, it is impossible for us not to discern and apprehend them. Let us see whether ABRAHAM'S lineage and descent were the real causes of his being styled "the friend of God?" Whether the promised land was the true seat of rest? Neither of these can be affirmed; therefore both were symbolical. In a word, let us examine all the legal ceremonies, and all the precepts which are not of *charity*, and we shall find them composing one general image, one uninterrupted allegory and prefiguration.

#### XIV. JESUS CHRIST.

THE infinite distance that there is between Body and Spirit, does but imperfectly represent to us the distance between Spirit and Charity, which being altogether supernatural, may be said to be infinitely more infinite.

All the splendour of outward greatness casts no lustre towards the eyes of those who are engaged in the pursuits of wit.

The greatness of wit and parts is wholly indiscernible to the Rich, to Kings, and Conquerors, and to all the great ones of the world.

The greatness of that wisdom which cometh from

above is alike imperceptible to the worldly, and to the witty. These are three orders of quite different kinds.

Great geniuses have their kingdom and splendour, their victory and glory; and want not carnal greatness, because it has no relation to the grandeur which they pursue. This grandeur does not, indeed, strike the eyes, but it is enough that it casts a distinguishable radiancy on the soul.

The saints likewise have their empire, their lustre, their greatness, and their triumphs; and want not the pomp of honour, or the pride of genius, for these things are quite out of their sphere and order, and such as neither increase nor diminish the grandeur to which they aspire. These truly great ones are equally invisible to bodily eyes, and to curious and subtle wits; but they are manifested to God and Angels, and are not ambitious of other spectators.

ARCHIMEDES would have gained the same esteem, without his relation to the Royal Blood of *Sicily*. It is true he won no battles; but he has left to all the world the benefit of his admirable inventions. O! how great, how bright does he appear to the eyes of the mind!

JESUS CHRIST, without worldly riches, without the exterior productions of science, was infinitely great in his sublime order of holiness. He neither published inventions, nor possessed kingdoms; but he was humble, patient, pure before God, terrible to evil Spirits, and without spot of sin. O! with what illustrious pomp, with what transcendent magnificence, did he come attended, to such as beheld with the eyes of the heart, and with those faculties which are the judges and discerners of true wisdom!

It had been needless for ARCHIMEDES, though of princely descent, to have acted the Prince in his Book of Geometry.

It had been needless for our LORD JESUS CHRIST to have assumed the state of an earthly King, for the illustration of his Kingdom of Holiness. But how great, how excellent, did he appear in the brightness of his proper order!

It is most unreasonable to be scandalized at the mean

condition of our LORD, as if it were opposed, in the same order and kind, to the greatness which he came to display. Let us consider this greatness in his life, in his sufferings, in his solitude, in his death, in the choice of his attendants, in their act of forsaking him, in the privacy of his resurrection, and in all the other parts of his history; and we shall find it so truly elevated and noble, as to leave no ground for our being offended at a meanness which was quite of another order.

But there are some who can admire only the greatness of this world, as if there were no proper greatness in wit; and others who are charmed only with greatness of wit, as if there were not still a more noble, a more sublime greatness in wisdom.

The whole system of bodies, the firmament, the stars, the earth, and the kingdoms of it, are not fit to be opposed in value to the lowest mind or spirit; because *Spirit* is endued with the knowledge and apprehension of all this, whereas *Body* is utterly stupid and insensible. Again, the whole united systems of Bodies and Spirits are not comparable to the least motion of *Charity*, because this is still of an order infinitely more exalted and divine.

From all *Body* together, we are not able to extract one thought. This is impossible, and quite of another order. Again, all *Body* and *Spirit* together are unable to produce one spark of *Charity*. This is likewise impossible, and of an order above nature.

\* JESUS CHRIST lived in so much obscurity, (as to what the world terms obscure,) that the *Pagan* historians, who were wont to record only persons of eminence, and things of importance, have scarcely afforded him a slender notice.

\* Who amongst men was ever arrayed with so much splendour as our LORD? The whole *Jewish* nation prophesied of him before his coming: the *Gentile* World adored him at his coming: both JEWS and GENTILES regarded him as their common centre, their expectation, and desire. And yet who had ever so little enjoyment of so abundant glory? Of thirty-three years, thirty he

spent in privacy, and at a distance from the world. During the three which remained, he was censured for an impostor, he was rejected by the priests and rulers of his nation, despised by his kinsmen and friends, and, in conclusion, suffered a shameful death, betrayed by one of his attendants, abjured by another, and deserted by all.

What share then can he be supposed to have borne in all this splendour? Never person was in greater glory; never person was in deeper disgrace. His whole splendour, therefore, was designed for our sakes, and to render him discernible to us; but not the least ray was reflected back upon himself.

Our LORD discourseth of the sublimest subjects in a phrase so plain and natural, as if it had not been deeply considered; but withal so pure and exact, as to shew that it proceeded from the greatest depth of thought. The joining of this accuracy with this simplicity is admirable.

\* The Old and New Testament equally regard JESUS CHRIST; the former as its hope and expectation; the latter as its author and example; both as their common centre and aim.

\* The Prophets had the gift of foretelling; but never were foretold themselves: The Saints, who followed, were foretold; but had not the power of foretelling: Our LORD, as he was the great subject of prophecies, so he was himself the chief of prophets.

\* The JEWS were blessed in ABRAHAM: ("I will bless them that bless thee:") but all the nations of the earth are blessed in ABRAHAM'S Seed: ("A light to lighten the Gentiles," &c.) "He has not done so to any nation," says DAVID, speaking of the Law: "He has done so to all nations," we may say, speaking of the Gospel.

Thus is it the sole prerogative of JESUS CHRIST to be an universal blessing. The sacraments and service of the Church have an effect only on actual believers; the sacrifice of our LORD on the cross extends its meritorious influence to the whole world.

\* Let us then stretch out our arms to embrace our

merciful Deliverer ; who, having been promised four thousand years before, came at length to suffer and to diē for us, at the same time and with the circumstances of the promise : and waiting, by his gracious assistance, till we shall die in peace, through the hope of being eternally united to him, let us in the mean while live with comfort ; whether amongst the good things which he so bountifully gives us to enjoy,—or amongst the evil things which he shall please to bring on us for our soul's health, and which, by his own example, he has taught us to sustain.

XV. *The Evidences of JESUS CHRIST from the Prophecies.*

The noblest Evidences of our LORD are the Prophecies which preceded him. And accordingly it has pleased GOD to exercise a peculiar care in this behalf. For the full accomplishment of them being a perpetual miracle, which reacheth from the beginning to the end of the Church, sixteen hundred years together, GOD raised up a succession of Prophets ; and during the space of four hundred years after, he dispersed these Prophecies, together with the JEWS that kept them, through all nations of the world. See the wonderful preparation to our LORD's appearance ! As his Gospel was to be embraced and believed by all nations, there was a necessity not only of Prophecies to gain it this belief, but likewise of diffusing these Prophecies to the same extent with the human race.

\* Supposing one single man to have left a Book of Predictions concerning JESUS CHRIST, as to the time and manner of his coming, and supposing him to have come agreeably to these predictions, the argument would be of almost infinite force. Yet here the evidence is stronger, beyond all comparison. A succession of men, for the space of four thousand years, follow one another, without interruption or variation, in foretelling the same great event. A whole people are the harbingers of the MESSIAS ;

and such a people as subsisted four thousand years, to testify in a general body their assured hope and expectation, from which no severity of threats or persecutions could oblige them to depart. This is a case which challengeth, in a far more transcendent degree, our assent and wonder.

\* The Time of our LORD's appearance was signified by the state of the JEWS; by the condition of the Heathen World; by the comparison between the two Temples; and even by the precise number of years which should intervene.

\* The Prophets having given various marks of the MESSIAS who was to come, it seemed necessary that these marks should all concur at the same period. Thus it was necessary that the Fourth Monarchy should be established before the expiration of DANIEL'S *seventy weeks*; that the sceptre should then depart from *Judah*; and that the MESSIAS should then immediately appear:—in pursuit of which predictions, our LORD appeared at this juncture, and demonstrated his claim to the style and character of the MESSIAS.

\* It is foretold, that under the Fourth Monarchy, before the destruction of the Second Temple, before the dominion of the JEWS was taken away, and in the seventieth of DANIEL'S Weeks, the Heathens should be led into the knowledge of the only true GOD, worshipped by the Jews; and that those who sincerely feared and loved him should be delivered from their enemies, and should be replenished with higher degrees of his fear and love.

We see the event answer in all points. During the time of the Fourth Monarchy, before the destruction of the Second Temple, the Pagans in multitudes adored the true GOD, and embraced a life altogether spiritual and angelic; women consecrated to religion their virginity, and their life; men voluntarily renounced all the enjoyments of sense. That which PLATO was unable to effect upon a few persons, and those the wisest and best

instituted of his time, a secret force, by the help only of a few words, now wrought upon thousands of ignorant, uneducated men.

What means this prodigious change? It is no other than was foretold so many ages since: "I will pour out my SPIRIT upon all flesh." The whole world, which lay enslaved to lust and unbelief, was now surprisingly inflamed with the fire of charity. Princes resigned their crowns; the rich abandoned their possessions; the daughters, with an astonishing courage, contended for the prize of martyrdom; the sons forsook their parents and habitations, to embrace the solitude of deserts. Whence springs this unknown and invisible force? The MESSIAS is arrived; behold the effects and the tokens of his coming!

For two thousand years together, the GOD of the JEWS remained unknown to an infinite variety of nations, over-spread with Paganism. Yet, at the precise time foretold, the Pagans in all nations adore this only true GOD: the Idol-Temples are every where destroyed: Kings themselves submit their sceptres to the cross. What new thing is this? It is the SPIRIT OF GOD poured out upon all the earth.

It was testified, That the MESSIAS should come to establish a new covenant with his people; such as might make them forget their departure out of *Egypt*, in comparison with this great deliverance: That he would put his law and his fear into their hearts; both which rested before in externals only:—

That the JEWS should reject our LORD; and should themselves be rejected of GOD;—"the beloved vine bringeth forth only wild grapes:"—that the chosen people should prove disloyal, ungrateful, and incredulous: that GOD should strike them with blindness; and that, like blind men, they should stumble at noon-day:—

That the Church should be narrow in its beginning, and should afterwards diffuse itself to a prodigious extent:—

That idolatry should then be extirpated: that the



MESSIAS should vanquish and expel the false deities, and reduce men to the worship of the true God :—

That the Idol-Temples should be cast down; and that in all places of the world men should offer to God a pure, and holy, and living sacrifice, in the room of the slain beasts :—

That the MESSIAS should instruct men in the true and perfect way :—

That he should reign over the JEWS and GENTILES :—

No person before, or since our LORD, has been known to teach any thing which bears the least affinity to these predictions.

\* After so many messengers sent to notify his coming, the MESSIAS was pleased himself to appear, with all the assured Evidences of the Person, and all the concurring Circumstances of the Time. He came to inform men, that they had properly no other enemies than themselves, or than those passions which separated them from God; and that his office was to set them free from these enemies, to strengthen them with his grace, to unite them all in one holy CHURCH, and to reconcile JEWS and GENTILES, by destroying the superstition of the former, and the idolatry of the latter.

And the issue of all this was, that the Apostles accordingly pronounced the sentence of rejection on the JEWS, and declared the glad tidings of acceptance and salvation to the GENTILES.

And yet, through the power of natural concupiscence, was this most divine undertaking opposed by the united force of mankind. This King of JEWS and GENTILES was denied, was oppressed, by both equally conspiring against his life. Whatever is wont to style itself great, in the world, attacked this religion in its very infancy,—the learned, the wise, and the princes of the earth. The first persecuted it with their pen; the second with their tongue; the last with their sword. But in spite of all opposition, within how little a space do we behold our LORD reigning victoriously over his enemies of every

kind, and destroying as well the Jewish as the Gentile worship, each in its chief seat and metropolis, **JERUSALEM** and **ROME**, planting in one of them the first, in the other the greatest of churches ?

Persons of mean endowments, and of no authority or strength, such as were the Apostles and primitive Christians, bore up against all the powers of the earth ; overcame the learned, the wise, and the mighty ; and gave a total subversion to the Idol-Worship, which had so firmly established itself in the world. And all this was brought to pass by the sole influence of that divine Word which foretold our **LORD**'s appearance.

\* The **JEWS**, in putting to death **JESUS CHRIST**, whom they believed not to be the **MESSIAS**, gave him the final mark and assurance of the **MESSIAS**'s character. The more they persisted in denying him, they still became the more infallible witnesses of his truth : for to disown, and to slay him, was but to join their own testimony to that of the Prophecies which they fulfilled.

\* Who is so ignorant, as not to distinguish and acknowledge our **LORD**, after the numerous prophetic tokens and circumstances of his history ? For it was expressly declared,—

That he should have one special messenger and fore-runner :—

That he should be born an infant :—

That his birth-place should be the City of **BETHLEHEM** ; that he should spring from the Tribe of **JUDAH**, and House of **DAVID** ; that he should exhibit himself more especially at **JERUSALEM** :—

That he should veil the eyes of the wise and learned, and preach the gospel to the poor ; that he should restore sight to the blind, health to the diseased, and light to those who languish under darkness :—

That he should teach the true and perfect way, and should be the great Instructor of the **GENTILES** :—

That he should offer himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world :—

That he should be the chief corner-stone, elect and precious :—

That he should, at the same time, be a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence :—

That the JEWS should fall upon this rock :—

That this stone should be rejected by the builders ; should be made by GOD the head of the corner ; should grow into a great mountain, and fill the whole earth :—

That the MESSIAS should be disowned, rejected, betrayed, sold, buffeted, derided, and afflicted by a thousand different methods ; that they should give him gall to drink, should pierce his hands and his feet, should strike him on the face, should kill him, and cast lots upon his vesture :—

That he should rise again on the third day from the dead :—

That he should ascend into heaven, and sit at the right hand of GOD :—

That kings should arm themselves to oppose his authority :—

That sitting at the right hand of the FATHER, he should triumph over all his enemies :—

That the kings of the earth should fall down before him, and all nations do him service :—

That the JEWS should still remain :—

That they should remain in a wandering and desolate condition, without princes, without sacrifices, without altars, without prophets ; ever hoping for safety, and ever disappointed of their hope.

\* It was necessary, according to the prophetic descriptions, that the MESSIAS, by his own strength, should gather to himself a numerous people, elect, sacred, and peculiar ; should govern and support them ; should lead them into a place of rest and holiness ; should present them blameless before GOD ; should make them temples of the Divine Presence ; should deliver them from the wrath of GOD, and restore them to his favour ; should rescue them from the tyranny of sin, which so visibly

reigned over ADAM'S posterity; that he should give laws to his people, and should grave these laws in their hearts, and write them in their minds; that he should be at once a holy Priest, and a spotless Sacrifice; and that, while he offered to GOD bread and wine, he should no less offer his own body and blood.—Each of these particulars have we seen exactly performed by JESUS CHRIST.

Again, it was foretold, that he should come as a mighty deliverer; that he should bruise SATAN'S head, and redeem his people from their sins: that there should be a new and an eternal covenant, and another priesthood for ever, after the order of MELCHISEDEC: that the MESSIAS should be powerful, mighty, and glorious; and yet so weak, so miserable, and so contemptible, as not to be distinguished or credited, but rejected and slain: that the people who thus rejected him should be no more a people: that the GENTILES should receive him, and trust in him: that he should remove from the hill of SION, and reign in the chief seats of idolatrous worship: that the JEWS should nevertheless continue for ever: and, lastly, that he should arise out of JUDAH, and at the precise time when the sceptre was departed from them:

\* “We have no King but CÆSAR,” said the JEWS. Therefore JESUS CHRIST was the MESSIAS; because their sceptre was departed to a stranger, and because they would admit of no other King.

### XVI. *Divers Proofs of JESUS CHRIST.*

In refusing to give credit to the Apostles, it is necessary we should suppose one of these two things, either that they were deceived themselves, or that they had an intention of deceiving others. As to the first, it seems next to impossible, that men should be abused into a belief of a person's rising from the dead. And as for the other, the supposition of their being impostors is loaded with absurdities of every kind. Let us be at the pains of examining

its process. We are, then, to conceive these twelve men, after the death of their Master, combining to delude the whole world with a report of his resurrection. As they could not embark in this design, without bringing upon their heads all the opposition of united strength and power; so the heart of man has a strange inclination towards lightness and change, towards closing with the bribes of promises and rewards. Now should so much as any one of them have been drawn from his resolution by these charms, or have been shaken by prisons, by tortures, or by death itself, all had been undone beyond recovery. This consideration, if pursued, cannot fail of appearing with great weight and advantage.

\* While their LORD continued amongst them, his presence might encourage and support them: but afterwards, what could possibly encourage them to proceed, except his real appearance and return?

\* The style of the Gospel is admirable in a thousand different views; and in this, amongst others, that we meet there with no invectives, on the part of the Historians, against JUDAS, or PILATE, nor against any of the enemies, or the very murderers, of their LORD.

Had the modesty and temper of the Evangelical Writers been affected, like the many strokes of art which we admire in vulgar history, and had they designed it only to be taken notice of,—either they could not have forborne to give some insinuation of it themselves, or, at least, they would have procured friends who should observe it to their advantage and honour. But as they acted without any manner of affectation, and with altogether disinterested motions, they never took care to provide any person who should make these reflections in their favour. This, I believe, is what no man has hitherto remarked, and yet what seems an admirable evidence of the great simplicity used in this whole affair.

\* Another signal confirmation of our faith, is the present condition of the JEWS. It is astonishing to see this people, during so vast a course of years, never extir-

guished, and yet ever miserable ; it being alike necessary to the demonstration of the MESSIAS, both that they should subsist to be his Witnesses, and should be miserable as having been his Crucifiers. And though to subsist, and to be miserable, are contrarieties ungrateful to nature, yet they fail not to maintain their subsistence under all the power of their misery.

But were they not reduced to almost the same extremities, during their captive estate? No : the sceptre, and regal line, were not in the least interrupted by their captivity in BABYLON ; because their happy return was expressly promised and determined. When NEBUCHAD-NEZZAR carried away the people, for fear they should imagine the sceptre to have then departed from JUDAH, they were before-hand assured, that they should sojourn but a few years, and at the end of them should certainly be re-established. They were never without the comfort of their Prophets, or the presence of their Kings. But the second ruin of their city and polity is without promise of a restoration,—without Prophets, without Kings, without comfort, or hopes,—the sceptre being now for ever departed from them.

To be detained in an enemy's country, with an assurance of being delivered after seventy years, can scarcely be looked on as a state of captivity, in respect of a whole people. But their present dispersion and banishment into strange lands is not only without assurance, but without the least hope, of restitution.

\* The only argument of the JEWS, which we find insisted on in their writings, the *Talmud*, and by the *Rabbins*, is, that JESUS CHRIST did not appear as a mighty prince and conqueror,—did not subdue the nations by the force and terror of arms. JESUS CHRIST, say they, suffered and died ; he overcame not the Gentiles by martial power ; he loaded us not with their spoils ; he neither enlarged our dominions, nor increased our stores. And is this all they have to allege? This is what we have especially to boast. It is in this that he appears so pecu-

liarly amiable: I would not wish for a MESSIAS of their description and character.

\* How lovely a sight is it, to behold with the eye of faith, DARIUS, CYRUS, and ALEXANDER, the ROMANS, POMPEY, and HEROD, all ignorantly conspiring to advance the triumphs of the Cross?

XVII. *For what reasons we may presume it has pleased GOD to hide himself from some, and to disclose himself to others.*

It has been the gracious purpose of GOD, to redeem mankind, and to open a door of salvation to those who diligently seek him. But men have shewn themselves so unworthy of this design, that he justly denies to some, on account of their obstinacy, what he grants to others, by a mercy which is not their due. Were it his pleasure to overbear the stubbornness of the most hardened unbelievers, he could easily effect it by discovering himself so manifestly to them, as to set the truth of his existence beyond the possibility of their disputes. And it is in this manner that he will appear at the last day; with such amazing terrors, and such a convulsion of all nature, that the most blind shall behold, and shall confess him.

But this is not the way which he has chosen for his first and milder coming: because, so many persons having rendered themselves thus unworthy of his mercy, he has left them deprived of a happiness which they vouchsafed not to desire. It had not, therefore, been consistent with his justice, to assume an appearance every way great and divine, and capable of working in all men an absolute and undistinguished conviction: nor, on the other hand, would it have seemed more equitable to have used so much privacy and concealment, as not to be discoverable by sincere inquirers. So that intending no less to reveal himself to those who sought him with their whole heart, than to hide himself from those who were alike indus-

trious to fly and avoid him, he has so tempered the knowledge of himself, as to exhibit bright and visible indications to those who seek him, and to turn the pillar of a cloud towards those who seek him not.

\* There is a due proportion of light for those who, above all things, wish that they may see; and a proper mixture of shade for those who are of a contrary disposition.

There is enough of brightness to illuminate the elect; and enough of obscurity to humble them.

There is obscurity enough to blind the reprobates; and brightness enough to condemn them, and render them without excuse.

Did the world subsist purely to inform men of the being of GOD, his divinity would shine through it with irresistible and uncontested rays. But, in as much as it subsists only by JESUS CHRIST, and for JESUS CHRIST, and to inform men of their corruption and redemption, we read these two lessons in every part of its frame. For all the objects which we can survey are such as denote neither the total exclusion, nor the manifest presence of a GOD; or they denote the presence of a GOD "who hides himself." The face of nature bears this universal character and language.

\* Had men never been honoured with the appearance of GOD, this eternal privation might have been the subject of dispute, and as well have been interpreted of his utter absence from the world, as of human incapacity to enjoy his presence. But by affording some, though not continual appearances, he has taken away all ground of doubt and debate. If he has appeared once, he exists for ever. So that we are obliged jointly to conclude, from the whole, the being of GOD, and the unworthiness of Man.

\* It seems to be the divine intention, to perfect the Will rather than the Understanding. But now, a convincing light and a perfect brightness, while they assisted the understanding, would forestall and defeat the will.

\* Were there no intermixture of darkness, man would



not be sensible of his disease ; and were there no degree of light, man would despair of a remedy. So that not only the divine justice, but human interest and advantage seem concerned, that GOD should discover himself in part ; it being alike dangcrous for us to know GOD, without apprehending our own misery,—and to know our own misery, without the apprehension of GOD.

\* Every thing instructs man in his own condition ; but then this maxim ought rightly to be understood. For it is neither true, that GOD altogether discovers himself, nor that he remains altogether concealed. But these are most consistent truths, that he hides himself from those who tempt him, and discloses himself to those who seek him. For men, though unworthy of GOD, yet at the same time are capable of GOD. They are unworthy of him by their corruption ; and they are capable of him by their original perfection.

\* There is no object upon earth which does not speak and proclaim either divine mercy, or human misery ; either the impotence of man, unassisted by GOD, or the power of man with GOD's concurrence.

\* The whole universe teaches man, either that he is distempered and lapsed, or that he is recovered and redeemed. Every thing informs him either of his greatness, or of his misery. The just dereliction of GOD, we may read in the Pagans : his merciful favour and protection, in the ancient JEWS.

\* All things work together for good to the elect ; even the obscurities of Scripture, which these honour and reverence, on account of that divine clearness and beauty which they understand. And all things work together for evil to the reprobates ; even the divine clearness and beauty of Scripture, which these blaspheme, on account of the obscurities which they understand not.

\* JESUS CHRIST is come, that those who see not, may see ; and that those who see, may be made blind. He is come to heal the sick, and to give over the sound ; to call sinners to repentance and justification, and to leave those

in their sins, who trusted in themselves that they were saints; to fill the hungry with good things, and to send the rich empty away.

\* It was to render the MESSIAS alike the subject of knowledge to the good, and of error to the wicked, that it pleased GOD so to dispose the predictions concerning him. For had the *manner* of his appearance been expressly foretold, there would not have been obscurity enough to mislead the worst of men. On the other hand, had the *time* been signified obscurely, the best of men would have wanted evidence. For instance, the integrity of their heart could never have assisted them in expounding a single  $\infty$  for the numeral of six hundred years. The Time, therefore, was declared in positive words; but the Manner wrapt up in shade and figure.

By this means the wicked, apprehending the promised Goods to be temporal, deceived themselves, notwithstanding the clear indications of the Time; while the righteous avoided this mistake. For the construction of the promised Goods depended on the heart, which is wont to apply the name of good to the object of its love: whereas the construction of the promised Time has no dependence on the heart or affections. And thus the plain discovery of the Time, and the obscure description of the Goods, or happiness expected, could be the cause of error only to the wicked.

\* Instead of complaining that GOD is so far removed from our search, we ought to give him thanks that he is so obvious to our discovery. Nor ought we less to thank him, that he still hides himself from the wise and the lofty, from those who are unworthy to know so pure and holy a GOD.

\* Let men, therefore, reproach us no more with the want of perfect light; for we profess ourselves to want it. But let them own the power and truth of Religion in its very obscurity, in that mixture of darkness which surrounds us, and that indifference which we find in ourselves towards the knowledge of our duty.

\* Were there but one Religion in the world, the discoveries of the Divine Nature might seem too free and open, and with too little distinction; and so likewise, if there were martyrs in no Religion but the true.

\* If the mercy of God be so abundant, as to afford us all saving knowledge, even while he hides himself; what immense light may we expect, when he shall please to unveil his perfections?

XVIII. *That the true Professors of Judaism and of Christianity have ever been of one and the same Religion.*

The *Jewish* Religion seems, at first view, to consist, as to its very essence, in the Paternity of ABRAHAM, in the rite of Circumcision, in Sacrifices, in Ceremonies, in the Ark, in the Temple at JERUSALEM, or, briefly, in the Law and the Covenant of MOSES.

But we offer to maintain, That it consisted in none of these, but purely in the Love of GOD; and that, besides this, nothing ever obtained the divine approbation and acceptance:—

That GOD bore no manner of regard to “Israel after the Flesh,” to those who proceeded out of the loins of ABRAHAM:—

That the JEWS, if they transgressed, were to be punished after the manner of strangers: “And it shall be, that if you do at all forget the LORD your GOD, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them; I testify against you this day, that ye shall surely perish: as the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish:—

That strangers, if they loved GOD, were to be received by him on the same terms with the JEWS:—

That those who were JEWS in truth and reality ascribed all their merit and pretensions not to ABRAHAM, but to GOD: “Doubtless thou art our Father, though ABRAHAM be ignorant of us, and ISRAEL knoweth us not: Thou art our Father and our Redeemer:”—

MOSES himself assured his nation, that GOD was no excepter of persons; “the LORD, your GOD,” says he, “regardeth not persons, nor taketh rewards:”—

We affirm, That the circumcision enjoined was that of the Heart: “Circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked. For the LORD your GOD is a great GOD, a mighty, and a terrible, who regardeth not persons:”—

That GOD particularly promised to bestow on them this grace of spiritual circumcision: “And the LORD thy GOD will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy GOD with all thy heart:”—

That the uncircumcised in heart shall be judged of GOD: “For GOD will judge all the nations which are uncircumcised; and all the people of ISRAEL, because they are uncircumcised in heart:”—

We say, That Circumcision was purely a figure, instituted to distinguish the people of the JEWS from all other nations: And this was the reason that they used it not in the wilderness, because there was then no danger of their mixing with strangers; as also that since the appearance of our LORD it is become altogether unnecessary:—

That the Love of GOD is, every where, principally commanded and enforced: “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live; that thou mayest love the LORD thy GOD, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him, for he is thy life,” &c. :—

It was declared, That the JEWS, for want of this Love of GOD, should be abandoned to their sins, and the Gentiles admitted in their stead: “I will hide my face from them; I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith. They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not GOD, they have provoked me to anger with their vanities;

and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people ; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation :—

That temporal goods are false and vain ; and that the only true and lasting good is the divine acceptance and favour :—

That the offerings of the Gentiles should be received by God ; and that he should withdraw his acceptance from the offerings of the JEWS :—

That God would make a new covenant by the MESSIAS ; and that the old covenant should be disannulled :—

That the old things should be universally forgotten, and should pass away :—

That the Ark of the Covenant should come no more to mind :—

That the Temple should be given up and destroyed :—

That the legal Sacrifices should be abolished ; and Sacrifices of a purer kind established in their room :—

That the *Aaronical* order of Priesthood should be dissolved ; and the order of MELCHISEDEC be introduced by the MESSIAS :—

That this latter Priesthood should be an ordinance for ever :—

That JERUSALEM should be reprobated ; and a new Name given to the elect people :—

That this new Name should be more excellent than that of the JEWS, and of eternal duration.

XIX. *That God is not known to advantage, but through JESUS CHRIST.*

THE greatest part of those who attempt to demonstrate the truth of the Divine Being to the profane, begin with the Works of Nature ; and in this method they rarely succeed. I would not seem to impair the validity of these proofs, which have been consecrated by the holy Scripture itself. They have, indeed, an undeniable agree-

ment with the principles of sound reason ; but are very often not so well proportioned to that disposition of spirit which is peculiar to the persons here described.

For we must observe, that discourses of this kind are not ordinarily addressed to men whose hearts abound with a lively faith, and who immediately discern the whole system of things to be no other than the workmanship of that God whom they adore. To these “the heavens declare the glory of God,” and all Nature speaks in behalf of its Author. But as for those in whom this light is extinct, and in whom we endeavour to revive it, persons who are destitute of faith and charity, and who behold nothing but clouds and darkness on the whole face of Nature, it seems not the most probable method of their conversion, to offer them nothing more on a subject of the last importance, than the course of the moon or planets, or than such arguments as they every day hear, and every day despise. The hardness and obstinacy of their temper have rendered them deaf to this voice of nature, which sounds continually in their ears ; and experience informs us, that instead of our gaining them by such a process, there is nothing which, on the contrary, is so great a discouragement, and so apt to make them despair of ever finding the truth, as when we undertake to convince them by the way of reasoning, and pretend to tell them that truth shines so bright, in these views, as to become really irresistible.

The Holy Scripture, which knows so much better than we the things which belong to God, never speaks of them in this manner. It informs us, indeed, that the beauty of the creature leads to the knowledge of the Creator ; but it does by no means assure us that the creatures produce this effect indifferently in all persons. On the contrary, it declares, that whenever they appear thus convincing, it is not by their own force, but by means of that light which God diffuseth into the hearts of those to whom he is pleased to discover himself by their means and intervention : it teacheth, in general,

that our GOD is "a GOD who hideth himself;" and that since the corruption of human nature, he has left men under such a blindness as they can only be delivered from by JESUS CHRIST, without whom we are cut off from all communication with the Divinity.

The Scripture gives us a farther evidence of this truth, when it so often testifies, that GOD is found by those who seek him; for it could never speak thus of a clear and certain light, such as gives not men the trouble of searching after it, but freely diffuseth itself around, and prevents the observation of the beholders.

\* The metaphysical proofs of GOD are so very intricate, and so far removed from the common reasonings of men, that they strike with little force: or, at best, the impression continues but a short space, and men, the very next hour, fall back into their old jealousies, and their perpetual fear and suspicion of being deceived.

Again; all the arguments of this abstracted kind are able to lead us no farther than to a speculative knowledge of GOD; and to know him only thus, is, in effect, not to know him at all.

The GOD of Christians is not barely the supreme and infallible author of geometrical truths, or of the elementary order and the disposition of nature; this is the Divinity of Philosophers and *Pagans*:—nor barely the Providential Disposer of the lives and fortunes of men, so as to crown his worshippers with a long and happy series of years; this was the portion of the JEWS. But the GOD of ABRAHAM and of ISAAC, the GOD of *Christians*, is a GOD of love and consolation; a GOD who possesseth the hearts and souls of his servants; gives them an inward feeling of their own misery, and of his infinite mercy; unites himself to their spirit, replenishing it with humility and joy, with affiance and love; and renders them incapable of any prospect, any aim, but himself.

The GOD of Christians is a GOD who makes the soul perceive and know that he is her only good, and that she can find peace and repose in him alone;—no delight, no

joy, but in his love;—and who, at the same time, inspires her with an abhorrence of those obstacles and impediments which withhold her from loving him with all her strength. As her two principal hinderances, self-love and concupiscence, are grievous and insupportable to her; so it is this gracious GOD who makes her know and feel that she has these fatal distempers rooted in her constitution, and that his hand alone can expel or subdue them.

This is to know GOD as a Christian. But to know him after this manner, we must, at the same time, know our own misery and unworthiness, together with the need we have of a Mediator, in order to our approaching his presence, or uniting ourselves to him. We ought by no means to separate these parts of knowledge; because each alone is not only unprofitable, but dangerous. The knowledge of GOD, without the knowledge of our own misery, is the nurse of pride. The knowledge of our own misery; without the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST, is the mother of despair. But the true knowledge of JESUS CHRIST exempts us alike from pride and from despair; by giving us, at once, a sight, not only of GOD, and of our misery, but also of the mercy of GOD in the relief of our misery.

We may know GOD without knowing our own miseries; or we may know our own miseries without knowing GOD; or we may know both, without knowing the means of obtaining from GOD the relief of our miseries. But we cannot know JESUS CHRIST without the knowledge of GOD, of our miseries, and of their cure; inasmuch as JESUS CHRIST is not only GOD, but he is GOD under this character, the Healer and Repairer of our miseries.

Thus all they who seek GOD without JESUS CHRIST can never meet with such light in their enquiries as may afford them true satisfaction, or solid use. For either they advance not so far as to know that there is a GOD; or if they do, yet they arrive hereby but at an unprofit-



able knowledge, because they frame to themselves a method of communicating with GOD, without a Mediator; as if without a Mediator they were capable of knowing him: so that they unavoidably fall either into Atheism, or Deism, things which the Christian Religion does almost equally detest and abhor.

We ought therefore wholly to direct our enquiries to the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST; because it is by him alone that we can pretend to know GOD, in such a manner as shall be really advantageous to us.

He alone is the true GOD to us *men*, that is, to miserable and sinful creatures: he is our chief centre and supreme object, in respect of all that we can wish, and all that we can understand. Whoever knows not him, knows nothing either in the order of the world, or in his own nature and condition. For as we know GOD only by JESUS CHRIST, so it is by him alone that we know ourselves.

Without JESUS CHRIST man is, of necessity, to be considered as lying in vice and misery: with JESUS CHRIST man appears as released from vice, and redeemed from misery. In him consists all our happiness, and all our virtue, our life and light, our hope and assurance: out of him there is no prospect but of sins and miseries, of darkness and despair; nothing to be beheld by us but obscurity and confusion in the Divine Nature, and in our own.

## XX. *The strange Contrarieties discoverable in Human Nature.*

NOTHING can be more astonishing in the nature of man, than the Contrarieties which we there observe, with regard to all things. He is made for the knowledge of truth; this is what he most ardently desires, and most eagerly pursues; yet when he endeavours to lay hold on it, he is so dazzled and confounded, as never to be secure

of actual possession. Hence the two sects of the *Pyrrhonians* and the *Dogmatists* took their rise; of which the one would utterly deprive men of all truth; the other would infallibly ensure their enquiries after it; but each with so improbable reasons, as only to increase our confusion and perplexity, while we are guided by no other lights than those which we find in our own bosom.

The *Sceptics*, who labour to bring all things to their own standard, are under a continual disappointment. We may be very well assured of our being awake, though very unable to demonstrate it by reason. This inability shews indeed the feebleness of our rational powers, but not the general incertitude of our knowledge. We apprehend with no less confidence that there are such things in the world as space, time, motion, number, and matter, than the most regular and demonstrative conclusions. Nay, it is upon this certainty of perception and intellection, that reason ought to fix itself, and to found the whole method of its process. We apprehend principles, and we conclude propositions; and both with the like assurance, though by different ways. It were to be wished that we had less occasion for rational deductions; and that we knew all things by instinct and immediate view. But nature has denied us this favour, and allows us but few notices of so easy a kind, leaving us to work out the rest by laborious consequences, and a continued series of arguments.

We see here a universal war proclaimed amongst mankind. We must of necessity enlist ourselves on one side or on the other: for he that pretends to stand neuter is most effectually of the *Pyrrhonian* party: this neutrality constitutes the very essence of *Pyrrhonism*; and he that is not against the *Sceptics*, must be, in a superlative manner, for them. What shall a man do under these circumstances? Shall he question every thing? Shall he doubt whether he is awake, whether another pinches him, or burns him? Shall he doubt whether he doubts? Shall he doubt whether he exists? It seems impossible to

come to this ; and therefore, I believe, there never was a finished *Sceptic*, a *Pyrrhonian* in perfection. There is a secret force in nature which sustains the weakness of reason, and hinders it from losing itself in such a degree of extravagance. Well, but shall a man join himself to the opposite faction ? Shall he boast that he is in sure possession of truth, when, if we press him ever so little, he can produce no title, and must be obliged to quit his hold ?

What measures can suppress or compose this embroilment ? The *Pyrrhonians*, we see, are confounded by Nature, and the *Dogmatists* by Reason. 'To what a distracting misery will that man, therefore, be reduced, who shall seek the knowledge of his own condition, by the bare light and guidance of his own powers ; it being alike impossible for him to avoid both these sects, and to repose himself in either !

Such is the portrait of man, with regard to Truth. Let us now behold him in respect of Felicity, which he prosecutes with so much warmth through his whole course of action : for all desire to be happy ; this general rule is without exception. Whatever variety there may be in the means employed, there is but one end universally pursued. The reason why one man embraceth the hazard of war, and why another declines it, is but the same desire, attended in each with a different intermediate view. This is the sole motive to every action of every person ; and even of such as, most unnaturally, become their own executioners.

And yet, after the course of so many ages, no person without Faith has ever arrived at this point, towards which all continually tend. The whole world is busy in complaining : princes and subjects, nobles and commons, old and young, the strong and the feeble, the learned and the ignorant, the healthy and the diseased, of all countries, all times, all ages, and all conditions.

So long, so constant, so regular, and uniform a proof ought fully to convince us of the disability we lie under

towards the acquisition of happiness by our own strength. But example will not serve for our instruction in this case; because there being no resemblance so exact as not to admit some near difference, we are hence disposed to think that our expectation is not so liable to be deceived on one occasion as on another. Thus the present never satisfying us, the future decoys and lures us on, till, from one misfortune to another, it leads us into death, the sum and perfection of eternal, complicated misery.

This is next to a miracle, that there should not be any one thing in nature which has not been some time fixed, as the last end and happiness of man; neither stars, nor elements, nor plants, nor animals, nor insects, nor diseases, nor war, nor vices, nor sin. Man being fallen from his natural estate, there is no object so extravagant as not to be capable of attracting his desire. Ever since the time that he lost his real good, every thing cheats him with the appearance of it; even his own destruction, though the greatest contradiction to Reason and to Nature at once.

Some have sought after Felicity in honour and authority, others in curiosity and knowledge, and a third tribe in the enjoyments of sense. These three leading desires have constituted as many factions; and those, whom we compliment with the name of Philosophers, have really done nothing else but resigned themselves up to one of the three. Such amongst them as made the nearest approaches to Truth and Happiness well considered, that it was necessary that the universal good, which all desire, and in which each man ought to be allowed his portion, should not consist in any of the private blessings of this world, which can be properly enjoyed but by one alone, and which, if divided, do more grieve and afflict each possessor, for want of the part which he has not, than they gratify him with the part which he has. They rightly apprehended, that the true good ought to be such as all may possess at once, without diminution, and without contention; and such as no man can be deprived of

against his will. They apprehended this, but they were unable to attain it; and, instead of a solid, substantial happiness, took up, at last, with the empty shadow of a fantastic virtue.

Our instinct suggests to us, that we ought to seek our Happiness within ourselves. Our passions hurry us abroad, even when there are no objects to engage and incite them. The things without are themselves our tempters, and charm and attract us, while we think of nothing less. Therefore, the wisest Philosophers might weary themselves with crying, "Keep within yourselves, and your Felicity is in your own gift and power." The generality never gave them credit; and those who were so easy as to believe them, became only the more unsatisfied and the more ridiculous. For is there any thing so vain as the *Stoics'* Happiness, or so groundless as the reasons on which they build it?

They conclude, that what has been done once, may be done always; and that, because the desire of glory has sometimes spurred on its votaries to great and worthy actions, all others may use it with the same success. But these are the motions of fever and phrenzy, which sound health and judgment can never imitate.

The civil war between Reason and Passion has occasioned two opposite projects, for the restoring of peace to mankind: the one, of those who were for renouncing their passions, and becoming Gods; the other of those who were for renouncing their reason, and becoming Beasts. But neither the one nor the other could take effect. Reason ever continues to accuse the baseness and injustice of the passions, and to disturb the repose of those who abandon themselves to their dominion: and, on the contrary, the Passions remain lively and vigorous in the hearts of those, who talk the most of their extirpation.

This is the just account of human nature, and human strength, in respect of Truth and Happiness. We have an idea of Truth, not to be effaced by all the wiles of the

*Sceptic* ; we have an incapacity of argument, not to be rectified by all the power of the *Dogmatist*. We wish for Truth, and find nothing in ourselves, but uncertainty. We seek after Happiness, and are presented with nothing but misery. Our double aim is, in effect, a double torture ; while we are alike unable to compass either, and to relinquish either. These desires seem to have been left in us, partly as a punishment of our Fall, and partly as an indication and remembrance whence we are fallen.

\* If man was not made for God, why is God alone sufficient for human happiness ? If man was made for God, why is the human will, in all things, repugnant to the Divine ?

\* Man is at a loss where to fix himself, and how to recover his rank in the world. He is unquestionably out of his way ; he feels within himself the small remains of his once happy state, which he is now unable to retrieve. And yet this is what he daily courts and follows after, always with solicitude, and never with success ; encompassed with darkness, which he can neither escape nor penetrate.

Hence arose the grand contention among the Philosophers ; some of whom endeavoured to raise and exalt man, by displaying his greatness ; others to depress and abase him, by representing his misery. And what seems more strange, is, that each party borrowed from the other the ground of their own opinion. For the misery of man may be inferred from his greatness, as his greatness is deducible from his misery. Thus the one sect, with more evidence, demonstrated his misery in that they derived it from his greatness ; and the other more strongly concluded his greatness, because they founded it on his misery. Whatever was offered to justify his greatness, in behalf of one tribe, served only to evince his misery, in behalf of the other ; it being more miserable to have fallen from the greater height. And the same proportion holds *vice versâ*. So that in this endless circle of dispute, each helped to advance his adversary's cause ;

for it is certain, that the more degrees of light men enjoy, the more degrees they are able to discern of misery and of greatness. In a word, man knows himself to be miserable: he is therefore exceedingly miserable, because he knows that he is so: but he likewise appears to be eminently great, from his very act of knowing himself to be miserable.

What a chimera then is Man! What a surprising novelty! What a confused chaos! What a subject of contradiction! A professed judge of all things, and yet a feeble worm of the earth! The great depositary and guardian of Truth, and yet a mere huddle of uncertainty; the glory and the scandal of the universe! If he is too aspiring and lofty, we can lower and humble him; if too mean and little, we can raise and swell him.—To conclude: we can bait him with repugnancies and contradictions, till at length, he apprehends himself to be a monster, even beyond apprehension.

### XXI. *The General Knowledge of Man.*

THE first thing which offers itself to Man, when reflecting on himself, is his Body, or a certain portion of matter allotted and appropriated to him. And yet to understand what this portion is, he must be obliged to compare it with all things that are above or below him, ere he can determine and adjust its bounds. Let him not therefore content himself with the sight of those objects, which immediately surround him. Let him contemplate all nature, in its height of perfection, and fulness of majesty. Let him consider the great body of the Sun, set up as an eternal lamp to enlighten the universe. Let him suppose the Earth to be only a point, in respect of the vast circuit which this luminary describes. And, for his greater astonishment, let him observe, that even this vast circuit is but a point itself, compared with the Firmament and the orb of the fixed Stars. If his sight be limited here, let his imagination, at least, pass beyond. He may sooner

exhaust the power of conceiving, than nature can want a new store to furnish out his conceptions. The whole extent of visible things is but one line or stroke in the ample bosom of nature. No idea can reach the immeasurable compass of her space. We may grow as big as we please with notion; but we shall bring forth mere atoms, instead of real and solid discoveries. This is an infinite sphere, the centre of which is every where, and the circumference no where. In a word, it is the greatest amongst all the sensible marks and characters of the almighty power of God. And let our imagination lose itself in this reflection.

If a man can recover himself from such a prospect, let him consider what he himself is, if compared with the whole expansion of Being. Let him conclude that he is accidentally strayed into this blind corner of nature; and from what he finds of his present dungeon, let him learn to set the proper value on the earth, on kingdoms, on cities, and on himself.

What is Man with regard to this Infinity about him? Who can fix his distance, or comprehend his proportion? But to shew him another prodigy no less astonishing, let him turn his thoughts on the smallest of those things which fall within his knowledge. Let a mite, for instance, in the contemptible minuteness of its body, present him with parts incomparably more minute; with jointed legs, with veins in those legs, blood in those veins, humours in that blood, drops in those humours, vapours in those drops. Let him still apply all his force, and strain his utmost conception, to divide the least of those particulars which we have mentioned; and when he has gone as far as his mind can reach, let the concluding atom be the subject of our discourse. He will probably suppose that this is the remotest extreme, the last diminutive in nature: but even in this, where he finds himself obliged to stop, I shall undertake still to open before him a new abyss of wonders. Let him conceive me delineating to him on the surface of this imperceptible atom, not only the visible



world, but whatsoever he is able to comprehend of the immensity of all things. Let him here behold an infinity of worlds, each with its firmament, its planets, its earth, under the same proportions, as in the natural system. Let him still imagine every such earth to be stored with all living things, and even with his mites; and let him consider that it is possible each of these mites may again present him with such a painted world as he admired in the first, and that the shew may still be repeated, without end, and without rest.

Let him again lose himself in these wonders, no less surprising for their minuteness than the former for their vastness and extent. And who will not be confounded to reflect that our body, which before was judged imperceptible, in respect of the world, which world is itself imperceptible in the bosom of Universal Being, should now become a Colossus, a world, or rather an Universality of Being, in respect of that exquisite diminution at which our last refinement of thought may by this artifice arrive.

He that shall take this survey of his own nature, will, no doubt, be under the greatest consternation to find himself hanging, as it were, in his material scale, between the two vast abysses of infinite and nothing; from which he is equally removed. He will tremble at the sight of so many prodigies; and turning his curiosity into admiration, will, I believe, be more inclined silently to contemplate them, than presumptuously to search their depths.

For what is Man amongst the natures which encompass him? In one view he appears as unity to infinity, in another, as all to nothing; and must therefore be the medium between these extremes; alike distant from that nothing whence he was taken, and from that infinity in which he is swallowed up.

His Understanding holds the same rank in the order of beings as his body in the material system; and all the knowledge he can reach is only to discern somewhat of the middle of things, under an eternal despair of compre-

hending either their beginning or their end. All things arise from nothing, and proceed to infinity. Who can keep pace with these steps? Who can follow such an amazing progress? None but the AUTHOR of these wonders is able to explain or understand them.

This middle state and condition is common to all our faculties. Our senses can bear no extremes: too much noise or too much light are equally fatal, and make us either deaf or blind; too great distance or too great nearness do alike hinder a prospect; too much prolixity or too much brevity darken and perplex a discourse; too intense a pleasure becomes incommodious; too uniform a symphony has no power to affect and move; our body is utterly indisposed for the last degrees of heat and cold; qualities in excess are enemies to our nature; we do not properly feel but suffer them; the weakness of childhood and old age alike incapacitate the mind; too much or too little food disturbs it in its actions; too much or too little study renders it extravagant and unruly. Things in extreme are of no use or account, with respect to our nature; and our nature is of as little with respect to theirs; either we shun and avoid them, or they miss and escape us.

This is our real estate; and it is this which fixeth and confines all our attainments within certain limits, which we can never pass, being equally unable either to know all things, or to remain ignorant of all things. We are placed here in a vast and uncertain medium, ever floating between ignorance and knowledge; and if we endeavour to step beyond our bounds, the object which we should seize doth, with a violent shock, wrest itself (as it were) from our hold, and vanisheth by an eternal flight, which no force may controul or stay.

This is the true condition of nature, and yet the most opposite to our inclination. We are inflamed with a desire of piercing through all things, and of building a tower, the top of which shall reach even to infinity. But our feeble edifice cracks and falls; the earth opens, without bottom, under us, and buries our devices in its gulf.

XXII. *The Greatness of Man.*

I can easily conceive a man without hands and without feet; and I could conceive him too without an head, if I did not learn from experience, that it is by the help of this he thinks. It is Thought, therefore, which constitutes the essence of Man, and without which he is altogether unconceivable:

\* What is that which has a sense of Pleasure in our frame? Is it our hand? is it our arm? is it the flesh? is it the blood? Do we not find it absolutely necessary to have recourse to somewhat of an Immaterial Nature for this service?

\* Man has such a stock of real greatness, that he is great even in knowing himself to be miserable. A tree is no more sensible of misery than of felicity. It is true, the knowing himself to be miserable is an addition to man's misery; but then it is no less a demonstration of his greatness. Thus his greatness is shewn by his miseries, as by its ruins. They are the miseries of a mighty Statesman in disgrace, of a Prince dispossessed and dethroned.

\* We have so great an idea of the human soul in any person, that we cannot bear the thought of wanting its regard and esteem; and it is this united esteem which composeth all the happiness of man.

If the false glory which men pursue, is on the one side a proof of their misery, it is on the other side an attestation of their excellence: for whatever degree of riches, health, and other benefits men enjoy, they are still dissatisfied, unless they find themselves in the good opinion of their own kind. Human reason challengeth so much esteem and reverence from us, that under the most advantageous circumstances of life we think ourselves unhappy, if we are not placed to an equal advantage in men's judgments. This we look on as the fairest post that can be attained: nothing is able to divert us from so passionate a desire; and it is the most indelible character

in the heart of man: insomuch, that those who think so contemptuously of mankind as to make the very beasts their equals, do yet contradict their own hypothesis by the motions which they feel in their own souls. Nature, which is stronger than all their reason, convinceth them more powerfully of man's greatness, than reason can persuade them of his meanness.

\* Man is a reed, and the weakest reed in nature; but then he is a thinking reed. There is no occasion that the whole universe should arm itself for his defeat; a vapour, a drop of water, is sufficient to dispatch him. And yet, should the world oppress and crush him with ruin, he would still be more noble than that by which he fell, because he would be sensible of his fate, while the universe would be insensible of its victory.

Thus our whole worth and perfection consist in Thought: it is hence we are to raise ourselves, and not from the empty ideas of space and duration. Let us study the art of thinking well: this is the rule of life, and the fountain of morals.

\* It is dangerous to inform man how near he stands to the beasts, without shewing him, at the same time, how infinitely he shines above them. Again, it is dangerous to let him see his excellence, without making him acquainted with his infirmity. And the greatest danger of all is, to leave him in utter ignorance of one and of the other. But to have a just representation of both, is his greatest interest and happiness.

\* Let man be allowed to know his own value. Let him love himself, because he has a nature capable of good; but let him not be in love with the weaknesses and diseases of that nature. Let him despise himself, because this capacity within him is altogether empty and void; but let him not hence entertain a dislike of so natural, so noble a capacity. Let him hate his being, and let him love it too, because he is framed for the possession of truth, (and consequently of happiness,) and yet can find no truth that is permanent or satisfactory. I would

therefore move him to entertain a desire, at least, of finding it, and to yield himself disengaged and ready to follow where he shall find it. And because I am not insensible how much the light of human knowledge is obscured by human passion, I would prescribe to him, above all things, the detestation of his own concupiscence, which is so fatal a bias on his own judgment; so that it may neither bind him while he is making his choice, nor divert or obstruct him from pursuing what he has chosen.

### XXIII. *The Vanity of Man.*

We are not satisfied with that life which we possess in ourselves, and in our own proper being; we are fond of leading an imaginary life in the ideas of others. And it is hence that we are so eager to shew ourselves to the world. We labour indefatigably to retain, improve, and adorn this fictitious being, while we stupidly neglect the true. And if we happen to be masters of any noble endowment of tranquillity, generosity, or fidelity of mind, we press with all vigour to make them known, that we may transfer and engraft these excellencies on that fantastic existence. Nay, we had rather part with them, than not apply them to so vain a use; and would gladly commence cowards to purchase the reputation of valour:—a great indication this of the meanness of our genuine being, not to rest satisfied in it without its shadow, and very often to renounce the former for the latter.

\* Pride has so natural a possession of us, in the midst of our misery and error, that we can lose even our lives with joy, upon the terms of being celebrated for the act.

\* Vanity has taken so firm hold in the heart of man, that a Porter, a Hodman, a Turnspit, can talk greatly of himself, and is for having his admirers. Philosophers do but refine upon the same ambition. Those who write of the contempt of glory, do yet desire the glory of writing well; and those who read their compositions would not

lose the glory of having read them. Perhaps I myself, who am now making these reflections, am now sensible of this glory; and perhaps my reader is not proof against the charm.

\* We are so presumptuous, that we desire to be known to all the world; and even to those who are not to come into the world till we have left it. And, at the same time, we are so little and vain, as that the esteem of five or six persons about us is enough to content and amuse us.

\* Curiosity is little better than mere vanity. For the most part we desire to know things, purely that we may talk of them. Few would undertake so dangerous Voyages and Travels, for the bare pleasure of entertaining their sight, if they were bound to secrecy at their return, or for ever cloistered from conversation.

\* We never think of raising a name and repute in places through which we only pass; but where we fix our residence for any time, there we eagerly admit, and industriously pursue this thought. What time is requisite for the purpose? Such as bears a proportion to our short and miserable life.

\* We can never keep close to the present. We anticipate the time to come as too slow, in order to the making it mend its pace; or we call back the time that is past as too swift, in order to the stopping its flight. Such is our folly, that we ramble through those times in which we have no concern, and utterly forget that on which our whole fortune and interest depend; such our vanity, that we dream of those which are not, and let that which alone subsists pass by us without notice or reflection. The reason of all which is this, because the present generally gives us some uneasiness, we are willing to hide it from our sight, as being grievous to us; but if it happen to be agreeable, we are in no less pain to see it slide so fast away. Hence we tack the future to it, to strengthen and support it, and pretend to dispose of things not in our power, for a time at which we have no assurance ever to arrive.

Let a man examine his own thoughts, and he will always find them employed about the time past, or to come. We scarce bestow a glance upon the present; or if we do, it is only that we may borrow light from hence, to manage and direct the future. The present is never the mark of our designs. We use both past and present as our means and instruments, but the future only as our object and aim. Thus we never live, but we ever hope to live; and under this continual disposition and preparation to happiness, it is certain we can never be actually happy, if our hopes are terminated with the scene of this life.

\* Our fancy so much enlargeth and swells this temporal duration, by reflecting perpetually on it, and so far extenuates and contracts our eternal state, by seldom taking it into thought, that we make a nothing of eternity, and an eternity of nothing. And the springs of this whole proceeding are so vigorous in us, that all our reason is too weak to suppress or over-rule them.

#### XXIV. *The Weakness of Man.*

There is nothing which more astonishes me than that the whole world should not be astonished at their own infirmity. Men proceed seriously to action, and every one follows the way of life he has embraced, not as if it were really good in being the mode, but as if each man were exactly acquainted with the measures of reason and justice.

We are disappointed every moment; and by a very pleasant humility, we imagine that the fault is in ourselves, and not in the art which we all profess to understand. It is fit there should be many persons of this complexion in the world, to demonstrate that man is capable of the most extravagant opinions, because he is capable of believing that the weakness he feels is not

general and inevitable, but that he is naturally endued with true judgment and infallible wisdom.

\* While we are too young, our judgment is in immaturity; and when we are too old, it is in decay. If we think too little of a thing, or too much, our head turns giddy, and we are at a loss to find out our way to truth.

He that views his own work just as it comes out of his hands, is too much prepossessed in its favour; and he that lets it lie too long unsurveyed, forgets the niceness of its contexture, and the model by which it was wrought.

There is but one precise point which is the true place of shewing a picture: all others are either too near, or too distant; too high, or too low. Perspective assigns this point in the art of Painting, but who has skill enough to fix it in Truth and Morals?

\* That mistress of mistake, which we call fancy or opinion, is therefore the greater cheat, because she does not cheat constantly, and by rule. Always to lie would be always to tell the truth; whereas being deceitful only for the most part, she gives us no marks of her character, but stamps truth and falsehood with the very same impression.

This proud princess and potentate, the sworn enemy of reason, so ambitious to rule and domineer, has, that she may shew her absolute power over the world, established in man a second nature. She has her rich and her poor, her happy and her miserable, her sick and her sound, her fools and her wise; and nothing grieves us so much as to see that she fills her votaries with a satisfaction more large and entire than reason pretends to give. The imaginary wise men feel another sort of complacency within themselves than the masters of true wisdom can regularly find. Those look on the world with an air of authority, and discourse with assurance, while these never express themselves without diffidence and concern. And that gaiety of countenance often gives the former such an advantage in the minds of their hearers, that when they meet with judges of their own standard, they seldom



fail to please. Opinion cannot, indeed, make a fool wise, but it makes him contented, and so triumphs over reason, which seems only to render its friends and followers more sensibly miserable. This punisheth us with infamy, while that rewards us with glory.

\* Look upon that venerable Magistrate, whose age and ability command the reverence of the whole nation. Would you not suppose that he governs himself by the purest and sublimest Wisdom, and judgeth of things according to their real nature, without being moved by those trifling accidents and circumstances which disorder only weak and little people? But behold him entering the court; see him placed on the bench, and prepared with exemplary gravity for a formal hearing: let one of the counsel have an untunable voice, or a singular aspect, let him have been ill-treated by his barber, or disobliged by the roads and weather, and I will wager against the countenance of your Chief Justice.

\* The soul of the greatest man living is not so free and independent but that it is subject to disturbance at the least noise about him. You need not let off a cannon to break his train of thought; the creaking of a weather-cock, or of a pulley, will do it effectually. Do not be surprised that you hear him argue a little incoherently at present. He has a fly buzzing at his ears, and that is enough to make him a stranger to good counsel. Would you have him rightly apprized of the truth, you must take off this untoward animal, which holds his reason at bay, and discomposeth that sovereign understanding which gives laws to towns and kingdoms.

\* Diseases are another principle of error. They impair our judgment and our senses. And if those which are most violent produce a very visible change, those which have less strength do yet leave a proportionable impression.

Again, interest must be acknowledged to have a singular art in agreeably putting out our eyes. Affection or dislike quite invert the rules of justice. A counsellor, retained

with a large fee, grows clear-sighted to admiration, and finds the cause immediately improve upon his hands.

\* Not only does a veneration for antiquity abuse and enslave our mind,—the charms of novelty have the same ascendant over us: and hence arise all the disputes amongst men, who charge each other either with sticking to the false impressions of their childhood, or with running, at all adventures, into every new fancy.

Who is the man that keeps the just medium between these extremes? Let him appear, and make good his pretensions. There is no principle, how natural soever it may seem, and though even sucked in with our first milk, but may be made to pass for a false impression, either of education or of sense. Because (says one,) you have been wont, ever since your infancy, to suppose a vessel empty when you saw nothing in it; hence you come to believe the possibility of a *Vacuum*: Why, this is only a strong delusion of your senses, strengthened by custom, which science and demonstration ought to correct. By your leave, (says the other,) you have been positively told in the schools, that a *Vacuum* was impossible; and thus your senses were corrupted, which easily and naturally allowed it before this ill impression: this, therefore, you ought to deface, by returning to your primitive nature. And now we have heard both sides, where shall we fix the cheat,—in our senses, or in our education?

\* The whole employment of men's lives is to improve their fortunes; and yet the title by which they hold all, if traced to its origin, is no more than the pure fancy of the legislators: but their possession is still more precarious than their right, and at the mercy of a thousand accidents. Nor are the treasures of the mind better insured, while a fall or a fit of sickness may bankrupt the ablest understanding.

\* Abstracting from a state of Grace, man is nothing but the continual subject of insuperable errors. He can purchase no certain information: every thing in the world abuseth his curiosity. His two *Criteria* of truth,

Reason and Sense, (besides that they are not always faithful to themselves,) are wont reciprocally to mock and delude each other. Our senses beguile our reason with false appearances; and our reason has likewise its false consequences wherewith to return and revenge the cheat. The passions discompose the senses, and strike upon them the wrong way. They lie, and forge, and misrepresent, with a sort of vicious emulation.

### XXV. *The Misery of Man.*

THERE is nothing more capable of letting us into the knowledge of Human Misery, than an enquiry after the real cause of that perpetual Hurry and Confusion in which we pass our lives.

The soul is sent into the body to be the sojourner of a few days. She knows that this is but a stop till she may embark for eternity, and that a small space is allowed her to prepare for the voyage. The main part of this space is ravished from her by the necessities of nature, and but a slender pittance left to her own disposal: and yet this moment which remains, does so strangely oppress and perplex her, that she only studies how to lose it: she feels an intolerable burden, in being obliged to live with herself, and think of herself; and therefore her principal care is to forget herself, and to let this short and precious moment pass away without reflection, by amusing herself with things which prevent her notice of its speed.

This is the ground of all the tumultuary business, of all the trifling diversions amongst men, in which our general aim is to make the time pass off our hands without feeling it, or rather without feeling ourselves; and, by getting rid of this small portion of life, to avoid that inward disgust and bitterness, which we should not fail to meet with, if we found leisure to descend into our own breasts. For it is undeniably certain, that the soul of man is here incapable of rest and satisfaction. And this obliges her to expand herself every way, and to seek how she may lose the thoughts of her own proper being in a settled

application to the things about her. Her very happiness consists in this forgetfulness : and to make her exquisitely miserable, nothing more is required but the engaging her to look into herself, and to dwell at home.

We charge persons, from their very infancy, with the care of their own fortunes and honours, and no less of their estates and dignities belonging to their kindred and friends. We burden them with the study of Languages, of Exercises, and of Arts. We enter them in Business, and persuade them that they can never be truly blessed, unless by their industry and caution they in some measure secure the interest and glory of themselves, their families, and their dependents, and that unavoidable unhappiness is entailed upon the failure of any one particular in this kind. Thus we teach them to wear out their strength, and to rob themselves of their rest. A strange method (you will say) of making them happy ! What could be done with more effect towards the insuring them in misery ? Would you know what ? Why, only to release them from these cares, and to take off these burdens. For then their eyes and their thoughts must be turned inward ; and that is the only hardship which they esteem insupportable. Hence, if they gain any relaxation from their labours, we find them eager to throw it away upon some sport or diversion, which takes up their whole activity, and pleasantly robs them of themselves.

It is for this reason that, when I have set myself to consider the various agitations of human life, the toil and danger to which we expose ourselves, in the court, in the camp, in the pursuits of ambition, which give birth to so much passion and contention, to so many desperate and fatal adventures, I have often said, that the universal cause of men's misfortunes was their not being able to live quietly in a chamber. A person who has enough for the uses of this world, did he know the art of dwelling with himself, would never quit that repose and security for a voyage or a siege ; nor would he take so much pains to hazard his life, had he no other aim than barely to live.

But, upon stricter examination, I found, That this aversion to home, this roving and restless disposition, proceeded from a cause no less powerful than universal; from the native unhappiness of our frail and mortal state, which is incapable of all comfort, if we have nothing to divert our thoughts, and to call us out of ourselves.

I speak of those alone who survey their own nature, without the views of Faith and Religion. It is indeed one of the Miracles of Christianity, that by reconciling Man to GOD, it restores him to his own good opinion; that it makes him able to bear the sight of himself; and in some cases renders solitude and silence more agreeable than all the intercourse and action of mankind. Nor is it by fixing man in his own person, that it produceth these wonderful effects; it is by carrying him to GOD, and by supporting him under the sense of his miseries with the hopes of an assured and complete deliverance in a better life.

But for those who do not act above the principles of mere Nature, it is impossible they should, without falling into an incurable chagrin and discontent, undergo the lingering torment of leisure. Man who loves nothing but his own person, hates nothing so much as to be confined to his own conversation. He seeks nothing but himself, and yet flies and avoids nothing more than himself; because when he is obliged to look within, he does not see himself such as he could wish; discovering only a hidden store of inevitable miseries, and a mighty void of all real and solid good, which it is beyond his ability to replenish.

Let a man choose his own condition, let him embellish it with all the goods and all the satisfactions he can possess or desire; yet if, in the midst of all this glory and pride, he is without business, and without diversion, and has time to contemplate his fortunes, his spirits must unavoidably sink beneath the languishing felicity. He will of necessity torment himself with the prospect of what is to come; and he that boasted to have brought home all the ingredients of happiness, must again be sent abroad, or condemned to domestic misery.

Is Majesty itself so truly great and sufficient, as to support those whom it adorns and encircles, under the bare thought of their own grandeur? Is it necessary that this thought should be here likewise diverted, as in the common herd of men? A vulgar person will be happy, if he may ease himself of his secret troubles, by applying all his care to excel in the perfection of Daucing. But dare we say this of a King? Or, will he be more charmed with so vain and petty amusements, than with the contemplation of his royal dignity and estate? What nobler, what more sublime object than himself, to engage and to satisfy his spirit? Might it not seem an envious lessening of his content, to interrupt his princely thought with the care of measuring his steps by an air of music, or of exactly ordering a ball, instead of leaving him to survey the glories of his throne, and to rejoice in the excellence of his power? Let us presume to make the experiment: let us suppose a prince in solitude, without any entertainment of sense, any engagement of mind, any relief of conversation; and we shall find that a prince with his eyes upon himself, is a man full of miseries, and one who feels them with as quick and piercing a resentment as the lowest among his slaves. And therefore it has been a standing maxim, to banish these intruding and importunate reflections from Court, and to keep about the *Royal Person* those who shall constantly purvey for the amusement of their master, by laying a train of divertisements to succeed after business, and watching his hours of leisure, to pour in immediately a fresh supply of mirth and sport, that no vacancy may be left in life; that is, the Court abounds with men who have a wonderful activity in taking care that *His Majesty* shall not be alone, well knowing that solitude is but another name for misery, and that the supreme pitch of worldly greatness is too nice and weak to bear the examination of thought.

The principal thing which supports men under great employments, otherwise so full of toil and trouble, is, that by this means they are called off from the penance of self-reflection.

For pray consider, what is it else to be a *Superintendent*, a *Chancellor*, a *Prime-President*, but to have a number of persons flocking about them from all sides, who shall secure them, every hour in the day, from giving audience to their own mind? If they chauce to fall into disgrace, and to be banished to their Country-Seat, though they want neither fortune nor retinue, yet they seldom fail to commence unhappy; because they are no longer entertained with such a variety of new faces, and a succession of new business, as may make any thing, rather than themselves, the subject of their meditation.

Whence comes it to pass that men are transported to such a degree with gaming, hunting, or other diversions? Not because there is any real and intrinsic good to be obtained by these pursuits: not because they imagine that true happiness is to be found in the money which they win at play, or in the beast which they run down in the chace: for should you present them before-hand with both these, to save their trouble, they would be unanimous in rejecting the proposal. It is not the gentle and easy part which they are fond of, such as may give them leisure and space for thought; but it is the Heat and the Hurry which divert them from the mortification of thinking.

On this account it is that men are so much in love with the noise and tumult of the world; that a prison is a seat of horror; and that few persons can bear the punishment of being confined to themselves.

We have seen the utmost that human invention can do, in projecting for human happiness. Those who content themselves barely with demonstrating the vanity and littleness of common diversions, are indeed acquainted with one part of our miseries; for a considerable part it is, to be thus capable of taking pleasure in things so base and insignificant. But they apprehend not the principle which renders these miseries even necessary to us, so long as we remain uncured of that inward and natural infirmity of not being able to bear the sight of our own condition. The hare which men buy in the market cannot

screen them from this view, but the field and the chase afford an approved relief. And therefore when we reproach them with their low and ignoble aim, and observe to them how little satisfaction there is in that which they follow with so much ardour, did they answer upon mature judgment, they would acknowledge the equity of our censure, and would ingenuously declare, that they proposed nothing in these pursuits but the bare violence of the motion, such as might keep them strangers to the secrets of their soul; and that therefore they made choice of objects which, however worthless soever in reality, yet were able to engross the activity of all their powers. And the reason why they do not answer in this manner is, the want of this acquaintance with their own bosom. A gentleman believes with all sincerity that there is somewhat great and noble in hunting, and will be sure to tell you that it is a royal sport. You may hear the like defence and encomium of any other exercise or employment which men affect or pursue. They imagine that there must needs be somewhat real and solid in the objects themselves. They are persuaded, that could they but gain such a point, they should then repose themselves with content and pleasure; and are under an insensibility of the insatiable nature of this desire. They believe themselves to be heartily engaged in the attainment of rest, while they are indeed employed in nothing else but the search of continual and successive drudgery.

Men have a secret instinct, prompting them to seek employment or recreation, which proceeds from no other cause but the sense of their inward pain, and never-ceasing torment. They have another secret instinct, a relic of their primitive nature, which assures them, that the sum of their happiness consists in ease and repose. And upon these two opposite instincts they form one confused design, lurking in the recesses of their soul, which engages them to prosecute the latter by the intervention of the former, and constantly to persuade themselves that the satisfaction they have hitherto wanted will infallibly attend them, if, by surmounting certain diffi-



culties, which they now look in the face, they may open a safe passage to peace and tranquillity.

Thus our life runs out. We seek rest by encountering such particular impediments, which if we are able to remove, the consequence is, that the rest which we have obtained becomes itself a grievance: for we are ruminating every moment, either on the miseries we feel, or on those we fear. And even when we seem on all sides to be placed under shelter, the affections, which are so naturally rooted in us, fail not to regret their lost dominion, and to diffuse their melancholy poison through the soul.

And therefore, when CINEAS so gravely admonished PYRRHUS, (who proposed to enjoy himself with his friends, after he should have conquered a good part of the world,) that he would do much better to anticipate his own happiness, by taking immediate possession of this ease and quiet, without pursuing it through so much fatigue,—the counsel he gave was indeed full of difficulty, and scarcely more rational than the project of that young ambitious prince. Both the one and the other opinion supposed that which is false,—that a man can rest satisfied with himself, and his present possessions, without filling up the void space in his heart with imaginary expectations. PYRRHUS must inevitably have been unhappy, either without or with the conquest of the world; and perhaps that soft and peaceful life which his minister advised him to embrace, was less capable of giving him satisfaction, than the heat and tumult of so many expeditions, and so many battles, which he was then forming and fighting in his mind.

Man, therefore, must be confessed to be so unfortunate, that without any external cause of trouble, he would ever regret and bemoan the very condition of his own nature; and yet to be at the same time so fantastical, that while he is full of a thousand inward and essential subjects of grief, the least outward trifle is sufficient to divert him. Insomuch that, upon impartial consideration, his case seems more to be lamented, in that he is capable of receiving pleasure from things so low and

frivolous, than in that he is so immoderately afflicted with his own real miseries ; and his diversion appears infinitely less reasonable than his disquiet.

\* Whence is it, think ye, that this Gentleman, who has lately buried his only Son, and who this very morning was so full of lamentation, at present seems to have quite forgotten his part ? Do not be surprised ; the business is, that our friend is wholly taken up with looking what way the stag will turn, which his dogs have been in chase of some hours. Such an accident is enough to put a man beside his chagrin, though groaning under the heaviest calamity of life. As long as you can engage him in some divertisement, so long you make him happy ; but it is with a false and imaginary happiness, not arising from the possession of any real and solid good, but from a levity of spirit, by which he loses the memory of his substantial woes, amidst the entertainments of mean and ridiculous objects, unworthy of his application, and more unworthy of his love. It is the joy of a man in a Fever or a Phrensy, resulting not from the regular motion, but from the distemper and discomposure of his mind. It is a mere sport of folly and delusion. Nor is there any thing more surprising in human life, than to observe the insignificancy of those things which divert and please us. It is true, by thus keeping our mind always employed, they shield it from the consideration of real evils, but then they make it utterly cheat itself, by doating on a fantastic object of delight.

What do you take to be the aim and motive of those Youths, whom you see engaged at Tennis with such force of body and application of mind ? Why, the pleasure of boasting to-morrow, that they won so many sets of such a notable gamester. This is the real spring of so much action and toil. And it is but the very same which disposes others to drudge and sweat in their closets, for the sake of informing the learned world that they have resolved a Question in Algebra, hitherto reputed inexplicable. Many thousands more expose themselves to the greatest of dangers, for the glory of taking a town ; in my

judgment, no less ridiculously. To conclude: there are not wanting those who kill themselves purely with reading and observing all this application of others; not that they may grow wiser by it, but that they may have the credit of apprehending its vanity. And these last are the most exquisitely foolish, because they are so willingly and wittingly; whereas it is reasonable to suppose of the rest, that were they alike sensible of their folly, they would want no admonition to desert it.

\* A man, that by Gaming every day for some little stake, passeth away his life without uneasiness or melancholy, would yet be rendered unhappy, should you give him every morning the sum which he could possibly win all day, upon condition to forbear. It will be said, perhaps, that it is the Amusement of the play which he seeks, and not the Gain. Yet if he plays for nothing, his gaiety is over, and the spleen recovers full possession. Bare amusement therefore is not what he proposeth; a languishing amusement, without heat or passion, would but dispirit and fatigue him: he must be allowed to raise and chafe himself, by proposing a happiness in the gaining of that which he would despise, if given him not to venture, and by creating a fictitious object, which shall excite and employ his desire, his anger, his hope, and his fear.

So that these diversions of men, which are found to constitute their happiness, are not only mean and vile, but they are false and deceitful; that is, we are in love with mere airy shapes and phantoms, such as must be incapable of possessing the heart of man, had he not lost the taste and perception of real good, and were he not filled with baseness, and levity, and pride, together with an infinite number of other vices, such as can no way relieve us under our present miseries, but by creating others, which are still more dangerous in being more substantial. For these are the things which chiefly bar us from our own thoughts, and which teach us to give new wings to time, and yet to remain insensible of its flight. Without these we should indeed be under a continued weariness and perplexity, yet such as might prompt us to

seek out a better method for its cure. Whereas these, which we call our diversions, do but amuse and beguile us ; and, in conclusion, lead us down blindfold into our grave.

\* Mankind having no infallible remedy against ignorance, misery, and death, imagine that some respite, some shelter, may at least be found, by agreeing to banish them from their meditation. This is the only comfort they have been able to invent under their numerous calamities. But a miserable comfort it proves, because it does not tend to the removal of these evils, but only to the concealment of them for a short season ; and because, in thus concealing them, it hinders us from applying such proper means as should remove them. Thus, by a strange revolution in the nature of man, that grief or inward disquiet, which he dreads as the greatest of sensible evils, is in one respect his greatest good, because it might contribute, more than all things besides, to the putting him in a successful method of recovery. On the other hand, his recreation, which he seems to prize as his sovereign good, is indeed his greatest evil, because it is of all things the most effectual in making him negligent under his distemper. And both the one and the other are admirable proofs, as of man's misery and corruption, so of his greatness and dignity. For the reason why he grows sick and weary of every object, and engages in such a multitude of pursuits, is, because he still retains the idea of his lost happiness ; which not finding within himself, he seeks it through the whole circle of external things ; but always seeks without success, because it is indeed to be found not in ourselves, nor in the creatures, but in God alone.

#### XXVI. *Thoughts upon Miracles.*

\* WERE there no Miracles ever joined to falsehood and error, they would be immediately convictive, without search or trial. But as the case is otherwise, had we no

rule to search and try them by, they would be utterly ineffectual, and we should lose the chief ground and motive of our faith.

MOSES has established one rule,—when the miracle performed shall lead men to idolatry; and our LORD has established another,—*There is no man, says he, which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me*: whence it follows, that whoever declares openly against JESUS CHRIST cannot perform miracles in his name, and miracles not performed in the name of CHRIST are to be rejected without credit or dependence. We see then the two only just exceptions against miracles; that in the Old Testament, when they turn us from GOD; and that in the New, when they turn us from JESUS CHRIST.

So that immediately upon the sight of a miracle, we ought either to yield and submit to it, or to have some extraordinary token in bar to its pretensions; that is, we ought to be certain whether the person, who performs it, denies the only true GOD, or our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

\* Every religion is false, which, as to its Faith, does not prescribe the Worship of one GOD, as the great Author and Fountain of all things; and which, as to its Morals, does not prescribe the Love of one GOD, as the Object and End of all things.

Every religion, at this day, which does not acknowledge the LORD JESUS CHRIST, is notoriously false, and even miracles are insufficient for its attestation. For our LORD himself declares, that his miracles rendered the JEWS without excuse. “If I had not done amongst them the Works which none other man did, they had not had sin.”

The consequence is, that He judged his Miracles to be infallible evidences of his Doctrine, and the Jews to be under a necessary obligation of believing him. And indeed his Miracles, especially, rendered the incredulity of the Jews wilful and criminal; for the testimonies drawn purely from Scripture did not, before our LORD's death, amount to a demonstration. For instance, MOSES had said, “A Prophet shall the LORD your GOD raise you up,”

&c., but this did by no means evince JESUS CHRIST to be that Prophet, and therefore left the main Question undecided : yet this, with other the like passages, was sufficient to raise a presumption that He might possibly be the MESSIAS, or that Prophet ; which presumption, with the reinforcement of his Miracles, ought to have confirmed the Jews in an opinion that He was really so.

The prophecies alone did not point out our LORD with the utmost certainty, during his life : so that, during this space, if his Miracles had not been decisive proofs, a man would have been excusable in disbelieving him. It is clear then, that Miracles performed are a sufficient evidence, when we have no contrary argument from doctrines delivered ; and that they ought, in this case, to be relied upon with assurance and satisfaction.

It was from our LORD's Miracles that NICODEMUS concluded the Divinity of his Doctrine. He did not judge of the Miracles by the Doctrine ; but of the Doctrine by the Miracles.

If therefore a doctrine should even be suspicious, (as that of our LORD might possibly be to NICODEMUS, because it seemed to destroy the traditions of the Pharisees,) yet if there are plain and undeniable Miracles on the same side, the authority of a Miracle ought to overbalance any difficulty that can arise from a Doctrine : the reason of which is founded upon this immoveable principle, That God cannot lead men into error.

There seems to be a reciprocal right (if we may so speak) between GOD and man. "Come now, and let us reason together," says GOD by ISAIAH ; and again, by the same prophet, "What could I have done more to my vineyard, that I have not done to it?"

GOD has this right with regard to Men, that they should embrace the Religion which He is pleased to send them : and men, by the Divine favour, seem to have this right in respect of GOD, that He should not lead them into error.

But now they would unavoidably be led into error, if a

Worker of Miracles should publish a false doctrine, unless either the doctrine itself visibly appeared to be false, or unless a Worker of much greater Miracles had given them an express caution against these which should follow.

Let us put the case of a Division in the Church; and let us suppose the Arians (who pretended to build upon the authority of Scripture no less than the Catholics) to have performed Miracles, and the Catholics none. Here men must have laid under a necessity of being deceived: for as a man who shall pretend to reveal to us the Mysteries of God is not worthy to be credited on his own private testimony; so a man who, to justify his divine commission, shall raise the dead, foretel future events, remove mountains, or expel diseases which are by human means incurable, merits such a credit as cannot, without the guilt of impiety, be denied him; provided that he be not convicted of falsehood by some other person, who shall perform still greater Miracles.

But is not God said to tempt and prove us? and may He not tempt us by Miracles wrought in the Defence of Error.

I answer, to tempt, and to lead into error, are very different things: the former is consistent with the Divine perfections; the latter not. To tempt is only to present the occasion; which imposes no necessity on our belief: to lead into error is to put a man under a necessity of embracing that which is false. This is what God cannot do, and yet what must be done by him, should He, while the question of Doctrine remains obscure, lend a Miracle to strengthen the wrong side.

Hence we may conclude it to be impossible, that a person who conceals the false part of his doctrine, and publishes that which only is true, should work a Miracle, in order to the passing his erroneous opinion insensibly upon the world: and more impossible it is, that God, who knows the heart, should vouchsafe the power of Miracles to such a Deceiver.

\* There is a wide distance between the not being for

our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the pretending to be so. Some persons of the former character may possibly be permitted to work Miracles, but none of the latter; because it is plain of *those*, that they work them against the truth, but not of *these*; and consequently the Miracles of the former are more clearly discerned, and more easily condemned.

Miracles, therefore, are a standing test of all things which admit of doubt, between Pagans and Jews, Jews and Christians, Heretics and the Orthodox, between the accuser and the accused.

This is what has been seen and exemplified in all the combats of the Champions of the Truth against those of Error; of ABEL against CAIN, of MOSES against the Magicians, of ELIAS against the false Prophets, of our LORD against the Pharisees, of St. PAUL against BAR-JESUS, of the Apostles against the Exorcists, of Christians against Infidels, of the Orthodox against Heretics: and this is what shall be seen in the final contention of ELIAS and ENOCH against Antichrist. In the trial by Miracle, Truth will always prevail.

To conclude: through the whole process of the Cause of GOD, and of the true Religion, no one Miracle has been performed on the side of Error, but what has been vastly overbalanced by much greater Miracles on the side of Truth.

Wherefore this rule evinceth the obligations which the Jews had to believe in JESUS CHRIST. Our LORD's Person was indeed suspected by them; but then the power of his Miracles was infinitely more apparent than the suspicions against his Person.

\* MOSES prophesied of JESUS CHRIST, and commanded that He should be heard and obeyed. JESUS CHRIST has prophesied of Antichrist, and forbidden us to follow or regard him.

The Miracles of JESUS CHRIST were not foretold by Antichrist, but the Miracles of Antichrist are foretold by JESUS CHRIST. Wherefore, if JESUS CHRIST had not been the Messias, he had properly led men into Error;



into which no man can with reason be led by the Miracles of Antichrist. And hence the Miracles of the latter cannot, in the least, prejudice the Miracles of the former; as none will say, that our LORD, when He warned us against those of Antichrist, did conceive that He should hereby impair the authority of his own.

\* As Miracles were the instruments of founding and establishing the Church, so shall they be the instruments of preserving it to the coming of Antichrist, and the Consummation of all Things.

Wherefore GOD, to secure this evidence to his Church, has either confounded all false Miracles, or has foretold them as such; and, as well by one means as the other, has not only raised Himself above all that which is supernatural in respect of us, but in some sort has raised us up above it too.

For Miracles are of so prodigious a force and influence, that notwithstanding all the conviction which we have of the Divine Existence and Perfections, it is still necessary that GOD should warn us not to credit them, when they make against Himself; without which caution, they might be able to perplex and mislead us.

So that the several passages in Deut. xiii., prohibiting all belief or attention to those who should work Miracles, in order to pervert men from the worship of the true GOD, as also that caution in St. MARK, "There shall arise false Christs and false Prophets, who shall do many notable signs, so as to seduce, if possible, the very elect," with many texts of the like import, are so far from lessening the authority of true Miracles, that they are the highest confirmation of their force and efficacy.

\* When I am considering what may be the reason that men afford credit to so many cheats in Physic, and even put their lives into their hands, it appears to me to be no other than this, that there are such things in the world as true and real Medicines; because otherwise it would be impossible, that these which are false and feigned should so much abound, or be so much depended on. For were there no such things, and were all distempers

indeed incurable, either no person would be so extravagant as to think himself master of these remedies, or much less would so many others be deluded by his pretensions. As if a man should give out that he has an infallible antidote against dying, it is not likely his practice should grow considerable, till he could produce a visible instance of its success. But in as much as there is certainly a great number of remedies, which have been approved by the knowledge and experience of the wisest men, this gives a ply to human belief; and because the thing cannot be denied in general, on account of particular effects, the multitude being unable to distinguish which of these particular effects are true, swallows them all in gross. As the reason why men ascribe so many false effects to the Moon, is because she has indeed some real influences, as in the ebbing and flowing of the Sea.

In the same manner, and with the like evidence, I conclude, that there could never have been so many pretended Miracles, Revelations, Lots, &c., but on account of others which were real; nor so many false Religions, but with regard to one which is the true. For were there nothing in this whole matter, it had been impossible for some to have entertained such conceits, and more impossible for others to credit what these should have conceived. But because there had been very signal events of the like nature, which were undoubtedly genuine, and acknowledged as such by the wisest and greatest amongst men, it was this impression which rendered the whole world so capable of admitting those that were spurious. And therefore, instead of arguing from the false miracles against the true, we ought, on the contrary, to infer these from those, and to assure ourselves, that Forgery and Falsehood are the Shadows which have ever followed Truth and Reality. And all this depends upon one natural principle, that the soul of man having been once brought to such a tendency and inclination by that which is just and solid, becomes ever after susceptible of what is specious and counterfeit.

\* There are so very few to whom GOD makes Himself known by these amazing strokes of his power, that men are in the highest manner obliged to make use of so extraordinary occasions. For the reason why He is pleased thus to come out of the awful retirements of his nature, is only that He may increase our faith, and may engage us to serve Him still with the more ardour, as we know Him with the more certainty.

\* Should GOD continually reveal Himself to men by visible discoveries, Faith would cease *to be a virtue*; and should He afford them no such discoveries, it would almost cease *to be*: and therefore we find, that as for the most part He dwells in secret, so He discloses Himself on some rare occasions, when He would more strictly engage men in his service. This wonderful mystery, impenetrable to any mortal eye, under which GOD is pleased to shade his glories, may excite us powerfully to a love of solitude and silence, and of retirement from the view of the world. Before the Incarnation, GOD remained hidden in the recesses of the Divinity; and after it He became, in some respects, more hidden, by putting on the veil of our humanity. It had been easier to have known Him while invisible, than when He conversed in a visible shape: and at length, designing to accomplish the promise which He made to his Apostles, of continuing with the Church till his second coming, He chose a concealment more strange and obscure than either of the former, under the species of the Eucharist.\*

We may add to these considerations the secret of GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT, as concealed in the Scriptures. For whereas there are two entire senses, a literal and a mystical, the Jews resting in the former, never so much as think that there is another, nor apply themselves to search after it. In the same manner wicked and impious persons, beholding the variety of natural effects, referred them to Nature only, without confessing the AUTHOR of both: so likewise

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\* The judicious Reader will easily trace, in some parts of this Paragraph, the peculiarities of that school of *Roman-Catholic Theology* to which the excellent Author belonged; and will exercise a suitable discrimination.--EDITOR.

the Jews, observing only the Human Nature in CHRIST, did not seek for another. "We thought not that it was he," says ISAIAH, in their name. There is nothing in the world but what covers and contains some Mystery. The whole Creation is but the Veil of the CREATOR. Christians ought, in every appearance, to see and acknowledge Him. Temporal afflictions overshadow those eternal goods to which they lead: temporal enjoyments cover and disguise those eternal evils which they procure. Let us pray GOD that He would grant us the power of knowing Him in all things; and let us render Him infinite thanks, that being in every object hidden from so many others, He should vouchsafe under every object, and by every method, to disclose Himself to us.

#### XXVII. *Christian Thoughts.*

\* THE Dignity of Man, under his primitive innocence, consisted in governing and using the Creatures; but, under his present corruption, it consists in retiring from them, or in submitting to them, and to his own necessities and infirmities.

\* Grace and Nature will ever maintain their contention in the world. There will be always Pelagians, and there will be always the Orthodox; because the first birth constitutes the one, and the second birth the other.

\* This shall be one amongst the horrors and confusions of the wicked in another life, to see themselves condemned by their own Reason, by which they pretended to condemn the Christian Religion.

\* When St. PETER and the other Apostles consulted about the abolishment of circumcision, where the point in debate was the acting contrary to the Law of GOD, they did not refer themselves to the Prophets, but considered barely the Gift of the HOLY GHOST poured out on persons uncircumcised. They judged it more certain, that GOD approved of those whom He filled with his SPIRIT, than that He required in all instances an exact and literal observation of the Law. They knew the very end of the Law to be no other than the SPIRIT, and concluded, that

than disloyal and unfaithful, without the succours of his grace, and is therefore Himself the Author of all their constancy and truth. So that while temporal Monarchs are wont to own an obligation to those who persist resolutely in their allegiance and duty; those, on the contrary, who persevere in the service of GOD, are under infinite obligations to Him for the very power of their perseverance.

\* Not the most rigorous austerities of Body, nor the most profound exercises of Mind, are able to support the pains and grievances of both, but only the good affections of the Heart and Spirit. For in short, the two great instruments of sanctification are pains and pleasures. St. PAUL informs us, that "all those who will live godly in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, must suffer persecution." Now this ought to comfort as many as feel these disquiets, and encounter these difficulties, in a course of holy living; because, being assured that the path to heaven, which they seek, is full of them, they have reason to rejoice at their finding so many marks of the true way. So that these pains are not without their pleasures, by which alone they can be balanced. For as those who forsake GOD, to return to the world, do it because they find more complacency in earthly delights, than in the satisfaction of being united to the Divine Nature, and because this fatal charm, drawing them after it as its captives, obliges them to relinquish their first love, and renders them, as TERTULLIAN speaks, "the penitents of the devil;" in like manner, there would be none found who should abandon the enjoyments of the world, to embrace the cross of JESUS CHRIST, did they not feel a more real sweetness in contempt, in poverty, in nakedness, and in the scorn and rejection of men, than in all the delicacies and pleasures of sin. And therefore, as the same Father observes, "We injure the Christian Life, if we suppose it to be a life of sadness and sorrow; because we never quit our engagements to any one pleasure, without being invited and bribed by a greater." "Pray without ceas-

ing," (says St. PAUL;) "in every thing give thanks : rejoice evermore." It is the joy of finding God which is the spring of our sorrow for having forsaken Him; and of our whole change in life and action. He that has found a treasure in the field, (according to the Parable of our LORD,) is so transported as to "go and sell all that he has, and buy that field." Worldly men have their share of sorrow, but then they are utterly excluded from true joy, that which the world can neither give nor take away. On the other hand, the saints in heaven possess their joy without sorrowing. And good men on earth partake of the same joy, not without a mixture and alloy of sorrow for having followed other joys, and for fear of losing the former in the latter, which incessantly solicit and engage their affections. We should therefore, with unintermitted pains and care, endeavour to preserve this sorrow ever fresh and lively in our breasts, as that alone which can secure and moderate our joy; and as often as we find ourselves carried too far towards the one, should sway and incline ourselves towards the other, that we may maintain the balance, and keep ourselves upright. It is agreeable to the advice of Scripture, that we should remember our rejoicings in the day of affliction, and our afflictions in the days of rejoicing; till the promise which our LORD has given us of making his joy perfect in us be happily accomplished. In the mean while, let us not suffer ourselves to be swallowed up of over-much sorrow, nor imagine that piety consists in bitterness without consolation. True piety is yet so full of satisfaction and delight, as to overflow its beginning, its progress, and its crown. It is a light so resplendent as to dart some rays of brightness through its whole compass and sphere. If, in its rise especially, it be shaded with some intermixture of grief, this proceeds from the persons, not from the virtue; and must be looked on, not as the first-fruits of that piety which is now forming in us, but as the relics of that impiety which is not yet destroyed. Could we root out the impiety, the joy would flourish and thrive. Let us

therefore ascribe the origin of our sadness not to religion, but to ourselves; and let us seek our comfort in our own correction.

What is past ought to give us no uneasiness, except that of repentance for our faults. And what is to come ought much less to affect us; because, with regard to us and our concerns, it is not, and perhaps will never be. The present is the only time which is properly ours; and this we ought to use in conformity to the will of Him that gives it. Here therefore our thoughts and studies should principally be engaged: yet the world is generally of so restless a disposition, that men scarce ever fix upon the present, nor think of the minutes which they are now living, but of those which they are to live. Thus we are always in the Disposition of Life, but never in the Act. Our LORD has cautioned us, that our forecast should not extend beyond the compass of a day. These are the limits which we ought to observe, as for the sake of our spiritual welfare, so even for that of our natural quiet and repose.

\* The reformation of ourselves is often more effectually assisted by the sight of evil, than by the example of good. The art of profiting by evil must be of admirable use, because the occasions of it are so frequent and numerous; whereas the subjects of virtuous imitation are so few in number, and do so rarely occur.

\* When I have been going to set down my thought, it has sometimes escaped me in the very writing. But this accident, reminding me of my weakness, which I am continually inclined to forget, is a lesson as instructive to me as the lost thought could have proved; because the whole aim of my study is to discover my own feebleness, and vanity, and nothingness.

\* In dealing with those who have at present an aversion to Religion, we ought to begin with shewing them, that it is by no means contrary to reason; in the next place, we should convince them, that it is great and venerable, and inspire them with reverence towards it; after this,

we should describe it as highly charming and lovely, to engage their wishes for its truth; and then we may proceed to demonstrate, by irrefragable proofs, that it is true; we may evince its antiquity and holiness from its awful majesty and sublime elevation; and, lastly, make it appear to be truly amiable, in that it promiseth our only good and happiness.

\* The Duties of Religion are the greatest Pains of a life which is merely secular, and the greatest Pleasures of a life which is holy and divine. Nothing is so natural and agreeable whilst we live in conformity to the world, as to be possessed of high dignities and ample revenues; nothing is so laborious and difficult, while we live according to the Will of God, as to possess these advantages, without an irregular taste, and an unwarrantable satisfaction.

\* Two persons coming from Confession, one of them told me that he was full of joy and satisfaction; the other, that he was full of trouble and fear. Upon which I remember myself to have passed this reflection, that these two men put together would make one good one; and that each was so far defective, in that he had not the sentiments of the other.

\* We could not but feel a very peculiar pleasure in being tossed by a tempest, while the vessel was infallibly secured from sinking. Such a vessel is the Church, such tempests are its Persecutions.

\* As the two great sources of all sin are Pride and Negligence, so God has been pleased to disclose two of his Attributes for their cure, his Mercy and his Justice. The office and effect of His Justice is to abase and mortify our Pride; and the office and effect of his Mercy is to prevail on our negligence, and excite us to good works. "The goodness of God leadeth to repentance." "Let us repent," (say the Ninevites,) "and see if He will not have mercy on us." Thus the consideration of the divine mercy is so far from being an encouragement to sloth and remissness, that it is the greatest spur to industry and action: and instead of saying, "If our



**GOD** were not a merciful **GOD**, we ought to bend our utmost endeavours towards the fulfilling of his commands ;” it is rational to say, “ Because we serve a **GOD** of mercy and pity, therefore we ought to labour with all our strength, to yield Him an acceptable service.”

\* All that is in the world, is “ the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes,” or “ the pride of life.” Miserable is that accursed earth, which these three rivers of fire do not refresh, but burn! Happy those who remain upon these rivers in immoveable safety, without being overwhelmed, or carried away with the stream ; not standing erect, but sitting on a sure and humble seat, whence they rise not till “ the day spring from on high,” when, having rested in peace, they stretch forth their hands to Him who will lift them up, and cause them to stand upright in the porches of the heavenly Jerusalem, where they shall be for ever secure from the assaults of pride! And yet are these happy saints at present in tears ; not to see all these perishable things vanishing and passing away, but at the remembrance of their dear country, the Jerusalem which is above, after which they sigh incessantly, while the days of their pilgrimage are prolonged.

\* The Heart has its arguments and motives, with which the Reason is not acquainted. We feel this in a thousand instances. It is the Heart, and not the Reason, which has properly the perception of **GOD** : *GOD sensible to the heart*, is the most compendious description of true and perfect Faith.

\* The nature of Man is so framed, that not only by often hearing himself called a Fool, he believes it ; but by often calling himself a Fool, he enters into the same opinion. Every person holds an inward and secret conversation with his own breast, and such as it highly concerns him well to regulate, because, even in this sense, “ Evil communications corrupt good manners.” To study silence as much as possible, and to converse with **GOD** alone, is the true Art of Persuasion, in respect of ourselves.

\* Our own Will, though it should obtain its largest

wish, would always keep us in uneasiness. But the very instant that we abandon our own Will, we grow easy. We can never be satisfied with it, nor ever dissatisfied without it.

\* It is very unjust that persons should build so much on our familiarity, though they do it with real inclination and delight. We deceive all those whom we encourage in such a dependence; because we are not, at last, the persons they suppose, and can by no means be able to satisfy their expectations. Do not we stand on the brink of the grave? and must not the object, of which they are so much enamoured, be lost and buried with us? As it would not cease to be criminal in us to propagate a falsity, though we might recommend it with eloquence, and others embrace it with pleasure; so are we in the like degree blameable, if we labour to charm men's affections, and to draw them into an undue confidence and reliance. We ought to caution persons whom we find disposed to credit a fiction, whatever advantage we might reap by their mistake. In the same manner ought we to warn those who are courting our favour, against engaging themselves in so vain a patronage and protection; because their whole life ought really to be spent either in seeking God, or in studying to please Him.

\* To trust in Forms and Ceremonies, is Superstition; but not to comply with them, is Pride.

\* There are three means of believing; by Inspiration, by Reason, and by Custom. Christianity, which is the only rational institution, does yet admit none for its Sons who do not believe by Inspiration. Nor does it injure Reason or Custom, or debar them of their proper force: on the contrary, it directs us to open our mind by the proofs of the former, and to confirm our mind by the authority of the latter. But then it chiefly engages us to offer ourselves, with all humility, to the succours of Inspired Grace, which alone can produce the true and salutary effect; "lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."

\* A man never does evil with so much complacency,

so full purpose and resolution, as when he does it upon a mistaken principle of Conscience.

\* Shall we call it Courage in a dying man, that he dares, under his weakness and agony, to affront an Omnipotent and Eternal God ?

\* There is a Virtuous Fear, which is the effect of Faith ; and there is a Vicious Fear, which is the product of Doubt. The former leads to hope, as relying on GOD, in whom we believe ; the latter inclines to despair, as not relying on GOD, in whom we do not believe. Persons of the one character fear to lose GOD ; persons of the other character fear to find Him.

\* SOLOMON and JOB judged the best, and spake the most truly of human Misery ; the former the most happy, the latter the most unfortunate of mankind ; the one acquainted, by long experience, with the Vanity of Pleasure, the other with the Reality of Affliction and Pain.

\* The whole World may be divided into these three ranks and orders of men ; those who, having found GOD, resign themselves up to his service ; those who, having not yet found Him, do indefatigably search after Him ; and lastly, those who have neither found Him nor seek Him. The first are Happy and Wise ; the third are Unhappy and Fools ; the second must be owned to be Wise, as they own themselves to be Unhappy.

\* Reason proceeds so slowly, and upon so many maxims and views, which it must always keep present before it, that every moment it either stumbles or goes astray, for want of seeing all things at once. The case is quite otherwise with Sense. This, as it acts in an instant, so it is always prepared for action. When our Reason, therefore, has brought us acquainted with the truth, we should endeavour to imprint our faith on the inward Sense of our heart, without which it will be ever wavering and uncertain.

### XXVIII. *Moral Thoughts.*

KNOWLEDGE has two extremities, which meet and touch each other. The first of them is pure natural ignorance,

such as attends every man at his birth ; the other is the perfection attained by great souls, who having run through the circle of all that mankind can know, find at length that they know nothing, and are contented to return to that ignorance from which they set out. Ignorance that thus knows itself is a wise and learned ignorance. Those persons who lie between these extremities, who have got beyond natural ignorance, but cannot arrive at that ignorance which is the effect of wisdom, have a tincture of science which swells them with vanity and sufficiency. These are the men that trouble the world, and that make the falsest judgments of all things in it. The vulgar, and the truly knowing, compose the ordinary train of men : those of the middle character despise all, and in return are despised by all.

\* A Christian loves himself as a member of that body of which JESUS CHRIST is the Head ; and he loves JESUS CHRIST as the head of that body of which he is himself a member. Both these motions centre and conspire in the same affection. If the feet or the hands were endued with a separate Will, they could never preserve their natural order and employment, otherwise than by submitting this private Will to that general and superior Will, which has the government of the whole body. Without such a resignation, they would have a liberty only of confusion and ruin ; whereas in serving the good of the Body, they most effectually consult their own.

\* Whence comes it to pass that we have so much patience with those who are maimed in body, and so little with those who are defective in mind ? It is because the Cripple acknowledges that we have the use of our legs ; whereas the Fool obstinately maintains that we are the persons who halt in understanding. Without this difference in the case, neither object would move our resentment, but our compassion.

\* It is a great advantage of Quality, that a man at eighteen, or twenty, shall be allowed the same esteem

and deference which another purchaseth by his merit at fifty. Here are thirty years gained at a stroke.

\* There are a sort of men who, to demonstrate the great injustice of our disregard, never fail to urge precedents of such and such great persons, who prize them after an extraordinary manner. The answer I would give to this argument is, Do but produce the Merit which gained you the esteem of these admirers, and I am ready to add myself to the number.

\* While we continue in good health, we can by no means apprehend how we should be able to bear the severity of a distemper. Yet when we are sick, we cheerfully take whatever is prescribed, and grow resolute upon our misfortune. We then no longer covet these opportunities of walking and diversion which we enjoyed in health, but which are incompatible with the necessities of our disease. Nature ever supplies us with a new set of passions and desires agreeable to our present state. It is not our nature, therefore, but our vain fear, which troubles us, by joining to the condition in which we are the passions of that condition in which we are not.

\* We are full of doubling, deceit, and contradiction. We love to wear a disguise, even within, and are afraid of being detected by ourselves.

\* It is but a mean character of a man, that he says a great many fine things.

\* I do not admire a man who possesseth any one virtue in its utmost perfection, if he does not, at the same time, possess the opposite virtue in an equal degree. This was the accomplished character of EPAMINONDAS, that he had the greatest valour, in conjunction with the greatest humanity. To appear otherwise is not to rise, but fall. A man never shews true greatness in being fixed at one end of the line; but he shews it to admiration, if he toucheth both extremities at once, and fills and illustrates all between. Perhaps the soul may still reside in a single point, and by such acts as these may shoot itself, by a sudden glance, from one boundary to the other. Yet this

is enough to demonstrate the agility of the soul, if not its compass and reach.

\* When I began my studies, I spent a considerable time in the pursuit of remoter knowledge; and the small number of those with whom I could converse in this way, discouraged me from proceeding farther.

When I afterwards applied myself to study *Man*, I discovered, that those abstracted sciences are by no means the proper entertainments of his nature; and that I had strayed farther from my proper condition, by sounding their depths, than others by remaining ignorant of them, whose neglect I could therefore easily forgive. I hoped at least to find more companions in my new enquiry, because this was the proper employment and exercise of mankind. But I was again disappointed, and found, on the whole matter, that those few who study Geometry are still more than those who study themselves.

\* If we would reprove with success, and effectually shew another that he is in the wrong, we ought to observe which way he looks on the object, (because, *viewed in that way*, it is generally such as he apprehends it,) and to acknowledge that he is so far in the right. He will be satisfied with this method, as intimating that he was not mistaken, but only wanted to have surveyed the thing on all sides. The former imputation is apt to work on our shame and resentment; but the latter gives us no disturbance: the reason of which possibly may be, that the understanding, as well as the sense, can never be deceived in that part of a thing which it actually has under its view.

\* A man's virtue is not to be measured by some extraordinary efforts and sallies, but by a constant and uniform series of actions.

\* We are, for the most part, more easily persuaded by reasons of our own finding out, than by any which owe their original to the wit of others.

\* The example of ALEXANDER'S continence has not made so many converts to chastity, as that of his drunk-

ness has to intemperance. Men apprehend no shame in being less perfect than he, and judge it very excusable to be more defective. We are apt to think ourselves much above the corruptions of the vulgar, when we fall into the vices of these great and renowned persons; not considering that their vices do really bring them down to the vulgar level. We are proud of joining ourselves to them by the same common term which joins them to the multitude. How lofty soever their condition may be, there is some hold or other about them, by which they are linked to the rest of mankind. They do not hang in the air, or subsist absolutely separate from human society. If they are above us, it is because their head is higher; their feet are always as low as ours. They all touch the same line, and tread the same ground; and in this respect are not superior to us, nor to children, nor even to beasts.

\* Men of irregular lives are wont to boast that they exactly follow Nature, and that those who walk by rule and order are the persons who really deviate from her; as men in a ship fancy those to move who stand on the shore. Both sides affirm the very same of each other; and we must be placed at some one precise point ere we can judge between them. The distance of the vessel from the haven is a clear decision of the latter controversy; but who can ever find the like mark to determine the former?

\* To lament the case of the unfortunate, is by no means a check upon our natural conceit, which may still reign with full power, though it gives us leave to shew this expression of humanity, and to acquire the reputation of pity and tenderness. Whence we are to infer, that such a reputation can be of no considerable value.

\* The *Platonists*, and even the *Stoics*, while they believed that God alone was an object so worthy as to justify our Love, did yet desire themselves to be beloved and admired by men. They had no manner of sense of

their natural corruption. Had they been really disposed to the Love and Adoration of God, and felt the most ravishing joy from so divine an exercise, they might fairly have called themselves as good and great as they had pleased. But if they found their hearts under an utter aversion and repugnancy to these duties; if they had no manner of inclination but to establish themselves in the opinion of men; and if their whole perfection consisted in being able to make others propose a happiness in loving and esteeming them;—such a perfection ought to be abhorred. For this was their ease: they possessed, in some degree, the knowledge of God, and yet courted only the love of men. They were desirous that men should place their hope and confidence in them, and should make them the sole objects of their choice and delight.

\* How wisely has it been ordained to distinguish men rather by the exterior shew, than by the interior endowments! Here another person and I are disputing the way. Who shall have the preference in this case? Why, the better man of the two. But I am as good a man as he: so that if no expedient be found, he must beat me, or I must beat him. Well, but all this while, he has four footmen at his back, and I have but one. This is a visible advantage: we need only tell noses to discover it. It is my part therefore to yield, and I am a blockhead if I contest the point. See here an easy method of peace, the great safeguard and supreme happiness of this world.

\* Time puts the surest end to troubles and complaints; because the world continually changeth, and persons and things become indifferent. Neither the aggriever nor the party aggrieved are long in the same circumstances. It is as if we should have personally affronted and exasperated those of a certain nation, and should be able to visit that nation again two generations hence. We should find the same *French*, for instance, but not the same *Men*.

\* It is infallibly certain that the soul is either mortal or immortal. This ought to make an entire change in



morality. And yet so fatal was the blindness of the Philosophers, that they framed their whole moral system without the least dependence on such an enquiry.

\* The last act of life is always tragical, how pleasantly soever the comedy may have run through all the rest. A little earth, cast upon our eold head, for ever determines our hopes and our condition.

### XXIX. THOUGHTS UPON DEATH :

*Being an Extract from a Letter of M. PASCAL, occasioned by the Death of his Father.*

WHEN we are under affliction and trouble for the death of a person who was dear to us, or for any misfortune which we are capable of suffering, we ought not to seek our consolation in ourselves, or in others, or in any part of the creation, but in God alone. And the reason seems to be evident ; inasmuch as no created being is the first cause and mover of those accidents which the world calls evil. Since therefore they are all to be referred to God as their real Author, and sovereign Disposer, it is visibly our duty to repair to this original Source, and to expect thence the only solid comfort. If we observe these directions ; if we look on the death, for instance, which we are lamenting, not as the effect of mere chance, nor as a fatal necessity of nature, nor as the sport of those elements and particles which constitute our frame, (for God never abandons his servants to so capricious events,) but as the inevitable, the most holy, and most just effect of a providential decree, now executed in its time ; if we consider that whatever has now happened was from everlasting present to God, and ordained by His wisdom ;—if, I say, by a noble transport of divine grace, we survey the accident which is before us, not in itself, and abstractedly from its Author, but out of itself, and in its supreme Author's Will, as its true cause,

with respect both to the matter and the manner, we shall adore, in humble silence, his unsearchable judgments, his impenetrable secrets; we shall reverence the holiness of his decrees; we shall bless the guidance of his providence; and uniting our will to the Will of God Himself, we shall choose with Him, in Him, and for Him, the very same events which He, in us, and for us, has chosen from all eternity.

\* There can be no comfort but in truth. It is most certain that SOCRATES and SENECA have nothing which may persuade and convince, may ease and relieve us on these occasions. They were both under the original error which blindeth mankind. They looked on death as really natural to us; and all the discourses which they have built on this false foundation have so much vanity, and so little solidity, as to serve for no other use but to demonstrate the general weakness of the human race, since the most elevated productions of the wisest amongst men are so childish and contemptible.

It is not so that we learn JESUS CHRIST; it is not thus that we read the canonical books of Scripture. It is here alone that we succeed in our search of truth; and truth is no less infallibly joined to comfort, than it is infallibly separated from error. Let us then take a view of death, by those lights which the HOLY SPIRIT has given us. And by those we have the advantage of discovering that death is no other than a punishment imposed on man. We are hence instructed, that JESUS CHRIST came into the world as a Victim and Propitiation, and as such offered himself to God; that his Birth, his Life, his Death, his Resurrection, his Ascension, and his Session at the right hand of the FATHER, all belong to one and the same Sacrifice. To conclude, we are informed, that what was accomplished in JESUS CHRIST, must be accomplished also in his members.

Let us then consider life as a sacrifice; and let the accidents of life make no other impression on us than as, in proportion, the accomplishment of this sacrifice is

either interrupted or promoted by them. Let us style nothing ill, but what turns the sacrifice of God into the sacrifice of the devil; and let us honour all such things with the name of good, as render that which was a sacrifice to the devil in ADAM, a sacrifice to God in JESUS CHRIST. Let us examine the notion of death by this rule and principle.

In order to which design, it is necessary to have recourse to the Person of JESUS CHRIST: for God regards not men, but through Him as a Mediator, so neither ought we to regard ourselves, or others, but with respect to the same Mediation.

If we look not through this medium, we shall discern nothing but either real pains, or detestable pleasures: but if we see all things as in JESUS CHRIST, all will conspire for our consolation, satisfaction, and edification.

Let us reflect on death as in JESUS CHRIST, not as without JESUS CHRIST. Without JESUS CHRIST it is dreadful, it is detestable, it is the terror of nature. In JESUS CHRIST it is fair and amiable, it is good and holy, it is the joy of the saints. All events being rendered sweet in JESUS CHRIST, death itself has a share in the influence. To sanctify death and sufferings to us, was the reason for which He suffered and died; who, as He was God and Man in one Person, comprised, at once, whatever was great and illustrious, whatever was humble and obscure; that He might sanctify all things in Himself, sin only excepted, and might be the standing Model of all characters and conditions.

Would we know what death is, what it is in JESUS CHRIST, we must examine the regard which it bears to his continual, uninterrupted Sacrifice. And we may observe, that in sacrifices the principal part is the Death of the Victim. The Oblation and Sanctification, which precede, are indeed the dispositions, but Death is still the completion; in which, by renouncing its very Life and Being, the creature pays to God the utmost homage of which it is capable; thus humbling, and, as it were, annihilating itself before the eyes of his Majesty, and adoring

His supreme existence, who alone essentially exists. There was indeed another part to be performed after the death of the sacrifice, without which it was vain and ineffectual, namely, the Acceptance of it by GOD. But this, though it crowned the sacrifice, was rather an action of GOD towards the creature, than of the creature towards GOD; and did not hinder, but that the last act of the creature was still determined by its Death.

We find each of these circumstances fulfilled in our LORD, upon his coming into the world. "Through the eternal SPIRIT, He offered up Himself to GOD. When He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offerings Thou wouldst not: then said I, Lo I come to do thy Will, O GOD. Thy law is within my heart." We have here his Oblation, and his Sanctification immediately followed. His Sacrifice continued through his Life, and was finished by his Death. It was needful for Him "to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory. Though He was a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered. In the days of his flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death, He was heard in that He feared." Finally, GOD raised Him again by his glorious power, (of which the fire which fell from heaven on the sacrifices was a type,) to burn and consume, as it were, his mortal body, and to exalt and restore Him to a life of glory.

The Sacrifice of JESUS CHRIST being thus perfected, as to the action, by his Death, and, as to the subject, by his Resurrection, (when the image of the body of sin was absorbed in glory,) He had performed all that was requisite on his part; and there remained nothing but that the Sacrifice should be accepted of GOD; and that, as incense, it should ascend, and carry up its odour to the throne of the Divine Majesty. In pursuance of which, our LORD was perfectly offered, lifted up, and received at GOD's throne, at his Ascension; which He effected, partly by his own proper force, and partly by the assistance of the HOLY SPIRIT, with which He was every

way encompassed and replenished. He was carried up as the odour of the sacrifices by the air which supported it; the former of which prefigured Himself, and the latter represented the HOLY SPIRIT. And the Acts of the Apostles expressly report, that he was received into Heaven, to give us an assurance that this holy Sacrifice, accomplished on earth, was received and accepted in the bosom of the FATHER.

Let us not be sorry, as Gentiles without hope, for our departed *christian* friends. Our loss of them is not to be dated from the hour of their death. To speak properly, we then lost them when they were admitted into the Church by Baptism. Ever since that admission, they were not ours, but God's; their life was devoted and consecrated to God; their actions bore no regard to the things of this world, but for the sake of God. By their death they are at length entirely disengaged from earth; and it is at this moment that they are accepted by God, and that their sacrifice receives its accomplishment and crown.

They have now performed what they vowed; they have finished the work which God gave them to do; they have discharged that which was the only end of their creation. The Will of God is perfected in them; and their will is swallowed up in the Divine. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not us put asunder;" but, by a true judgment, let us suppress, or at least moderate, the sentiments of corrupt and mistaken nature, which exhibits nothing but false images, and whose illusions disturb the sanctity of those thoughts, which from the instruction of christian truth we ought to have derived.

Let us form our ideas of human dissolution, not on the Pagan, but on the Christian Model; that is, let them, as St. PAUL enjoins, be built on Hope, the great gift and privilege of Christians. Let us look on the remains of a deceased friend, not as a noisome and infectious carcass, according to the fallacious portrait of Nature; but, according to the assurance of Faith, as the eternal and inviolable temple of the HOLY GHOST.

Let us not consider the faithful, who are departed in the grace of God, as having ceased to live, which is the false suggestion of Nature; but as now beginning to live, which is the infallible testimony of Truth. Let us look on their souls not as annihilated and lost, but as quickened and enlivened, and united to the Sovereign Life. And, by attending to these sound doctrines, let us correct the prejudices of error, which are so firmly rooted in our mind, and the apprehensions of fear, which are so strongly imprinted on our sense.

\* God created man under a double passion, one for his Creator, the other for himself; but on this condition, that the Love of his Creator should be infinite, that is, should have no other end but God, and that the love of himself should be finite, with a constant regard and reserve to his Creator.

Man, in this state, not only loved himself without sin; but had sinned, could he possibly have ceased to love himself.

By the entrance of sin into the world, man was deprived of the former of these affections; and his soul, which was still great, and still capable even of an infinite passion, retaining only the latter, this immediately diffused itself, and overflowed all the mighty space which had been evacuated by the Love of God. And thus we came to love only ourselves, and to love ourselves infinitely; that is, to love all things with respect only to ourselves.

Behold the origin of self-love! It was natural to ADAM: it was, during his innocence, regular and just, but became immoderate and criminal upon his fall.

Behold the genuine source of this love, together with the unhappy cause of its viciousness and excess!

The same will hold true of our desire of dominion, of our aversion to business, and of many natural motions of a similar kind. And this whole doctrine may be easily applied to our present subject. The fear of death to ADAM, in innocence, was not only natural, but just; because human life being then not disagreeable to God,

ought to have been agreeable to man ; and death, for the same reason, ought to have been an object of horror, as threatening to cut off a life which was conformable to the Divine Will. But upon man's transgression, his life was debased and corrupted ; his soul and body were set at variance one with another, and both with God.

When this fatal change had infected and impaired the holiness of life, the love of life continued still ; and the fear of death remaining with no less vigour, that which was just in ADAM was rendered unjust in us.

This is a true account of the fear of death ; whence it sprung, and by what means it was tainted and vitiated.

While we admit then that love which ADAM had for his life of innocence, and which even our LORD JESUS CHRIST retained for His ; let us be resolute in hating such a life as is contrary to that which was loved by JESUS CHRIST ; and let us be concerned at such a death only as affected our LORD Himself with some sort of apprehensions, a death happening to a body pure and spotless in the sight of GOD : but let us not fear a death which punishes a sinful and purges an impure body, and which therefore ought to inspire us with quite opposite sentiments, were we in any degree possessed of those noble endowments, faith, hope, and charity.

It is one of the most acknowledged principles of Christianity, that whatever happened to JESUS CHRIST is likewise to be transacted in the soul and in the body of every Christian. So that as our LORD suffered in this life of infirmity and mortality, as He was raised to a new life, and at length carried up into the heavens, where He now sits at GOD'S right hand ; in the same manner, both the soul and body are to suffer and die, to be raised again, and to ascend into heaven.

All these particulars are accomplished in the soul during this life ; though not in the body.

The soul suffers and dies to sin. The soul is raised to a new life. The soul relinquisheth this earth, and soars towards heaven in leading a heavenly life on earth.

The like changes are not accomplished in the body during this present life, but shall be accomplished after it.

For, at our decease, the body dies to this mortal life : at the Judgment, it shall rise to a new life : after the Judgment, it shall be exalted to heaven, and there reside for ever.

Thus the very same things happen to soul and body, though at different periods ; and the revolutions of the body do not take place till those of the soul are completed ; that is, not till after death. Insomuch that death, which is the end and crown of the soul's happiness, is but the prelude of happiness to the body.

\* It is not reasonable that we should continue absolutely unmoved and unaffected at the misfortunes and evils which befall us, like Angels, who have no sentiments or inclinations of our nature ; nor is there more reason that we should sorrow without hope, like Heathens, who have no feeling, no apprehension of grace. But reason and justice allow, that we should mourn like Christians, and be comforted like Christians, and that the consolations of grace should overcome the affections of nature : so that grace may not only dwell in us, but may be victorious and triumphant in us ; that by our thus hallowing the Name of our Father, his Will may become ours, and His grace may reign over our nature ; that our afflictions may be the matter and subject of a sacrifice, which his grace will perfect in us, to His glory ; and that these particular sacrifices may be so many assurances of the entire and universal sacrifice, in which our whole nature shall be purified and perfected by the power of JESUS CHRIST.

Thus shall we make advantage of our own infirmities, while they furnish matter for this whole burnt-offering. And to profit by failings and imperfections is the great aim of Christians, who know that "all things work together" for the elect.

If we observe these things with a closer view, and as they really are in themselves, we shall not fail to draw from them great improvement. For it being most certain,



that the death of the body is but the type and image of that of the soul ; if we have reason to hope for the salvation of our friends, while we lament their decease, though we may not be able to stop the current of our sadness, yet we cannot but reap the benefit of this lesson, that since bodily death is so terrible as to create these disorders in us, the death of the soul is a subject which ought to give us far more inconsolable regret. God having been pleased to deliver to the first those for whom we mourn, we may believe that He has graciously rescued them from the second. Let us contemplate the greatness of our happiness, in the greatness of our misery ; and then, even the excesses of our grief can be but the just standard of our joy.

One of the most solid and useful charities towards the dead, is to perform that which they would enjoin us to do, were they still in the world, and to put ourselves, for their sakes, into that condition in which they wish us to be at present.

By this means we shall make them, in some sort, revive in ourselves ; while it is by their counsels and instructions that we live and act. And, as the authors of heresies are punished in another life for the sins to which they have moved their followers, in whom their poison still operates after their death ; so good men are recompensed in a better state, not only for their own virtues, but for the virtues of those whom they have engaged by their precepts, and influenced by their examples.

### XXX. *Miscellaneous Thoughts.*

The greater degree of parts and sagacity any one is master of, the more *Originals* he will discern in the characters of mankind. Persons of ordinary endowments are utter strangers to this difference amongst men.

\* A man may have good sense, and yet not be able to apply it alike successfully to all subjects ; for there are

those who judge exactly within one certain order of things, and yet are quite lost and confounded in another. Some are excellent in drawing consequences from a few principles, others from many. Some, for instance, have an admirable understanding of Hydrostatics, where the principles are few, but the consequences so fine and delicate, as not to be reached without the greatest penetration. And these persons would perhaps be no extraordinary Geometricians; because the principles of Geometry are vastly numerous, and because a genius may be so formed as, with ease, to search a few principles to the bottom, and yet not to comprehend things with the same accuracy, where the principles are diffused to a larger compass.

There are two sorts of geniuses therefore; the one disposed for a deep and vigorous penetration into the consequences of principles, and this is a genius properly true and just; the other fit to comprehend a great number of principles without confusion, and this is the genius for Geometry. The one consists in the force and exactness, the other in the extent and capacity of thought. Nor is this distinction without ground; because a genius may be vigorous, and yet contracted, or it may have, on the contrary, a great reach, and little strength.

There seems to be a wide difference between a genius for the Mathematics, and a genius for business or policy. In those Sciences the principles are gross and palpable, yet so far removed from vulgar use, that a man is at a loss to turn his head that way for want of practice; but upon the least application he sees them all at their full, and must have a very untoward judgment if he draw wrong inferences from principles, which are too big to be overlooked, and too distinct to be confounded.

But in business and policy, the principles are taken from daily custom, and from the actions of the whole world. There is no need here of giving the head a new ply, or of committing violence on ourselves. The only point is, to have a good discernment: because these principles are so numerous and so independent, that it is

hardly possible but some of them should escape us. And yet the omission of any one principle breaks the whole thread, and betrays us into error. A man, in this case, must be clear and capacious, that he may comprehend the whole set of principles; and he must likewise be just and solid, that from known principles he may not deduce false conclusions.

Every Geometrician would therefore be a man of business, if he were not too short-sighted; for he seldom argues wrong, when he is thoroughly acquainted with his principles. And every man of business might be a Geometrician, if he could once turn his thought to the less obvious principles of Geometry.

The reason then, why some persons of management and subtlety are not equally qualified to excel in Mathematics, is, because they cannot bend the whole stress of their mind to principles which lie so far out of the road; and the reason why some persons, admirably successful in the study of the Mathematics, are less happy in civil business, is, because they are purblind in the things which lie just before them. For these latter having been accustomed to principles which are full and distinct, and having never reasoned, even from these principles, till they have viewed them a considerable time, and have handled them after their own way, they cannot but lose themselves in matters of political address. Here the principles will not submit to be thus treated and managed; they are not to be discerned without difficulty; the mind rather sees than feels them; and it would require almost an infinite labour to work a perception of them in those who have it not by their own natural sagacity. These things are so nice and so numerous, that a man must have the clearest and finest understanding to apprehend them: and, if apprehended, it is very seldom that they can be so regularly demonstrated as the subject of Geometry; because no one can pretend to have so firm a hold of their principles and necessary foundations, this being a task next to impossible. We must see them at one immediate view, without the

train and progress of reason ; at least the intuitive knowledge of them must be extended to such a degree, ere the rational can proceed. Thus it rarely happens that either of these geniuses can advance many steps in the province of the other. The masters of Geometry sometimes make themselves ridiculous, by endeavouring to confine the subjects of business to their own method, and by retaining the way of definitions and maxims, a process which this kind of reasoning will not bear : not but that the mind does the very same thing which they propose to do by their rules ; but then the mind does it silently and naturally, without art or shew, and in a way above the capacity of most men to conceive, and of all to express.

On the other side, the politick heads, having been used to judge of things in the way of intuition, are so amazed when we offer them problems which they apprehend nothing of, and such as they cannot enter into, but through a series of definitions and barren maxims, that these find them soon disheartened, and inclined to give over the pursuit. But then it is certain, between both, that a false genius will neither make a Geometry-Professor, nor a Privy Counsellor.

Men who have a genius only for Mathematics, will be true and exact in thinking, provided all things are explained to them in their own formal manner ; otherwise their judgment will be erroneous and insupportable, because they never proceed right, but upon principles of which they have a perfect view. Again, those who have a genius only for business, are seldom patient enough to descend into the first principles of speculative and abstracted things, which they have not encountered in common life and action.

\* It is easier to die without the thought of death, than to think of death without the apprehension of danger.

\* We ordinarily presume that all men have the same apprehension and sense of the same object, when presented to them : But we presume thus much upon a precarious title, and without real proof. I know very well,

since men were capable of the latter without circumcision, they wanted not the preparation of the former.\*

\* Two plain Laws might be more effectual in regulating the whole Christian Community, than all political Institutions,—the Love of God, and that of our Neighbour.

\* Those whom God has inspired with the Grace of Religion in their hearts and affections, are most entirely convinced, and most completely blessed. But as for those who have not yet attained it, we have no way of recommending it to them but by Reason and Argument; waiting till God shall please to imprint an inward feeling of it on their hearts, without which, all faith, as it is only the conviction of the understanding, is unprofitable to salvation.

\* What can be more shocking, than to feel all our possessions continually sliding through our hands, and yet to acquiesce in this wretched poverty, and to entertain no desire of securing a more fixed and durable treasure?

\* An Atheist ought to offer nothing but what is perfectly clear and evident. But a man must have lost all his senses, before he can affirm it to be perfectly clear and evident that the soul is mortal. I freely disown the necessity of diving into COPERNICUS'S system: but I maintain, that it concerns us more than our life is worth to enquire whether the soul is mortal or immortal.

\* A person discovering the Proofs of the Christian Religion, is like an Heir finding the Deeds and Evidences of his Estate. Shall he officiously condemn them as counterfeit, or cast them aside without examination?

\* I see no greater difficulty that there is in the Resurrection of the Dead, or the Conception of the Virgin, than in the Creation of the World. Is not the re-production of human bodies as easy as the first production? Or, supposing us to be ignorant of the natural method of generation, should we think it more strange to see a child from a woman only, than from a man and a woman?

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\* What is here said must be understood as referring only to the rites prescribed by the *Ceremonial Law*. To the rules of the *Moral Law* such observations are altogether inapplicable.

\* There are two Maxims of Faith equally fixed and unalterable ; the one, that man, in his state of Creation, (or in that of Grace,) is raised above all visible nature ; made like unto God, and a partaker of the Divinity : the other, that man in his state of Corruption and Sin is fallen from this pitch of greatness into a resemblance of the beasts. These two propositions are alike firm and certain : the Holy Scripture bears a positive testimony to both. For, in some places we read, “ My delight is with the sons of men : I will pour out my SPIRIT upon all flesh : I have said ye are gods,” &c. ; but in others, “ All flesh is grass : Man is like the beasts that perish : I said in my heart, concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they themselves are beasts.”

\* We should strive to bring ourselves to such a temper as not to be troubled at any occurrence, but to take every event for the best. I apprehend this to be a necessary duty, and the neglect of it to be properly a sin. For the reason why we term any thing sinful, is taken from its repugnancy to the Will of God. If then the very essence of sin consists in cherishing a will which we know to be contrary to that of God, it seems clear to me, that when He is pleased to discover his Will to us by events, we are justly reputed sinners, if we conform not ourselves by a ready compliance and submission.

\* When truth is deserted and persecuted, this seems to be the time at which the service which we yield to God in its defence is peculiarly acceptable. He permits us to judge of Grace by the comparisons of Nature. And as a Prince dethroned by his own subjects, retains a most tender affection for those who continue faithful to him in the public revolt ; so we may presume to conceive that God will ever regard those with peculiar goodness who maintain the purity of Religion, when it is, on all sides, attacked or oppressed. But here is the difference between the Kings of the earth, and the KING OF KINGS ; that the Princes of this World do not make their subjects loyal, but find them so ; whereas God never finds men otherwise

that men apply the same words to the same occasions ; as when two persons look on the snow, both the one and the other expresseth the appearance of this object by the same term of *White*. From this conformity of speech we draw a strong conjecture for the like conformity of idea ; which, though highly probable, yet is not absolutely demonstrative.

\* Those who judge of any work by rule are, in respect of others, like a man who has a Watch, when the rest of the company have not. One friend says, we have been two hours together ; another affirms it to have been but three quarters of an hour since we met. Here I privately look upon my watch, and tell one that he is melancholy, and the other that he is merry, because we have been together precisely an hour and an half ; and I despise those that tell me, time passeth as I please to make it, and pretend that I judge of it by my fancy, not knowing that I judge of it by my watch.

\* The understanding naturally believes, and the will naturally loves ; so that if either of them be not directed to true objects, it must necessarily take up with false.

\* Many things which are true have been contradicted ; many which are false, pass without contradiction. To be contradicted is no more a mark of falsehood, than not to be contradicted is a mark of truth.

\* The sense we have of the falseness of those pleasures which are present, and the ignorance we are under as to the vanity of those pleasures which are absent, are the two great sources of all our levity and inconstancy.

\* If we dreamed the same thing every night, it might perhaps affect us no less than the objects which we encounter by day. And if an Artisan should be sure of dreaming, as often as he went to bed, that he was a King, I think he would be as happy as a King, who should dream constantly, for the same space, that he was an Artisan. Should we every night dream that we were pursued by our enemies, so as continually to lie under the fright of these troublesome phantoms, or that we are

engaged in a succession of labour, as in travelling, we should suffer almost as much, as if the things were real; and should be as much afraid of sleeping, as we are now afraid of being awake, when we apprehend ourselves to be entering upon these misfortunes or difficulties. And the consequence of the reality could scarcely be more fatal than that of the imagination. But because our dreams are ever varying from themselves, what they present us with strikes us more faintly than what we behold with open eyes, which is for the most part uniform, equal, and consistent. Not but that this latter way has also its changes, though not with such frequency, or so great abruptness, but in the manner of an easy journey. And hence came the phrase of our being *in a dream*: for life is indeed but a dream, though of a less inconstant and irregular kind.

\* Those mighty efforts and sallies to which the mind sometimes attains, are things of which it cannot keep possession: it wins them by a vigorous flight, and loseth them by as sudden a fall.

\* Provided we know the ruling passion in any man, we assure ourselves of being able to please him. And yet every man has his peculiar fancy and humour, contrary to his real good, even in the idea which he forms of good: and this diversity breaks and disconcerts the measures of those who are studious of winning upon the affections of others.

\* The same means by which we corrupt our judgment, we employ to corrupt our sense. Now both our sense and judgment are chiefly formed upon conversation; so that good or ill company may make or mar them. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance to choose our company well, that we may confirm, and not debauch our powers: and yet it is hardly possible to make this good choice, unless they are already confirmed and not debauched. Thus the whole matter runs in a circle; which, without a very particular happiness, we shall never get out of.



\* We naturally suppose ourselves more capable of diving to the centre of things, than of embracing the circumference. The visible extent of the world plainly surpasseth us and our faculties. But because we ourselves do likewise surpass, with a great disproportion, the minuter parts of nature, we fancy that these must necessarily fall under the command of our mind. And yet it requires the same (that is, an infinite) perfection and capacity to descend to nothing, as to extend to all. And I am persuaded, that if a man could penetrate into the first elements of things, he might, by the same strength, arrive at the comprehension of infinity. Each labour depends on the other; each conducts to the other. These vast extremities, the farther they reach, the more surely they meet and touch, re-uniting, at length, in GOD, and in GOD alone.

\* If a man did but begin with the study of himself, he would soon find how incapable he was of proceeding farther. For what possibility is there, that the part should contain the whole? It seems, however, more reasonable that we should at least aspire to the knowledge of the other parts, to which we bear some proportion and resemblance. But then the parts of the world are so nicely interwoven, so exquisitely linked and encased one within the other, that I look upon it as impossible to understand one without another, or even one without all.

To instance in ourselves. Man has really some dependence on every thing that he knows. He has need of place, to contain him; of time, to lengthen out his duration; of elements, to compose his frame; of motion, to preserve his life; of heat and food, for nourishment; of air, for respiration. He sees the light which shines upon him; he feels the bodies which encircle him; in short, he contracts an alliance with the whole world.

In order, therefore, to an exact knowledge of man, we must know whence it comes to pass, that air, for example, should be necessary for his subsistence: and to apprehend the nature of air, we should know by what

particular means it has such an influence on the life of man.

Again: flame cannot subsist without air; therefore, the philosophy of the one depends on that of the other.

All things then being in different regards, effects, and causes, near and remote, holding communication with each other by a natural, though imperceptible line, which unites the most distant in place, and most repugnant in kind; I see no possibility either of knowing the parts without the whole, or of knowing the whole without a distinct apprehension of the parts.

And what seems to fix and complete our utter inability for the knowledge of things, is, that they are all, in their own nature, simple; whereas we are composed of two opposite natures, Spirit and Body. For it is impossible that our reasoning part should be other than spiritual. And as for the extravagance of those who will allow themselves to consist of nothing but body, this excludes them still more forcibly from all acquaintance with the objects about them; it being a most inconceivable paradox to affirm, that matter is capable of reflection or thought.

It is this composition of Body and Spirit which has made the Philosophers, almost universally, confound the ideas of things; ascribing to body the properties of spirit, and to spirit the affections of body. Thus they tell us, with good assurance, that bodies have a tendency downwards; that they aspire to their proper centre; that they shun their own destruction; that they have their peculiar inclinations, sympathies, and antipathies: all of which belong purely to spirit. But on the other hand, if spirits are the subject of their discourse, they consider these as circumscribed in place, as endued with local motion, &c., which ought, in justice, to be applied to the body only.

Instead of receiving into our mind the true and genuine ideas of things, we strike a tincture of our own compound being on all the simple objects which we contemplate.

While we make no scruple to compose the whole world of Spirit and Body, might it not seem natural to infer, that we really apprehend this composition? And yet this is what, of all things, we are most at a loss to apprehend. Every man is to himself the most prodigious object in the extent of nature; for as he knows little of body, and less of spirit, so he knows least of all, how body should be united to spirit. This is the very complication of all his difficulties: and yet this is no other than his own proper being.

\* This dog is mine, says the poor child: this is my place in the sun. From so petty a beginning may we trace the tyranny and usurpation of the whole earth.

\* The common idea which we form of PLATO or ARISTOTLE, represents them in their garb of Professors, and as persons of composed seriousness and immoveable gravity. Whereas they were really honest gentlemen who could laugh and jest with a friend, as well as ourselves. And it was in this vein of mirth and humour that they framed their laws, and systems of polity. The time they spent upon these projects was the most unphilosophical part of their whole life. When they pleased to be philosophers in earnest, they had no other care or thought than how to live with privacy and tranquillity.

# PRA Y E R

OF

## MONSIEUR PASCAL,

COMPOSED IN SICKNESS.

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I. O LORD, whose SPIRIT is so good and gracious in all things, and who art so infinitely merciful, that not the prosperities alone, but even the distresses, which happen to thy chosen, are the effects of thy mercy, grant that I may not bring a Pagan mind to my present afflictions; but that, like a true Christian, I may in all events acknowledge thy justice, and thy providence: for the altering of my condition can in no way affect or influence thine. Thou art ever immutable, though I am ever subject to change; Thou art the same GOD, no less in afflicting and punishing, than in the midst of thy indulgences, and plentiful consolations.

II. Thou gavest me health to be spent in serving Thee, and I perverted it to a use altogether profane. Now thou hast sent a sickness for my correction: O suffer me not to use this likewise, as a means of provoking Thee by my impatience! I abused thy gift of health, and thou hast justly punished me for my neglect; O keep me from abusing thy very punishment! And because the corruption of my nature is such, that it renders thy favours pernicious to me; grant, O GOD, that thy all-powerful

Grace may render thy chastisements wholesome and beneficial. If I had a heart filled with affection for the world, while I enjoyed any degree of strength and vigour, destroy that vigour, for my soul's health ; and, whether by weakening my body, or by inflaming and exalting my charity, render me incapable of delighting in the world, that my delight may be only in Thy Name.

III. O GOD, before whom I shall be obliged to give an exact account of my actions at the end of my life, and the end of the world ; O GOD, who permittest the world, and all things in it, to subsist, only for the probation of the good, and for the punishment of the wicked ; O GOD, who leavest hardened sinners to enjoy the world, with a delicious, but eriminal use ; O GOD, who appointest our body to die, and who, at the hour of death, removest our soul from all that it doated upon here ; O GOD, who at the last moment of my life wilt foreibly separate me from all things that have engaged my thoughts, and taken up my heart ; O GOD, who wilt consume the heavens and the earth at the last day, and all the creatures they contain, to convinee men that nothing subsists but by thy Hand, and that nothing besides Thee deserves our love, because, besides Thee, nothing is fixed and permanent ; O GOD, who wilt destroy all these vain idols, all these fatal objects of our affections ; I praise Thee, O GOD, and I will bless Thee while I have my being, for that thou hast been pleased, of thy favour towards me, already to antieipate the dreadful day, by already destroying all things to my taste and thought, under this weakness which I suffer from thy Providence. I praise Thee, that Thou hast given me this divorce from the sweetness of health, and from the pleasures of the world ; and that Thou hast, in some sort, consumed these vain idols, which Thou wilt effectually consume in the day of thy wrath. Grant, O LORD, that I may judge myself after this seeming destruction, which Thou hast made in my behalf ; so that after the final destruction which Thou wilt make of my life, and of the world, I may escape when judged by Thee. I

know, O LORD, that at the instant of my death, I shall find myself entirely separated from the world, stripped naked of all things, standing alone before Thee, to answer to thy justice concerning the motions of my thoughts and spirit; grant that I may look on myself as dead already, separated from the world, stripped of all the objects of my passion, placed alone in thy presence, to implore thy mercy for the conversion of my heart; and that I may gather hence matter of exceeding comfort, that Thou shouldst be pleased first to send this image of death, as the subject of thy mercy, before Thou sendest a real dissolution, to exercise thy justice. As Thou seemest to have prevented the time of my death, so let me prevent the rigour of thy sentence; and let me so examine myself before thy judgment, that in thy judgment I may find mercy.

IV. Grant, O LORD, that I may, with an obedient silence, adore the methods of thy Divine Wisdom in the disposals of my life; that thy rod may comfort me; and that having lived in bitterness of my sins, while I enjoyed the good things of my peaceable condition, I may taste the heavenly sweetness of thy grace, during these salutary evils. But I am sensible, O my God, that my heart is so hardened, so full of worldly engagements, solitudes, and disquiets, that neither health, nor sickness, nor discourses, nor books, (not even thy Sacred Word,) nor thy most holy Mysteries, nor alms, nor fastings, nor mortifications, nor miracles, nor the use of any Sacraments, nor all my endeavours, nor the endeavours of the whole world together, can effect any thing toward the beginning of my conversion, if Thou bledest not all these means with the extraordinary succours of thy grace. I address my prayer unto Thee, Almighty LORD, to intreat from thy bounty a gift, which the joint concurrence of created things can never procure or bestow. I should not have the boldness to direct my cries to Thee, were there besides any that could hear, and could relieve them. But, O my God, since the conversion, which I now beg

of thy Grace, is a work exceeding all the powers of nature, to whom can I apply, but to the Almighty Master of my heart, and of nature itself? To whom, O LORD, should I cry, to whom should I flee for succour, unless unto Thee? Nothing that is not GOD can fix my confidence, or fill my desires. It is GOD alone whom I ask and seek; it is Thou alone, O my GOD, whom I implore, for the obtaining of Thyself. O LORD, open my heart; 'enter this rebellious place, possessed by my vices and my sins. They at present hold it in subjection; do Thou enter, as into the "strong man's house;" first bind the strong and powerful enemy who is master of it, and then spoil it of the treasures which it now conceals. Rescue and retrieve my affections, of which the world has robbed me; spoil Thou the world of this treasure, or rather resume it as thy own, for to Thee it is but a just tribute, because thy own image was stamped upon it. Thou alone wast able at first to create my soul; Thou alone art able to create it anew: Thou alone couldst imprint on it thy image; Thou alone canst revive and refresh that defaced image, even JESUS CHRIST, the express image of thy substance.

V. O my GOD, how happy is the soul which can love so charming an object; where the affection is so honourable, the alliance so full of benefit and safety! I perceive I cannot be enamoured of the world without incurring thy displeasure, without prejudicing, and even degrading myself; and yet the world is still the mark of my desire! O my GOD, how happy are the souls which have fixed their desire on Thee; because this is an affection to which they give themselves wholly up, not only without scruple, but with commendation! How firm and lasting is their happiness, whose expectation can never be defeated; because Thou failest not, and because neither life nor death can separate them from this Divine Object of delight! For the same moment which shall involve the wicked, together with their idols, in a common ruin, shall unite the just to Thee in a common glory; while, as the former perish with the perishing objects to which

they had ensnared their affections, the latter subsist eternally, in that self-subsisting object to which they were allied. O the happiness of those, who with an absolute choice, and with an invincible bent of inclination, are able to love perfectly and freely, what they are engaged to love out of duty and necessity.

VI. Perfect, O my God, the good motions Thou hast wrought in me. Be Thou their end, as Thou art their beginning. Crown thy own gifts ; for thy gifts I acknowledge them to be. I acknowledge them, O God, and am so far from presuming on any such merit in my prayers, as should oblige Thee to a necessary grant, that I likewise most humbly acknowledge, that having given up to the creatures this heart which Thou formedst purely for thy own service, not for the world, nor for myself, I can expect no means of favour but from thy Mercy ; because I have nothing in me that can engage thy assistance ; and because all the natural movements of my heart, being directed either towards the creatures, or towards myself, can have no force with regard to Thee, but that of incensing and provoking Thee. I thank thee, therefore, O my God, for the good motions Thou hast inspired ; and for this amongst the rest, the Grace of thanking Thee for them.

VII. Strike my heart with true repentance for my faults ; because without this grief of mind, the evils with which Thou hast stricken my body will only procure me a new occasion to sin. Make me rightly to understand, that the evils of the body are nothing else but the punishment, and at the same time the figure, of those which happen to the soul : But, O LORD, make them to prove likewise their remedy, by making me consider, in the bodily pains I feel, those in my soul which I feel not, though my soul, as well as my body, is overspread with sickness and sores. For my greatest evil of soul is this insensibility, and this extreme weakness, which disable it from all apprehension of its own miseries. Give me a



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lively sense of these miseries, and of my past offences ; and grant that the residuc of my life may be one continued penitence.

VIII. O LORD, although my life has been hitherto free from more grievous crimes, (the occasions of which Thou hast been pleased in mercy to remove,) yet it must needs have been exceedingly hateful to Thee, by reason of my habitual neglect, my contempt of thy Word and Inspirations, the idleness and unprofitableness of all my actions and thoughts, and the entire loss of all that time, which Thou hast given me for no other employment but that of worshipping Thee, of sceking in all my business and applications the means of doing thy pleasure, and of becoming truly penitent for my daily trespasses.

IX. Hitherto, O LORD, I have ever been deaf to thy Inspirations ; I have despised thy Oracles ; I have judged contrary to what Thou judgest ; I have crossed those holy maxims which Thou broughtest into the world from the bosom of the Eternal FATHER, and according to which Thou wilt judge the world at thy second coming. Thou hast said, "Blessed are those that mourn, and woe unto those who have received their consolation." My language was directly opposite:—Woe unto those who mourn ; happy those who abound in consolations and enjoyments, those who possess a plentiful fortune, an uninterrupted health, and unbrocken vigour. And for what reason could I make these advantages the standards of happiness, but because they furnished their owners with a more large capacity of enjoying the creatures ; that is, of offending Thee. Thus, as to health in particular, I confess, O LORD, that I esteemed it a good, not because it supplied more easy means of profiting in a course of holiness, and of exhausting more cares and more watchings in thy service, or in the assistance of my neighbours ; but because under its protection I might abandon myself with less restraint to the delicacies of life, and receive a

quicker relish of pernicious and fatal pleasures. Grant, O LORD, that I may reform my corrupted reason, and rectify my sentiments by thine ; that I may judge myself happy in afflictions ; that, under this my disability as to external actions, Thou mayest so purify my thoughts and intention, as to reconcile them to thy own ; and that I may thus find Thee within myself, while my weakness incapacitates me from seeking Thee without. For, O LORD, thy kingdom is in the hearts of the faithful ; nor shall my heart be debarred from perceiving and enjoying it in itself, if it may be replenished with Thy SPIRIT, and with thy wisdom.

X. But, O LORD, by what means shall I engage Thee to pour down thy SPIRIT upon this miserable soul ? All that I have, all that I am, is odious to Thee ; nor can I discover in myself the least foundation of union and agreement. I see nothing, O LORD, but my sufferings, which have a resemblance with thine. Look therefore on the evils I now labour under, and those which threaten me with their approach. Behold, with an eye of pity, the wounds which Thy Hand has made. O my SAVIOUR, who lovedst thy own sufferings, even to death ; O GOD, who for no other cause becamest Man, but that Thou mightest suffer more than mere Man could undergo, for human salvation ; O GOD, who wast therefore incarnate since the fall of man by sin, and didst assume our body, that Thou mightest feel all the evils which sin had deserved ; O GOD, who so lovest bodies exercised with sufferings, as to have chosen for Thyself a body loaded with the most grievous sufferings this world can exhibit ; be pleased favourably to accept of my body, not for its own sake, nor for all that it contains, for all deserves thy wrath ; but may my sufferings be pleasing to Thee, and my afflictions invite Thee to visit me. But to complete the preparation for thy reception and stay, grant, O my SAVIOUR, that as my body has this in common with thine,—to suffer for sin, so my mind may have this likewise in common with thy mind,—to be

sorrowful for sin ; and that thus I may suffer with Thee, and like Thee, both in body and mind, for my numberless transgressions.

XI. Grant me, O LORD, the grace of joining thy consolations to my sufferings, that I may suffer like a Christian. I pray not to be exempted from pain ; for this is the glorious recompence of saints : but I pray that I may not be abandoned to the pains of nature without the comforts of thy SPIRIT ; for this is the curse of Jews and Pagans. I pray not to enjoy a perfect fulness of comfort, without any alloy of sufferings, for that is the noble prerogative of a life of glory ; neither pray I for a perfect fulness of sufferings without any mixture of comfort, for that is a state of Jewish darkness and misery : but I pray, O LORD, that I may feel at once, both the pains of nature for my sins, and the consolations of grace by thy SPIRIT ; for that is the true state of Christianity. O ! may I never feel pain without comfort ! but may I so feel them together, as at length to feel thy comforts only, without my pains ! For so, O LORD, Thou didst leave the whole world to languish under natural sufferings till the coming of thy SON ; but now thou comfortest and sweetenest the sufferings of thy servants by his Grace, and fillest thy saints with pure beatitude in his Glory. These are the three wonderful steps by which Thou hast been pleased to guide and exalt the works of thy Providence : Thou hast raised me from the first ; O conduct me to the second, that I may attain the third ! Thy grace, O LORD, is sufficient for me.

XII. Suffer me not, O LORD, to continue under such an estrangement from Thee, as to be able to reflect on thy Soul, which was sorrowful even to death, and thy Body which was oppressed and overcome by death, for my sins, without rejoicing, if I may be counted worthy to suffer in my body and in my soul. For what can be more shameful, and yet what is more usual with Christians, and even with myself, than that whilst Thou, in thy Agony, didst sweat drops of blood for the expiation of our offences, we should make it our whole study to live in delicacy and ease !—that

Christians, who profess a dependence on Thee ; that those who, at their baptism, renounced the world to become thy followers ; that those who, in the face of the church, have engaged themselves by a solemn oath to live and die in thy service ; that those who pretend a belief, that the world persecuted and crucified Thee ; that those who acknowledge Thee to have been exposed to the wrath of **God**, and to the cruelty of men, to purchase their redemption ; that those who make a daily confession of all this, who consider thy Body as the Sacrifice which was offered for their salvation, who look on the pleasures and sins of the world as the only cause of thy sufferings, and on the world itself as thy murderer ; should yet seek to gratify their bodies with the same pleasures and sins in the same world !—and that those who could not without horror behold a person caressing the murderer of his father, by whose voluntary death the son is ransomed and lives, should be able to find delight, as I have done, in the world which I know to be the murderer of Him whom I own for my Father and my **God**, who was delivered for my releasement and safety, and who in his own person sustained the punishment due to my sins ! It was most just, **O LORD**, that Thou shouldst interrupt so criminal a joy as this, with which I solaced myself under the very shadow of death.

XIII. Take from me, **O LORD**, that sorrow which the love of myself may raise in me from my sufferings, and from my unsuccessful hopes and designs in the world, while regardless of thy glory. Create in me a sorrow resembling thy own. Let my pains prove the happy occasion of my conversion and my salvation. Let me not hereafter wish for health or life, but with the prospect of spending both *in Thee, with Thee, and for Thee*. I pray not that Thou wouldst give me either health, or sickness, life, or death ; but that Thou wouldst dispose of my health, my sickness, my life, and my death, for thy glory, for my eternal welfare, for the use of the Church, and the benefit of thy faithful servants, into the

number of whom I hope to be admitted by thy grace. Thou alone knowest what is expedient for me ; Thou art my Sovereign Master and Lord ; guide and govern me at thy Pleasure. Give to me, or take from me, as shall seem best to thy Providence ; but in all things conform my will to thine ; and grant that with an humble and perfect submission, and a holy confidence, I may dispose myself to receive the orders of thy eternal wisdom, and may equally reverence and adore the most different events which Thou shalt please to accomplish in me.

XIV. Let me with a constant evenness of spirit embrace all thy disposals ; forasmuch as we know not what we ought to ask, and cannot wish one event rather than another without presumption, and without making ourselves the judges of that train of future things which thy wisdom has so justly concealed from our view. I know, O LORD, that my whole knowledge may be reduced to this one point, That it is good to obey Thee, and evil to offend Thee. After this, I know not what is the best, or the worst, amongst all things. I know not which is more profitable for me, health or sickness, riches or poverty, any condition, any circumstances of this world. For such a judgment surpasseth the sagacity of men, and lies hidden among the secrets of thy Providence, which I reverence and adore, but will never attempt to penetrate.

XV. Grant, O LORD, that in every condition, I may conform myself to thy Will, and in my present sickness glorify Thee by my pains. Without these it is impossible I should attain to thy Glory, since Thou thyself wast not "made perfect," but "through sufferings." It was by the marks of thy sufferings that Thou wast known to thy disciples ; and it is by their sufferings that Thou knowest who are thy disciples. Receive me into that blessed company, by means of these evils which I endure in body and mind for my past transgressions. And because no sacrifice is acceptable to the FATHER, unless presented by Thee, unite my will to thine, and my torments to those which Thou didst not disdain to undergo. Let my suffer-


ings be interpreted as thine own. Unite me to Thyself, replenish me with Thyself, and with thy HOLY SPIRIT. Enter into my heart and soul, there to sustain my afflictions, and continue to endure in me what is behind of thy passion, which Thou still sufferest in thy members ; so that being inspired and acted by Thee, it may be no longer I who live or suffer, but Thou, O my SAVIOUR, who livest and sufferest in me ; and that having thus borne some share in thy sufferings, Thou mayest admit me to a participation of those glories which Thou hast acquired by them, and in which, with the FATHER and the HOLY GHOST, Thou livest and reignest for ever. Amen.





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THE  
GREAT DUTY  
OF  
**SELF-RESIGNATION**  
TO THE  
DIVINE WILL.



EXTRACTED FROM A TREATISE

BY JOHN WORTHINGTON, D.D.

*Master of Jesus College, Cambridge, and Prebendary of Lincoln,*

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VOL. XIII.

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THE

# PREFACE,

BY BISHOP FOWLER.



THE following Treatise contains the substance of several Sermons, which were preached on divers Texts relating to each other, and most of them at *Bennet-Fink*, in *London*, where the worthy Author was, for some time, Preacher, till his Church and Parish were laid in ashes; and they were the last that were heard from him in that place.

On that LORD'S-Day, whereon the dreadful Fire of *London* brake forth, he was come to insist on the exemplary *Resignation* of holy JOB to the Divine Will, under those dismal sufferings he was exercised with, which is the Argument of the Ninth Chapter of the Second Section of this Discourse. And it is to be believed that he was directed by a very special Providence to a subject, so highly useful and seasonable for preparing his hearers for that heavy calamity which was so nearly approaching them.

The Reader will observe an excellent and most christian spirit running through this whole Discourse; and will see great reason to believe, that the Author was very much affected with what he hath written, that his heart was powerfully touched with the arguments he pursueth,

and that he had not a merely notional, but an experimental knowledge of the excellency of a self-denying, resigned temper, and was actuated by a great zeal for the propagation of it, as being truly sensible that it is the very life and soul of Christianity.

He appeared, to all that knew him, to have a vigorous sense of this principle ; most of his discourses in the pulpit were much tinctured with it ; and he gave many singular proofs of his living under the power and government of it.

Now the God of all grace, without whose blessing all our endeavours prove ineffectual, make this Treatise, with all other the pious labours of his Servants, instrumental to the furthering of the great end of our Christian Faith,—the conforming us more and more to the Divine Will and Likeness, and the qualifying us by purity of heart, and a participation of that image of God, which consists in righteousness and true holiness, for his special favour and love in this world, and for a glorious immortality in the complete enjoyment of the ever-blessed TRINITY in the world to come.

EDWARD FOWLER.

THE

## INTRODUCTION.



AMONGST all divine Truths, none are more frequently or more powerfully to be pressed and urged, than those that are wholly practical, that refer to spiritual obedience, that “pertain to life and godliness,” that tend to the real bettering of man, and to his transformation into the divine image; such as are most powerful to the subduing our own Wills, as divided from GOD’S, and the bringing them unto a conformity to the Will of GOD.

But, alas! these great practical truths have been, too commonly, either sparingly or but coldly and insignificantly, not fully, clearly, and vigorously recommended. The great noise in the Christian World hath been about the lighter matters of the Law, mint, anise, and cummin, meats and drinks, wherein the Kingdom of GOD doth not consist. The great talk and zeal have been about things

less necessary, and more obscure and doubtful; men doting about questions and strifes of words, “whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, and evil surmisings.”

It pleaseth men to hear of speculative doctrines, and to be entertained with a luscious preaching of the Gospel, made up all of promises, and these wholly unconditional; it gratifies them to hear what is done without them, rather than what is to be done within them, and the necessity of sincere and entire obedience to our SAVIOUR’S precepts. All would *reign* with CHRIST, but they would not *suffer* with Him; they would hear only of CHRIST’S dying for sin, and of his being crucified for them; but to hear of their dying to sin, and their own corrupt will, of their being crucified with him, and suffering their wills to be resigned to the will of the FATHER, as CHRIST’S was,—to hear of making an entire oblation of themselves to GOD,—“this is a hard saying,” few will bear it; it is very displeasing to flesh and blood. But how displeasing soever it be, it is not therefore to be forborne: For “if we should seek to please men, we should not be the servants of CHRIST.” If we should humour people in their soft and delicate religion, we should not be faithful unto their souls, whose grand interest is to know and practise this first and great lesson in the school of CHRIST.

SELF-RESIGNATION is a great part of the doctrine that is “according to godliness.” They are the wholesome or healing words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, viz. “He that doth not take up his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple;” nor “is he worthy of me.”

This is healing doctrine, that alone can cure the inward distempers of our souls, and therefore absolutely necessary to be taught and pressed with all authority. It matters not that the carnally-minded and delicate Chris-

tian doth not relish it. We that are the Ministers of the Gospel are to imitate careful Physicians, who, when they come to their patients, do not ask them what they love best, and then prescribe for them what is most pleasing to their palates; but, informing themselves well of the case of the diseased, they appoint what they judge most proper for them, though it be no whit grateful or acceptable to them.

But howsoever the resigning their wills to the will of GOD be loathsome physic to the carnal, it is to the truly spiritual both meat and drink, as it was to their great Master: it is their constant diet; the savoury meat which their souls love and live by: they esteem the fore-mentioned, and the like words of their SAVIOUR'S mouth, "more than their necessary food."

This so much neglected Doctrine of SELF-RESIGNATION is that which I design to treat of, and with all seriousness to recommend to those that name the name of CHRIST. For the more distinct understanding whereof, we must know, that SELF-RESIGNATION doth relate either, first, to the commands of GOD, particularly such commands as are difficult to nature, and grievous to flesh and blood; (for to obey in lesser and more easy instances is no worthy proof of our Resignation;) and thus considered, it implieth an entire Obedience to the preceptive will of GOD: or, secondly, it relates to trials, hardships and sufferings, such as GOD doth allot and appoint, to humble us, and to know what is in our hearts; and thus considered, it implieth a meek Patience and quiet Submission to the divine disposals.

But I shall not speak to these two distinctly, but join them both together in this Maxim, wherein is comprised the grand Fundamental of Practical Religion, viz. *That*



*a Christian is to resign his Will wholly to the Will of God, and to make an entire Oblation of himself to Him.*

In discoursing on which we shall, first, present you with several weighty Considerations that recommend this SELF-RESIGNATION; and, secondly, set down such Helps and Directions as are most proper to attain it.

# PART THE FIRST:

CONTAINING

## CONSIDERATIONS

CONCERNING

### THE DUTY OF SELF-RESIGNATION.

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#### CHAP. I.

*That it is the Law of our Creation, both first and second.  
The Consideration of GOD as a second Creator shewed  
mightily to enforce our Engagement to this Duty.*

I. SELF-RESIGNATION is the Law of our Creation, both as we are Creatures, and as we are New Creatures; as we are made, and as we are renewed after GOD's image. It is not a new thing introduced first by CHRIST; it is not an institution peculiar to the times of the Gospel, so that for almost four thousand years, man was not obliged to it; but it is our unchangeable duty, arising from our dependence upon GOD, and relation to Him. There is a law written within us that requires this, nor can any thing free us from our obligation hereunto. We were made by GOD for Himself, and therefore must needs be under an eternal obligation to yield universal obedience to Him. This is an old commandment, which man

had from the beginning, rooted in and interwoven with his very being; and all the duties enjoined therein are branches of the everlasting righteousness, and are of an eternal and unchangeable nature.

It is the character of Angels, that "they do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word," and that they "do his will:" and the Self-Resignation of Angels, their doing GOD'S will in heaven, is the model of men's Resignation and Obedience on earth; for our SAVIOUR hath taught us to pray, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." Angels and men are under the same moral obligation of religion; the same law, for substance, concerns both. Love is the sum of the whole law, and Angels are to love GOD with all their might, as well as men, and one Angel is to love another as himself.

Religion obligeth every rational creature, and the quintessence of Religion is Resignation; and therefore it is impossible this could ever have not been, or should ever for the future cease to be, our duty. GOD himself cannot absolve men from the religious fear and observance of Himself, and a most obedient regard to his holy will.

What the Apostle saith of Love, that it is an old, and yet a new commandment, is true also of this high and holy commandment of Self-Resignation. It is a new commandment; not as if it were first brought in by CHRIST, as was said,—for men were never free to will their own wills, or to walk in the ways of their own hearts; but it is new, as the commandment of Love is new, in that it was enlivened and enforced anew by CHRIST, and had its power and virtue renewed and increased, and the engagement to it heightened, both by the doctrine and example of our SAVIOUR; both tending to the advancement of Self-Resignation, in a way beyond any doctrine or example of life that ever appeared before or since in the world. And therefore it is also the law of the New Creation, and by virtue thereof its obligation is now doubled. The consideration of GOD as our Second Creator mightily enforceth this duty. For,

1. The relation of a new creature is more noble and honourable. In the second creation the image of God is repaired in the soul, and man that was a disfigured and disordered thing, by his apostasy from God, is restored to that better and more excellent state. As he is a new creature, he partakes of the SPIRIT, and is heavenly and spiritual; which is far more than having a natural being, by which, as the Apostle speaks, he "is of the earth, earthy."

2. It is also a sweeter relation; there is a most dear love, to be admired rather than to be expressed, manifested herein; (1 *John* iii. 1;) "Behold what manner of love the FATHER hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God." "Abba Father" comes more freely from the lips and heart of a new creature. Such may draw near to God with a filial freedom and humble boldness.

3. Besides, it is a more advantageous relation: for "if children," saith the Apostle, "then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with CHRIST." And the inheritance they are heirs to, is "incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in heaven for them;" such as "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard," and the glory of which "no heart can conceive;" of which, "according to the abundant grace of the God and FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, they are begotten again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the dead."

4. This new creation impowers, capacitates, and enables us for this duty. These things might be largely insisted upon; but thus much is briefly intimated, that the obligation to Self-Resignation may appear more from the notion of a New Creature, than from that of a Creature. And to this purpose is that of the Apostle, (*Eph.* ii. 10.) "We are his workmanship, created in CHRIST JESUS unto good works;" created unto entire obedience to the will of God, the foundation, and also the sum and abridgment whereof, is Self-Resignation.

## CHAP. II.

*That SELF-RESIGNATION is that which doth eminently difference a good man from the Devil and the wicked; and that mere external performances do not distinguish between the one and the other.*

II. SELF-RESIGNATION is that which doth eminently difference a good man from the DEVIL and the wicked. Those Angels that would not continue in Resignation, that would have another will of their own, that rended their wills from the will of GOD, they are the evil and miserable Angels; and still they are impetuously actuated by a boisterous self-will, and are impatient of having it checked. *Belial* is the DEVIL's name, and that word signifies *without yoke*; and the children of *Belial* are for a boundless, lawless liberty; they "set themselves against the LORD and his CHRIST, saying, Let us break their bands in sunder, and cast away their cords from us:" they "altogether break the yoke, and burst the bonds," and are impatient of restraint.

Wicked men, in whose hearts the Apostate Spirit worketh, are "the children of disobedience:" they are not for entire subjection to the Divine Will, though wise, good, and perfect; but addicted to their own will, which is childish, vain, and perverse, and to the gratifying of their "many foolish and hurtful desires." They are all for "walking after the imagination and stubbornness of their own hearts," and for "fulfilling the will of the flesh, and of the mind." Whereas the children of GOD are "children of obedience," (1 *Pet.* i. 14,) "not conformed to their former lusts, but to the will of GOD."

And here it is fit to admonish Christians, that it is a policy of SATAN, in all ages, to magnify some pieces of outward religion, and put such a value upon them as from them to denominate men good and religious; and so men are reputed saints, and the children of GOD, by such and such opinions and notions, such expressions, such observ-

ances, such things as may be performed by very bad men : so that on these different forms are founded different parties and sects, and each magnifies its own mode ; and thereupon men are tempted to associate themselves with one or other, whom they repute religious. But in the mean while, the main thing is little minded, that which doth intrinsically and eminently difference the good from the wicked, and that is Self-Resignation ; that which our SAVIOUR makes the essential character of a true Christian, Self-Denial.

This doctrine of denying and resigning ourselves, the doctrine of the inward cross, and of being dead to our own desires and interests, is very unacceptable and grievous to formal Christians. They would fain live to themselves, and please themselves, “ being lovers of their own selves, covetous, proud, incontinent, fierce, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God ;” as the Apostle speaks of some, who hereby denied the power of godliness, whereof yet they had a form.

It is a good service done to religion, to endeavour, both by life and doctrine, to rescue it from these abuses, and from being thought to consist in such outward shews, and to place the Kingdom of GOD where it should be. It is for the interest of the pure and undefiled religion, and for the advancement of real holiness, to lessen the credit of such appearances of mere outward performances ; to lessen the repute of any sort of mock-holiness, and observance of only the externals of religion, be they such as are commanded by GOD, or be they mere arbitrary and voluntary tasks, which have a shew of wisdom and holiness, but indeed are a holiness of men’s own framing.

But yet, this is not spoken to lessen the repute of what is external, or with a design to make men regardless thereof, but only to awaken them, from resting in these externals, to the minding of a righteousness which “ exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees ;” who were men very observant of the outward parts of religion, and strict as to things that did not cross their

interests, but yet notoriously loose as to what was most strictly and mainly required by GOD. And therefore our SAVIOUR, in the Sixth Chapter of *Matthew*, required his disciples to beware of strengthening that *babel*, that false imaginary holiess of the Pharisees, who by their specious appearances grew into a great reputation among the people, as if there were much of religion in them.

Among the externals of religion, some are of GOD's own requiring; as Praying, Reading, Preaching, and Hearing the Word. But even as for these, (not to mention such as men voluntarily impose upon themselves,) we are not to value men as religious by any thing in the use of them which is common to the regenerate and unregenerate, and may be performed by the hypocrite or formal Christian, who may make a fair shew in the flesh, and outward part of religion, and yet be unacquainted with the spirit and power of it.

It is the doing these things from a resigned heart;—so to pray, as in praying to have an humble submission to the will of GOD; so to read, so to preach, so to hear, as to be willing to be formed into all that truth, which is the good and acceptable will of GOD;—this is all in all; this is that which doth distinguish the formal and the real Christian. Others can perform all that is outward in religion, and in such a way as to have the praise of men; but to deny ourselves, to resign our wills entirely to the Divine Will, this is proper and peculiar to the inward and sincere Christian.

### CHAP. III.

*That SELF-RESIGNATION is the most acceptable way of glorifying GOD; and that He is honoured by no performances separated from this.*

III. SELF-RESIGNATION, and a conformity to the Divine Will, is the most excellent and most acceptable way of

glorifying GOD. The greatest honour we can express to an excellent person, is to endeavour to be as like him as may be; to imitate him in whatsoever commends and represents him as justly exemplary. And the most excellent way of honouring GOD, is to endeavour to be transformed into his likeness; to have our will the same with his; to will as he wills.

Indeed the mere outward Christian thinks that he doth GOD great honour, when he gives him the fruit of his lips in goodly expressions and specious praises; when he gives him the fruit of a bodily worship, in multiplying external devotions and religious observances: hereby he thinks he doth highly please GOD, as if GOD were such an one as himself, and were apt to be taken with words and shews, and did seek after such praises and respects.

But thus to judge of GOD, and deal with Him, is really to dishonour Him as much as thou pretendest to honour Him: it is plainly called in scripture, a “flattering of GOD;” (*Psal.* lxxviii. 35, 36;) “They remembered GOD their Rock, and the high GOD their Redeemer; nevertheless they did flatter Him with their mouth, and they lied unto Him with their tongues.” It was a good maxim of the *Pythagoreans*, “Thou shalt then in the most excellent way glorify and honour GOD, when in thy mind thou art like to GOD:”—when thou art affected as GOD is affected, when thou willest as He wills, and art willing to have that destroyed in thee which is contrary to the Divine Nature.

That which the *Chaldee Paraphrast* observes on those words, (in *Psal.* l. ult.) “Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me,” is very pertinent, namely, “whoso subdues and destroys the principle of inordinate affection in him, it shall be accounted to him as a sacrifice of praise.” The mortifying of earthly members, the slaying of undue desires, corrupt interests, and uncurbed affections, is more, infinitely more pleasing than all those costly and pompous services under the Law, than the utmost that lip-service and tongue-devotion can make shew of.



That great bulk of ceremonies, those burdensome services under the Law, those multitudes of sacrifices of bulls, goats, lambs, &c., they did not, they could not avail, they were but mean and inconsiderable things, without the inward sacrifice of an heart sincerely and ingenuously affected towards GOD. This, *this heart*, such a temper of spirit, did “please the LORD better than a bullock that hath horns and hoofs.”—“Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice; and to hearken, than the fat of rams,” the best of the sacrifice.

“Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, and ten thousands of rivers of oil?”—with multitudes of outward services and bodily austerities, with long fastings or prayings, or prophesyings in his name; with large discourses, glorious expressions, vehement disputings, or the like? These he shall have, any thing shall be given, rather than that the sin of the soul, the corrupt will, should be destroyed. But it is the walking with GOD in Humility and Resignation, which is that good thing which “GOD hath shewed thee, O man;” and which “the LORD thy GOD requircth of thee.”

“The sacrifice of the wicked,” those whose wills are opposite to the will of GOD, “is an abomination unto the LORD.”

And now under the Gospel-state, wherein those legal ordinances are ceased, our more seemingly spiritual exercises of religion, our prayings, our fastings, our saying LORD, LORD, and naming the name of CHRIST, and great profession of Christianity, and all other religious outward observances, are but empty things, of no account with GOD, except there be, at the bottom of all, a resigned heart.

As St. JAMES saith, “If any man seemeth to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue,” so is it most true, If any man seemeth to be religious, and bridleth not his Will, which is more hard, “that man’s religion is vain.”

## CHAP. IV.

*That SELF-RESIGNATION is the way to Light, even in the greatest difficulties and perplexities.*

IV. FOURTHLY, SELF-RESIGNATION is the way to Light, and that in the greatest difficulties and perplexities. There is a kind of Divine Oracle within the self-resigning soul, which speaks clearly and plainly, not darkly and ambiguously, as that Oracle in *Greece*. There is a spiritual priesthood which hath the *Urim* and *Thummim* (not upon the breast, as AARON had, but) within the breast: Light and Integrity go together. "The Secret of the LORD is with them that fear Him, and He will shew them his Covenant;" or, as it is better in the margin, "and his Covenant; to make them know it:" That is, it is part of GOD's gracious Covenant, to make them know his will. That which it concerns them to know and practise, GOD will not hide from the sincerely obedient.

GOD makes such to "know wisdom in the hidden part," or in "the hidden man of the heart," to use St. PETER's phrase.

But to speak more particularly. Where this inward principle of Self-Resignation is, there are the fewest Doubts; or, in case of such doubts, there are the speediest and surest Resolutions.

Now the Doubts and Solitudes that perplex Christians may be chiefly ranked under these two heads: They are either about their Duty, or about their State.

And in both, Self-Resignation is the way to Light, and affords the greatest advantages of knowing aright.

1. Be the Doubts and Perplexities about our Duty, what we are to do: the self-resigning soul is in the best disposition to give a right judgment in this case, and is best prepared to receive divine light, and the guidance of GOD's counsel.

(1.) This soul is best prepared to receive Divine Light.

Such a soul is wholly made for obedience and submission to the will of GÖD ; it is brought up at the feet of CHRIST, and sits there (with MARY) in the posture and spirit of a willing and obedient disciple ; and the Teacher of Souls will not neglect to shew unto such the path of life. God will write his law in the humble and obedient heart ; the rules of life and obedience shall be written within it by the SPIRIT of the Living God. Those eternal characters of goodness and righteousness, which are in the mind of God, are copied out in the soul of a resigned Christian. " We have the mind of CHRIST," saith the Apostle. " The meek shall He guide in judgment, the meek shall He teach his way." And those letters are not dead letters, like those written with ink on paper ; but they are living characters, as they are in God, and written on living tables. They are " the law of the SPIRIT of LIFE," an inward living principle.

Again, the self-resigning soul is still and silent before the LORD. Lusts and corrupt interests are here silenced, which make a continual clamour in the unresigned, by their importunate solicitations ; and therefore such a soul is better prepared to hear God coming to it in the still small voice, as oncc He did to ELIAS.

Those gentle whispers of the SPIRIT, *Venæ divini murmuris*, as PRUDENTIUS calls them, those inward manifestations of himself, are best discerned and attended to in this solemn silence. When the wind is high, and beats upon the windows and doors of the house, it is hard to hear what is said within. All tumultuous passions must be calmed, and the soul be in a state of due tranquillity, to hear what God speaks to it. And when this is the language of our hearts, " Speak, LORD, for thy servant heareth ;" then it is that we hear a voice behind us, saying, " This is the way, walk in it." And thus shall " the path of the righteous be as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

(2.) The self-resigning soul is in the best disposition to give a right Judgment, and to discern the Will of God.

When men are unresigned, unwilling to be wholly GOD's, and have some interest to serve contrary to the design of CHRIST, and are eagerly carried out to it, it is no wonder if they err in their hearts, and know not the way of GOD, wherein he hath declared He will have them to walk ; for they are easily brought to fancy that right, which they strongly will, and to judge things to be thus, from their impetuous willing them to be thus. And it is just with GOD to give them up to an undiscerning mind, so that things appear to them, not as they are, but as they would have them ; not according to their own inward nature, but according to the lusts of their own heart. Lusts and passions cast such a mist before our minds, that we cannot see our way, nor well discern between good and evil.

It is easy to observe, that the same men, when they are free from temptations, and from the power of passions, clearly see many things to be evil, and condemn them, which at other times they will not be convinced are so. Therefore, the self-resigning Christian, having that subdued in him that would tempt him to judge amiss, is in the ready way to the clearest discernment of the will of GOD. What is said of CHRIST, is, according to his measure, true of a faithful Christian, " He is of a quick understanding in the fear of the LORD ;" of a sagacious spirit ; he hath a more exact *κρίτησιον* ; " his senses are spiritually exercised to discern both good and evil."

Such as " are not conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of their minds," shall " prove" and discern " what is that good, acceptable, and perfect will of GOD."

Unpurified reason is far from being a sure and safe guide about what ought to be done ; for it looks at what is profitable, rather than at what is honest. Though it may be quick enough to discern matters merely speculative, yet it is very apt to miscarry in matters of practice. But " a good understanding have all they that do his com-

mandments ;” a better light shines into holy and purged hearts, and “in this light, they see light.”

This is the privilege of the self-resigning soul, that knows no will of its own, divided from the will of God. Such a soul shall “understand the fear of the LORD,” and have great and frequent occasions of saying with DAVID, “I will bless the LORD who hath given me counsel.”

2. Be the Doubts about our Condition, what it is to GOD-ward : As ST. JAMES speaks, “Whence come wars and fightings ?” I may add, Whence come those Fears and Uncertainties, that are to be observed in many about the State of their souls, those fears that have torment in them? “Come they not from hence, even from the lusts that war in their members ?”

Are not most of these tormenting fears in Christians to be resolved into the want of Faith and entire Self-Resignation? Men will not come thoroughly to this ; they would be indulged in something or other, and yet would be at peace ; they would be cured of their distemper, and yet are unwilling to have the root of it taken away. Consider, therefore, is there not something of Self-will that is too powerful within thee ? Wouldst thou not be unresigned, and please thyself in this or that thing ? Dost thou not say with NAAMAN, “The LORD pardon thy servant in this thing ?” and as LOT, “Is it not a little one ?” If this be so, GOD, who seeth the heart, seeth this ; and he will not be mocked, nor bribed to give thee peace, by thy making a shew of being resigned in other things.

But if, by the power of GOD’s grace, our wills be entirely subjected to the Divine Will, we cannot have the least reason to torment ourselves with anxious thoughtfulness about our state ; we may be sure that the outward hell shall not be our portion, if we are delivered from the hell within ; and that we cannot miss of the heaven above, while we have a heaven within us, by a free resignation to the will of God. They to whom the doing GOD’s will is their meat and drink, “have eternal life ;” they, in a lower degree, live the life of souls in glory.

Indeed it is as impossible for souls, whose sincere care it is to purify themselves as God is pure, and only to will as he wills, to be in hell, as it is for impure and disobedient souls to be in heaven. It is as impossible for "love, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," and the like fruits of the SPIRIT, to be in hell, as it is for "uncleanness, lasciviousness, hatred, strife, wrath, envyings, cruelty, unrighteousness," and the like works of the flesh, to grow in heaven. That soul cannot be miserable, which is entirely resigned; for he "dwelleth in love," and therefore "in God, and God in him." Nor can the infinitely good God cast off any soul that cleaveth to him with full purpose of heart. Thirstings and holy breathings after the enjoyment of God, and a frame of heart agreeable to God, cannot fail to be united to Him their Original.

#### CHAP. V.

*That SELF-RESIGNATION is the way to Rest and Peace: That those that have attained thereunto, find satisfaction, both in doing and suffering the will of God; and that Self-Will is that which puts the world into confusion.*

V. SELF-RESIGNATION is the way to true Peace and Joy; Joy unspeakable, "Peace which passeth all understanding." By the way, observe, that neither words nor thoughts can reach spiritual excellencies; this is their sole privilege, that they can never be overvalued. Other things we may easily speak too highly of; but we can never invent too magnificent expressions concerning these; we cannot raise men's expectations too high concerning them. It will be said by the soul that comes to know these things by experience, "Behold, the half was not told me."

This Self-Resignation, I say, is the way to a holy

Rest ; to the Sabbath of the Heart. If thou wilt enjoy the true rest, and keep the inward sabbath, thou must not “do thine own ways, nor speak thine own words, nor find thine own pleasure.” Thou must “cease from thine own works.” All desire rest, peace, and pleasure ; but no where shall we find them but in yielding ourselves to GOD ; and that they are to be found in this way, our SAVIOUR hath told us ; “take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; and ye shall find rest to your souls.”

In taking CHRIST’S yoke upon us, in bearing his burden, in a sincere and entire obedience to his laws, in learning of Him, who was meek and lowly in heart, a pliable temper of spirit, we shall undoubtedly find the sweetest tranquillity of mind.

As the soul groweth in Resignation, it returns more to its rest ; it comes to be more, as it would be, by being more restored to its original constitution. Man was made after GOD’S image, and while his will was the same with the Divine Will, he dwelt in peace and joy : but when he would needs have a will of his own, divided from the Will of GOD, in falling from Resignation, he fell also from peace and rest, into trouble, fears, shame, and confusion.

The resigned soul enjoys religion in all the privileges of it ; it “tastes and sees how good the LORD is ;” and the more a man is conformed to the Will of GOD, the more he enjoys the “peaceable fruits of righteousness.”—“To him that overcometh,” (that overcometh his own will, those lusts that war against his soul,) “shall be given the hidden manna, and the white stone, with a new name in it, known only by him that receiveth it.”

Those who have the HOLY SPIRIT for their Guide, shall undoubtedly have Him for their Comforter. “The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.”

A man can have no peace that cherisheth his deadly enemy in his bosom ; it cannot be well with him in whom self-will abounds. Our own desires are the corrupt humours

that disturb the inward man ; and till these be purged out, there can be no health, no joy, no rest. Inordinate self-love breeds perpetual tumults in our breasts ; for having many appetites to be satisfied, so long as any of them are crossed, (which must be sometimes,) they must necessarily be very troublesome ; but a sweet composure of soul enters with Self-Resignation, and removes the cause of trouble and disquiet.

There is indeed pain in the first tearing off our wills from those things to which they cleaved. As it is said of the milch-kine that drew the Ark, their calves being shut up, that they went lowing all the way to *Bethshemesh* ; so it is with souls in their passage to Resignation, they then parting with what was fondly beloved and eagerly pursued by them. But they are no sooner arrived at this state, but the bitterness of the death of the old corrupt man is past, the hour of travail is over, and they remember no more the anguish, for joy that the new man, created after the image of GOD, is born in them. They have now broken through the difficulties of the way, are got out of the Wilderness, over *Jordan*, and their feet are on the Holy Land, the "land of righteousness and rest." The ways of religion are not, as before, grievous, but paths of peace and pleasantness.

Religion is now become their temper and life ; and sin is grievous and hard to them. It is not so troublesome to them to be patient as to be passionate, to forgive as to revenge ; humility is more easy than pride, sobriety than intemperance ; chastity and purity are more easy than lust and sensuality ; and the like may be said of the other graces and virtues. To the self-resigning soul, CHRIST'S commandments are so far from being grievous, that the inward voice of such a soul is, " I delight to do thy will, O my GOD."

And as the yoke of CHRIST'S Law, so the yoke of his Cross, is not grievous to the self-resigned. He saith, with his SAVIOUR, " The cup which my FATHER giveth me to drink, shall I not drink it ?" Let GOD feed him with



bitterness and wormwood, yet his meditation of him is sweet. He possesseth his soul with patience, and often also with joyfulness.

It is sweet to a Christian to find himself willing to be without that which he desired, and to suffer that which he was most averse to, when it appears to be the will of God that he should have such trials, and continue in such circumstances. How sweet is such a temper to the soul! It is far sweeter than the obtaining and enjoying that we desire.

But as for the unresigned, his impatience and self-will make his cup more bitter, and his cross far heavier than it is in itself. To such an one even the grasshopper is a burden, and a light affliction intolerable.

I may in the close of this add, that Self-Resignation is the way to peace among men, and that it is self-will which puts the world into confusion, and makes it so uncomfortable a place. Men that are passionately carried out to please themselves, are neither themselves at rest, nor suffer others so to be. These create differences, blow the coals of strife, and are ready to set on fire the course of nature, or the wheel of affairs; and from the abounding of such comes complaining in our streets. From this self-will it is, that we cannot sit down quietly under our own vine and fig-tree; and from hence it is that the world is become a great *Acelanda*, a field of blood, and a vale of tears.

## CHAP. VI.

*That SELF-RESIGNATION is the way to true Liberty of Spirit, and the contrary to perfect Slavery.*

VI. SELF-RESIGNATION is the way to true Liberty of Spirit. That which some call Liberty, namely, "to walk in the ways of their own heart, and in the sight of their eyes," is in truth perfect Slavery. The Apostle PETER

saith, that “of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought into bondage.” But he that lives to the pleasing of his own will, is overcome of pride, envy, covetousness, unruly passions, fleshly or spiritual lusts, and therefore is in bondage to them. Wicked men are described as “serving divers lusts and pleasures;”—not one, but many lords; and these such, that to be under the power of them is a most ignominious bondage. “But if the SON make us free, we shall be free indeed.”

Now He makes men free, by delivering them from their Self-will; by bringing them to will as His FATHER and He will; by uniting their wills with those things that are intrinsically and immutably holy, things which are in their own nature good; by enabling them to act conformably to everlasting and unchangeable righteousness and goodness. But those that would live as they list, in giving indulgence to the flesh, and fulfilling it in the lusts thereof, affect such a kind of freedom as GOD Himself hath not; and therefore that which is utterly unworthy of so excellent a name, and is indeed the vilest and most intolerable slavery.

The commands of sin are most tyrannical and unreasonable; never was poor *Israelite* so abused by *Egyptian* task-masters, as the soul of man is by sensual lusts; they command impetuously and cruelly, and one or other of them is continually putting him upon such employments, as are no less contrary to freedom than to the excellency and dignity of our nature. To be actuated by eager ambition, or unsatiable covetousness, or a vehement thirst after bodily pleasures,—what a miserable servitude must it be to the free and heaven-born spirit of man.

But there is no Liberty like the being free to good, and enlarged to spiritual obedience. He that is so hath an empire within him; he hath victory over the world, both the good and evil things of it; his mind is disentangled, and lord over those whom it before obeyed. SOLOMON expresseth the excellency of the freedom which this man

enjoyeth in these words, "He that ruleth his own spirit (or passions) is better than he who taketh a city."

To do good with readiness of mind, and without reluctance, is the most glorious Liberty; and this is the happy consequent of Self-Resignation.

For the farther clearing of this grand truth, know that **GOD** is not cruel in his restraint of our wills. He doth not, like **РЕНОВОАМ** and wicked rulers, affect to lay an unmerciful burden on men; nor doth He, as one ambitious to shew absolute sovereignty over us, give out his laws merely for his own will and pleasure. But this is an important truth, *That the business of Religion is wholly for the good of man.* Therein **GOD** seeks not any advantage to himself, for He is an infinitely perfect Being. "He is not worshipped with men's hands, as though He needed any thing. Our goodness extendeth not unto Him." In all his injunctions, He seeks only the interest of his creatures.

We cannot hurt **GOD** by our self-will and disobedience, but we shall thereby most certainly wrong our own souls; and knowing that this pleasing of our own will is no better than sweet poison, the Lover of our Souls warns us of the danger of so doing.

In short, **GOD** is most holy and wise, our Creator and Lord. As He is worthy and most fit to give us Law, so is that which He hath given us most holy, just, and good. He doth not command us any thing in that law, written in men's hearts, and more fully declared in Scripture, but what is absolutely better for us to observe than not; nor hath he forbidden us any thing, but what it is absolutely better for us that it should not be allowed us; and therefore it cannot be doubted but that the true Liberty consists in Resignation to the Divine Will.

This weighty truth is most clearly discerned by the self-resigning soul; for he never feels himself so free, or so much master of himself, as when engaged in **GOD**'s service. But the natural (that is the sensual) man cannot

receive this doctrine ; it is foolishness to him. He looks upon the laws of his Creator and Redeemer as too severe, and the entire observance of them as unnecessary and troublesome ; as if the wisdom of GOD did not better know the just bounds where man was to be restrained, and where he might be indulged, than he doth ; as if there were envy in the infinitely good GOD, and an evil eye towards us, in denying us any thing that is for our good.

It becomes us, therefore, to have our minds deeply affected with this truth, *That it cannot be Liberty to be loose from GOD* ; all He commands us being in its own nature unchangeably good, and all his laws such as it is most fit for us to be governed by. Both his commands and restraints proceed from his tender love and care of us.

Though souls as yet unexperienced in religion do not understand thus much at first, but are apt to think that GOD might have dealt less severely with them, yet they come to be of another mind, when they are grown up to maturity in CHRIST. Then they evidently see that all GOD commands or forbids was out of the most tender goodness ; and therefore what at first was grievous to them, becomes their choice. They “esteem (with DAVID) all GOD’s precepts concerning all things to be right.” They do not think the way too narrow that leads to life, nor wish it broader than it is. They do not wish the yoke or burden of CHRIST to be more easy or lighter than it is ; all they wish is, that they were more strong to bear it, to obey more cheerfully and constantly. They know that the only way to have their wills, is to resign them to GOD ; that it is for their own advantage, not GOD’s, that He calls for their hearts ; and that He requires them for this end, that He may fill them with true peace, rest, and heaven.

The great foundation of men’s backwardness to receive this doctrine, is their mistake of that which they call *themselves*, their generally valuing themselves by the body, and their reference to this present world ; by which means they are chiefly carried out in their affections towards the

things thereof, to the satisfying of its appetites, though never so prejudicial to their souls. The vulgar opinion is, that the Body is the Man; and consequently, that to love the body, is for a man to love himself, and that to "make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof," is to make provision for himself.

But the ancient and wisest Philosophers, as also the primitive Fathers, and great Lights of the Church, would not so much as allow the Body to be one half of the Man. Man is not that part which is seen: And the Holy Scripture puts *Soul* for the *Person* very frequently. Man is a creature that can think, reason, and understand; and that which doth this is the Soul only, and therefore this is the true Man. To do acts proper to a man is above the power of body or matter; and therefore the Body is called by those low names of an house or tabernacle, wherein the Soul dwelleth.

Upon this account, GOD forbids us to love our bodies better than our souls, or equally with them, and permits us not to satisfy the cravings of our bodily appetites, to the damage of our souls: and all the declarations of his will concerning us are for the great end of restoring to the soul its dominion over the body, and maintaining its dignity and superiority.

And when it is able so to do by cleaving to GOD, and willing as he wills, its slavery ceaseth, and it hath recovered true amplitude and liberty. "I will walk at liberty," saith the Psalmist, "for I seek thy precepts." ADAM, affecting to be loose from the will of GOD, thought to have gained more liberty, but he was sadly mistaken. DAVID would once be free to gratify the unwarrantable desires of his heart; but by this licentious and false freedom, he lost the true; he miserably sunk himself into a narrow and slavish spirit: and therefore he prays that God would "renew a right spirit within him," and that he would "stablish him with a free spirit."

## CHAP. VII.

*That SELF-RESIGNATION is the Sum of the Gospel-Commands : that all the Ordinances of the Gospel, and even Faith itself, are in order to this.*

VII. SELF-RESIGNATION is the Sum of the Gospel-Commands, the whole concernment of a Christian. If there be any other commandment, (as the Apostle saith of Love,) it is briefly comprehended in this, "Thou shalt resign thyself; thou shalt deny thine own will, and surrender it to the Divine Will." This is the great lesson in the school of CHRIST; "He (saith our SAVIOUR,) that will be my disciple, must deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

As PLATO would have it written upon his School-Door, *Let none enter that is unskilled in Geometry*; so this is the most proper motto for the School of CHRIST, "Let none enter here, that is not resolved on *Resignation*."—"LORD, what wouldest thou have me to do," is the first thing to be minded by all CHRIST'S disciples.

And as it is the *Alpha*, so is it the *Omega* also; it is both the first and the last lesson of Christianity. All is done when this is done; and till this be learned, all that we have done or learned signifies very little. When we have well gotten this, we are disciples indeed. It is not the saying, "LORD, LORD," but the "doing the will of GOD," that will give us that title.

It is observable, that in *Rom. xii.*, (a Chapter richly fraught with divine morality, and matters of Christian practice, as any in the Epistles,) the Apostle, describing and inculcating the most excellent instances of Practical Christianity, sets this first, as comprehensive of all the particular duties mentioned afterwards; namely, the giving up ourselves as a sacrifice and entire oblation to GOD; (ver. 1,) "I beseech you, by the mercies of GOD, that ye present your bodies" (that is, *yourselves*, bodies

being here put for the whole man, in allusion to the bodies of beasts offered in sacrifice under the Law,) “ a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” In this general exhortation (together with the words following, which are an illustration of it,) is summed up whatsoever is particularly mentioned in the following verses, relating to the practice of the several graces required of a Christian. From hence flow the particular duties hereafter expressed ; and they are all contained herein, as in the seed and root. Plainly thus : —If you give up yourselves an entire oblation to God, you will “ shew mercy with chearfulness,” “ love without dissimulation,” and be “ fervent in spirit ;” you will “ rejoice in hope,” be “ patient in tribulation,” and “ continue instant in prayer ;” you will “ distribute to the necessity of saints,” and be “ given to hospitality ;” you will “ not recompense evil with evil, but overcome evil with good ;” you will, “ as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men.”—And so for all other duties which concern a Christian Life.

So that the foundation of Christian practice is Self-Resignation, and from it may be expected every duty and act of a religious life.

There is nothing difficult in Christianity but this one thing : when our wills are once resigned, all other duties will flow as naturally from us, as streams from a fountain.

Let me add, that Prayer, and all the Ordinances of the Gospel, are in order to this ; the business of them all is to unite our wills inseparably to the Divine Will.

And even that great and high grace of Faith, is wholly subservient to the attainment of this Self-Resignation. The design of Faith in the Power of God, is to encourage us to go forth against those *Anakims*, those lusts that war against our souls ; that at last all may be destroyed in the mind of man, which is contrary to the will of God.

And as for Faith in the Mercy of God in Christ, as to the pardon of sin, the end of that is not merely that we may have a sense of our being forgiven, but it hath a

farther aim, namely, that we, being delivered from tormenting fears about the pardon of our sins, may love GOD and CHRIST more, that we may obey more, and that our obedience may be more free, ingenuous, natural, and constant, as that is which flows from love.

In a word, Faith looks at the Divine Promises, that thereby we may be partakers of the Divine Nature; for to this end were the Promises given, and to this end they are to be applied; and when we partake of the Divine Nature, our wills become one with the Divine Will.

## CHAP. VIII.

*That SELF-RESIGNATION is that wherein consisteth the Power of Godliness; and that, as it distinguisheth both from the insincere and from the weak Christian.*

VIII. THIS Self-Resignation (as is manifest by the last Chapter) is that wherein consisteth the Power of Godliness; it is the great proof and expression of it.

By the Power of Godliness, I do not only mean that which is opposed to an empty Form of it, but also Godliness in its Strength and Vigour, that which is powerful as well as sincere. To suffer no will to rule in us, but what is agreeable to GOD's will, to regulate all our inordinate desires, to cross their cravings, and to have the love of the world, and all self-love, overcome in us; these are the worthy achievements of those souls who are "strong in the LORD, and in the power of his might." These are the mighty acts of those Christians that "quit themselves like men." These are the great things of Religion.

1. This Self-Resignation is the only expression of that Power of Godliness that distinguishes from the false Christians. These are, both the Publicans and Sinners, and the Pharisees and Formal. To die to their own will, and, "through the SPIRIT, to mortify all the deeds of the



body," is Death indeed to these, and the King of Terrors. The separation of their hearts from the lusts to which they have cleaved, is like the separation of soul and body; and their spirits and lives declare, that (how much soever they may excel in some things) here they are sadly short.

And it is worthy of observation, that these people, being conscious of their deficiency herein, love to represent some outward observances in religion, as high and hard matters; some things that any carnal man may do, as well as they, as the great instances of the Power of Godliness.

The phrase is very common, both in their lips and books; but it is not to be found in their spirits and lives. They are not able to hide their being under the power of either sins of the flesh, or of the spirit. They cannot so artificially ape the Christian, as not to betray an inordinate affection to the world, either the profits, pleasures, or honours of it; and, in too many instances, a will unre-signed to His, whose followers they pretend to be. From what hath been discoursed, it therefore appears, that the Power of Godliness is but a mere sound, named, but not experienced by them. There is a Form of Godliness which may very well agree with the Power of Self-will. And men may discover a great zeal for this or that mode and opinion, and against some certain sins; they may profess a great love to CHRIST, faith in his merits, and zeal for his honour; they may speak in such a strain, as is wonderfully taking with the vulgar, and have notable gifts in discoursing about the things of GOD, and in praying to Him; they may strain at gnats, and be very scrupulous in some small and disputable things;—and yet be self-lovers, seeking and pleasing themselves, "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of GOD, covetous, envious, proud, high-minded, unrighteous, unfaithful, unmerciful, uncharitable:" And such as are any one of these, notwithstanding all their specious Form, are perfect strangers to the Power of Godliness.

Now I would offer that question of our SAVIOUR,

“What do ye more than others?” What excellent, what difficult thing, such as is worthy to be thought an instance of the Power of Godliness, do ye? You constantly, it may be, frequent the public worship of God, you hear God’s Word, and read the Bible and religious books frequently; you pray in your closets, and with your families; you do not run with the profane to their excess of riot: these are good things; (and woe be to them that despise or neglect external duties;) but if you do no more than this, what extraordinary thing do you? May not any man, void of the SPIRIT, do the same?

Thou canst pray without a form; thou canst dispute and discourse about matters of religion, and in such a way as is apt to affect others; thou canst deny thyself in some things, that will not disadvantage thy beloved sins; thou dost reform in some things, as to outward deportment: but in all this, “What dost thou more than others?” Shall the Power of Godliness be placed in those things, in which merely outward and notional Christians may be as ready and dexterous as others? Alas! what are all these, to that which the Scripture calls “cutting off the right hand, plucking out the right eye, and selling all for the pearl of great price?” What are these to the “mortifying of earthly members,” to the “crucifying of the body of sin,” to the “being dead to sin?” All which expressions are not to be looked upon as high metaphors, but as sober realities, and our necessary duty. And these are the things wherein that Power of Godliness shineth forth, which distinguisheth between those that are indeed alive, and those which have only a name to live.

Thou shewest that thou hast read and heard much, hast had a good education, hast kept good company, and art of good natural parts; but how hast thou prospered in Self-Resignation? Art thou more crucified to the world? Hast thou more power over thy spirit? Is the power of thy self-will more broken? Art thou more free and ingenuous in thy obedience? God looks at the heart, and temper of the mind. The difference between men

and men is mainly within, in the influences of religion upon their spirits, in its bettering their inward frame, and thereby mending the outward course of life.

2. Self-Resignation is likewise the only proof of the Power of Godliness, in the second sense; that (as was said) which distinguishes strong from weak Christians, those that are grown nearer to a perfect stature in CHRIST from others, who, though sincere, are but babes in Christ.

It is according as men excel, more or less, in Self-Resignation, that they are stronger or weaker Christians. This fully appears by what hath been already said.

Now who sees not, that there is exceeding much in this consideration also, to recommend this great duty. For weak Christians, though ever so well-meaning, bring not near so much honour to Religion, as the strong do; nay, often they much discredit it. But none can doubt that it is exceedingly more for the honour of our LORD and his Religion, to have his servants healthy and in good heart, than to have only a company of sickly, impotent persons to attend Him, such as are always complaining of difficulties, and to whom every service, that calls for self-denial, is grievous. It is much more for his honour, that his Church should be an Academy of persons strong and hardy, than that it should be a mere Hospital; that it should be an Orchard of well-grown and goodly trees, bringing forth much fruit, rather than a Nursery of tender plants and little shrubs. It is not for the honour of CHRIST, the Physician of Souls, that his patients should be always feeble, sore, and faint, and at best but between sick and well; but that they should grow up to a healing constitution, a good complexion, and a sound temper. "Herein is my FATHER glorified, that ye bear much fruit."

And though it be true, that GOD will not "despise the day of small things," and that CHRIST is far from insulting over the weaknesses of young Christians, where there is at the bottom simplicity, or the "good and honest heart;" yet He will not encourage or indulge them in a

lazy continuance in a state of weakness and childhood ; but is displeas'd with those, who, when for the time they might have been at " strong meat," are yet but at " milk ;" who, while they should be " fighting the good fight of faith," and " running with patience the race set before them," still lie on the ground, complaining and dishearten'd.

And I add also, that according to the Power of our Godliness, and our strength and growth in grace, we shall have more or less Assurance of the goodness of our state, and higher or lower degrees of Glory in the life to come.

## CHAP. IX.

*That SELF-RESIGNATION is the Establishment of GOD'S Kingdom in us here, and an Introduction to his Kingdom of Glory hereafter.*

IX. SELF-RESIGNATION is the Establishment of GOD'S Kingdom within us here, and an Introduction to his Kingdom of Glory hereafter.

1. IT is the Establishment of the Kingdom of GOD and CHRIST within us here. No sooner hath a man obtained, by the Grace of GOD, a power over his own spirit, but this glorious empire is set up in his soul. When our will is brought into compliance with the Divine Will, then is JESUS crown'd and enthroned within us.

DAVID, in his troubles, and in his triumphs, was a type of CHRIST. He met with many troubles and difficulties before he was established in his throne ; and the spiritual DAVID meets with many also. His difficulties arise altogether from the opposition of our wills : they rage and set themselves against the LORD, and against his Anointed, as the *Moabites, Philistines, Ammonites,* and House of *Saul*, did against DAVID. " We will not have CHRIST to reign over us," is the inward language of the

unresigned. But no sooner is self-will persuaded to yield, but the Kingdom of CHRIST is come into us. We may then cry, "Hallelujah, for the LORD GOD Omnipotent reigneth."

2. It is also a necessary Preparation and Introduction to the Kingdom of Glory: nay, it is the very essence of happiness, and, without Self-Resignation, there can be no such thing.

The happiness of glorified souls doth not consist in their being above the stars; for a soul not resigned to the will of GOD, would be as far from heaven, though mounted to such a height, as if it were in the lowest abyss.

A good Angel, while he converseth on earth, and is fulfilling the pleasure of GOD here below, is most happy, and carrieth his paradise and heaven always with him: and if such an Angel might be supposed to repine, and struggle with the will of GOD, and so not continue in Resignation, he would consequently not continue to be happy, though his residence were always in the mansions above.

This is a most fundamental maxim, and of great importance in Practical Religion,—that happiness consists in being transformed into the Divine Image, in partaking of the Divine Nature, in having one will with GOD, in being free to obedience; and that the unspeakable and glorious joy of blessed souls ariseth chiefly from that harmonious agreement which is between GOD and them.

Other notions of Heaven are *unspiritual* and carnal, and argue men not to have sufficiently tasted the powers of the world to come, but to savour too much the things of this earth; and, as Sr. AUSTIN doth fitly express it, "to desire to carry this world along with them when they leave it."

And because it is absolutely impossible that man should be in a happy state while he is otherwise affected than GOD is, thence it is that the infinite, sovereign, and perfect Goodness requires our conformity to Himself, and will

have a participation of his Holiness and Image the condition of attaining a participation of his Happiness, nor will dispense with purity of heart in order to the seeing of Him: for, without this, without the agreeableness of our wills to the Divine Will, we shall be wholly unqualified for GOD'S Kingdom, and incapable of the happiness thereof.

## CHAP. X.

### *That Self-Will is the Root of all Sin and Misery.*

X. SELF-WILL, on the contrary, is the root of all sin and misery. Every sin grows out of this root of uncurbed desire and self-will, which is a "root of bitterness," a "root that beareth gall and wormwood."

It may be fit here again to observe, that in that large enumeration of those evil dispositions which make times perilous, this is mentioned in the first place, "Men shall be lovers of their own selves." This is mentioned first, as being the root of all the rest.

It was well observed by ST. AUSTIN, "The Devil's City is founded in Self-love and Self-pleasing."—Where Self-Will is set up, there the soul is impetuously carried out to all iniquity with greediness.

The soul wherein Self-will is set up, saith with PHARAOH, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey him?" This is another "abomination standing in the holy place," erected in the soul which should be holy to the LORD. Self-Will is an inward and mysterious *Antichrist*, "opposing and exalting itself above GOD;" it "sits as GOD" in the heart, that inward temple of GOD, "shewing itself that it is GOD."

In the Scripture, the pleasing of our own will is frequently put in the general for all sin. Going on in sinful and wicked courses is expressed by "walking in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes." Men's

wickedness is often styled, “walking after the imaginations of their own heart.” The doing of sinful actions is called, “doing thine own ways, and finding thine own pleasure.” And sinning against God is called, “seeking after thine own heart, and thine own eyes.”

And as Self-Will is the root of all sin, so is it likewise the root of Misery, both here and hereafter.

It being the root of the former, must needs be so of the latter ; sin and misery being inseparable.

And as we shewed that the happiness of Heaven, as to the main, consists in being transformed into the Divine Image, or the having but one will with God, so the hellish state chiefly consists in a perfect contrariety to God, and the soul’s opposition to the Divine Will.

Therefore is the Devil a most miserable creature, because he is made up of Self-Will ; because the Will of God is most grievous to him ; he sets himself against it ; and goes about the world endeavouring to draw others from complying with it : And those with whom he prevails he makes as miserable as himself.

If there were no Self-Will there would be no Hell ; according to that of St. BERNARD, *Cesset voluntas propria, et infernus non erit* : “ *Let Self-Will cease, and there will be no Hell.*”

To suppose Self-Resignation in a damned and miserable soul, and Self-Will in a happy and glorified one, is to suppose the greatest contradictions and inconsistencies.

There can be nothing of Self-Resignation in Hell, and nothing of Self-Will in Heaven.

## CHAP. XI.

*That the Love of CHRIST, in dying for Sinners, makes the Duty of SELF-RESIGNATION highly reasonable.*

XI. THE LOVE of CHRIST, in dying for us, is most powerful to oblige Christians to Self-Resignation. CHRIST’S

giving Himself a sacrifice to God, in a way of Expiation, layeth the strongest engagement on Christians to offer up themselves as a sacrifice to Him, in a way of Resignation and Obedience.

This improvement the Apostle makes of this consideration, (2 *Cor.* v. 14, 15,) “The Love of CHRIST constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them.” What could be more express?—“Should not live unto themselves,” not please themselves, gratify their own will and lusts, but please CHRIST, and do his will in all things: “Not seek our own, but the things which are JESUS CHRIST’S;” not pursue our own ease, profit, and honour, but live to his glory, and prefer his interest before our own.

The like inferenc the same Apostle makes in 1 *Cor.* vi. 20: “Ye are bought with a price; (viz. with the precious blood of JESUS CHRIST;) therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” And what is the best way of glorifying God hath been shewed in the third Chapter.

The Death of CHRIST is the great manifestation of his Love. By the bitterness of his cup, by the depth of his sorrows and sufferings for us, we may make an estimate of the exceeding height of his affection. “Behold and see, was there any sorrow like unto his sorrow?”—and therefore, “was there any love like unto his love?” “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;” but he laid down his life for us when enemies.

Out of Love, he left the bosom of his FATHER, and humbled Himself to a mean and afflicted life upon earth. He “who was rich became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.” Such was the “grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.”

Out of Love, he died. He who was “LORD of all,”



“ the LORD of Glory,” “ the brightness of GOD’s Glory, and the express Image of his Person,” humbled himself to death, even the death of the Cross. And notwithstanding the pains and sorrows He felt were inexpressibly great, yet after his resurrection, He would have gone into the Garden again, gone over his agony again, and drunk again that bitter cup which made his soul so sorrowful,—He would have gone to *Calvary*, and been crucified again and again, had it been the will of his FATHER, for the redemption of man ; for He knew nothing but to be obedient and perfectly resigned to his will.

This is that “ Love of CHRIST which passeth knowledge ;” and can there be a more natural, a more powerful engagement to Self-Resignation ? Did CHRIST so freely give Himself for thee, and shouldst not thou most heartily give up thyself to Him ? Was all of CHRIST turned into a sacrifice for thee, and shouldst not thou make an entire oblation of thyself to Him ?

It is not only ingenuousness but justice, wholly to live to Him that died for thee, and bought thee with so dear a price. Did He suffer such inexpressible pains for us, and shall not we be willing to endure some pain, which at first will be, in denying the solicitations of our fleshly mind, and in going about to cross our own will ? Shall not we also patiently undergo any sorrows with which the Divine Wisdom sees meet to exercise us ? The worst that we can undergo in this world is far short of our SAVIOUR’s sufferings in our behalf.

## CHAP. XII.

*That the Example of CHRIST layeth a mighty Obligation on Christians to SELF-RESIGNATION.*

XII. IN the last place, the Example of our LORD JESUS CHRIST obligeth us very strongly to the practice of Self-Resignation. There never appeared in the world so perfect and lovely a pattern of the best Life, as the Life

of CHRIST. There never shined in the world such a light ; nor was He in any thing a more shining example to us than in Self-Resignation ; a signal instance whereof we have in that speech of his, in his agony in the Garden, “ FATHER, if Thou be willing, let this cup pass from Me ; nevertheless, not my will but thine be done.” How bitter this cup was,—how great, beyond compare, the last sufferings of CHRIST were, which began in the Garden of *Gethsemane*, and ended in his death on Mount *Calvary*,—may appear,

First, By those significant Words that occur in the story of his sufferings : “ Then he began,” not only “ to be very sorrowful,” but “ to be very heavy,” and “ to be sore amazed,” and that even to an Agony. And both in ST. MATTHEW and ST. MARK is that expression, “ My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.”

Secondly, By the great Weakness of his Body. In his agony “ He sweat as it were great drops of blood ;” an extraordinary, unnatural sweat, falling from him in thick, clammy drops, and this in a cold season too. And so weak was his body, that an Angel comes down from Heaven to strengthen Him. This was a visible manifestation of excessive heaviness, and of a great conflict within Him ; his mind so strangely affecting his body.

Thirdly, By his Prayers and Tears. He prayed thrice to this purpose, “ FATHER, if Thou be willing, let this cup pass from Me :” and the third time he prayed with more earnestness and vehemence. And when He prayed, “ He kneeled down,” saith ST. LUKE ; “ He fell on his face,” saith ST. MATTHEW ; “ He fell on the ground,” saith ST. MARK. He lay prostrate on the ground, and put Himself in a posture of the lowest humiliation. And besides, his “ prayers and supplications were offered up with strong cryings and tears.”

By all this, (and more might be added,) it appears that this cup was exceedingly bitter, and his sufferings and sorrows were beyond compare. And yet He was willing to undergo them ; though there was that in his human

natural will, which had a great antipathy against this cup, yet it was not overcome thereby; but the divine principle in him did bring this will into a due acquiescence, and by the power thereof He freely resigned it up to the will of his FATHER.

Now the consideration of his Example lays a great obligation upon us to follow Him, as in every other grace, so particularly in his Resignation. For the Gospel represents Him not only as a propitiatory Sacrifice, but also as an Example. The Gospel doth not only represent the Doctrine of CHRIST to be believed, but the Life of CHRIST to be followed. Nor shall any have Him for their Advocate and Propitiation, but such as are willing to have Him for their Example, and to imitate his humility, patience, purity, benignity, and self-resignation. None shall be benefited by his Death, that are unwilling to live his Life.

So far was it from being the intention of our SAVIOUR'S Death, to make void the necessity of our being conformed to his Life, that one of the great ends of his coming into the world, and clothing Himself with human nature, was that He might give us an Example of living, and be a Pattern for our imitation.

That God might the more plainly and familiarly teach us how to be like Himself, He was pleased to manifest Himself in flesh, to tabernacle among us, go in and out before us in our likeness, and become the most excellent pattern of holiness, that as He was, so we might be in this world.

And I heartily wish that Christians did more seriously consider what a transeendent privilege and advantage it is, that they have the spirit and life of CHRIST set before them in the New Testament, to shew what a spirit they should be of, and what a life they should live. This is such a favour as the People of God had not vouchsafed to them in the Old Testament. And therefore if our lives be not better than theirs, we do not live as becomes Christians; nor are we faithful to this and other advantages we have above them.

But I fear we are too insensible of this privilege, and that we do not think sufficiently of this, that He who “was in the form of GOD, took upon Him the form of a servant,” and was tempted in all points as we are, that we might have a complete pattern and guide in those varieties of conditions, difficulties, and temptations which we may meet with, and be instructed how to behave ourselves therein in a manner worthy of CHRIST.

This I know, that those Christians who are most sensible of this extraordinary privilege, who have high thoughts of the Life of CHRIST, which is the Life of GOD manifested in our flesh, who have it most in their eye, and are most affected and enamoured with it, are most visibly bettered, and differ eminently from others;—that there is a more excellent spirit in them;—that they are more pure, meek, and lowly, more benign and merciful, more resigned, and in every way more exemplary; more of GOD is in them of a truth; they are greater ornaments to the holy Religion they profess, and more qualified with such a disposition as renders them universally useful to mankind, than other Christians.

And thus we have seen how many powerful Considerations there are that demonstrate the exceeding Reasonableness of this Duty of Self-Resignation, and strongly oblige us to the practice of it.

# PART THE SECOND :

CONTAINING

## DIRECTIONS

FOR THE

### ATTAINMENT OF SELF-RESIGNATION.

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#### CHAP. I.

*That in order to the Resigning of our Wills entirely to the Will of GOD, we should frequently consider such Principles as are most available to the effectual subduing of them thereunto.*

FIRST, Let us labour to be fully possessed with the truth and power of such Principles as are available to the subduing of our Wills to the Will of GOD. Let us fix deeply in our minds these following truths :

1. That the Will we are to submit to is the Will of our great Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor.

As GOD is our Creator, He hath a right to be our absolute LORD ; and being so, we must needs acknowledge that we ought to will nothing, nor do any thing, but what He allows.

Again, it is the Will of our great Preserver and Benefactor, who hath, ever since we had a being, laid new obligations upon us, in the continued care of his gracious Providence, and by his renewed mercies. He is always

doing us good, and filling our hearts with food and gladness; being not at all niggardly in the comforts of this life, but bestowing them in such proportion as is able to content moderate desires, and being richly gracious in affording us suitable means for a better life. And therefore if we have the least sense of what is worthy and ingenuous, we shall acknowledge it to be most reasonable that we should do all we can to please Him, who hath done so infinitely much to please us. The Apostle well knew the power of this argument, when he said, "I beseech you, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Nor can there be a more powerful argument to persuade to patience, and to a quiet submission to Divine Providence; seeing that for one cross we have many hundred blessings. *Ubi mali gutta est, ibi immensum mare beneficiorum Dei*: "Where there is one Drop of Evil, there is a large Sea of Divine Favours and Benefits." And this men would confess, if they were as curious and careful to consider the many mercies they enjoy, as they are to consider the few evils they suffer;—if they were duly sensible that they are less than the least of the many mercies they possess, and that, in all their sufferings, God punisheth them less than their sins deserve. Holy JOB thought it reasonable thus to argue, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" What, is God bound to be always heaping favours upon us? Must we be fed with nothing but marrow and fatness? If God gives us sometimes to taste of the bitter, to drink of the waters of *Marah*, shall we murmur, and think much of it? Far be it from us so to do.

2. The Will we are to submit to is the Will of the infinitely perfect Being, who is most holy, good, wise, and powerful: and accordingly his Will is most holy, good, wise, and perfect, and therefore infinitely more worthy to be followed than our own, which is vain and perverse, and hath many foolish and hurtful desires.

If a child be left to his own will, it would be his ruin ; and it would be much more pernicious to us not to be guided, governed, and restrained by the Will of God.

And GOD is not only to be considered as the great Sovereign of the world, but also as the wise Physician of it, who hath the care of mankind, as of sick persons ; this world being a great Hospital, a place for diseased and infected souls, and afflictions are his physic, which He prescribes and applies according to the several cases of his patients. The sick soul is not for this kind of physic, but would rather be pleased and gratified ; but GOD's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his will as ours. He will have his patients submit to his method of cure ; herein He is wise and good also, for it is an act of great mercy in Him to do thus. It would be an act of cruelty in the Physician to comply with his patient's humour, and suffer his will to prevail. And there is no true Christian, however true it is that " chastening is not joyous but grievous" to him for a time, but finds afterwards that " it yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness," and that " it is good for him to have been afflicted."

I add, that it is the Will of GOD most powerful, as well as most holy and wise, that we are to submit to ; and this teaches us how fruitless an attempt it is to resist his Will. " Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker ; let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth." So that if we will not be persuaded to a compliance with the Will of GOD, either from the consideration of his holiness, wisdom, or goodness, let us dread the terrible effects of his Power. How many instances of *Irresignation* and stubborn Self-Will are to be found in Scripture, whom GOD made to know that it is impossible to oppose his Will and prosper.

3. The Will to which we are to be resigned, commands such things as are in their own nature good, and carry their own reason in them. The goodness and reasonableness of all GOD's primary commands, and our obligation to them, doth not merely depend upon his sovereign

authority. Though they are to be observed because God commands them, yet He doth not command them only *pro imperio*, to shew absolute sovereignty over us, but because they are essentially good, most agreeable to his holy nature, and greatly for our advantage.

“ This is the will of God, even our sanctification,”  
 1 *Thess.* iv. 3. This is the sum of all He wills concerning us ; and judge in yourselves, is not a life of chastity better than that of uncleanness? Are not temperance and sobriety better than surfeiting and drunkenness? Are not humility and meekness more lovely and commendable than pride and insolence? Are not justice, uprightness, and truth, better than injustice, falsehood, and oppression? Are not charity and pity better than hatred, cruelty, and hard-heartedness? Is it not more reasonable to love God above all, than to prefer any thing before Him, He being the highest Good, our infinitely best Friend and Father, from whom are ourselves and all we enjoy? Nay, whose reason doth not tell him, that as the former are most amiable, and most becoming human nature, so the latter are as hateful, and unworthy of us?

Is it not best, beyond all comparison, to love the soul which is spiritual and immortal, more than the body which is corruptible, and whose welfare depends upon the well-being of the soul? Is it not most becoming us to repent, to be sensible of our unworthy behaviour towards God, to be grieved that we have offended the Father of Mercies, and to amend our ways, as ever we would expect his favour, and those mercies which none but He can bestow upon us? And is not this better than to continue in disobedience, and to harden our necks against God, and not to be affected with any ingenuous sense of our carriage towards Him? So that we see repentance is most agreeable to the condition of our state here ; and so is also patient submission to the Will of God in his disposals of us, both in respect of his goodness and power ; nor can any thing more become us, for nothing is



more manifestly unreasonable than to repine at any of the Divine Providences.

And as for the other things which God commands, those which are our duty only by positive institution, as they are but very few under the Gospel, so are they only commanded, in order that they may better secure the weightier matters of the Law, the primary commands, and fit us for a mindful observance of them. And as He, who is infinitely wise and good, knows best what is fittest to be required of us, in order to so great an end, it cannot but be highly unreasonable and unworthy, not to comply cheerfully with his Will declared in these, as well as in the other commands.

4. The Resignation of our Wills to the Will of God hath the promise of a reward infinitely above the labour of any services He requires of us, and the pain of any sufferings He inflicts upon us. Our services are due to God, as we are his creatures; and therefore it would be our duty to yield ourselves to his Will, without the consideration of any future reward. And besides, we have more than our services are worth, and our sufferings amount unto. We are less than the least of the multitude of mercies we daily receive. And the very comforts which arise from the sense of doing our duty, are a great reward. But that God should confer such a reward upon such poor, mean services,—a reward so rich and glorious, beyond expression and apprehension,—what a consideration is this! What we do or suffer, in compliance with the Will of God, is far from being above what the heart can conceive, or the tongue express: but the reward which God will bestow for this doing and suffering, is such as is “unspeakable and full of glory,” and “passeth all understanding.”—“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.”

Again: our services and sufferings are but for this life, which is “but as a vapour, that appeareth for a little

time, and then vanisheth away:" but GOD will reward them with an "exceeding great and eternal weight of glory." So that well might the Apostle "reckon the sufferings of this present time," (and consequently the services also,) "not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Thou art not far from thy journey's end; thou hast but a little time to testify thy love to GOD here; and he hath an eternity to reward thee in; which therefore should encourage our patience to persevere to the end. Especially when we consider, that though this reward be future, yet it is near; at least, part of it, and a considerable part too. Though there will be a further completion of it, at the "great day" of recompence, yet the souls of the faithful may expect to receive a very considerable part of "the recompence of reward" before that day.

And even in this life they have some earnest of that glorious reward, some foretastes of the pleasures of GOD's right hand, some bunches of the grapes that grow in the heavenly *Canaan*. And the more Christians endeavour to live the life of Heaven, the more heavenly their affections and conversations are here, the more shall they have *here* of heavenly enjoyments. And in these respects the Scripture speaks of those that are truly religious, even whilst they are in this life, that they "have eternal life," and that they "sit with CHRIST in heavenly places."

Lastly, This Resignation to the Will of GOD is also highly conducive to our temporal good: and that, not only because "it hath the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that to come," but because it tends in its own nature hereunto. I will briefly shew that it makes for our advantage, as to our outward Estate, as to our Ease and Quiet, and as to our Health and Strength.

(1.) As to outward Estate. This it doth, 1. As it engages men against Pride, and to Humility and Modesty. By this means are avoided vast and needless expenses about dressing, building, feasting, and a great number of pompous vanities; and also the great charges which men

of ambitious spirits are at, for the procuring of dignities and high places, and the supporting of their grandeur, that they may be the more revered and admired. 2. As it engageth to Temperance and Sobriety, against all Sensuality, and a luxurious life; and so, expensive diversions and revellings, incontinence, and "making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof," which consume men's estates, and bring not a few to a morsel of bread, are all avoided. The desires of temperance are cheap, easy, and soon satisfied. 3. As it engages to Meekness, in opposition to Wrath and Revenge: and by this means, quarrels and expensive law-suits are prevented. It commonly costs men more to revenge injuries than to bear them. 4. As it engages to Industry in lawful callings, in opposition to Sloth, which, (as SOLOMON saith,) "shall clothe a man with rags; whereas the hand of the diligent maketh rich."

(2.) It makes for our Ease and Quiet in the world. And this, 1. As it engageth to Meekness, which, as it is a grace most lovely in itself, so it makes those that are endued with it lovely and acceptable to others. 2. As it engageth to Mercifulness, both in giving and forgiving. None but a monster, and one prodigiously wicked, will put affronts upon, and procure trouble to, those that are merciful in these two respects. 3. As it engageth to Justice and Truth, in giving to every one his due, in not defrauding or defaming any; all which plainly tend to the procuring of Peace.

(3.) It makes for the Health and Strength of our bodies, as well as our souls. This it doth, 1. As it engageth to Sobriety against Excess, which both begets and feeds diseases. Intemperance weakens both body and mind, shortens life, and makes it painful and uncomfortable while it lasts. 2. As it engageth against heart-tearing cares, and such anxious solitudes as waste natural strength, and prey upon the spirits. 3. As it engages against all inordinate affections. These make men lean and sick, as *Annon's* towards *Tamar* made

him. 4. As it begets Tranquillity of spirit, which hath a natural efficacy to the preservation of health. As “a broken spirit drieth the bones,” so “a cheerful heart doth good like a medicine,” *Prov.* xvii. 22. 5. As it engageth to honest Labour in opposition to a soft and delicate life. Exercise hath a natural tendency to make men strong and healthful.

Now, then, would we be in all things resigned to the Will of God, let us observe this first Direction; and labour after a due sense of the truth of the foregoing considerations, which are most powerful arguments to persuade to this duty.

## CHAP. II.

*That humble and fervent Prayer is a necessary and effectual means to the attainment of SELF-RESIGNATION.*

II. IN the second place, being humbled in a deep sense of thy *Irresignation* and disobedience, beg of God this holy temper of soul.

Humble Prayer is one of the greatest helps to the obtaining of any good thing from God. Let us then carefully apply ourselves to Him for this great blessing, which none but Himself can give; and He who is our “Father in heaven,” the “Father of mercies,” will give this, and all good things, to them that ask Him.

“If any of you lack Wisdom (saith St. JAMES,) let him ask it of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” Now this Resignation of our Wills to God is the highest Wisdom, and that particularly meant in the Text, as appears by the foregoing verses.

But then our Prayers must be with Fervency and in Faith.

First, They must be *fervent*. “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much;” not cold and languid desires, or faint wishes.

But we are not to judge of the true fervency of prayer by the heat of the fancy, but by the ardency of our affections. "My heart (saith DAVID) רָחַשׁ boils or bubbles forth a good matter." We are to judge thereof by the earnestness of our desires, not by any thing that is obvious to sense, not by the loudness or length of prayer, though it were as long as that prayer of *Baal's* Priests, "from morning to noon," or as that prayer, among the Papists, of Forty Hours, by which they amuse the weak.

There may be as much, yea more, of the Spirit of Prayer, when there are no Words at all. There are times when the SPIRIT maketh intercession with groanings that cannot be uttered,—affections too quick and strong for expressions, and which would cool if put into words. Thus HANNAH spake in her heart to GOD; her voice was not heard, but she poured out her soul before the LORD; and GOD heard, "who knoweth the secrets of the heart, and the mind of the SPIRIT." These inward breathings of the soul are ever very precious to GOD, and find favour with Him.

When a soul prayeth out of a deep sense and feeling of its wants, and is full of affectionate breathings after GOD, and hath the most inflamed desires after spiritual things, this is true praying with fervency, and "in the HOLY GHOST." And the silence of the soul is louder, and much sooner reacheth the ears of the ALMIGHTY, than the greatest loudness and volubility of speech.

If we would therefore obtain this best of all blessings, let us pray for it with the greatest ardour of affection. We may be assured that GOD will never cast away so rich a pearl as this upon those that declare themselves insensible of its worth, by asking it in a cold and formal manner.

And the more to excite and quicken our desires after it, let us know, that if GOD accepts our prayers, and gives us this holy temper, he doth infinitely more for us than what HEROD promised to the daughter of HERODIAS. If He gives thee this empire over thine own will, He

bestows that on thee which incomparably excels the greatest earthly kingdom. The Kingdom of God is then within us here, and we are thereby made meet for his Kingdom of Glory hereafter. And who that duly considers this, can be flat and heavy in his prayers for this grace ?

Secondly, Our Prayers must be also in Faith. Thus, St. JAMES tells us, we must ask this spiritual Wisdom, in the following verse : “ But let him ask in Faith, nothing wavering.” That is, we must believe that as God is able, so He is as willing and ready, to give us what we ask, “ if we ask according to his Will,” as St. JOHN qualifies it, (1 *John*. v. 14.) And it is according to his Will, and pleaseth Him highly, that we ask spiritual Wisdom.

This Faith is the ground of all address to God. “ He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” And this He will assuredly be in his own time, which is always the best. God may sometimes make as if He did not hear, that we may seek him more diligently, and pray more fervently, that he may prove our patience and just valuation of his blessings, and that we may be the more thankful for them when we have them, prize them the more, and improve them the better ; but if we persevere in earnest and believing Prayer, we shall undoubtedly in due time obtain. And as for such spiritual good things as are necessary to salvation, we are to pray for them with such a Faith as to assure ourselves that God will give them, if we ask aright ; his most gracious nature and promises assuring us, that He cannot deny them to such askers.

### CHAP. III.

*That in order to our being entirely resigned to the Divine Will, we must be willing, pati DEUM, “ to suffer God,” and abide the Power of his SPIRIT working in us.*

III. HAVING poured out thy soul before God in humble and earnest Prayer, thou must be willing, *pati DEUM*, “ to

suffer GOD," and abide the Power of his SPIRIT working in thee.

To this purpose there is an observable passage in St. AUSTIN on *Psal. cii. 3, Magni languores, sed major medicus, &c.* "Be the maladies of thy soul ever so great, yet there is a Physician that is greater, and who never fails to cure, for to an all-powerful Physician nothing is incurable; only thou must patiently suffer thyself to be cured. Do not thrust back his hand, when he begins to touch thy sores, and search thy soul's wounds. He well knows what He is doing; do not hinder and resist, when it begins to pain; be not so delicate and tender to thine own hurt, but with a quiet patience bear for a while the anguish, when He cuts and lances, considering that the present pain makes way for thy future health and soundness."

Let not CHRIST and his HOLY SPIRIT have cause to say of thee, (as it was said of *Babylon*,) "We would have healed him, but he would not be healed."

*Ut corpus redimas, ferrum patieris et ignes.*

For the health and safety of the Body, (in case of a gangrene or other dangerous disease,) how do men endure a tedious course of physic and much torment?

*Ut valeas animo, quicquam tolerare negabis?*

And for the health of thy Soul, wilt thou not endure the pain of being cured of its diseases, which, if let alone, will make thee eternally miserable?

Let us, therefore, as ever we would obtain this divine temper of Self-Resignation, take heed of quenching the SPIRIT, of resisting the HOLY GHOST, as the *Jews* did, and paid dear for it. Take we heed of stifling any of his convictions, and rejecting his motions. Let us not seek to shift off serious and awakening thoughts, as the usual practice of sinners is, by the vain entertainments and pleasures of the world, nor endeavour to drown the voice

of conscience, which is the voice of God, and ought to be heard with a reverent regard.

If we would have CHRIST sit as a purifier and refiner in the midst of us, to purge us as gold and silver, that we may offer ourselves unto the LORD an offering in righteousness, we must "abide the day of his coming."

But, alas ! there are but few of the Christian Profession who are thus patient, and will endure the refining and purifying work of the SPIRIT. Most men would, with SIMON MAGUS, have the HOLY GHOST in his Gifts, such as may procure them admiration ; but few would have the "Renewing of the HOLY GHOST," and the "Sanctification of the SPIRIT unto obedience." Many would be glad to have the SPIRIT to sit as a Refiner upon their Lips, that they may be able to speak spiritually ; but few are willing that He should sit as a Refiner in their Hearts, to melt and consume their self-will, and purge out all secret inclinations to sin. Many have learned, parrot-like, to talk of the SPIRIT, and pretend greatly to things spiritual, who yet declare by their lives that they are altogether sensual, "having not the SPIRIT."

It hath been a great and common fault, which hath been the occasion of a world of mischief to souls, that men have been valued as spiritual by the Gifts of the SPIRIT, rather than by the Graces and Fruits of the SPIRIT.

But to return : Would we have our wills fully resigned to the Will of God, let us above all things beware of grieving His HOLY SPIRIT. When CHRIST "stands at the door and knocks," and waits to be gracious, let us not refuse to open to him, nor seem not to hear him ; but say with SAMUEL, "Speak, LORD, for thy servant heareth."

#### CHAP. IV.

*That we are not only to suffer the SPIRIT to work in us, but also to work with him in heartily opposing our own Desires.*

IV. We must not be merely passive, and only suffer the HOLY SPIRIT to work in us ; but we must likewise work



with Him in vigorously resisting our own Desires. We must put on heroical resolutions, stoutly to oppose the impetuous desires of our sensitive powers. "It is GOD that worketh in us both to will and to do;" but yet we must also "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling." We must "strive according to his working which worketh in us mightily." We must be faithful to that lesser light and strength which is in us, and we shall have more. And here take these following Directions.

1. Resist the first motions of inordinate Appetites. "Quench sinful desire when it doth begin to smoke," (as JUSTIN MARTYR phraseth it,) before it bursteth out into a flame; for then it will be too hard to master. Think not to ease thyself by giving some satisfaction to thy lusts; for by this means they will solicit thee the more; and the yielding to commit a sin leaves a greater propensity to sin again. Thou shalt best silence the importunities of a temptation, by not listening in the least to them. As one act of mortification prepares us for, and enables us to do, another; so on the contrary, by once yielding to corrupt nature, thou art made less able to resist another time.

2. Those sins to which, either through Constitution or Custom, thou hast the strongest inclination, thou must shew more than ordinary severity against. It is not safe to dispute or argue with temptations to such sins. It was a good observation of ARISTOTLE, that "some passions are not to be vanquished by Reason, but by Force;"—not so much by arguments, as by a holy violence and resolution.

And there is not more need of taking this course against any temptations, than those that solicit to the sin of Uncleanness. *Duriora sunt prœlia castitatis*, saith ST. CYPRIAN: "*The battles of Chastity are more sharp than any other.*"

The fore-mentioned Philosopher, observing that "Man is a creature very apt to be ensnared by Pleasures," adviseth, that for the attainment of virtue, (the Middle between two Extremes,) we should shun that Extreme

most, which pretends to most Pleasure. This is good advice for the attainment of Chastity, and for overcoming temptations to Uncleaness, which of all other sins doth promise the most pleasure, that we should not trust ourselves to enter into the least parley with them, but presently fly from them, by diverting ourselves to other thoughts, and forcing our minds to other objects.

3. We ought to shun whatsoever may probably be an Occasion of our being tempted, especially to such sins as we are most inclined to. Art thou prone to excess, either in meat or drink? Art thou apt suddenly to be inflamed with passion? Art thou of a sensual temper, or the like? Avoid, as much as thou canst, such Places, Company, and Objects, as may be incentives to those appetites. Thus, in order to avoid uncleaness, the Wise Man adviseth, “not to come near the house of the whorish woman;” and, for the prevention of drunkenness, not so much as to “look upon wine when it is red, and giveth its colour in the glass.”

4. It is of good use in the spiritual warfare, with humble dependence on God for the aids of his grace, to engage ourselves in solemn Vows against those sins, especially, which have gotten most dominion over us. I cannot commend the obliging of ourselves by Vows to certain tasks, (as the manner of some is,) which have not an immediate tendency to the mortifying of sin, and the advancement of holiness;—but to vow against things unquestionably evil, and to the use of certain means that are necessary to the destruction of the Body of Sin, and that, first, for a shorter space of time, and afterwards, for a longer; and so, that time being expired, to renew these Vows, till we be well grounded in holiness, till religion become the temper and constitution of our souls, the joy of our hearts, and our deliberate choice and settled practice, till we have gotten the complete mastery over those sinful desires, by which we have been most carried away captive;—I say, to vow, with such cautions, is found by experience to be of great advantage.

And when we have thus vowed, we should frequently reflect upon what we have done ; and especially when we are solicited by the Tempter within or without to sin, let us then say with holy DAVID, “ Thy vows are upon me, O GOD : I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.”—Neither hopes nor fears, neither the terrors nor allurements of the world, shall dissuade me from a faithful obedience to them.

Vows prudently managed are of great use to secure us to Religion ; and this is the only end of them. “ To vow,” saith CAJETAN, “ is nothing else but to fix the mind, and make it immovable, that it may not start back from the practice of Religion.”

And as for those that are shy, thus to engage themselves to GOD, (which I fear in most proceeds from a too dear affection to some sin,) let them know that GOD’S Vows are already upon them ; they are under the obligation of the Baptismal Vow, “ to renounce the Devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, the covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so as not to follow nor be led by them.” So much is implied in being baptized in, or into, the Name of the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST.

And besides, those that have received the LORD’S SUPPER, have thereby renewed their Vow in BAPTISM. In this other Sacrament we make a profession, that “ we offer and present unto GOD ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a holy and lively sacrifice to Him ;” than which there is nothing more due or reasonable, considering the great love of GOD in giving his SON for us, the great love of our SAVIOUR CHRIST in his death and sufferings, represented in this Sacrament, and the great blessings procured for us by the Blood of that spotless Lamb. So that all of us have already “ bound our souls with a bond,” (as to vow is described, *Numb. xxx.*;) being under the engagement of either one or both of these Sacramental Vows ; and therefore in exhorting you to oblige yourselves by solemn Vows to the duties of

Religion, I do not advise you to a new thing, but only to repeat what you have already done ; and if you intend to stand to the Vows you have made, what should deter you from reiterating them, whilst you have need of them.

But always remember, when you vow to the LORD, to do it with a trust and faith in his all-sufficient Grace, and with a distrust of your own ability to perform your Vows. And when at any time you have failed in the performance of them, be deeply humbled before GOD ; renew your engagements ; be more watchful over yourselves ; and let your falls make you more narrowly look to your feet for the time to come.

5. FASTING is another means to be used for the mortification of the Body of Sin. It is of great consequence, and necessary to the health of the inward man, to keep under the body, to humble and bring it into due subjection.

RELIGIOUS FASTING is of great use to the subduing of the body to the spirit, and to the starving of corruptions, by cutting off their provision ; as the ungovernable beast is made tame by taking away his provender. And there are a sort of Devils that will not go out without Fasting and Prayer, and other means ; but it is most especially of force for the casting out of the *Unclean* Devil : and according as we find that we stand in more or less need of this remedy, we should oftener or seldomer make use of it.

## CHAP. V.

### *Of the great Efficacy of Faith in GOD's Power and Goodness.*

V. The next Direction I shall give, in order to subdue our Wills to the Will of GOD, is that of our SAVIOUR, "Have Faith in GOD : " Have faith in his Power and Goodness. This will add life to our prayers ; this will animate all our endeavours.

Take heed of doubting whether the LORD'S hand be not shortened, that it cannot save ; whether his ear be not heavy, that it cannot hear, or his bowels shut up, that He is not ready to help.

Take heed of questioning, whether thine own will and selfish desires be not stronger than can be subdued ; of entertaining suspicious thoughts, that, after all thy endeavours to win the spiritual *Canaan*, there will be no arriving at that land of rest, but that at last thou shalt die in the wilderness ; that there is no hope, or but little, of overcoming the giant-like mind, (as the expression is in *Ecclesiasticus* xxiii. 4,) and those sons of *Anak*, that thou findest vigorous and strong in thee. For by this thine Unbelief, or Weakness of Faith, thou greatly dishonourest GOD, who is able and willing to save the soul that trusteth in Him ; and by this means will the chariot-wheels of thy soul be taken off ; thou wilt extremely discourage thyself, and blunt the edge of those weapons wherewith thou art to encounter thy spiritual enemies.

If thou art sincere and hearty in imploring the aids of GOD'S SPIRIT, and hast Faith to be healed, thou shalt undoubtedly " see the salvation of the LORD." He " will teach thine hands to war, and thy fingers to fight : " He " will gird thee with strength ; " and thou shalt be " more than conqueror through CHRIST that loved thee."

Though thou hast " no might against that great company that cometh against thee, " " against flesh and blood, principalities and powers, " yet, if thou " waitest on the LORD, " and art " of good courage, he will strengthen thine heart. " He will " strengthen thee with strength in thy soul, " and " through Him thou shalt do valiantly, and tread down thine enemies. "—" He that is in thee " will be " greater than they that are in the world, " namely, " the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life."

Take heed, therefore, of all such reasonings and principles as tend to beget a despondency of spirit ; but " lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees. " To the soul that believes, all things are possible. Let

Faith say unto any mountain of difficulty, "Be thou removed," and it shall be done. "Who art thou, O great Mountain?" Before this blessed grace, and in the exercise of it, thou shalt become a plain. Thy self-will and lusts are therefore strong, because thy Faith is weak. But if thou wert "strong in the LORD, and in the power of his might," if thou didst "resist, steadfast in the faith," thou shouldst see thine adversaries flee before thee. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—"Above all, take the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the Wicked."

Glorious things are spoken of thee, O Faith! Who can recount the mighty acts of those holy souls, who have strongly confided in the gracious Power of GOD in CHRIST JESUS for the subduing of sin, as well as in GOD'S Mercy and CHRIST'S Merits for the pardon of it. These, through this Faith, have "subdued kingdoms," even the kingdom of divers lusts and pleasures, and the kingdom of the Prince of this World, to which they were once subject. Through Faith they have "wrought righteousness," even the righteousness of GOD, far excelling that outward, slight, and partial righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. Through Faith they have "stopped the mouths of lions," the impetuous and ravning solicitations of their own will. Through Faith they have "quenched the violence of fire," (or the lusts of passion, malice, and uncleanness, which burned like fire within them,) "out of weakness were made strong, and turned to flight the armies of the Aliens."

Now there are many exceeding great and precious Promises, scattered through the Scriptures, which are of sovereign force for the encouragement of our faith and hope in GOD, and for strengthening us against his and our enemies. But there is abundantly enough in that one passage, *Luke xi. 13*, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more

shall your heavenly FATHER give the HOLY SPIRIT to them that ask Him." What could our SAVIOUR have spoken more plainly and fully for our encouragement to a dependence on GOD for grace and spiritual strength, and to a quiet expectation of assistance from Him?

This Promise concerned not only those that heard CHRIST preach to them from the Mount, but all his followers, all that shall believe on his name to the end of the world. It is said,—*to them that ask Him*,—without any limitation either to a certain age, people, or nation; and therefore we may be as much comforted from these words, as if we had been in the number of those who heard our SAVIOUR preach that best of sermons: for, as there is the same need of the HOLY SPIRIT for us as there was for them, so there is now, and ever will be, the same benignity in GOD, the same good-will and love to men, that there was then and in former ages. He is "without variableness or shadow of turning; the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

But this word of promise is so rich and precious, that it deserves a more particular consideration.

*If ye that are evil know how to give good gifts unto your Children—*] Earthly Parents are too commonly envious, niggardly, and cruel to others, being all for themselves, and not caring for the good of others; yet they cannot find in their hearts, when their *Children* ask, to withhold from them; they will be free and bountiful to *them*: And such is their affection to their children, that they will not give them any thing they know to be hurtful; they will not give them stones for bread, a serpent for a fish, or a scorpion for an egg.

—*How much more shall your heavenly Father—*] He who, being good, cannot but do good; He who is "the Father of Mercies," the GOD of Love and Goodness, and "Love" itself; He who best knows what is good, and is best able to bestow it; He who is as willing to do us good as He is able, and as able as willing, (which no

earthly parent is,) He in whom is nothing of envy towards others, and who hath in himself all fulness, and is infinite, almighty, and all-sufficient.

—Give the HOLY SPIRIT to them that ask Him, saith one Evangelist, and give good things, saith another.] The greatest good that Omnipotence itself, and infinite Goodness, can do for us, is the giving the HOLY SPIRIT, and with Him spiritual light to know, and spiritual strength to do his will, and to subdue our own wills, and whatsoever is contrary to Him in us. To be endowed with the HOLY SPIRIT doth import an accession both of light and strength, knowledge and power.

So that our SAVIOUR argues from the less to the greater, from the drop of goodness and benignity in creatures, and those sinful creatures too, to that fountain-fulness which is in GOD. What good soever children may expect from their parents, that, and infinitely more, may GOD's children expect from Him. And it is impossible to conceive that the infinitely good GOD will be more wanting to his children's souls, than are evil men to their children's bodies.

All those affections and tenderesses which GOD hath implanted in all parents toward their offspring, are but a drop to that ocean of love and mercy that is in Himself; are but a representation of those inconceivable riches of goodness, and bowels of compassion, which are in Him. *Nullus Pater tam Pater*; “No Father is so fatherly, so much a Father, as GOD is,” said TERTULLIAN. CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS styles Him, out of ORPHEUS, thus, “The tenderesses of both a Father and Mother are in GOD.”—“Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget;” (it is possible, but very prodigious;) “yet will not I forget,” saith GOD.

GOD doth not take empty titles to himself, but fills up to the utmost whatsoever relation He is set forth by in the Holy Scriptures. Whatsoever the wisest, most careful,



and most loving Parents, are to theirs, GOD is such, and incomparably more, to his children.

If the affections of ten thousand Parents were in one Father or Mother, how secure would the child be of their tender care; but all these, in one person, would be far short of GOD's affection, who is the spring of all the fatherly tenderness which is diffused in the hearts of so many millions of Fathers as are in the world.

Let me add this, that the Promise of the SPIRIT is the Great Promise of the Gospel, the great Privilege of the Evangelical Dispensation or New Covenant. Greater aids and supplies of grace, for the subduing of our corruptions, we are encouraged to hope for under the Gospel. The Apostle saith, (*Tit. iii. 6.*) that "the HOLY GHOST is shed on us *abundantly*, through JESUS CHRIST our SAVIOUR."

If therefore we are not stronger, if we are not better, it is because we resist, or at least neglect, the HOLY SPIRIT. It is because we have not Faith in GOD, not because He is unwilling to assist us. For what saith ST. JAMES; "The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy; but GOD giveth more grace:" He gives grace in such a measure as to overpower that spirit which lusteth in us. So that, for that "abundance of wickedness," (*Jam. i. 21.*) there is "an abundance of grace," (*Rom. v. 15.*) which the believing soul receiveth by JESUS CHRIST. "For it pleased the FATHER, that in Him should all fulness dwell; that "of his fulness" all might "receive even grace for grace." And this "grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by JESUS CHRIST our LORD."

Thus you see what abundant encouragement there is to have Faith in GOD for the supplies of his Grace and SPIRIT, and what reason we have to take heed of Unbelief, if ever we would master our sinful affections, and bring our wills into compliance with the Will of GOD.

And there is a double Unbelief, of which we are to beware, as very hurtful to our souls.

*First*, An Unbelief in relation to the *Mercy* of GOD for the Pardon of Sin.

*Secondly*, An Unbelief in relation to the *Power* and *Goodness* of GOD, for the Subduing of Sin.

Now it is much to be lamented, that whereas the former sort of Unbelief is much taken notice of, and condemned in sermons and books, the latter is but little mentioned. But if the evil of this were no less clearly and powerfully represented, than the evil of the other, and men were as effectually warned to beware of this as of that, it would, through the blessing of GOD, be an excellent means to make more sincere, strong, and healthy Christians: Whereas, alas! the spirits and lives of the generality of professors do now too plainly declare, that they had rather have sin pardoned than subdued;—that they had rather sin should not be imputed to them, than destroyed in them.

But the complete Faith is this, in opposition to that twofold Unbelief:

*First*, To believe that CHRIST came to make expiation for sin, so that it is pardoned to those that truly repent;—that is, to those that, being sensible of their sins, and affected with a godly sorrow for them, and an holy hatred and abhorrenee of them, desire and purpose to walk before GOD in newness of life. These conditions of Pardon are by too many either not at all, or but slightly, insisted on, while they press the duty of relying on CHRIST's merits for justification and salvation.

*Secondly*, To believe that as CHRIST came to make atonement for sin, so He was manifested also, that “He might destroy the Works of the Devil;” and that he might procure Grace for us, so that sin may have “no more dominion over us.” But this part of Faith, I say, is little urged, in comparison of the other; whereas it is of as great concernment to our eternal happiness, to have Faith in the Power of CHRIST, as to have Faith in his Blood.

Nay, to have sin mortified, and to be enabled to will after the Will of God, is far more than to be merely pardoned for willing otherwise than God doth will.

Now their defect in this latter part of Faith, is a great cause of Christians continuing so weak, lazy, and faint,—in a sickly, and even bed-ridden condition,—and of their fancying that they honour and please God by complaining of their impotence and infirmities; whereas the true way to please and honour Him is, confiding in his omnipotent Grace, to get up and be doing.

But I fear I may also add another reason, why most of those that will confess their sins, and pray for grace and strength against them, are still as impotent as if there were no grace or assistance promised, namely, their not being heartily desirous of grace, as well as their want of faith in the promises of it; their unwillingness to have some lust or other mortified, and to be thoroughly purified; their secret fear of the searching and purging work of the SPIRIT, and of that light and grace that would disquiet them, and not let them alone in some sins to which they are fondly devoted. It was one of ST. AUSTIN'S Confessions:—"I, when I was a young man, begged of Thee that thou wouldest endow me with the grace of Chastity, and said; *Give me Chastity*, but not yet; for I feared lest Thou shouldest presently hear me, and immediately heal me; and I had rather satisfy sinful desire, than have it extinguished."

If this be the temper of thy soul, then in thy complaining of weakness, and that the *Sons of Zeruah* are too hard for thee, and in thy praying for the assistance of God's grace against them, thou dost no better than add sin to sin, the sin of hypocrisy to that of unbelief; "thy heart is not right with God, and thou lighest unto Him with thy tongue."

To conclude this: Let us take heed lest there be in any of us an evil heart of unbelief, and so we fall short of the spiritual *Canaan*, as it befell the unbelieving *Israelites*, who perished in the Wilderness. None of all that came

out of *Egypt* entered into *Canaan* but CALEB and JOSHUA, —men of another spirit, and that followed GOD fully, who were full of Faith, and encouraged the people to believe and prosper.

And it is observable, that CALEB asked for the mountainous country where the *Anakims* dwelt, and in which the cities were great and fenced, by the news of which the evil Spies dismayed *Israel*; but CALEB gave proof of the strength of his faith, in freely choosing to expose himself to the hard and seemingly impossible service of gaining this country, and was rewarded with success answerable to so great a Faith: For we read, that he drove out the three Sons of *Anak*, notwithstanding that it was commonly said, “Who can stand before the Sons of *Anak*?” He made it manifest that Faith could *stand before* them and *overcome* them.

And if we have CALEB’S Faith in fighting with the spiritual *Anakims*, we may be undoubtedly assured of CALEB’S Success.

Let the spiritual *Israel*, therefore, encourage themselves in the LORD their GOD, and they may be certain that it shall be unto them according to their Faith; his “grace shall be sufficient for them;” and “when the Enemy shall come in like a flood, the SPIRIT OF THE LORD shall lift up a standard against Him.”

## CHAP. VI.

### *Of the wonderful Efficacy of Love to GOD, and to Divine Things.*

VI. LABOUR to be affected as much as possible with the LOVE of GOD, and of Divine Things. To Faith, add Love; they are joined together in Scripture, and should be conjoined in the hearts of Christians. In 1 *Thessalonians*, v. 8, Love, as well as Faith, is called a Breast-plate, whereby we may be secured against the assaults of temptations.

If the Love of GOD be perfected in us, we shall find Self-denial and Self-Resignation easy and pleasant. Love will make us think nothing precious that God will have us part with ; it will make us with great cheerfulness, part with a right eye, a right hand, or our own will, if it offend us ; it will make us without grudging, cross our own will, when it contradicts the Will of our Beloved ; it will cause us to believe no suffering harsh that God inflicts, no duty difficult which he commands. "This is the Love of GOD, that we keep his commandments ; and his commandments are not grievous."

"If you love me," is a familiar and potent form of speech with us, to persuade to the doing or forbearing of any thing ; and what human Love works among men, that, and much more, will be effected by Divine Love. This is a far more powerful principle of action ; and yet the effects of that love have been very wonderful.

"It is love alone that is ashamed to mention Difficulty," saith ST. AUSTIN. Nay, Love welcomes Difficulties, and pleases itself in hard instances of obedience, because by them it sheweth forth more of its reality and power ; easy and ordinary performances being but mean and short significations of a hearty love. And the greatest achievements, such acts as are most heroic, as denying ourselves in what is most dear to us, are the true and proper results and expressions of Divine Love ; these are the worthy exploits of this holy affection.

Love makes the noblest champions in the holy war against sin, the world, and *Satan* ; and animates a Christian to the greatest adventures. As for easy and common performances, and self-denial in small matters, viz. in such things as a man is but little inclined to, and as are less for his pleasure and advantage, Divine Love is less solicitous about them ; but it chooseth rather to awaken and animate the soul to the harder services of Religion. It doth not think it quitteth itself in engaging against the weaker lusts, but it sets itself against the most powerful corruption ; it plants its batteries against the

strong-holds, the inmost fort where self-will hath intrenched herself. "The weapons of its warfare are not carnal; but mighty, through GOD, to the pulling down of strong-holds, casting down imaginations," or reasonings, "and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of GOD, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of CHRIST."

"There is a Lion in the way," is the voice of the lazy sluggard; but this is no discouragement to the Lover of GOD. Nay, so far is this Love from being cooled and disheartened by difficulties and oppositions, that it is rather kindled and improved; by these it heightens itself into an holy indignation against whatsoever would attempt to draw it from GOD. "Many waters cannot quench Love, neither can the floods drown it:" Nay, as Water cast into Lime, they increase, instead of lessening its heat.

Love, though it be a soft and delicate affection, yet it is hardy and strong withal. "Love is strong as Death;" And it is as ingenuous and noble, as it is strong; for "if a man would give all the substance of his house for Love, it would utterly be contemned." Neither the hard and evil things which the world threatens, nor its most tempting allurements, can affright or corrupt that heart, where Divine Love rules; but to the several temptations it meets with, this is the constant and resolute answer of every holy lover, "How can I do this wickedness, and sin against GOD?"

Yea, Love enables a Christian to do his duty much sooner and better. That which is in others the effect of great severity to the body, long fastings, and other toilsome exercises, is done in a more compendious and effectual way, by the power of Love, in such as are indued with it.

Now that this Divine Love may be enkindled and increased in us;

First, Let us often lift up the eyes of our mind, and fix them upon those infinitely lovely Perfections and Excellencies in GOD, which the Scriptures so abundantly cele-

brate. Let us view these frequently in the Scriptures, and in the works of Creation and Providence. Let us often consider with ourselves, that all the loveliness and sweetness that are in creatures, are but so many drops from the fountain of them, that is GOD; and that every love-attracting excellency, every thing the world calls precious and desirable, is but a very weak resemblance of what is to be tasted and enjoyed in Him.

Secondly, Let us frequently contemplate those invaluable Mercies, those numberless Kindnesses, for which we stand obliged to GOD; and above all, that Gift of Gifts, his SON, in whom He expressed a Love to us that passeth knowledge.

The contemplation of the infinite Perfections that are in GOD, will render all things contemptible, compared with Him, and consequently make them weak, untempting things.

What PYTHAGORAS said he learned by his Philosophy—*to admire nothing*—we shall learn by this contemplation. When the soul hath inured herself to view the Divine Glories, how near to nothing is this whole Universe in its eyes! What a little point! When she hath been upon the Mount with GOD, and ravished herself with his astonishing beauty, she must needs be affected with such a magnanimity and generosity of spirit, as will courageously repel the strongest temptations to withdraw her from a close union of will and affection to Him.

And the consideration of the innumerable and transcendent blessings which we receive from GOD, will work in us such an ingenuous gratitude, as will excite us to give up our hearts, and our all, to Him.

The excellencies of his nature, and the exceeding riches of his bounty, will represent Him as most worthy to be known with the Flower of our Mind, as ZOROASTER expresseth it, and with our highest apprehensions; and to be loved with the Flower of our Hearts, so that our dearest affections will not be thought too precious for Him.

Let us briefly reflect upon the power of worldly and sensual Love, and see what this will do.

First, *The Love of Money*. How doth this oblige and force the men of this world to hard labours, dangerous adventures, and anxious cares; to rise early, sit up late, eat the bread of sorrow, and deny themselves the comforts and contents of life; in a word, to “pierce themselves through with many sorrows.”

Secondly, *The Love of Honour, Dignities, and Preferments*. How doth it put ambitious men upon restless labours, tedious attendances, servile offices, base flatteries and compliances! Such stick at nothing, for obtaining their ends; but devote themselves to the humour of their Patron, as if he were their GOD, and they his creatures more than GOD's. They address themselves to him, by whose favour they hope to be raised, in such a form of respect and devotion as approacheth near to that regard and reverence which are only due to the MOST HIGH GOD. So full of zeal and observance is this civil kind of superstition.

Thirdly, *The Love of Beauty*. What a strange power hath it upon the fond man! To him no services, no sufferings, seem grievous, which his mistress wills him to undertake. With all submission and devotion he admires and adores this his soul's idol, this deity of clay; and that in such strains as blasphemously resemble that most affectionate and humble devotion, which none but his Creator may challenge from him. He gives her his whole heart, and resigns his whole will to her will; complies with all her humours; yields an entire obedience to all her commands, be they never so unreasonable. He patiently suffers tedious delays; and meekly bears her frowns, affronts, and disdains, her harsh language, and hard usage, and all the other arts she hath of afflicting him, besides the troubles and hazards he sometimes meets with from his rivals. This *Love-Bigot*, such is his devotion, neglects himself, his rest, his food, and his health, renounces all his own contentments, and denies himself whatsoever is



for either his delight or advantage, if he understands it to be the pleasure of his mistress. He mortifies himself, pines and consumes, and is lean from day to day for her, as AMNON was for TAMAR. Such are the severe mortifications and austerities this man is wont to undergo in this idolatrous Love-Service; yea, and sometimes he sacrificeth his very life, which the poor wretch calleth Love's Martyrdom.

Here is Self-Denial or Self-Resignation with a witness! With what pains and trouble doth this poor creature purchase to himself misery? With much more ease, had his love been placcd upon the best of objects, he might have been happy to eternity: He might have lived with GOD, who is Love itself, holy and unspotted Love, and reigned with CHRIST, the faithful Lover of his Soul, in a kingdom of peace and joy for ever!

By these instances we may discern the strange force of a degenerate and impure Love, and to what a degree of Self-Renunciation it forceth those in whom it reigns.

And is the love of uncertain Riches, of a little white and yellow clay, so powerful with men, and shall not the Love of the true and durable Riches, the glorious inheritance in Heaven, which is incorruptible and fadeth not away, be more forcible? Hath the Love of airy Honour such power; and shall not the Love of that Honour which is from GOD, that Honour and Glory that He hath promised to "every soul that worketh good," that Honour of "shining forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of the FATHER,"—shall not the Love, I say, of such inexpressible Honour as this, have as powerful effects upon us, and much more powerful? Shall the Love of a fading Skin-Beauty, the love of a little red and white, the love of withering roses and lilies and violets, with which fond lovers adorn the checks and hands of their mistresses, shall this base kind of Love so potently command poor mortals, and shall not the Love of GOD do much more, who is the first fair and original Beauty, as well as the first Good, whom Angels, the flower and top of the

creation, admire and adore with the greatest complacency, and ardour of affection?

Shall not Love, fixed upon such an object as this, inflame us with a holy resolution to undertake or undergo any thing for the fulfilment of his Will?—considering withal, that his commands are in themselves most reasonable, most fit to be approved and observed by us, agreeable to the dignity of our souls, and in their own nature most lovely, excellent, and worthy; and that they have moreover a mighty recompence of reward, which cannot be said of the commands of sensual love, but the perfectly contrary,—they being most vain, unreasonable, and cruel, and obedience to them of most pernicious consequence.

Nor is there any thing that GOD would have us part with, but what it is better for us to be without; better for our peace and pleasure, and more for our liberty to be freed from.

I pass to that other branch of this Direction, namely, that we should labour to be affected with a strong and ardent Love, as of GOD, so of Divine Things, of Virtue and Holiness, which are the impressions of the Divine Image upon the soul.

Had we worthy conceptions of spiritual excellencies, and a due sense of the beauty of Holiness, they would even ravish our hearts, and “excite in us strange and wonderful affections to them,” (as TULLY speaks of Virtue,) and consequently secure us from the allurements of earthly vanity.

But till a man comes to admire and be enamoured with the Divine Graces and Virtues, every thing which gratifieth sensuality, will be ready to get his heart, and to carry him away captiv.

By one unacquainted with the loveliness of Holiness, the least twinkling of this world’s glory will be admired; but there can be no better way to frustrate the temptations of the things below, than to be well acquainted and

greatly affected with the things above, the things that are holy, heavenly, and divine.

That observation of PLUTARCH was most true and excellent; "It is impossible for men not to have a great affection and ambition for the things which the world admires and pursues, except there be a principle within them to admire Virtue, whose beauty and lustre alone would darken and put out all other glories and gaieties whatsoever."

Be fully possessed, then, with the importance of this truth, that the most sovereign way for a man to take off his heart from the vanities of this world, and consequently to deny himself, is plainly this,—to turn his mind and affections to better objects, to admire the uncreated and original beauty, and to have an high esteem of the participations and impressions thereof.

The affections will not be pent in; they will run out upon something: Let them therefore issue forth, but let it be to the nobler objects; let them stream forth freely, but to better things. There is such a way approved by Physicians for the stopping of blood, namely, when it issueth out one way, to open a vein elsewhere, and so to stay it by diverting the course.

Nor is that Fable of the Poet unfit to be applied here, as containing an excellent Moral, which tells us the best means of defeating the *Syrens*, the most dangerous temptations of the world. ULYSSES and his companions stopped their ears with wax, as they sailed by, that they might not hear them, and so avoided the danger: but ORPHEUS, by singing divine hymns, by celebrating the praises of God, and recounting his excellencies and favours, is said to have overcome them, which was the more noble way of conquest.

But to prevent all mistake and scruple, I add, that what hath been said doth not imply that a Christian is to stop up his affections from issuing out to any thing in this world: but this we are to consider.

There are *undue* and *forbidden*, and there are *due* and *allowed* objects of the affections.

Now as for *undue* objects, the pleasures of sin, the things which GOD expressly forbids in Scripture, we are to have no affection at all for them, but the greatest antipathy against them. There must not be the least tasting of the forbidden Tree, though its fruit be never so fair and tempting.

But as for *due* objects of the affections, and such as GOD allows, our care must be, that they be carried forth towards them in a due Order and Degree.

First, in a due Order. Our Love must first be placed upon GOD and CHRIST, his kingdom and his righteousness, and thence descend to inferior good things. Things Divine must have the precedency in our care and endeavours, according to the advice of our SAVIOUR in *Matt.* vi. 33.

Secondly, in a due Degree and Measure. GOD, and the things above, must be most desired and delighted in. "Whom," saith the Psalmist, "have I in Heaven but Thee? and there is none on Earth I desire in comparison of Thee?" GOD alloweth us to give a lesser Love to the lesser goodness; but the highest affection is to be given to the highest and original goodness.

I will conclude this Direction with the advice of TAULERUS, in his eighth epistle: "Account that day mispent and lost, wherein you have not subdued your own Will by the Love of GOD."

This advice imports two things:

First, That a Christian is to make this duty of *Self-Resignation* his daily business; that it is a lesson which he is to be every day learning, and an exercise in which he is to make continual progress.

Secondly, That the Love of GOD is of most sovereign virtue to break and subdue a man's own Will.

## CHAP. VII.

*That Humility is a powerful means for the attainment of SELF-RESIGNATION.*

VII. ENDEAVOUR after deep Humility, if thou wouldest be truly resigned to the Will of GOD. Humility is a most powerful means for the attainment of Self-Resignation, both as it implies Obedience to GOD's Commands, and Submission to his Disposals.

First, As it implies Obedience to the Commands of GOD. The humble Christian cannot think much of doing any thing GOD requires, or forbearing any thing He forbids: For,

1. He considers that there is an infinite distance between GOD and him: that GOD is infinite in all perfections: that He is the Lord of all things, the Sovereign of Men and Angels, and therefore it is most fit that He should have the pre-eminence in all things; and most unbecoming in him to oppose this will, even when He commands things ever so ungrateful to flesh and blood.

He considers that himself is a dependent and indigent being; that he is nothing but what he is by GOD, and can have nothing but what comes from Him; and consequently that it is most unreasonable that *his* will should ever take place of the Will of GOD. The infinite superiority of GOD's Being most justly and plainly infers the precedency and superiority of his Will.

He considers that GOD is the inexhaustible fountain of life, the great ocean of being, whence all the rivers of particualar beings flow, and whither they return again; whereas Man is a poor, feeble creature, "altogether vanity," and that, "at his best estate;" even "all the nations of the earth are counted but as a drop of the bucket, or small dust of the balance," as ISAIAH speaks; nay, they are "all as nothing before GOD, and are counted to him less than nothing." What then shall we think of

each particular man, he being so inconsiderable a part of that *drop*, that *dust*, that *nothing*, and *less than nothing*. The humble Christian, I say, hath a due sense of his inconceivable disproportion to GOD; and thence concludes, that nothing can be so unreasonable as to expect that his will should be humoured, or to take it ill to have it crossed by the Will of GOD.

He is deeply sensible, that nothing is so intolerable as for the will of any creature in any thing to controul the LORD OF LIFE AND GLORY, the great Maker and Preserver of all things, and therefore that it is much more the greatest petulancy, and most horrible presumption, for such a creature as himself to dispute and quarrel with the divine commands.

2. The humble Christian considers also, that GOD, being self-happy and self-sufficient, cannot design his own advantage in laying his commands upon us: that we are not able to gratify Him by any service,—but, being infinitely good, He aims at our benefit in so doing: that GOD, in the business of Religion, seeks not his own, but merely our interest and welfare; in that He needs not, nor is capable of receiving, any additions of happiness, much less from without Himself, and therefore means kindness to us in all his commands; and his Laws are to be numbered among his Favours, even his most endearing and obliging ones. And he who is thus assured must needs be strongly excited to perform a most hearty, ingenuous, and cheerful obedience to all the declarations of the Divine Will.

Secondly, Humility qualifies us for Resignation, as it imports patient Submission to all GOD's Disposals: and that,

1. Upon the same account that it disposeth to active Obedience; namely, because it makes us sensible of the infinite disproportion that is between GOD and us; the consideration of which will necessarily convince us, that it becomes such despicable creatures as we are to humble ourselves under his mighty hand, and to lay ourselves

down in the dust before him, instead of repining at his Providence.

2. Humility disposeth to patience, as it makes us sensible of our moral imperfections, our sins and transgressions, whereby we are become obnoxious to God's displeasure; the sense whereof will force us to acknowledge that He is most righteous whensoever he punisheth, and therefore we should accept of the punishment of our iniquity.

Murmuring, and complaining thoughts, arise from pride, and a too good opinion of ourselves: it is self-conceit that makes us misconstrue any of God's dealings as over-rigorous towards us; but to the humble man, who is sensible of his manifold miscarriages, they appear most just and equal, nay, very gentle too, in comparison of his deserts.

He having a deep sense of the evil of sin, how unreasonable, unjust, and disingenuous, and therefore how unspeakably heinous it is, to oppose the will of the Most High God, the supreme Governor of the World, and Judge of all the Earth—to offend infinite Goodness, and to return evil to Him from whom we have always received good, and to whom our engagements are inexpressibly many and great;—I say, the humble Christian having a great sense of this, and being conscious to himself that he hath been this unreasonable, unrighteous, and disingenuous creature, will, under the sharpest afflictions he can suffer in this world, say with EZRA, "Thou hast punished me less than mine iniquities do deserve."

3. Humility disposeth to a submissive bearing of afflictions, as it makes us sensible of the exceeding shortness of our understandings, and our utter inability to fathom God's counsels, and the reasons of his Providences. The humble Christian will cry out with the blessed Apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways are past finding out!" He knows that infinite and unsearchable wisdom must needs administer

the affairs of the world in general, and of every person in particular, in the best and wisest way; and therefore that there is very great reason for whatsoever sufferings he undergoes, although they may seem to his shallow capacity to be ever so unreasonable.

Murmuring at any of the Divine Providences is a tacit charging of GOD, as with unrighteousness, so with folly, and a setting up of our wisdom above GOD's.

4. The humble Christian is likewise sensible of the great need he hath of afflictions; that he needs them as medicines to cure his spiritual maladies; that they are needful as they are preventions of sin, and secure him against many temptations; and as they are very instructive, much of GOD and himself being to be learned in the school of the cross.

This man knoweth, that not to be corrected in order to his amendment, is the greatest of punishments; and that no judgment is so dreadful as sin itself, and to be given up to an hard heart; and therefore he accounts these troubles and difficulties he meets with as expressions of GOD's unwillingness that he should undo himself.

It is most certain, that the holy, wise, and good GOD doth not directly and primarily will punishment, (as neither doth any good and wise lawgiver,) for to do thus is not justice but cruelty: nor doth He desire the occasions of inflicting punishments, viz. the transgression of his laws. Justice is wise and good; it hath ever the best of ends, namely, the discountnancing and preventing of sin, the encouragement of goodness, and the securing of the authority of righteous laws. And the humble person, considering that GOD's design in afflicting him is to cure the greater evil of sin, by the lesser of suffering, and that afflictions are so necessary as that he is seldom long well without them; by this means he is the better enabled quietly to submit when he suffers.

Lastly, Humility qualifies a Christian both for Obedience and Patience, as it makes him capable of more Grace:



And the more Grace, the more Power he hath both to do and suffer the will of GOD. "Surely," saith the Wise Man, "he scorneth the scorers, but he giveth grace unto the lowly." And St. PETER writes, "GOD resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." And again, St. JAMES says, "The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy, but he giveth more grace: Wherefore he saith, GOD resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."

The high mountains are barren, but the low valleys are covered with corn; and the showers of GOD's Grace fall into lowly and humble souls. The more empty and poor in spirit men are, the more earnestly desirous are they of spiritual things; and such shall be filled, according to CHRIST's promise, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

You know the story in *2 Kings*, iv. So long as the Widow had an empty vessel, the oil flowed; but when there was not another to be gotten, it immediately stayed. And so long as GOD sees an empty soul, that is ready to receive, and desirous of his grace, He is ready to communicate of his fulness to it.

A soul that is poor in its own eyes, void of self-glorying, and acknowledging its own indigence, and withal its utter unworthiness to receive the least favour from the Divine Bounty, is such a one as GOD looks for, to communicate more and more of his Grace and SPIRIT to. "To this man will I look," saith GOD, "even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit. Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the spirit of the contrite ones."

Humility disposes to Gratitude, and Gratitude fits us to receive more from GOD; for a grateful soul will set a high value upon his blessings, and most gladly give Him the glory of his grace. The humble Christian thinks himself, with JACOB, less than the least of all GOD's

mercies, and consequently he will be heartily thankful for the least ; and by being thus affected, he becomes meet for the greatest, and therefore cannot fail of it.

It is to be observed, that when JACOB was in this humble and self-abasing temper, it was then that he “ saw God face to face at *Peniel* :” then it was that he was honoured with the name *Israel*, and “ as a Prince had power with GOD and men, and prevailed.”

On the contrary, pride and self-sufficiency, which are ever accompanied with unthankfulness, make men incapable of the Divine Grace : And therefore the PHARISEES, who “ gloried in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others,” who were not sick, but whole, in their own conceit, died of their diseases, notwithstanding that the great Physician of Souls was so long among them.

Now there are two graces for which humility gives a peculiar fitness, two of the first magnitude and greatest influence in a Christian life, to wit, the Love of GOD, and Faith or Trust in Him. .

\* It is evident that Humility hath a peculiar fitness to increase the grace of Love ; for the more sensible any one is of his great unworthiness, the more he must needs love GOD for having so gracious a regard to him ; the more will he admire and adore the riches of his grace.

And it is as evident that Humility affords the like advantage for Faith or Trust in GOD ; for the more sensible a Christian is of his own impotence, the more will he rely upon the Divine Power and Goodness, having so many promises to encourage him. The sense of our own weakness will make us distrust ourselves ; and the more we distrust ourselves, the more shall we stay our souls on GOD, and confide in his wisdom, power, and grace.

## CHAP. VIII.

*That the serious observation of the great Examples of SELF-RESIGNATION, which are recorded in the Scriptures, is of great use : and first, of ABRAHAM.*

VIII. Look to the lively Examples of Self-Resignation in the Holy Scriptures. These are of singular use to be seriously considered : for they plainly show this holy disposition to be attainable, and that GOD requires herein nothing that is impossible.

Could they do thus, and cannot we, by the same divine help, which we have shown is attainable by us as well as them ? They were “ subject to like passions with us ;” they were flesh and blood as we are, and naturally as infirm as ourselves ; and GOD is the same in power and goodness now as ever he was.

And this may commend to us the fulness of the Scriptures, that besides the best Precepts, we have the best Examples recorded in them of every grace and virtue : so that, by the assistance of the HOLY SPIRIT, the Christian “ may be perfected, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.”

The best Rules of the best life are laid down in the Inspired Writings, and they are plain and intelligible, especially to those that have the “ good and honest heart ;” but Examples superadded to Rules, and Patterns to Precepts, make both more instructive, and as well encourage as direct our practice. And we having many worthy examples upon record of this Self-Resignation, the lesson becomes neither too high nor hard for us to understand or practise.

Have we not, besides others, the Example of JOSEPH for Chastity, MOSES for Meekness, JOB for Patience, ABRAHAM for Faith, DORCAS and CORNELIUS for Charity, DANIEL for a holy Resolution of Spirit in owning GOD, St. PAUL for an unwearied Zeal ; and above all, that Example of

all Examples for every thing that is holy, pure, and lovely, our LORD JESUS CHRIST?

Take we heed then, that we be not found *ingentium exemplorum parvi imitatores, small Imitators of mighty Examples*, as SALVIAN expresseth it. But let it be our serious care and holy ambition to transcribe their virtues, to write after those fair copies, to be followers of those blessed souls, as they were followers of GOD and CHRIST.

But our present argument determining us to Self-Resignation, let us consider some Examples hereof.

And, first, that of ABRAHAM, “faithful ABRAHAM,” as he is styled by the Apostle PAUL. There were ten trials wherewith GOD was pleased to exercise this good man, as they are collected by the Hebrew Writers; the first and last of which ten were the sorest of all.

The first was his being commanded of GOD to leave his own country, his house and lands, his friends and kindred, and to go to a place he knew not.

This command, as grievous as it must have been to flesh and blood, he did not in the least demur to: But “by Faith, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, he obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither he went.”

The last was his being commanded to take his only son, ISAAC, and to offer him for a burnt-offering; than which there could not be a greater trial.

We have the command in *Genesis* xxii. 2; every word of which hath a singular emphasis, and deserves attention.

“Take now thy Son, thine only Son ISAAC, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the Land of *Moriah*, and offer him there for a burnt-offering, upon one of the Mountains which I will tell thee of.”

“Take now thy *Son* :”—Not any of the best of his great store of cattle, but his *Son*.

“Take him *now* ;”—forthwith, without any delay.

“Thy Son *ISAAC* :”—Not ISHMAEL, but ISAAC, his own and SARAH’s *delight* and *joy*, as the name signifies.

“Thine *only* Son:”—He and SARAH had no other to solace themselves in, nor were they ever like to have any other.

And besides, there is another observable thing mentioned, *Heb.* xi. 17, 18: “He that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten Son, of whom it was said, that in ISAAC shall thy Seed be called.”

“Whom thou *lovest*:”—That is, Whom they very dearly and passionately loved, as being the SON of their old age, their only Son, and a Son of the Promise. These two go together, “the only one,” and “the choice one,” *Cant.* vi. 9. To lose the only Son is that which causeth bitter lamentation; and the mourning for such a one is used to express the most passionate and doleful mourning; *Amos* viii. 10, *Zech.* xii. 10.

“And get thee into the Land of *Moriah*, and offer him there.”—ABRAHAM himself must offer him; he might not command his two servants to do it; they went no farther than till they came within sight of the place where he was to be offered.

The tender Father must take his “only Son, whom he loved,” and bind him with his own hands upon the altar, and take the knife to slay him. As his eyes must behold him bleeding, and gasping, and burning, so must he be himself the Executioner.

“And offer him there for a burnt-offering, on one of the *Mountains*, which I will tell thee of.”—This was the place where the Temple was to be built by SOLOMON, the place of offering Sacrifices.

And it was three days’ journey from ABRAHAM’S habitation, which might make the command yet more grievous. As often as in that journey he looked upon the wood, or the fire, or the knife, or the place which he saw afar off, how could it be but that his eye must most deeply affect his heart.

It follows, *verse* 6, “And ABRAHAM took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid it upon ISAAC his Son, and

he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and they went both of them together.”—What an affecting and heart-piercing sight was this! And herein was ISAAC a figure of our blessed SAVIOUR, who bare the wood of the cross upon his shoulders, whereon He was to be offered up for a Sacrifice to God.

And it is hence to be concluded, that ISAAC was now no child, in that he was able to travel with so great a burden; such a quantity of wood as was sufficient to burn his body to ashes could be no small weight. JOSEPHUS makes ISAAC to be now twenty-five years old; but an Hebrew Tradition, about thirty and three. If so, he was in this circumstance also a figure of our SAVIOUR, who was offered up at about the same age.

Now ISAAC being at this time grown up to a good age, it might make his Father the more unwilling to part with him, and considerably add to the greatness of his trial.

And those words of ISAAC, which he spake in a strain of sweet innocence and simplicity, *ver. 7*, “My Father, behold the Fire and the Wood, but where is the Lamb for a burnt-offering?”—they must needs have caused a great conflict within him, and yearning of bowels. No doubt, ABRAHAM’S affections did strangely work now, and he was pained at the very heart.

There is one thing more which we may take notice of in this command; it is said, “Offer him there for a burnt-offering;”—לעילא.—This kind of offering was an Holocaust, all of which was to be consumed by fire, so that there was not the least relie to remain of him.

This was the command; and was it not a most difficult one? Could there have been a sorer trial? But behold the signal Resignation of ABRAHAM to the Will of God! He, without the least delay, betook himself to the performance of the divine pleasure. It is said, *verse 3*, that “ABRAHAM rose up early in the morning.” It is likely that the command came secretly to him in a dream or vision of the night; and at or before the first peep of day he addressed himself to obey it. Thus he denied his

natural and great affection to his Son, and gave a most illustrious proof that nothing was so dear to him, nothing so powerful with him, as the Will of God. "Wisdom kept him strong against his tender compassion towards his Son," saith the Author of the Book of *Wisdom*.

The completion of his obedience is set forth in the ninth verse: "And ABRAHAM built an altar in the place which GOD told him of, and laid the wood in order, and bound ISAAC his Son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood."

By the way, not only ABRAHAM, but ISAAC too, was herein a rare Example of Resignation. He was, doubtless, (as appears by what was said of his age and strength,) able to have resisted his Father, now stricken in years; but he expressed no reluctance; he quietly and meekly suffered himself to be bound, and laid upon the altar. And herein again, (as in several other particulars,) was he a figure of our SAVIOUR, who, though He could have rescued himself from the power of the *Jews* and *Romans*, yet permitted them to take and bind him, to heap many vile indignities upon him, and at last to nail him to his Cross.

And then it follows,—“ And ABRAHAM stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his Son.”—This GOD accounted to him as if he had done it, because he was fully purposed to do it, and, had it not been for GOD’S interposition, would have performed his purpose. Therefore the Scripture reports it as if he had actually offered up his Son, in *Heb. xi. 17*; “ By Faith, ABRAHAM, when he was tried, offered up ISAAC; and he that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten Son;” and in *James ii. 21*; “ Was not ABRAHAM our Father justified by works, when he had offered ISAAC his Son upon the altar?” And hereupon “ he was called the Friend of GOD.” He eminently approved him as such, for this high act of obedience.

I will conclude this great example of Resignation with that saying in *Isai. xli. 2*, “ Who raised up the righteous

man from the East, and called him to his foot :”—ABRAHAM obeyed GOD in all things ; he had him at his call, as the Falconer hath a well-manned Hawk, and calls her to his hand.

And shall not the spiritual seed of ABRAHAM (for so Christians are) be observant of every call of GOD, though He call them to such trials as are very difficult and ungrateful ? “ Let us walk in the steps ” of the faith and obedience “ of our Father ABRAHAM,” in readily sacrificing our ISAAC, our delight and joy, that sin which is most beloved, “ the sin of our souls,” (as the phrase is, *Micah* vi. 7,) which seems to bring us most profit, most delight and pleasure. By thus doing, we shall be owned as the especial Friends of GOD, as ABRAHAM was, and receive the reward of such, as he did.

## CHAP. IX.

### *Of JOB and DAVID.*

THE next example of Self-Resignation shall be that of JOB ; and he will appear to be a most eminent one, by these particulars.

First, he was a great man : great for estate and riches. We read, that he had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred she-asses, and very great store of servants ; that he was the greatest of all the men of the East, that is of *Arabia*, which lay eastward from the Land of *Canaan*. He was great for wisdom, and by that means for honour and esteem ; of which there is a particular account in *Chap.* xxix : “ The aged men, when they saw me, arose and stood up. The Princes refrained talking, and laid their hand upon their mouth ; the Nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth ; ” *ver.* 8—10. Such a reverence had they for him, for the greatness of his wisdom and excellent accomplishments,



that “ the ear that heard him, blessed him. All gave ear to him, and waited and kept silence at his counsel. After his words they spake not again ; his speeches dropped upon them, and they waited for him as for the rain, and opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain ;” *ver.* 11, 22, 23. They received his discourse as a welcome and most desirable rain ; and such especially was the latter rain, before harvest.

Secondly, He was as good, as great and honourable. Such was his Humility, that he did not “ despise the cause of his man-servant or maid-servant, when they contended with him ;” *Chap.* xxxi. 13.

His Sobriety and Moderation of spirit are to be seen, *ver.* 25, &c.

His Charity and Compassion, *Chap.* xxix. 13, 15, 16 ; xxx. 25 ; xxxi. 16, 17, 19, 20, 32.

His Chastity, *Chap.* xxxi. 1, 9 :—So far was he from making his great estate minister to sensuality.

His Integrity and Honesty, *Chap.* xxix. 14 ; xxxi. 7, 38, 39.

His readiness to employ his power for the relief, and not for the crushing, of oppressed innocents, *Chap.* xxix. 12 ; xxxi. 21 : And this he did boldly and resolutely, *Chap.* xxxi. 34.

His exemplary Piety, in keeping himself from the idolatries of the Arabians, *Chap.* xxxi. 26, 27 ; and in his pious solicitude for his children, in their yearly feasting, lest they might have offended God in the heat of their banquets, *Chap.* i. 5. And in *Chap.* xxiii. 11, 12, we find him expressing the great devotion of his soul towards God, in the constancy and universality of his obedience : “ My foot (saith he,) hath held his steps ; his way have I kept, and not declined ; neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips : I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

And God Himself gives this character of Job ; (*Chap.* ii. 3 ;) “ There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil.’”

Thus was this excellent person a great pattern of virtue in his flourishing estate; and he was no less a pattern of Self-Resignation in his afflictions.

For, Thirdly, this great and good man was sorely afflicted and tried by GOD. There were three messengers that brought him the tidings of sad calamities that befel him in his possessions; his oxen, asses, sheep, and camels, with his servants, being carried away by the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans*, or consumed by fire from heaven. But the fourth messenger brings the heaviest news of all, namely, that all his sons and daughters were crushed to pieces, by the fall of the house wherein they were feasting.

This was dismal indeed, to lose all his children at once, and that not by a natural, but a violent death, and to have them destroyed with such a sudden destruction, and that also in the midst of their feasting and mirth.

The more to aggravate his affliction, these several messengers came immediately one after another; while one was speaking, another came in; one wave, the more to overwhelm him, came upon the neck of the other; so that he had no respite, no time to concoct his sorrows, no time of breathing after one, to prepare himself to bear the next.

But after all this, affliction comes still more close to him: GOD permitted SATAN to exercise his cruelty upon his body, which was stricken with sore boils, and that all over, "even from the crown of his head, to the sole of his foot," (*Chap. ii. 7.*) He was full of anguish in every part. There was nothing about him left whole and entire but the "skin of his teeth," (*Chap. xix. 20.*) or the skin about his gums or lips. Nothing was whole about him, but his mouth to complain with. To have one such boil is very painful, but to have such noisome things all over the body, how exquisitely tormenting must it needs be?

And in this sad plight "he sat down," not on an easy couch or soft bed, but "among the ashes," (*v. 8.*) or upon a dunghill without the city, as the *Septuagint* hath it, where he had none to dress his sores but himself, nor

any thing (that we read of) to help himself with, but some piece of an earthen vessel cast on the dunghill. Instead of using oils and salves that were proper for the mitigation of his pain, and the healing of his sores, he scraped them, or squeezed out the raging matter of them “with a potsherd.” He was so changed by his blains and botches, and in so squalid a condition, that his “friends knew him not;” (*Chap. ii. 12.*)—“his brethren went far from him, and his acquaintance were estranged from him; his kinsfolk failed him, and his familiar friends forgot him; they that dwelt in his house, and his maids, counted him for a stranger; he was an alien in their sight. He called his servant, and he gave him no answer; he entreated him with his mouth. His breath was strange to his wife, though he entreated for the children’s sake of his body. The young children despised him, and spake against him. His inward friends abhorred him; and those whom he loved were turned against him;”—as he most pathetically complains in *Chap. xix.*

His three Friends, **ELIPHAZ**, **BILDAD**, and **ZOPHAR**, when they first came to see him, sat down upon the ground seven days and nights, and could not speak for astonishment; and what they afterwards spake was both impertinent and highly uncharitable. Instead of giving him any relief, it added more to his grief, and aggravated his torment. “They were physicians of no value, and miserable comforters,” as **JOB** told them.

And whereas he might have hoped, that the Wife of his bosom, she to whom he had been so true and faithful, (*Chap. xxxi. 9.*) might have been some comfort to him; she, on the contrary, was not only estranged from him, but also a disheartener of his patience, and assisted **SATAN** in his designs against him. **SATAN** had touched his bones and his flesh; but that speech of his Wife,—“Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse **GOD** and die,”—must needs smite him to the heart.

And now have I not set before you a sad and most pitiable condition, full of such difficult circumstances, as might be

apt, any of them, to make the duty of quiet submission to the Will of GOD, very hard and grievous? For this wealthy man to lose all his estate, and that estate which he had done so much good with; and together with his estate, all his ten children by one sudden stroke; for this great and honourable person to be brought so low, as to sit upon a dunghill; for this so greatly revered and esteemed person, who had been so humble in the height of his honours, and employed his power for the relief of the oppressed, to be now the object of the greatest contempt; for so good a man, that feared GOD and eschewed evil, to be delivered up to the malice of the Devil; for such a man, to be thus afflicted both by Men and Devils, Foes and Friends too, and not to have so much as one comfort left;—who can sufficiently set forth the pitifulness of this case? The Scriptures mention JOB's Wealth, Greatness, and Goodness, that the greatness of his Sufferings might the more appear.

For one who had but little before, to lose that,—one who was low before, to fall lower,—is not so sharp a trial, as from possessing a great abundance, to be deprived of all, and that at once,—to be immediately brought out of the extreme of prosperity, into the extreme of adversity.

Had he, by a riotous course, like the prodigal in the Gospel, brought himself into straits, or had he, by some heinous sin, provoked the ALMIGHTY to inflict upon him some sore judgment, he would have had no such trial of patience, but might have thanked himself for what was come upon him; but for one who had always kept a conscience void of offence, both towards GOD and men, and who walked in all the commandments of GOD with an upright heart, to be so strangely plagued, what a trial is here!

But behold now JOB's Resignation, and Submission to the Will of GOD, great as his sufferings!

As soon as the last messenger had delivered the heaviest tidings, (for they came, as was said, so thick one upon

another, that he had not time to say any thing before,—the latter coming while the former was yet speaking,) of all his ten children being slain at once, he put himself into the most humble posture, “rent his mantle, shaved his head, and fell down on the ground and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither : the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the LORD.”

What more emphatical expression of an humble and profound submission to the Divine Will, could have been uttered by the tongue of a man ? “Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither.”—I have as much still, as I brought into the world with me : “For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.” That which I have lost was not mine ; it was but lent to me by GOD, who might call for it again whensoever He pleased : I came into the world without it, and without it may go again out of the world, and be nevertheless happy.

“The LORD gave :”—I acknowledge his goodness in what I once enjoyed, and that I so long enjoyed it : “And the LORD hath taken away :”—I acknowledge and submit the LORD’s good pleasure, in stripping me of all these comforts and enjoyments. He doth not say, “The LORD hath given, and the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans* have taken away ;” but he looks beyond men, and all inferior causes, to GOD, and saith, “The LORD hath taken away.”

“Blessed be the name of the LORD :”—To bless GOD, when he bestoweth his blessings on us, is very easy : It is no hard thing to say, The LORD hath given, blessed be the name of the LORD. But to bless GOD even when He hath deprived us at once of all our comforts, this is hard indeed ; this argues an excellent spirit, more than thousands of thanksgivings in a prosperous condition ; this is an admirable instance of Self-Resignation.

Not to murmur and repine at such exceedingly severe Providences, is a great expression of a resigned temper,

how great an evidence of it, then, is an heart borne up, in such miserable circumstances, in a thankful and praising frame ?

And that JOB should now bless GOD, when SATAN was so confident that he would "curse him to his face," was a great defeat given him, and such a disappointment as could not but vex him at the very heart.

Nor is that other expression of JOB (*Chap. ii. 10.*) unlike to this, namely, his answer to that wretched speech of his Wife ; "He said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What ? shall we receive good at the hand of GOD, and shall we not receive evil ?" "What ! is GOD bound always to be heaping his favours upon us ? Must we have nothing but sun-shine, without wind, or clouds, or rain ? Must we be fed with nothing but marrow and fatness, and taste nothing but what is sweet and delicious ? Must we have all smooth and flowery way in our journey ? And if he for a while cloud himself, or if he stop the streams of his comforts that flowed so abundantly upon us, if he give us to taste of the bitter, the waters of *Marah*, must we therefore repine and complain, and think evil of him, and grow weary of his service ? Having received so much good from him, is it not equitable and fit that we should bear some evil when he sends it ? Should not the memory of his many and long-continued mercies more sweeten and endear our good GOD to us, than some present crosses and adversities imbitter our thoughts of him, and sour our spirits with discontent ?"

O the height and excellency of Grace in this holy man ! He was *Vir ante evangelia evangelicus* : "A person of the true evangelical and christian spirit, before CHRIST or his Gospel came into the world." How had patience its perfect work in him ! There could not be a more lovely sight on the whole earth for GOD and Angels to behold, than such a soul in the midst of such trials ; "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" being "in the sight of GOD, of great price."

This honourable eulogium is given of him, (*Chap. ii. 10.*)

“In all this, JOB sinned not with his lips;” and the like in *Chap. i. 22*, where it is added, “nor charged God foolishly.” He did not speak unworthily of God or his disposals; nor had he any unbecoming thoughts of him or them: nay, he was so far from repining at the severest of them, that he took them gratefully at his hands.

As deformed and diseased a creature as JOB was, as to his outward man, he was most sound and lovely within; though his body lay among the ashes and potsherds, yet was he, as to his soul, as the wings of a dove, beautified with such interexchangeable colours, by the sun shining upon her, that they are, as it were, “covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.”

In the Song of HANNAH it is said, that GOD “raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill;” but here we have a far greater wonder: GOD exalted JOB even when he debased him to the dust, and made him in his lowest estate glorious; more glorious to all ages than ever he would have been, had there been nothing in his story, but that he was for his wealth and honour the greatest of all the men of the East. So that JOB, even whilst he was “of this low degree,” might “rejoice in that he was exalted.”

Great afflictions, accompanied with an unconquerable patience, advance men to a peculiar degree of honour and glory above the rest of mankind. “Behold we count them happy that endure:” We “call them blessed.” *James v. 11.*

ST. CHRYSOSTOM thus magnificently speaks of JOB’s dunghill, that it was “more stately than any kingly throne;” and of his sores, that they were “richer than any jewels or precious stones;” nay, that they were “more splendid and glorious than the sun-beams;” and again, that no King sitting upon his throne, is so illustrious as was JOB then upon the dunghill.

That very dunghill, where the illustrious, but debased JOB sate, was a throne of glory; no royal seat of majesty, or chair of state, was so glorious. Here his patience was

enthroned ; here the humble greatness and majesty of his mind shined forth, and “ the SPIRIT OF GLORY rested on him.”

What a pleasure was it to Heaven, to see this champion come off so bravely, and baffle all attempts that the Devil could use to break his spirit, and force him to impatience and unworthy reflections upon GOD !

GOD said twice to SATAN : “ Hast thou considered my servant JOB, that there is none like him in all the earth ? ” —“ Hast thou set thine heart upon my servant JOB ? Hast thou taken special notice of him ? ” GOD seemeth to make his boast of this excellent person, as a more worthy sight than any that presented itself in any part of the world. But he was much more worthy of esteem and admiration after he had been proved by such sore trials ; when “ the trial of his faith ” and patience “ was found unto praise, and honour, and glory. ” So great was his patience, so exemplary his Resignation, that the Holy Scripture sets a special mark upon it and him :—upon *it*, (*James* v. 11 ; ) “ Ye have heard of the patience of JOB ; ” —upon *him*, in that he is mentioned as one of GOD’S three peculiar Favourites in *Ezek.* xiv.

And now, having given some account of his Afflictions, and his Patience under them, we will speak of the Reward with which his Resignation to the Will of GOD was crowned. After the Apostle had said, “ Ye have heard of the patience of JOB, ” it follows, “ and have seen the end of the LORD, that the LORD is very pitiful and of tender mercy. ” And in the forty-second Chapter of JOB, we find him most amply rewarded even in this life. In the seventh and eighth verses we read, that he found such special favour in the eyes of GOD, that his three Friends, who had added to the heavy weight of his afflictions, and had not spoken of GOD that which was right, as JOB had, could not atone his anger with a burnt-offering without JOB’S intercession in their behalf. In the tenth verse it is said, that “ the LORD turned the captivity of JOB, when he prayed for his friends ; also the LORD gave JOB twice



as much as he had before ;” and, in the twelfth verse, that “ the LORD blessed the latter end of JOB more than his beginning ; for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses ;” whereas he had before but half this number of each of these.

Thus as to his goods and possessions, which were either destroyed by fire, or carried away by the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans*, and so were never to be enjoyed by him more, GOD gave him double. But as to his children, He gave him just the number he had before, to wit, “ seven sons and three daughters,” *Verse 13*. These it is likely were not doubled, because though they were taken away by death, yet they were not utterly lost, but their spirits returned to GOD, and were still alive with GOD, where their Father should again meet them in the other life.

But there is this said concerning these new daughters of JOB, which was not said of the former, that “ in all the land were no women found so fair as they ;” *Verse 15*. And lastly, we read, (in *Verse 16*,) that “ after this lived JOB an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons’ sons, even four generations.” After which, the happy days he enjoyed here concluded in an unspeakably more happy eternity.

And now, as SATAN said, “ doth JOB serve GOD for nought ?” We see that his great patience and exemplary submission to the Will of GOD under the severest trials, were not in vain, but abundantly recompensed.

The third example I shall propose of Self-Resignation is holy DAVID. He was eminent for obedience to the divine commands ; he “ delighted to do the will of GOD ; yea, his “ law was within his heart.” And he was likewise eminent for a patient temper under great trials and sufferings.

That was an exceedingly great trial, when, with his household and loyal subjects, he was forced to fly with all speed out of *Jerusalem*, for the saving of his life from the bloody machinations of his own SON ABSALOM ABSALOM,

his third son by birth, but now his eldest, and therefore Heir-apparent to the Crown, being impatient to stay for it till the natural death of his Father, designed first by flattering civilities to insinuate himself into the hearts of the people, and afterwards by armed power to force his way to the throne.

For his person, he was of a very lovely aspect ; “ so that in all *Israel* there was none to be so much praised as **ABSALOM** for his beauty ; from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head, there was no blemish in him.”

He had also a fair and smooth tongue, and was of a winning and insinuating behaviour, so that “ he stole away the hearts of the men of *Israel*. And having so done, it was an easy business to get himself chosen and proclaimed King ; which was done by the men of *Israel*, and that in *Hebron* too, the very place where his Father was first anointed by the men of *Judah*, and, seven years and a half afterwards, by the tribes of *Israel*.

And now **ABSALOM** endeavours to confirm himself in his usurped dominion by the best arts of power and policy he could imagine. He gains **AHITHOPHEL** to be of his side, who was the King’s Counsellor, a man of that venerable esteem for his great wisdom, that his counsel is said to be “ as if a man had enquired at the Oracle of God.”

He is busy in preparing a great army against his Father : the conspiracy was strong, and the people increased continually with **ABSALOM**, which made **DAVID** cry out, as he did, in *Psal.* iii. 1, 2, (a Psalm penned upon this occasion,) “ **LORD**, how are they increased that trouble me ? Many are they that rise up against me ; many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God.” And that these *many* were not the *Philistines*, *Moabites*, *Amalekites*, *Ammonites*, and other Heathens, but his own subjects, was a more afflicting trouble. And that among these should be found **AHITHOPHEL**, his Friend and Counsellor, this made it more afflicting still, as he complaineth, *Psal.* lv. 12, 13, 14 ; “ It was not an enemy

that reproached me, then I could have borne it ; neither was it he that hated me, that did magnify himself against me ; then would I have hid myself from him : but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and my acquaintanee. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the House of God in company.”

And that the General who headed the army against him should be AMASA, the son of his sister ABIGAIL, and therefore so near to him, as that DAVID saith of him, that he was “ bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh ;” this was another aggravation of his affliction.

And lastly, this made the affliction most sharp of all, that he that was at the head of all should be ABSALOM ; that the Son should thirst after the Father’s blood ; that he which “ came forth of his bowels should seek his life,” as he complains *2 Sam. xvi. 11* ; that he should be the son whom he loved most passionately, even so passionately, that after his three years’ absence from court, it is said, (*Chap. xiii. 39.*) “ the soul of DAVID longed to go forth unto ABSALOM ;” and that all this should befall him in his old age, and after he had by his valour and conduct saved his people out of the hands of their enemies.

Put all these sad circumstances together, and was not DAVID in sore troubles and trials ? But how doth he behave himself herein ? Doth he quarrel with Providence, and the instruments of his trouble ? Nothing less : but his carriage was all composed of meekness and submission to the Will of God.

Being sensible of the imminent danger he was in, he provides for his security by removing from *Jerusalem* ; which he and his servants did with all speed, lest ABSALOM should suddenly overtake them, and “ thrust” (or “ push”) evil upon them, as the word is : for his enemies were most quick and active in their preparations against him ; which therefore he calls the “ stormy wind and tempest,” *Psal. lv. 8.* Of his hasty fleeing he speaks in *Psal. lv. 6, 7,* (which refers to this occasion, as appears by verse 14,) where he cries, “ O that I had wings like a dove ! for

then would I flee away, and be at rest : Lo then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.”

Being gotten out of the City in haste, he and his Guard tarry in a place that was far off, (2 *Sam.* xv. 17,) to refresh themselves ; not knowing whither to go, or where to be at rest ; *Verse 20.*

Having made a little pause here, he passeth over the brook *Kedron*, *verse 23*, (a brook between the City and Mount *Olivet*,) all the country weeping with a loud voice at this sad procession ; as also, when they were going up Mount *Olivet*, “ they went weeping as they went, every one “ covering his head,” after the manner of mourning ; *Verse 30.* And in the midst of these hardships, and sorrowful sympathizings of the people, which could not but much affect his heart, (having given order to *ZADOK*, the Priest, to return back to the City with the Ark of *GOD*, which thus far accompanied him, desiring that that monument of *GOD*’s Glory and Presence might not wander up and down with him, in his desolate condition, but be placed again in the City of *GOD*,) he thus expresseth the humble and quiet Resignation of his spirit : (*Chap.* xv. 25, 26 :) “ If I shall find favour in the eyes of the *LORD*, He will bring me again, and shew me both it (the Ark) and his habitation ; (*Jerusalem*, the City of the great King ;) but if he thus say, “ I have no delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do unto me as seemeth good unto him.”—“ Though I be brought into excessive straits, though I be deprived of all my glory in my old age, after all the services I have done for *Israel* and *Judah*, yet here am I, let Him do as seemeth good to Him, not as seemeth good to me. Thy will, O *LORD*, shall be my will ; in thy pleasure I will acquiesce. Thou shalt choose for me. Be it so as thou wouldst have it be, O thou Most Holy and Wise, the *LORD* of all, who dost whatsoever pleaseth thee in heaven and earth. My heart is ready, O *GOD*, my heart is ready ; it is fixed and resolved to drink of that cup which thou hast appointed me.”

And his humble disposition of soul discovered itself immediately afterwards, in his penitential behaviour as he went up the Mount. "He wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot;" which were the most significant expressions of humiliation and submissiveness of spirit.

And this meek frame of soul, in reference to God's disposals, did dispose him to a rare meekness and patience in reference to Men.

There happened, a little after he had passed Mount *Olivet*, a very provoking occasion; for SHIMEI, a *Benjamite*, threw stones at him and his men, and cast dust at them all along the way, and added to this indignity their curses and revilings. ABISHAI, one of his three chief Commanders, was so incensed at the horrid insolence of this "dead dog," as he called SHIMEI, that he prays the King that he might go over to him, and take off his head. But DAVID was so far from permitting this, that he was more offended at ABISHAI's zeal for him, than at SHIMEI's injuries, and thus replies to him: "What have I to do with you, ye sons of ZERUIAH? So let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse DAVID;" that is, because the LORD saw it good to permit him to curse me for my punishment; "who then shall say, Wherefore hast thou done so?" Again, "Behold," saith he, "my Son, which came out of my bowels, seeketh my life: How much more may this *Benjamite* do it? Let him alone, and let him curse: for the LORD hath bidden him."

DAVID was not a person of a dull, phlegmatic temper, or of a slow and stupid disposition, but of a vigorous, active spirit; he was sensible what a barbarous act this was in SHIMEI, thus to insult over his King, and that in his great distress; but being also sensible of God's Providence in permitting this wretched man thus to affront, revile, and curse him, to correct him for his sins, he quietly and meekly submitted to it.

And DAVID lost nothing by his humble submission; for

GOD delivered him from the policies of AHITHOPHEL, and from the powerful army of ABSALOM, and brought him back with joy and triumph to *Jerusalem*.

And as for SHIMEI, GOD returned his wickedness upon his own head; and DAVID found that true, which he did but modestly suppose upon SHIMEI's cursing: "It may be," (saith he,) "the LORD will look upon mine affliction, and that the LORD will requite good for his cursing this day." And he that spake with such an humble and resigned mind,—“But if He say, I have no delight in thee, behold here am I, let Him do to me as seemeth good to Him,”—found that GOD did delight in him, and therefore delivered him. GOD did what seemed good to DAVID, seeing he was willing He should do what seemed good to Himself.

Now, if DAVID, a King, one of such dignity, one of so great renown in the world, one of such incomparable magnanimity, did with such meekness of soul submit to the Divine Providence, and in such instances as these, wherein as a King and as a Father he was most highly provoked; is it not a shame for us, who are so much his inferiors, to be impatient and unresigned, and that in far less trials than his were?

## CHAP. X.

### *Of the Example of ST. PAUL.*

THE last example I shall mention is blessed PAUL; a "Follower of CHRIST," as he styles himself, *1 Cor. xi. 1*; and he imitated him in nothing more than in Self-Resignation.

The very first words he spake at his Conversion did speak the great preparedness of his soul for this grace: "LORD," said he, "what wilt thou have me to do?" There then shone round about him a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun; but a more glorious

light shined into his heart: and as *that* light struck his body down to the earth, so did *this* his soul, and humbled it to the lowest degree of self-abasement, and submission to the Will of GOD.

“LORD, what wilt thou have me to do?”—was as well the language of his heart as of his lips. And whatsoever it was the will of GOD that he should do or suffer afterwards, he was most yielding to it. He would will or act nothing but according to the Will of CHRIST,” *Phil.* i. 21. His own will was swallowed up in His Will; so that *he* did not so much live, as CHRIST lived in him; *Gal.* ii. 20.

None of the Holy Writers spake more frequently or vigorously than ST. PAUL, of the necessity of our being “crucified to the world,” and of having “the world crucified unto us;” of “crucifying the world with the affections and lusts;” of “mortifying through the SPIRIT the deeds of the body,” as being the only way to eternal life; and of “putting off the old man, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts:” By all which expressions is meant the subduing of our own will, and whatsoever is contrary to the Will of GOD.

These things this excellent Apostle doth press with all seriousness, and in expressions of greater significancy, and of a more spiritual and full energy, than any forms of spech in the Old Testament.

And what he thus teacheth and exhorts to, he was an eminent Example of. He himself was “crucified with CHRIST;” he “suffered the loss of all things,” and “accounted all” other “things but loss and dung that he might win CHRIST,” and that he “might know the power of CHRIST’s resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.”

He professed, that it is most reasonable, that if CHRIST died for us, we should live to Him, and not to our own wills; that the love of CHRIST doth, with a sweet force, constrain hereunto; and that the mercies of GOD powerfully engage us to make an entire oblation of ourselves to Him, “which is our reasonable service.”

And his practice was fully agreeable to his professions. At his Conversion, GOD showed him how great things he must suffer for his name's sake ; but the hardships he was to endure did not at all startle him. The HOLY GHOST witnessed in every city, that bonds and afflictions did await him ; but, saith he, "none of these things trouble me, nor count I my life dear unto myself," (and what is dearer than life?) "so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the LORD JESUS, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of GOD." And therefore he went to *Jerusalem*, (where he was to expect very great afflictions,) "bound in spirit," constrained by a holy violence.

Nor could he be persuaded by those Disciples at *Tyre*, who, by revelation, told him that he would incur much hazard by going up to *Jerusalem*, and therefore advised him not to go : nor was he wrought upon by those other Disciples, who endeavoured by their tears, added to their earnest entreaties, to stay him : but his answer to them was, "What mean you to weep, and to break mine heart ; for I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at *Jerusalem*, for the name of the LORD JESUS." And by the steadfast purpose of his will to submit to GOD, did he at last win them over to the same Resignation : "And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The Will of the LORD be done."

So far was he from living a self-pleasing life, that, if he pleased himself in any thing, it was "in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for CHRIST's sake."

So far was he from impatience, or shrinking at those disposals of Providence, that he rejoiced in his sufferings, while he "filled up that which was behind of the sufferings of CHRIST in his flesh, for his body's sake, which is the Church."

But there is one passage in St. PAUL's Writings, which I had chiefly in mine eye, when I thought him, next to our blessed SAVIOUR, most worthy to be presented as a



pattern for Christians to follow: and it is a passage which expresseth the great progress he had made in Self-Resignation, both as it consists in a free and entire obedience to difficult Commands, and in the patient bearing of hard Trials and Sufferings.

The passage is that in *Phil.* iv. 11—13: “I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; every where, and in all things, I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through CHRIST that strengtheneth me.”

Of which words I may say, as AUSONIUS of the Emperor’s Words, *O mentis aureæ verba bracteata!* “O plated (or rich and most excellent) words, expressing a golden (or most beautiful and goodly) mind.” Yea, such is the preciousness of this wisdom, to “know how to be either abased or to abound,” to have “learned in every condition to be content,” that it is not “to be valued with pure gold, with the precious onyx or the sapphire; the price of it is above rubies.”

To “know how to abound and to be full,” and not to deny GOD, not to forget and forsake him in fulness, not to be high-minded, or trust in uncertain riches, not to make the abundance of these outward things to administer to pride and sensuality; but, on the contrary, to be humble, to trust in GOD, to acknowledge Him in all his gifts, to be moderate in abundance, and strictly religious;—this is no easy thing; it is a lesson that few will learn; but St. PAUL had learned it.

To “know how to be abased, how to want,” and to be kept short; to look upon others’ full portions in this life without covetousness, or envying what they have; to bear adversity, to endure afflictions, losses, and difficulties of all sorts, without impatience and murmuring at the allotment of Providence; to be quiet and meek; and much more, to be cheerful, and rejoice under all; not to love GOD the less, nor trust Him the less, nor to flag or be

discouraged by this means in his service;—this is also a difficult and uneasy lesson, but holy PAUL was likewise herein instructed.

“We glory in tribulations,” saith this great Apostle, *Rom. v. 3.* Glorifying is not mere joy, but joy exalted to its utmost height. And what a full expression is that which he useth, *2 Cor. vii. 4,* “I do more than abound with joy in all tribulation:” or, “I rejoice with a superlative joy.” What a mighty proficient was this blessed person in the school of CHRIST! Yea, he farther saith, that he could “do all things through CHRIST strengthening him.” And he had learned to be content not only in some conditions, but “in whatsoever state:” he knew how to be abased, and how to want, not only in some circumstances, but “every where, and in all things.” Here was the Power of Godliness indeed, and “the Kingdom of GOD not in Word but in Power.” And after all this, he ascribes nothing to himself, but gives to CHRIST the glory of all. He was, he says, able to do all this “through CHRIST strengthening him;” through the power of his grace, which was sufficient for him.

This is somewhat, of much more that might be observed, concerning this blessed Apostle, who, in Resignation to the Will of GOD, was one of the best Copies, and nearest the Original, that ever was drawn by the finger of GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT. And, next to the life of CHRIST, the fairest picture of purity and holiness, the life of PAUL is set forth at large; above half of the *Acts of the Apostles* being spent in his character. Nor was it out of any vain-glorious design, nor from any undue love or value of himself, that he entreated others to “be followers of him, as he was of CHRIST,” but from the inward sense of the great sweetness, peace, and comfort, and the many advantages, which he found in the imitation of Him, and from the absolute necessity of this duty. And these great reasons induced him to propound himself as a pattern, particularly to the *Corinthians*, (*1 Cor. xi. 1, chap. iv. 16;*) to the *Thessalonians*, (*2 Thess. iii. 7, 9;*) and to the *Philippians*,

(chap. iii. 17, and iv. 9;) “Those things which ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me, do, and the God of Peace shall be with you.”

Now then, O feeble and faint-hearted Christian, take courage from these great Examples; up and be doing; be strong in the LORD, and in the power of his might. Wait upon GOD, and apply thyself heartily to Him, that thou mayest be clothed with the same spirit, and be endued with “power from on high.” And as ELISHA said of old, “Where is the LORD GOD of ELIJAH,—so rouse up thyself, and say, Where is the GOD of PAUL, the GOD of ABRAHAM, JOB, and DAVID? The same GOD, who wrought effectually in these to such an exemplary Resignation, will be mighty in thee also, if thou hast the same spirit of faith. “He that is mighty will magnify thee,” will do great things for thee and in thee.

“Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting GOD fainteth not, neither is weary?” Nor hath He “forgotten to be gracious;” but his tender mercies are the same, and the arm of his strength the same.

Only take heed of being wearied, and fainting in your minds; but “wait on the LORD, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the LORD.” You shall then be enabled to “run the race that is set before you with patience;” though it is a long and hard race, you shall “run it and not be weary;” you shall “walk,” in the most difficult paths of obedience, “and not faint.” “The arm of the LORD shall awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old;” as it did in the days of the fore-mentioned Worthies: And you shall be “strengthened,” as they were, “with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering,” and that “with joyfulness.”

## CHAP. XI.

*That the consideration of CHRIST Crucified is a very effectual means for the crucifying of the Old Man.*

NINTHLY, Let thy mind dwell much upon the meditation of CHRIST CRUCIFIED. Bring thy self-will and inordinatc affections to Mount *Calvary*, and there nail them to the cross of CHRIST. AS CHRIST “blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, and contrary to us,” namely, the Jewish Law, the Mosaical Rites, “and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;” so should a Christian do with the Law in his Members, or the Law of Sin and Death. The nailing it to the cross of CHRIST is a most effectual means to take it out of the way.

The cross of CHRIST is a proper instrument for crucifying the Old Man, and the Body of Sin; and the consideration of CHRIST Crucified is a powerful engine, “mighty, through GOD; to the pulling down of strong holds,” to the beating down of all those fortifications which sin hath raised in the soul, all imaginations, all carnal reasonings and affections, every high thing that would exalt itself against the knowledge of GOD, and the obedience of CHRIST.

ST. PAUL speaks his own experience of the success he found in the serious consideration of CHRIST Crucified, in *Gal. vi. 14*: “GOD forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, whereby the ‘world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world:’” that is, the vanities and allurements of the world, whether they be riches, honours, or pleasures, are become lifeless and untempting to me, and have no force to persuade me to a pursuit of them; I am so little affected towards them, so mortified to them, as to place no part of my happiness in such things.

Now, then, the meditation ON CHRIST Crucified is a

means greatly available to the subduing of our own will and irregular appetites, in that,

1. As the Scripture declares that his dying on the cross was to make atonement for sin; so it affirms, that it was also designed to root out and destroy it. This is asserted in many texts :

Particularly in *1 Pet.* ii. 24 ; “ Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness ; by whose stripes ye were healed : ”

In *2 Cor.* v. 14, 15 ; “ For the love of CHRIST constraineth us ; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead ; and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live to themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again : ”

In *1 Pet.* i. 18, 19 ; “ Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, but with the precious blood of CHRIST, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot. ”

In *Gal.* i. 4 ; “ Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of GOD and our FATHER : ”

In *Titus* ii. 14 ; “ Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works : ”

And in *Rom.* viii. 3, 4 ; “ For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, GOD sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh : That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the SPIRIT. ”

2. CHRIST'S dying on the cross was designed to be a Pattern of our crucifying the Body of Sin. As his Resurrection is a figure of the spiritual resurrection of Christians, and of their rising to a life holy, heavenly, and divine ; so his Death on the cross is a representation of that spiritual death which is to pass upon the Old Man.

And because this is a necessary and important truth, as well as pertinent to the point in hand, I shall observe three passages of Scripture to this purpose, and a little descant upon them :

First, that in 1 *Pet.* iv. 1 ; “ Forasmuch, then, as CHRIST hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind ; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.”

The “ suffering in the flesh,” in which the Apostle here tells us we are to imitate our SAVIOUR, is not to be merely understood of suffering afflictions in the body, but of our resembling the suffering and dying of CHRIST in dying unto sin. This appears from what next follows, “ He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.” Some Greek Copies leave out the particle *εν*, and read *ο παθων σαρκι*, he that hath *suffered* or *died to the flesh* ; the same with that phrase, *Rom.* vi. 2, *dead to sin*. He that hath suffered or died to the flesh, or he that hath suffered pain and smart in the flesh, in the mortifying of his sin and of the deeds of the body, “ hath ceased from sin ;” as he that is dead ceaseth from the actions that belong to the natural life.

This also appears from *ver.* 2, “ That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of GOD ;”—should not live any longer in the gratification of those fleshly appetites that enslave the greater part of mankind, but, on the contrary, live a life of entire obedience to the will of GOD.

A second passage, to the like purpose, is that in *Philippians* iii. 10, “ That I may know Him, and the power of his Resurrection, and the fellowship of his Sufferings, being made conformable unto his Death :” which last words are a key to the foregoing ; and this conformity to the death of CHRIST implies, that it hath in it something of Pattern to be spiritually resembled and imitated by a Christian.

There is a knowing of the power of CHRIST’S Resurrection and Sufferings *without us*, as they refer to GOD the

FATHER, in purchasing his favour, and in procuring the pardon of our sins, and reconciliation with Him: For CHRIST was “delivered (to death) for our offences, and rose again for our justification;” *Rom. iv. 25.* And besides, there is a knowing of the power of CHRIST’S Death and Resurrection *within us*; there is something to be done and transacted in us that is answerable thereunto. There is a partaking of his Sufferings in a spiritual sense; when we are enabled, by the power of GOD, to suffer the pain and agonies that accompany the crucifying of the flesh, or body of sin, and to die *unto sin* as he died *for it*. And there is a partaking of CHRIST’S Resurrection in a spiritual sense; when we are enabled to rise to a new and heavenly life, when we “seek” and savour “those things which are above, where CHRIST sits at the right hand of GOD,” *Col. iii. 1.*

This is that excellent Knowledge of CHRIST, for which the Apostle “counted all things but loss and dung.” Had he rested in a merely speculative, historical knowledge of the Death and Resurrection of CHRIST, *without him*, and been impatient of the energy of both *within him*; had he not so known CHRIST dying and raised again to life, as to be spiritually crucified with Him, and to rise with Him to newness of life; such a knowledge would not have availed him in the end.

The third passage is that in *Rom. vi. 4, 5*, “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: For if we have been planted together in the Likeness of His Death, we shall be also in the Likeness of His Resurrection.”

By this Likeness of CHRIST’S Death and Resurrection, it appears, that there is a lively resemblance of both, which a Christian is obliged to endeavour after. Then it follows; “Knowing this, that our Old Man is crucified with Him, that the Body of Sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

3. The Death and Sufferings of CHRIST are very powerful

to engage and enable us to the great duties of crucifying worldly lusts, and mortifying corrupt affections, as they are effectual to work in us the most heart-bleeding Sorrow for Sin, and the most vehement Detestation of it, and to raise the soul to the greatest degrees of Love and ingenuous Gratitude.

(1.) To work in us the most heart-bleeding Sorrow for Sin. Who can seriously consider CHRIST Crucified; Christ bleeding on the cross; bleeding from the sixth to the ninth hour; (from twelve o'clock to three;) his bleeding head, crowned with sharp thorns; his bleeding hands, and feet, and side;—I say, who can consider this, and not bleed within? Who can “look upon Him that was pierced,” and not be inwardly pierced himself, or not be pricked to the heart, as they are said to have been who are mentioned in *Acts* ii. 37, at the preaching of CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

And when we consider that “He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities,” or, (as the words are rendered by some,) “of our transgressions and iniquities;” when we consider that *we* have crucified the LORD OF LIFE AND GLORY; that our sins nailed Him to the Cross, wounded Him to the heart, and put Him to all the grief and pain he underwent; how can it be, that our hearts should not be wounded within us? How can we forbear to express our sorrow for sin in some such words as those of JEREMIAH, “My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at the very heart: O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears!”

And can we consider his agony in the garden, the “exceeding sorrowfulness of his soul,” his “extreme heaviness and sore amazement,” his “strong crying and tears,” and his “sweating great drops of blood,” and not be melted into holy mournings for our sins, and for all our unkind and unworthy behaviour towards CHRIST, who thus suffered for us?

How hard is that heart which the so great and painful sufferings of our SAVIOUR cannot melt and dissolve!



At the Passion of CHRIST (besides other prodigies,) it is said “the rocks rent;” and are our hearts harder than rocks, not to be affected with remorse at the consideration of CHRIST CRUCIFIED?

It is ST. HIEROM’s observation, that “when CHRIST died, all creatures were his fellow-sufferers; the SUN was eclipsed, the Earth shook, the Rocks were cleft in sunder, the Veil of the Temple was rent in twain, the Graves opened: Man alone, for whom only CHRIST died, suffered not with Him.”

Certainly, if the consideration of our SAVIOUR’s sufferings for our sakes cannot prevail to melt our hearts into a holy sorrow for our sins, nothing will ever do it.

And if it hath such a peculiar and sovereign efficacy to work a heart-bleeding sorrow for sin, it will consequently be very effectual to disengage us from it, and to take us off from all those vanities and lusts, which were formerly most dear and pleasing to us.

If we are grieved at the heart for our self-will, self-love, and manifold disobediences, we shall not continue to “make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”

(2.) The Death and Sufferings of CHRIST are effectual to work in us the most vehement Detestation of Sin. It appears from thence, how hateful and abominable a thing sin is to GOD, who is original Rectitude and infinite Purity. For how could He demonstrate a greater antipathy against sin, than in being “pleased to bruise, and put to grief,” the SON of his Love, and to give up “the Brightness of his Glory and the express Image of his Person” to inexpressible dolours, to the end that He might make expiation for it.

If sin were an inconsiderable thing, if it were not a thing of a most odious nature, a high injury to GOD, and of dismal consequence to man,—He would not have required *such* a Sacrifice for it.

This consideration must needs be most forcible to work in us Detestation of Sin, whatsoever favour it hath found

in our eyes. Suppose we ourselves to have seen CHRIST in the last scene of his sufferings, and to have accompanied him from the Garden of *Gethsemane*, where he was in his *Agony*, and sweat drops of blood, to the High-Priest's House, thence to the Judgment-Hall before PILATE, then to Mount *Calvary*, in which places he was reproached, spit upon, scourged, and at last nailed to the Cross: and suppose him speaking to us, as, in another sense, PILATE spake of him, "*Behold your King; Behold your LORD and SAVIOUR*: See the wounds which your sins have given me; see how they have torn my flesh, and despitefully used me: But the unsecn wounds, the inward sorrows of my soul, are such as the heart of man cannot conceive, as neither hath the eye seen, nor the ear heard what may be compared to them. Thus have your lusts dealt with me; and in all this see their cruelty."—If we had beheld our blessed LORD in his direful sufferings, and heard him thus expressing himself to us, do we think we could still cherish and embrace those enemies of his, which have put him to all this shame and torment?

If we have an inward knowledge and feeling of CHRIST Crucified, it will most undoubtedly inflame us into a just indignation against those lusts which sucked the life-blood of CHRIST, which crucified the LORD OF GLORY. We shall say concerning *them*, what the *Jews* cried concerning *Him*, "Away with them, away with them, they are not worthy to live:" Let these murderers of the Just One die the death, but let JESUS live; and let the life of CHRIST be manifested in us. How can that be longer sweet to me, which made CHRIST's cup so exceeding bitter? How can I delight in that, which made his soul sorrowful unto death? How shall that be my pleasure, which was his pain, and put him to grief; such grief, that "there was no sorrow like unto his sorrow?" How should I glory in that, which put Him to such an open shame?

(3.) The Death and Sufferings of CHRIST are powerful to raise the soul to the greatest degrees of Love and Gratitude. We have already shown that there never was a

love like the love of CHRIST; that love which He expressed in giving himself an offering and a sacrifice to GOD for us.

Now, not to part with our lusts for Him, who parted with life itself for us; not to put ourselves to some pain in crucifying the lusts of the flesh, in denying our own will, and in taking up the cross and following Him, who hath, to amazement, denied himself, and taken upon him the greatest of sufferings, for our sakes; this would be an instance of the vilest ingratitude imaginable. This will be more grievous to him, than all his sufferings from the *Jews* and *Romans*; it being a disappointment of him in the great design he had in submitting to those sufferings.

But a soul truly sensible of the love of CHRIST in giving Himself for us, can think nothing too dear to part with for him,—cannot look upon his commands of Self-Denial and Self-Resignation as grievous and unsufferable.

I will add, that the particular circumstances of CHRIST'S last Sufferings, have a special force for enabling a Christian to overcome those particular sins, which prevail most among men, and which are the most fruitful branches that grow out of that cursed stock of Self-Will: as,

(1.) *Self-Esteem*; an over-valuing of a man's self, and of his fame and regard in the world; a seeking the praise of men, and being disturbed at their disrespect.

Now of how great efficacy must it needs be, to the subduing of this corruption, to “consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself,” and how he was exercised with all manner of derisions, reproaches, injuries, and indignities, that the wit and malice of his enemies could devise, to render him despicable before men.

He was called a blasphemer, a deceiver, an enemy to CÆSAR, (or traitorous person,) and a seditious stirrer-up of the people; and all this about the time of his last passion; as before he was called a *Samaritan*, (or heretic,) and *Beelzebub*.

And as an expression of their contempt, they “spit upon his face;” that sacred face, which the glorious Angels delighted to look upon; and which ABRAHAM, and many Kings, and Prophets, and righteous persons, desired to see. What indignity like to this! They “smote him on the face;” adding farther contempt, accompanied with pain, to the disgrace of having his face besmeared with their filthy spittle: and withal, they “covered his face, saying, Prophecy unto us, thou CHRIST, who it is that smote thee.”

Thus contumeliously did they use the ANOINTED OF THE LORD; and as in the last passage they mocked at his *Prophetical*, so did they afterwards at his *Kingly Office*,—putting on him a gorgeous robe, plaiting thorns into the form of a crown, and putting it on his head, and a reed for a sceptre into his hand, and then bowing the knee before him, saying, “Hail, King of the *Jews*.”

These are a few instances of the many dishonours and indignities done unto him.—I might add, that the kind of death which he suffered was as ignominious as painful, the death of slaves, and vile offenders: and to add to the disgrace, they crucified him between two thieves.

Yea, even when he was bleeding upon the Cross, they would not forbear to deride and revile him; expressing their scorn both in words and gestures. Nor were they who did thus, the rude rabble only, but the Chief Priests, Scribes, and Elders.

Now consider this, O Christian, how it fared with CHRIST, thy great LORD and MASTER; what affronts, what dishonours, what reproaches he endured, and how undisturbedly he bare them; how he “despised the shame;” how little he cared, either for the applause or contempt of the world; how he chose rather to be reputed and dealt with as the basest of men, than to be glorious in the world, and to shine in its vain honours: and will not this prevail with thee, to set thyself against thy pride and *Self-Esteem*? Surely it is not possible that thou,

who art infinitely beneath thy blessed SAVIOUR, shouldest set a high value on thyself, and affect the praises of men, or be greatly concerned at the contemptuous behaviour and affronts of the world, when thou seriously considerest how CHRIST was used, reproached, and despised, and with what calmness of spirit he bore it. "The Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord. It is enough for the Disciple that he be as his Master, and the Servant as his LORD."

(2.) As for the lust of *Self-Plcasing*, the love of ease and pleasure, an aversion to endure hardships, a studious care to gratify the cravings of our appetites,—is there not enough in the consideration of CHRIST *crucified*, to cure also this distemper of the soul? Did not CHRIST, out of tender compassion towards men, leave his FATHER'S House, where was all fulness and all joy, and humble himself to become man, and "take upon Him the form of a servant?" He endured cold and heat, hunger and thirst, wearisome labours, long fastings, and faintness. "He bare our griefs, and carried our sorrows;" and endured inexpressibly worse griefs and sorrows than any of ours.

Now how can we consider this, and be any longer solicitous for the pleasing of our appetites, and pampering our bodies? And as for the impure pleasures of the world, no consideration can be more powerful to extinguish in us all desires to them, than that of CHRIST *upon the Cross*.

(3.) *Revenge and Hatred*: Who can harbour these lusts, that considers that CHRIST laid down his life for his enemies; and that almost the last words he spake on the cross, amidst that shame and torment to which they put him, were a prayer for them: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

(4.) *Covetousness*, or the *Love of Money*: Who that considers, that "though CHRIST was rich, yet he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich," and

that it was this lust that betrayed the LORD of LIFE to his merciless enemies, can find it difficult to subdue his inclinations to it?

To conclude: To the serious Christian, *the Word of the Cross of CHRIST* is sharper than any two-edged sword, to the destroying of all evil and corrupt affections.

But I fear that it is not considered, as it ought, by most of us. Christians generally consider the Sufferings of CHRIST, only as they were designed to expiate sin, and in reference to what He hath done for them and without them; not in their reference to the extirpation of sin, and to the "crucifying of the flesh, with its affections and lusts:" and hence it is, that their consideration thereof is no more available to this great end.

## CHAP. XII.

*That the frequent consideration of the great Recompence of Reward, is a mighty help to the attaining of SELF-RESIGNATION.*

XII. IN order to the attainment of Self-Resignation, let us look to the great Recompence of Reward. Let us, with an eye of faith, frequently look upon the promise of eternal life, the prize that is set before us, the crown of life and glory, that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for all obedient and resigned souls.

It is said of JESUS, (*Heb. xii. 2.*) that "for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross," exquisitely painful as it was, and "despised the shame;" all the insultings of his enemies over him, and the vile ignominy of his death.

And in conformity to him, a Christian may be enabled to endure the inward cross, in being crucified to the world, and in dying to sin, and to his own corrupt will, by eyeing steadfastly the joy and glory set before him, and by often contemplating the future reward, which is in-

finitely above all the labours that accompany Self-Resignation, and the pains and sorrows that attend it.

The great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, who was acquainted not only with the greatest sufferings from the world, and the labours and pains of mortification and self-denial, but also with this blessed Reward, (having been taken up into Paradise,) having well weighed both, thus pronounces: (*Rom. viii. 18.*) “ I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.” If the sufferings be laid in one balance, and the glorious reward in the other, the glory will unspeakably outweigh them: for it is a “ far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;” in comparison of which our heaviest afflictions are but “ light,” and our longest “ but for a moment.”

That GOD is “ a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him,” is the first principle to be believed in Religion; without which, all our endeavours therein will be weak and feeble. And the End of our faith and obedience being much in our eye, the excellency and infinite desirableness thereof will take away all that unpleasantness which may be in the Means.

A firm belief, with frequent and fixed thoughts of the heavenly Reward, would fill our hearts with joy and strength, and carry us with great ease through whatsoever difficulties lie before us in the way of entire obedience and Self-Resignation. None of the divine commandments can be grievous to the heavenly-minded, nor any trials burdensome.

Serious and believing thoughts of the glory to be enjoyed, will put such life, spirit, and vigour into us, as will cause us to “ run the race set before us,” not only “ with patience,” but with delight and joy: so that we shall “ sing in the ways of the LORD,” as the expression is in *Psal. cxxxviii. 5*, and “ glorify him even in the fires;” (*Isa. xxiv. 15.*) We shall be enabled to submit to GOD’S Will, under great afflictions, as without murmuring, so with thankfulness.

They that grudge to give GOD more than the fruit of their lips, than some good words, wishes, or intentions, or some formal observances, or some reformation in lesser and easier matters, and then think that they have done as became those that sought GOD's Kingdom, miserably undervalue the glory and felicities of the life to come. They never spent so many thoughts on Heaven as to have any true and worthy conception of the happiness of it; otherwise they could never imagine it to be fit, that the doing and suffering of no more than this comes to, should be recompensed with such a reward; or that God will ever reward such a shadow of religion, with so real and substantial a happiness,—their withering leaves of outward profession, with such a crown of glory as shall never fade. But those that frequently affect their souls with the thoughts of that bliss which is promised to those who “deny themselves and take up their cross, and follow CHRIST” in spiritual obedience and resignation, can never think much of any pains or trouble this may put them to. If the Devil can prevail, as he doth, by those imaginary satisfactions which he promiseth, what influence would GOD's promises of “fulness of joy,” and “pleasures for evermore,” and “an everlasting kingdom,” have upon all those that duly consider them?

How will men deny themselves, what labours will they undergo, what hardships will they suffer, for some worldly advantages which fall far short of a kingdom, for some petty principality and dominion over others, for a preferment that hath some little authority in it, or brings in some profit! But had any such ambitious ones, the hope of a kingdom, how would they be transported with excess of joy; what difficulties, dangers, and painful labours would they go through, and think them nothing! And can we grudge to do or suffer as much for an infinitely more glorious Kingdom than any in this world, if we really believe it to be attainable by us?

If we were promised a great earthly reward, upon condition that we would abstain from such and such things,



would we not do it? And shall not the eternal blessedness which God, who is as able as faithful to perform, hath promised, be of like force with us? Nay, shall it not be of far greater force, proportionable to the quality of the reward? When all that we can do is but very little, and utterly unworthy to be compared with this glorious reward, is it possible that we should do less than we can, for the obtaining of it, if we considerately and believingly thought of it?

“ Know ye not,” saith the Apostle, “ that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things: Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.” If they, in the *Isthmian Games*, were so careful to observe an accurate diet, to prepare and qualify themselves for those exercises; if they were temperate in all things, denying themselves in their sensual desires; if they were willing to weary and spend themselves in the race, or to endure blows and wounds in the combat, and thought no diligence, no labour, no hazard too great, for but a flowery or leafy, a fading and corruptible crown, a short and perishing reward; would not Christians much more “ run their race with patience,” “ fight the good fight of faith,” “ endure hardship, and deny themselves and their fleshly desires, while an exceeding and eternal weight of glory” is in their eye? If the men of this world shall think no pains too great for uncertain riches, which, while they enjoy them, are embittered with many fears and anxious cares; would not the lively hope of eternal life, and of a treasure in Heaven, which “ neither the moth can eat, nor rust can corrupt, nor thieves steal,” engage us to greater labour and self-denial? Would it not more strongly affect us, and make us more earnest and industrious? Surely it would.

Awake, awake then, O thou delicate and lazy Christian! Rouse up thyself, and stir up the gift of God in thee: Go up to Mount *Nebo*, and take a view of *Canaan*, that

pleasant and glorious land. See what a goodly heritage is reserved for thee, and “how great that goodness is which GOD hath laid (or stored) up for them that fear him.” Eye the fulness of the Reward; keep it in thy mind; believe it with thine heart; and then how cheerfully wilt thou travel through the wilderness to *Canaan*! Yea, this will make the very wilderness a little *Canaan*, or Land of Rest and Delight to thee; it will make it a little *Eden*, and Garden of the LORD. Nor wilt thou then grudge if GOD shall prove and humble thee by a long journey in the wilderness, “to know what is in thine heart,”—whether there be in thee an obedient will, a resigned and submissive temper as to his commands and disposals. Thou wilt not be difficultly persuaded to believe that *Canaan* will make an abundant recompence for all thy wearisome labours. And if, in the mean while, GOD feeds thee with the bread of Heaven, and sustains thee with *manna* in the wilderness, art thou not well and kindly treated by Him? Hereafter to feed with Angels, to “sit down with ABRAHAM, ISAAC, and JACOB, in the Kingdom of Heaven;” and here to be provided for with “Angels’ food” to the full: to have “joy unspeakable and glorious,” an eternity of pleasures hereafter; and withal, “peace which passeth all understanding” here,—inward pleasures and delicious satisfactions, “the peaceable fruit of righteousness,” which thy “sowing to the SPIRIT” will yield thee in this life: to be crowned with glory in heaven, and on earth to be “crowned with loving-kindness and tender mercies:”—these foretastes of happiness and earnestness of the great reward, these little coronets for the present, and the assurance of a massy crown, a “weight of glory,” in the other life, methinks, should be of force to endear obedience, and sweeten patience to thee; to remove all apprehension of difficulty in what GOD will have thee either to do or suffer.

If there be any generosity in thee, thou canst not but be very angry with, and condemn thyself, whensoever

thou feelst any secret grudging at what God would have thee undertake, seeing he hath proposed such a Reward to animate thee to it.

If there were any ingenuity in thee, thou couldst not but be ashamed at thinking how little thou either sufferest or doest for the Kingdom of God.

Thy obedience is due to his commands, and thy submission to his will, though there were no future Reward: But will God bestow on thy obedience and thy patience so glorious a Reward? Will he reward an obedience for a short time, and a momentary suffering of affliction, with an eternity of bliss, with a glory so transcendently and astonishingly great?

And is this great Reward so near? This present life is but short; thou hast but a few days to continue here; there is but a step between thee and eternal life: there is, between this and the other world, the vale of the shadow of death, a darksome passage, but a very short one, and thou shalt enter upon "the reward of the inheritance;" which, at the glorious appearance of JESUS CHRIST, shall be grown up to its full proportion.



AN  
EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
CHURCH CATECHISM.



EXTRACTED FROM BISHOP KEN.





AN  
EXPOSITION  
OF THE  
CHURCH CATECHISM.

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QUESTION. *What is your name?*

ANSWER. *N. or M.*

Q. Why do you answer by that name rather than by your surname?

A. Because it is my Christian name, and puts me in mind both of the happiness and duty of a Christian.

Q. Where do you learn the happiness and the duty of a Christian?

A. The next answer teaches me the happiness, and all the rest of the Catechism, the duty of a Christian.

Q. *Who gave you this name?*

A. *My Godfathers and Godmothers in my baptism, wherein I was made a member of CHRIST, the child of GOD, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.*

Q. Show me from hence the happiness of a Christian?

A. The happiness of a Christian is altogether unutterable: he is one who has CHRIST for his head, GOD for his Father, and Heaven, with all its joys and glories, which are eternal, for his inheritance.

**Q.** Show me, on the contrary, the condition of one that is not a Christian.

**A.** The misery of such a one is altogether insupportable. He has **CHRIST** for his enemy, the Devil for his father, and hell, with all its miseries, and torments, and despair, which are eternal, for his doom.

**Q.** Which of these conditions do you choose ?

**A.** I adore the goodness of **GOD**, who has set before me, "life and death, blessing and cursing," (*Deut.* xxx. 19,) and in great compassion to my soul, has bid me choose life; and with all my heart I choose life, even life eternal.

**Q.** Are there not many in the world that choose death ?

**A.** It is too visible that there are; such is the extreme madness and folly of obstinate sinners, that they choose the service of the Devil before the service of **GOD**, and hell before heaven; the damnation of such men is wholly from themselves; (*Ezek.* xxxiii. 11, *Hos.* xiii. 9;) and having chosen death, even death eternal, it is most just with **GOD** to give them their choice.

**Q.** Blessed be **GOD** who has given you grace to make a right choice. Tell me what you must do to obtain that which you have chosen, life eternal ?

**A.** All that I am to do is reduced to one word only, and that is **LOVE**. This is the first and the great command, which comprehends all others: if I truly love **GOD**, I shall live beloved by **GOD**, to all eternity.

**Q.** Tell me wherein the Love of **GOD** doth consist.

**A.** The Love of **GOD** is a grace rather to be felt than defined, so that I can do no more than rudely describe it; it is the general inclination and tendency of the whole man, of all his heart, and soul, and strength, of all his powers and affections, and of the utmost strength of them all, to **GOD**, as his only, and perfect, and infinite good.

**Q.** Is this Love of **GOD** taught in the Catechism ?

**A.** The Catechism, having in the entrance of it presented to our choice the happiness of a Christian, does throughout all the remaining parts of it instruct us in

the duties of a Christian, all summed up in the Love of God, which is here most methodically taught.

Q. In what method does the Catechism teach the Love of God ?

A. In a method so excellent and natural, that if by God's help I can but faithfully observe it, I shall not fail of the Love of God.

Q. Explain this method to me.

A. It teaches me how the Love of God is produced, how practised, and how preserved.

Q. Show me more distinctly in what parts of the Catechism each of these particulars is couched.

A. If I seriously desire the Love of God, I must first expel all contrary loves out of my heart by faith. This is taught in the vow of Baptism and in the Creed.

When Divine Love is once produced, my next care is to put it in practice; and that is, by bringing forth the fruits of Love, which are all contained in the Ten Commandments.

When the Love of God is produced in my heart, and is set on work, my last concern is to preserve, and insure, and quicken it; it is preserved by Prayer, the pattern of which is the LORD'S Prayer; it is insured to us by the Sacraments, which are the pledges of Love; and more particularly it is quickened by the holy Eucharist, which is the Feast of Love: so that the plain order of the Catechism teaches me the rise, the progress, and the perfection of Divine Love, which God of his great mercy give me grace to follow.

Q. You are to begin with the vow you made at your Baptism. Tell me,

*What did your Godfathers and Godmothers then for you ?*

A. *They did promise and vow three things in my name : First, That I should renounce the Devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh ;*



*Secondly, That I should believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith ;*

*And, Thirdly, that I should keep GOD's holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life.*

*Q. Dost thou not think thou art bound to believe and to do as they have promised for thee ?*

*A. Yes, verily ; and by GOD's help so I will ; and I heartily thank our heavenly FATHER, that he hath called me to this state of salvation, through JESUS CHRIST our SAVIOUR : and I pray unto GOD to give me his grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life's end.*

*Q. The promises of faith and obedience, which you made in your baptism, will be mentioned in their proper places, when you come to the Creed and to the Commandments ; that which now lies before you is to show how your renunciation is preparatory to the Love of GOD.*

*A. As all particular graces are but the Love of GOD, varied by different instances and relations, so all particular sins are nothing but the love of one creature or other, in competition with, or opposition to, the Love of GOD. Now all the creatures on which we set our love are reducible to these three, the Devil, the world, and the flesh ; and my heart must be emptied of these impure loves, before it is capable of entertaining the pure love of GOD.*

*Q. If you are conscious to yourself, that you have entertained these impure loves, and have violated your baptismal vow, and have in your heart renounced GOD, instead of renouncing his enemies, what must you do to recover that favour of GOD, and to be delivered from the wrath to come ?*

*A. I must thoroughly repent of all the breaches of my vow, and seriously renew it.*

*Q. Express your repentance for breaking it.*

*A. I express it thus :*

*O LORD GOD, with shame, and sorrow, and confusion of face, I acknowledge thy infinite goodness to me, and my infinite vileness and ingratitude to Thee !*

Thou, LORD, infinitely good and gracious, wast pleased, out of thy own free mercy, first to love me, to excite me to love again : glory be to thee.

Thou, LORD, didst vouchsafe, of a miserable sinner, to make me a member of my SAVIOUR, thy own child, and an heir of heaven : glory be to thee.

I, infinitely wicked and unworthy, have despised, and rejected, and forfeited all the inestimable blessings, to which I was entitled by my baptism : LORD, have mercy upon me.

Woe is me, wretch that I am, I have cut myself off by my sins, from being a true *member of* CHRIST'S mystical body, and from all the gracious influences I might have derived from my union to Him ; LORD, have mercy upon me.

Woe is me, wretch that I am, I have by my numerous provocations, lost that Holy Spirit of Adoption, whereby I might become thy child, O GOD, and call thee FATHER, and am become a child of wrath : LORD, have mercy upon me.

Woe is me, wretch that I am, I have, by my own wilful impiety, disclaimed my being *an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven*, and am become an heir to the kingdom of darkness : LORD, have mercy upon me.

Woe is me, I have easily yielded to the temptations of Satan, and have wrought the *works of my father, the Devil* : LORD, have mercy upon me.

Woe is me, I have greedily coveted and pursued *the pomps and vanities of this wicked world* : LORD, have mercy upon me.

Woe is me, I have often indulged *the sinful lusts of the flesh* : LORD, have mercy upon me.

Woe is me, I have loved all things which Thou, LORD, hatest, and am myself become odious in thy sight : LORD, have mercy upon me.

Woe is me, I have neither believed in thee, O my GOD, nor obeyed thee, nor loved thee, as I ought, and as I solemnly vowed I would : LORD, have mercy upon me.

O LORD GOD, most gracious and reconcilable, pity and pardon me.

I lament, O LORD GOD, my detestable impiety, for having so long, and so often, and so obstinately offended thee.

O FATHER of Mercy, I bewail and abhor my unworthiness, and the hardness of my heart, that has "despised the riches of thy goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, which should have led me to repentance." (*Rom. ii. 4.*)

O LORD GOD, whatever thou deniest me, deny me not "a broken and a contrite heart." (*Psa. li. 17.*)

"O that my head were waters, and my eyes fountains of tears," (*Jer. ix. 1.*) that I might weep much and "love much," (*Luke vii. 47.*) having much to be forgiven.

LORD, hear me, help me, save me, for thy own gracious promise' sake, for thy own tender mercies' sake, for the merits and sufferings of JESUS thy Beloved, in whom thou hast made penitents accepted. Amen, Amen.

Q. Having repented of the violation of your baptismal vow, show me how you will renew it.

A. I shall do it after this manner:

I have sinned, O LORD GOD, I have sinned, and done evil in thy sight; but I repent, I turn to thee.

I confess and forsake my wickedness, and am sorry for my sins.

It grieves me, O most amiable Goodness, it grieves me that ever I offended thee.

With all my heart, O my GOD, do I now renew the sacred vow, which, alas! I have so often violated.

O LORD GOD, I do, for the future, *renounce the Devil*, that arch-rebel against thee, with all his apostate angels.

I renounce all his worship, all his impious suggestions, delusions, and temptations, and all the ways of consulting him which ungodly men have taken. (*Acts xix. 19.*)

I renounce all his works, all those sins of the spirit, all pride, and malice, and envy; all treachery and lying, revenge and cruelty; all tempting others to sin, hatred to holiness, and apostasy.

I utterly renounce, O GOD, *the pomps and vanities of this wicked world*; all covetous desires of honour, riches, and pleasure; all sinful excesses in things lawful.

I renounce, LORD, all evil customs, all evil companions, all that is vain or wicked in the world, all that friendship with the world which is enmity with thee, all things that may alienate my heart from thee.

I renounce, O LORD GOD, all worldly comforts and possessions, all my natural relations, and my own life, whenever they stand in competition with my duty to thee.

I utterly renounce, O LORD GOD, *all the sinful lusts of the flesh*, all the inordinate desires of my own corrupt nature, of my own "carnal mind which is enmity with thee."

I renounce, LORD, all fleshly lusts which war against thee, and against my own soul, all sloth and idleness, and intemperance, and lasciviousness; all filthiness of flesh and spirit, which render us unclean in thy sight.

O LORD GOD, I utterly renounce all things that any way displease thee; from them all let it be thy good pleasure to deliver me.

I know, LORD, that sin is the utmost abomination to thy purity, the most audacious outrage to thy adorable majesty, and therefore I utterly renounce and abhor it.

I know, LORD, that sin exposes us to all the vials of thy wrath, and to vengeance eternal; I know it sets the sinner at the extremest distance and opposition to thee, and therefore I utterly renounce and abhor it.

I know, LORD, I cannot love thee, without hating evil, and therefore I renounce and detest it.

Turn thou me, O LORD GOD, and so shall I be turned.

Turn, O LORD, the whole strain of my affections, from sensual love to the love of thee.

O my GOD, let thy heavenly love be the constant bias of my soul; O may it be the natural spring and weight of my heart, that it may always move towards thee.

Thy love, O my GOD, shall hereafter be the sole rule and guide of my life; I will love thee, and love whatever

thou lovest, and hate whatever thou hatest ; I will believe all the articles of the Christian Faith ; and I will keep thy holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life.

All this, O my GOD, I own myself bound to believe and do ; and though of myself I am impotent to all good, yet by thy help I will perform it ; and I heartily thank thee, O Heavenly FATHER, who, out of mere compassion to my soul, hast called me to this state of salvation, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

Glory be to thee, O LORD, who hast indulged me with this opportunity of repentance ; glory be to thee who hast wrought in me this will, to renew my baptismal vow.

O my GOD, I humbly, I earnestly pray unto thee, to give me continual supplies of thy grace, that I may continue in thy love unto my life's end, and that, being faithful to death, I may receive the crown of life.

O LORD GOD, I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.

My heart longs for thee : enter, O my GOD ; possess it with thy gracious presence, and fill it with thy love.

LORD, for thy tender mercies' sake, restore me to favour ; to all those privileges of my baptism, of which I have been spoiled by my sins.

LORD, make me a living member of the Church, the mystical body of thy SON.

O my GOD, unite me inseparably to CHRIST my Head, and from thence let his gracious influences be ever streaming into my soul.

“ FATHER, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son : ” but I return with the Prodigal ; O let thy paternal bowels yearn on me, and graciously receive me.

LORD, send thy SPIRIT of Adoption into my heart, to instil true filial affection, that I may again be owned by thee for thy child, and call thee FATHER, and share in the blessings of thy children, and at last become an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven.

O Heavenly FATHER, accept my imperfect repentance, compassionate my infirmities, forgive my wickedness, purify my uncleanness, strengthen my weakness, fix my unstableness, and let thy love ever rule in my heart, through the merits, and sufferings, and love of the SON of thy love, in whom thou art always well pleased.

*Q. Rehearse the Articles of your Belief.*

A. I. *I believe in GOD the FATHER ALMIGHTY, Maker of Heaven and Earth :*

II. *And in JESUS CHRIST his only Son our LORD ;*

III. *Who was conceived by the HOLY GHOST, born of the Virgin MARY ;*

IV. *Suffered under PONTIUS PILATE, was crucified, dead, and buried ; He descended into hell ;*

V. *The third day he rose again from the dead ;*

VI. *He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of GOD the FATHER ALMIGHTY ;*

VII. *From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead :*

VIII. *I believe in the HOLY GHOST ;*

IX. *The holy Catholic Church ; the communion of saints ;*

X. *The forgiveness of sins ;*

XI. *The resurrection of the body ;*

XII. *And the life everlasting. Amen.*

*Q. What dost thou chiefly learn in these Articles of Belief ?*

A. *First, I learn to believe in GOD the FATHER, who hath made me and all the world :*

*Secondly, In GOD the SON, who hath redeemed me and all mankind :*

*Thirdly, in GOD the HOLY GHOST, who sanctifieth me, and all the elect people of GOD.*

*Q. What is the method of the Creed ?*

A. The Creed teaches me to believe in GOD, and to believe his Church.

*Q. How in GOD ?*

A. It teaches me to believe in GOD, with respect to his Unity, and then to the Trinity of Persons in that Unity, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST.

Q. How does it teach you to believe the Church ?

A. It teaches me to believe the Church with regard to its different states, either militant below, or triumphant above.

Q. How are the articles of the Creed motives of love ?

A. Every article includes a blessing as well as a mystery, and is as proper to excite our love, as to engage our faith.

Q. Give me such a paraphrase on the Creed, that throughout the whole, your faith may work by love.

A. I shall do it to the best of my power.

*I believe.*] My LORD and my GOD, with a full, free, and firm assent, I believe all the articles of my Creed, because thou hast revealed them ; I know thou art infallible truth, and canst not, thou art infinite love, and wilt not deceive me : Glory be to thee.

With all my heart, O my GOD, do I love and praise thee, who art so infinitely amiable in thyself, and so full of love to us, that all I can know, or believe of thee, excites me to love thee.

LORD, daily increase my faith ; make it active and fruitful, that I may believe and love thee as entirely as becomes one entirely devoted to thee.

*In GOD.*] I believe, O my GOD, that thou art one, (*Deut. iv. 35,*) and that there is no other GOD besides thee. (*Isa. xlv. 6. xlv. 5, 6.*) Thou art that one infinite and independent Being, that one only true GOD, whom all men, and all angels, are to adore.

O LORD GOD, help me to love and to praise thee with God-like affections, and a suitable devotion.

I believe, O my GOD, that in the Unity of thy Godhead there is a Trinity of Persons : I believe in thee, O FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, in whose name I was baptized, (*Matt. xxviii. 19,*) and to whose service I am devoted. All glory be to thee.

I believe, I admire, I love, I praise, I adore thee, O most blessed and glorious Trinity, GOD the FATHER, GOD the SON, and GOD the HOLY GHOST, for being the joint authors of our salvation. All glory be to thee.

O sacred, and dreadful, and mysterious Trinity, though I cannot conceive thee, yet let me daily experience thy goodness; let thy grace, O LORD JESUS, let thy love, O GOD the FATHER, let thy communications, O HOLY SPIRIT, be ever with me.

*The FATHER.*] I believe, and love, and praise thee, O my GOD, the first Person in the most adorable Trinity; the Fountain of the Godhead; the eternal FATHER of thy co-eternal SON, (*John* i. 18; v. 18,) JESUS my SAVIOUR.

Glory be to thee, O GOD the FATHER, "for so loving the world, as to give thy only begotten SON to redeem us."

Glory be to thee, O Heavenly FATHER, for first loving us, and giving the dearest thing thou hadst for us; O help me to love again, and to think nothing too dear for thee.

*Almighty.*] I believe, O my GOD, that thou art a Spirit, most pure and holy, and infinite in all perfections, in power, and knowledge, and goodness; that thou art eternal, immutable, and omnipresent: all love, all glory be to thee.

I believe, O LORD, that thou art most wise and just, most happy and glorious, and all-sufficient; most gracious, and merciful, and tender, and benign, and liberal, and beneficent: all love, all glory be to thee.

I believe thy Divine Nature, O my GOD, to be in all respects amiable, to be Amiableness itself, to be LOVE (1 *John* iv. 8, 16,) itself; and therefore I love, I admire, I praise, and fear, and adore thee.

Thou, LORD, art my hope, my trust, my life, my joy, my glory, my GOD, my all, my love.

*Maker of Heaven and Earth.*] I believe that thou, O FATHER ALMIGHTY, didst create heaven and earth, the whole world, and all things in it, visible and invisible, out of nothing, and by thy word only, (*Gen.* i. 1, *Heb.* xi. 3, *Psal.* xxxiii. 6.) All glory be to thee.

I believe, O thou great CREATOR, that thy divine love made thee communicate being to thy creatures; that



thou lovest all things, and hatest nothing thou hast made. Glory be to thee.

I believe, O GOD, that thou art the sole Lord and Proprietor of all things thou hast made; that all things necessarily depend on thee; that it is in thee only we live, and move, and have our being. (*Acts xvii. 28.*) All love, all glory be to thee.

I believe, O thou communicative Goodness, that thou dost preserve, and sustain, and protect, and bless all things thou hast made, suitably to the natures thou hast given them. All love, all glory be to thee.

I believe, O mighty Wisdom, that thou dost sweetly order, and govern, and rule over all things, (*Ps. civ. 24,*) even the most minute, (*Matt. vi. 26, 28; x. 30,*) even the very sins of men, (*Gen. i. 20,*) so as to make them conspire in thy glory. O do thou conduct my whole life, and steer every motion of my soul towards the great end of our creation,—to love and glorify thee.

I believe, O LORD, that thy love was more illustrious in the creation of man, than in all the rest of the visible world; thou wert pleased to make him in thy own image, (*Gen. i. 26,*) and after thine own likeness. All love, all glory be to thee.

Thou, LORD, didst make man for thyself, and all things visible for man; thou designest all creatures for his use, (*Psal. viii.*) and didst subject them to his dominion; the very angels thou didst charge to keep him in all his ways. All love, all glory be to thee.

Thy works, O LORD, are wonderful and amiable; I love, and admire, and praise thy universal providence over the whole world; the perpetual flux of thy goodness on every creature. All glory be to thee.

I love and praise thee, O my GOD, for all the particular vouchsafements of thy love to me; for all thy deliverances and blessings, either to my body or to my soul, known or unknown; for all that I do not remember, or did not consider. All love, all glory be to thee.

The longer I live, O my GOD, the more reason I have to love thee, because every day supplies me with fresh experiments of thy manifold love to me; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

*And in JESUS.*] I believe in thee, O JESUS, and I rejoice in that dear name, which is so full and expressive of thy love.

Thou art JESUS, our SAVIOUR, because thou camest into the world on purpose to save us from our sins. All love, all glory be to thee.

O be thou ever JESUS to me; let me feel the kind force of that sweet name, in which I and all sinners read our danger and our deliverance, our guilt and our salvation.

O JESUS! he well deserves to be accursed that does not love thee: Who, LORD, can ever hope to share in thy salvation, who does not love thee his SAVIOUR?

*CHRIST.*] I believe, O merciful JESUS, that thou art CHRIST, the true MESSIAS, the anointed of the LORD, the promised "Seed which was to bruise the serpent's head," long expected by the Fathers, (*Luke* ii. 25,) foretold by the Prophets, (*Acts* x. 43,) represented by types, which were all fulfilled in thee, O thou, "the Desire of nations." All love, all glory be to thee.

I believe that thou, O JESUS, wert anointed with the HOLY SPIRIT, (*Acts* x. 38,) and that all his gifts and graces were poured out, like a sweet ointment, on thy soul "without measure:" thou art altogether lovely, O CHRIST, and "of thy fulness we all receive." All love, all glory be to thee.

I believe, O thou ANOINTED of GOD, that as Kings, (1 *Sam.* xv. 1,) and Priests, (*Lev.* iv. 3, 5, 16,) and Prophets, (1 *Kings* xix. 16,) were heretofore anointed with material oil; so by thy heavenly anointing, (*Matt.* iii. 16,) thou wast consecrated to be our Prophet, our King, and our Priest, and in all those offices to manifest thy love to us; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

Glory be to thee, O CHRIST, our Prophet, who didst

teach, and reveal, and interpret thy FATHER's will, and all saving truth, to the world.

Glory be to thee, O CHRIST, our King, (*Luke* i. 33, 69, 71,) who dost give laws to thy people, dost govern and protect us, and hast subdued all our ghostly enemies.

Glory be to thee, O CHRIST, our Priest, who dost bless us, who didst offer thyself a sacrifice, and dost still make intercession for us.

Our redemption, our illumination, our support, is wholly from thy love, O thou Anointed of GOD. All love, all glory be to thee.

*His only SON.*] I believe that thou, O most adorable JESUS, art the SON of GOD by ineffable generation; thou didst from eternity derive thy Godhead from the FATHER; "thou art the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person." All love, all glory be to thee.

Thou, O blessed JESUS, art the *only* SON of GOD, the "only-begotten SON, full of grace and truth;" thou art the only "beloved SON, in whom thy FATHER is well pleased;" it is only in thee, and for thee, that sinners have hope; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

Thou art equal to thy FATHER, O JESUS, in amiableness and in love to us, and art equally to be beloved by us; and therefore all love and praise be to the FATHER *that eternally begat*, and to the SON *eternally begotten*.

*Our LORD.*] I believe, O thou eternal SON of the FATHER, that thou art the *great* and *true* GOD, (*1 John* v. 20,) "JEHOVAH our righteousness," (*Jer.* xxiii. 16,) "GOD above all blessed for ever." (*Rom.* ix. 5.) All glory be to thee.

I believe, O LORD JESUS, that thou didst make\* (*John* i. 3,) and "dost sustain all things by thy power;" (*Heb.* i. 3. 10;) and that thou art to be honoured by men, and by angels, as thy FATHER is honoured. (*Heb.* i. 6; *Phil.* ii. 10; *John* v. 23.) All love, all glory be to thee.

I believe, O thou "KING of KINGS, and LORD of LORDS," that thou art the Lord and the Author of the new creation, (*Eph.* i. 21, 22; ii. 10,) as well as of the old;

and that thou art more peculiarly Lord of us sinners by purchase. (1 *Cor.* vi. 20.) O that I, and all that own thy dominion, may for ever love, and revere, and obey so powerful and gracious a LORD!

*Who was conceived by the HOLY GHOST.*] I believe, O most condescending Majesty, that when thou didst stoop so low, as to assume our frail nature, the HOLY GHOST came on thy sacred Mother, and that “the power of the Highest did overshadow her,” and that she did conceive, and lodge thee in her womb, who fillest heaven and earth; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

*Born of the Virgin MARY.*] I believe, O most adorable humility, that thou wast at last born into the world; and that, having only GOD for thy Father, and MARY, a pure virgin, for thy Mother, whom “all generations do call Blessed,” both thy conception and birth were perfectly immaculate,—that being without sin thyself, thou mightest be a fit sacrifice to atone for us sinners, who being born of unclean parents, were all by nature unclean; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee, O immaculate “LAMB of GOD, who takest away the sins of the world.”

I believe, O blessed SAVIOUR, that the two natures of GOD and of Man were in thee so mysteriously united, without either change or confusion, that they made in thee but one person, but “one Mediator,” (1 *Tim.* ii. 5,) “one LORD.” (*Eph.* iv. 5.) Thou, O Eternal WORD, didst become flesh, and didst dwell among us, on purpose to save us; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

*Suffered.*] I believe, O adorable Love, that thy whole life was made up of sufferings, and that for sinful men, and in particular for me. O let me never cease to adore and love thee.

It was for us sinners, O tenderest Love, that in thy very infancy thou wast circumcised, and designed by Herod for slaughter, and forced to flee into Egypt, and therefore I praise and love thee.

It was for us sinners that thou, O afflicted Love, wert all thy life long “a Man of Sorrows and acquainted

with grief;" that thou wast persecuted and reviled, "despised and rejected," and hadst "not where to lay thy head:" and therefore I am bound to praise and love thee.

It was for us sinners, that thou, O compassionate Love, when thou tookest on thee our nature, "wast touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and wast in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," that thou mightest the more affectionately pity the weak, and succour the tempted; and therefore I praise and love thee.

It was for us sinners, that thou, O beneficent Love, didst go about doing good, preaching repentance, publishing the glad tidings of salvation, sending thy disciples, confirming thy heavenly doctrine by many glorious miracles, and illustrating it by a God-like example; all thy life is full of love and pity to us sinners, which constrain us to praise and love thee.

O, how amiable are all thy graces! O fill my heart with thy love, and transform me into thy likeness, that I may all my life long imitate thy perfect obedience, unspotted holiness, universal charity, uninterrupted devotion, contempt of the world, heavenly-mindedness, ardent zeal for thy FATHER'S glory, and unbounded love; and that for the sake of that dearest love, which inclined thee to become incarnate for me.

*Under PONTIUS PILATE.*] I believe, O my LORD and my GOD, that though thou didst suffer all thy life long, yet thy greatest sufferings were under the *Roman* Governor of *Judea*, PONTIUS PILATE. I believe all those mighty sufferings, but am as little able to express the greatness of them, as I am the greatness of thy love, which moved thee to suffer: all I can do is to love and praise thee.

How great were thy sufferings, when the very apprehension of them made thy "soul very heavy, exceeding sorrowful, even to death;" made thee "offer up prayers, with strong crying and tears," that if it were "thy FATHER'S will the cup might pass from thee;" and threw thee into an agony and bloody sweat, insomuch that there

was an angel sent from heaven on purpose to strengthen thee! O thou agonizing Love, impress on my heart so tender a sense of thy sufferings for me, that I may agonize with thee, that I may feel thy sorrows, that though I cannot sweat blood like thee, I may dissolve into tears for thee, that I may love and suffer with thee throughout every part of thy passion.

O suffering JESUS, when my meditations follow thee from the Garden to Mount *Calvary*, I grieve and I love all the way.

I grieve, and I love, when I see thee, O incarnate GOD, who couldst command more than twelve legions of angels for thy rescue, out of love to sinners, and in particular to me, one of the vilest of all, humbling thyself to be apprehended and bound by the rude soldiers, as a malefactor.

I grieve, and I love, when I see thee, O gracious LORD, for my sake, betrayed by the treacherous kiss of JUDAS, denied by PETER, and forsaken of all thy disciples.

I grieve, and I love, when I see thee, O spotless Innocence, out of love to me, dragged to Annas and Caiaphas, when I see thee accused by false witnesses, arraigned, and condemned.

I grieve, and I love, when I see thee, O Divine Majesty, out of love to me, spit upon, and blindfolded, and buffeted, and mocked, sent to PILATE, then to HEROD, who with his men of war put on thee a white robe of mockery, and sent thee again to PILATE.

I grieve, and I love, O injured Goodness, when I see thee, though declared innocent by the traitor JUDAS, though declared innocent by PILATE himself, the Judge to whom thine enemies appealed, yet worried to death by the clamours of the rabble, that cried out, "Crucify, crucify;" and when I see BARABBAS, a traitor and a murderer, preferred before thee.

I grieve, and I love, when I see thee, O Lover of Souls, for my sake, given up into the hands of soldiers, to be stripped naked, and tied to a pillar, and scourged; when

I see “the ploughers ploughing on thy back, and making long furrows.”

I grieve, and I love, O King of Heaven, when I see thee, out of love to me, humbling thyself to be “arrayed in purple, with a reed in thy hand;” when I see thee “crowned with thorns,” to multiply thy torments; when I see thee mocked by barbarous wretches with “Hail, King of the *Jews*.”

I grieve, and I love, when I see thee, O LORD GOD, whom the angels worship, spit upon again, and buffeted, and for my sake made the scorn and sport of thy insolent and insulting enemies; and though still declared innocent by PILATE, yet surrendered to the unrelenting cruelty of the multitude, to be crucified.

My LORD, my GOD, with all my heart I love and adore thy infinite love to sinners; with all my heart I lament and detest the hatred and outrage of sinners to thee.

*Was crucified.*] I grieve, and I love, O sorrowful JESUS, when I see thee, for my sake, oppressed with the weight of thy own cross, till thy tender body, quite spent with sufferings, sank under it.

I grieve, and I love, O thou great Martyr of Love, when for my sake I see thy virgin body stripped naked, thy hands and thy feet nailed to the cross; when I see thee “crucified between two thieves,” and “numbered with the transgressors;” when I see gall given thee to eat, and vinegar to drink.

I grieve, and I love, when I see thee, O incarnate DEITY, hanging on the cross, and for my sake, by thy own people, in the height of thy anguish, derided, reproached, and blasphemed, with wagging of their heads, mocked by the soldiers, and by the impenitent thief.

I grieve, and I love, when I see thee, O GOD, blessed for ever, O Fountain of all blessing, hang bleeding on the cross, and made “a curse for me.” How does my indignation swell against the injustice, and ingratitude, and inhumanity of the *Jews*, who could thus cruelly treat so irreproachable an innocence, so compassionate a Saviour!

Alas, alas, it was the *Sinner*, O Love incarnate, rather than the *Jew*, that betrayed, and derided, and blasphemed, and tortured, and crucified thee; the sins of lapsed mankind, (*Isa.* liii. vi.) and particularly my sins, they were thy tormentors; and therefore from my heart I bewail, detest, and abjure them.

My LORD, and my GOD, instil penitential love into my soul, that I may grieve for my sins, which grieved thee, and that I may love thee for suffering for us sinners, who occasioned all thy griefs: O may I always love thee, O may I never grieve thee more!

*Dead.]* I grieve, and I love, O bleeding Love, when I see thee on the cross, quite spent with pain and anguish; when I see thee in thy dying pangs, commending thy spirit into the hands of thy heavenly FATHER, bowing thy head, and giving up the ghost. Thou, O LORD of Life, didst for us sinners humble thyself to death, even to the death of the cross, a death of utmost shame, and of torment insupportable: all love, all glory be to thee.

Was ever any sorrow, O crucified LORD, like that sorrow which my sins caused to thee!

Was ever any love, O outraged Mercy, like that love which thou didst show in dying for sinners!

All the frame of nature, O dying SAVIOUR, fell into convulsions at the crucifixion of their great CREATOR: "the sun was darkened, the veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom, the earth quaked, the rocks clave asunder, the bodies of dead saints rose out of their graves;" insomuch that the Centurion and infidel soldiers acknowledged thee to be the SON of GOD. Thou wast lovely, and glorious, and adorable in thy lowest humiliation: all love, all praise be to thee.

Thy bodily sufferings, O Almighty Love, were intolerable; but yet thy inward were far greater.

I grieve, I love, when I hear thee on the cross crying out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" (*Matt.* xxvii. 46.) Ah! sinful wretch that I am! how infinite and inconceivable were the inward agonies thou



didst undergo for us sinners, when thou didst tread the wine-press of thy FATHER'S wrath alone; when it pleased thy own beloved FATHER "to bruise thee, and to put thee to grief;" when the iniquities of the whole world were laid on thee, and my numerous sins increased thy load, and heightened thy torment; when thy own DEITY withdrew all consolations from thee; when GOD, offended by our sins, did "afflict thee in the day of his fierce anger!" (*Lam. i. 12.*) No sufferings, no love, were ever like unto thine for me; no grief, no love, but thy own, should exceed mine for thee.

For whom, O unutterable Goodness, didst thou suffer the extreme bitterness of sorrow, but for the vilest of all thy creatures, sinful man; and for me, one of the worst of sinners?—and therefore I praise and love thee.

For what end didst thou suffer, but to save sinners from all things that were destructive, the curse of the law, (*Gal. iii. 13,*) the terrors of death, (*Heb. ii. 14, 15,*) the tyranny of sin, (*Rom. vi. 14,*) the powers of darkness, and torments eternal; (*1 Thess. i. 10;*) and to purchase for us all things conducive to our happiness, (*Eph. i. 7, Heb. ix. 12, 15,*) pardon and grace, consolation and acceptance, and the everlasting glories of the kingdom of heaven?—and therefore I praise and love thee.

Out of what motive didst thou suffer, but out of thy own preventing love, free mercy, and pure compassion?—and therefore I praise and love thee.

When no other sacrifice could atone, O thou beloved SON of GOD, and reconcile Divine Justice and Mercy together, but the sacrifice of GOD incarnate, who as man, was to die, and to suffer in our stead, and as GOD, was to merit, and make satisfaction for our sins; it was then that thou, O GOD the SON, didst become Man, the very meanest of men, didst "take upon thee the form of a servant," and didst on the cross show us the mystery and miracle of love, GOD crucified for sinners, and sinners redeemed by the blood of GOD.

O GOD incarnate, by what names shall I adore thee

all are too scanty to express thee ; love only, nothing but love will reach thee ; thou art Love. (1 *John* iv. 8.) O JESUS, thou art all Love ; soften, sweeten, refine, love me into all love like thee !

By the love of thy cross, O JESUS, I live ; in that I will only glory, that above all things will I study, that before all things will I value. By the love of thy cross I will take up my cross daily, and follow thee ; I will persecute, and torment, and crucify my sinful affections, which persecuted, tormented, and crucified thee ; and if thy love calls me to it, I will suffer on the cross for thee, as thou hast done for me.

How amiable were thy graces amidst all thy sufferings, O thou afflicted JESUS : I admire and I love thy profound humility, unwearied patience, lamb-like meekness, immaculate innocence, invincible courage, absolute resignation, compassionate love of souls, and perfect love to thy enemies. O my Love, I cannot love thee, but I must desire above all things to be like my beloved : O give me grace to tread in thy steps, and conform me to thy image, that the more I grow like thee, the more I may love thee, and the more I may be loved by thee.

*And buried ; he descended into hell.*] I believe, O crucified LORD, that thou wast really dead, and that there was a separation of thy body and soul : that thy side was mortally wounded, and pierced with a spear on the cross, and thy sacred body was buried, to assure us of thy death. All love, all glory be to thee.

I believe, O wounded Love, that thy soul, in the state of separation, did descend into the place of spirits.

Glory be to thee, O thou great Champion of Love, who didst for our sakes singly encounter all our ghostly enemies, who didst thyself taste of death, that thou mightest take away the sting of death, who didst wrestle with principalities and powers, and all the force of hell, that we might share in thy victory ; for which wonderful salvation I will always praise and love thee.

*The third day he rose again from the dead.*] I believe,

O almighty Love, that according to the types and prophecies which went before of thee, and according to thy own infallible predictions, thou didst by thy own power rise from the dead the third day. All love, all glory be to thee.

Glory be to thee, who didst lie so long in the grave, to convince all the world thou wert dead ; and didst rise so soon, that thou mightest not see corruption. All love, all glory be to thee.

*He ascended into heaven.*] I believe, O victorious Love, that thou, after thy conquest over death and hell, didst ascend in triumph to heaven, that thou mightest prepare mansions for us, and from thence, as conqueror, bestow the gifts of thy conquest on us, and above all, the gift of thy HOLY SPIRIT ; that thou mightest enter into the holy of holies, as our great High Priest, to present to thy FATHER the sweet-swalling sacrifice, the sole propitiation for sinners ; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

Glory be to thee, O JESUS, who didst leave the world, and ascend to heaven, about the thirty-third year of thy age ; to teach us in the prime of our years to despise the world, when we are best able to enjoy it, and to reserve our full vigour for heaven and for thy love.

O thou whom my soul loveth, since thou hast left the world, what was there ever in it worthy of our love ! O let all my affections ascend after thee, and never return to the earth more ; “ for whom have I in heaven but thee ? and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee.”

*And sitteth at the right hand of GOD the FATHER Almighty.*] I believe, O triumphant LORD, that thou now sittest in full and peaceable possession of bliss, and at the right hand of GOD ; that thy human nature is exalted to the most honourable place in heaven, where thou now sittest on thy throne of glory, adored by angels, and interceding for sinners ; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

Glory be to thee, O Love enthroned ; thy resurrection, ascension, and session, are all signal instances of thy love, and earnest of our future felicity, the entire purchase of thy love : all our hopes of heaven, our resurrection, ascension, and glorification, depend on, and are derived from thine, and are all the trophies of thy love to us ; and therefore I will ever praise and love thee.

*From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.*] I believe, O glorified Love, that from thy throne at GOD'S right hand, where thou now sittest, thou wilt come again to judge the world, attended with thy holy angels.

I believe, O thou adorable Judge, that all mankind shall be summoned before thy awful tribunal. All the *dead*, who shall be waked out of their graves when the Angel shall blow the last trump, and all that are then *quick*, and alive, shall appear before thee.

I believe, LORD, that I and all the world shall give a strict account of all our thoughts, and words, and actions ; that the books will be then opened ; that out of those dreadful registers we shall be judged ; that SATAN and our own consciences will be our accusers. O let the last trumpet be ever sounding in my ears, that I may ever be mindful of my great account, and that I may neither speak, nor do, nor think any thing that may wound my own conscience, or make me tremble at the awful day.

I know, O thou adorable Judge, that love only shall then endure that terrible test, that love only shall be acquitted, that love only shall be eternally blest ; and therefore I will ever praise and love thee.

Glory be to thee, O thou beloved SON of GOD, to whom " the FATHER has committed all judgment."

How can they that love thee, O JESUS, ever despond, when at last they shall have Love for their Judge, Love that hath felt and will compassionate all their infirmities ; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

*I believe in the HOLY GHOST.*] I believe in thee, O thou SPIRIT of GOD, the third Person in the most adorable

Trinity ; I believe, O BLESSED SPIRIT, that thou art the LORD, that thou art GOD, eternal, omniſcient, a Perſon diſtinct from both the FATHER and the SON, eternally proceeding from both, and equally ſent by both, and joint-author with both of our ſalvation ; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

I believe, O bleſſed SPIRIT, that thou art holy, eſſentially holy, in reſpect of thy divine nature, and being eſſentially holy, art infinitely amiable ; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

I believe, O bleſſed SPIRIT, that thou art the Author of all internal holineſs, and all internal and ſanctifying grace ; that thou art the principle of all ſpiritual life in us ; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

Glory be to thee, O LOVE INCARNATE, for ſending the SPIRIT in thy ſtead, and for promiſing him to our prayers.

Glory be to thee, O SPIRIT of LOVE, for ſhedding the love of GOD abroad in our hearts, for filling all that love thee with joy and conſolation. All love, all glory be to thee.

O thou bleſſed SPIRIT the COMFORTER, purify my ſoul, and infuſe thy love into it, and conſecrate it to be thy temple, and fix thy throne immovably there, and ſet all my affections on fire, that my heart may be a continual ſacrifice of love offered up to thee, and that the flame may be ever aſpiring towards thee.

*The holy catholic Church.*] I believe, O bleſſed and adorable MEDIATOR, that the Church is a ſociety of perſons, founded by thy love to ſinners, united into one body, of which thou art the Head, initiated by Baptiſm, nouriſhed by the Eucharit, governed by Paſtors commiſſioned by thee, profeſſing the doctrine taught by thee, and delivered to the ſaints, and devoted to praiſe and love thee.

I believe, O holy JESUS, that thy Church is holy, like thee its Author ; holy by the original deſign of its inſtitution ; holy by baptiſmal dedication ; holy in all its adminiſtrations, which tend to produce holineſs ; and though there be a mixture of good and bad in it, yet it has always

many real saints in it ; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

I believe, **LORD**, this Church to be catholic, or universal, made up of all particular churches ; I believe it to be catholic in respect of time, comprehending all ages to the world's end ; catholic in respect of all places, out of which believers are to be gathered ; catholic in respect of all saving faith, of which this creed contains the substance, which shall in it always be taught ; catholic in respect of all graces, which shall in it be practised ; and catholic in respect of that war which it is to wage against all its ghostly enemies, for which it is called militant. O preserve me always a true member of thy catholic Church, that I may always inseparably adhere to thee, that I may always devoutly praise and love thee.

Glory be to thee, O **LORD** my **GOD**, who hast made me a member of the particular Church of *England*, whose faith and worship are holy, and catholic, and apostolic, and free from the extremes of irreverence or superstition ; which I firmly believe to be a sound part of thy church universal ; and which teaches me charity to those who dissent from me ; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

O my **GOD**, give me grace to continue steadfast in her bosom ; and to improve all those helps to piety, all those means of grace, all those incentives of love, with which thou hast mercifully indulged me in her communion, that I may with primitive affections praise and love thee.

*The communion of Saints.*] I believe, O King of Saints, that among the Saints on earth, there is a mutual and catholic participation of all good things, which is the immediate effect of catholic love.

I believe, O thou **GOD** of Love, that all the Saints on earth ought to communicate one with another, in evangelical worship, in the same holy sacraments, in the same divine and apostolical faith, in all offices of corporal and spiritual charity, in delight in each other's salvation, and

in tender sympathy as members of one and the same body. O GOD of Peace, restore in thy good time this catholic communion, that with one heart and one mouth we may all praise and love thee.

O my GOD, amidst the deplorable divisions of thy church, let me never widen its breaches; but give me catholic charity to all that are baptized in thy name, and catholic communion with all Christians in desire. O deliver me from the sins and errors, from the schisms and heresies of the age. Give me grace to pray daily for the peace of thy Church, and earnestly to seek it, and to excite all I can to praise and love Thee.

I believe the Saints here below have communion with thy Saints above, while we celebrate their memories, congratulate their bliss, give thee thanks for their labours of love, and imitate their examples; for which all love, all glory be to thee.

I believe thy Saints here on earth have communion with holy Angels above; that they are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for the heirs of salvation;" and we give thanks to thee for their protection, and emulate their incessant praises and ready obedience; for which all love, all glory be to thee.

I believe, O my LORD, that the Saints in this life have communion with the three Persons in the most adorable TRINITY in the benign influences of love, in which all three conspire; for which all love, all glory be to thee, O FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, world without end.

Glory be to thee for all the graces and blessings in which the Saints communicate; and for breathing thy love into thy mystical body, as the soul that informs it, that all that believe in thee may love one another, and all join in loving thee.

*The forgiveness of sins.*] I believe, O my GOD, that none can forgive sins but thou alone, and that in thy Church forgiveness is always to be had; and for so inestimable a blessing, all love, all glory be to thee.

I believe, O thou Lover of Souls, that without true repentance we cannot hope for pardon ; and that it is out of thy mere mercy, O heavenly FATHER, and for the merits and passion of thy crucified SON, that thou dost accept our imperfect repentance, and art pleased to forgive us ; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

Glory be to thee, O most adorable TRINITY, for thy infinite love in our forgiveness : glory be to thee, O FATHER forgiving, O SON propitiating, O HOLY GHOST purifying : I, miserable sinner, praise and love that most sweet, tender, and amiable mercy, that delights in forgiving sinners.

*The resurrection of the body.*] I believe, O victorious JESUS, that by the virtue of thy resurrection all the dead shall rise, bad as well as good : all love, all glory be to thee, by whom death is swallowed up in victory.

I believe, O almighty JESUS, that by thy power all shall rise with the same bodies which they had on earth ; that thou wilt collect their scattered dust again ; that our souls shall be re-united to our bodies ; that we shall be judged both in body and soul, for the sins committed by both ; that the bodies of the wicked shall be fitted for torment, and the bodies of the saints made glorified bodies, immortal and incorruptible, fitted for heaven, and for eternally loving and enjoying thee ; for which glorious vouchsafement I will always praise and love thee.

*And the life everlasting.*] I believe, O great Judge of Heaven and Earth, that after all the quick and dead have appeared before thy judgment-seat, then the just sentence shall pass, and be executed to all eternity, joyful to those that love thee ; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

I believe, O righteous JESUS, that the wicked shall be set on thy left hand, and be damned to hell, to be tormented with everlasting and inconceivable anguish and despair, by the Devil and his angels, and their own consciences, both in soul and body, in the lake of fire and brimstone, from which there never can be any redemption. O just reward of those that do not love thee !



O merciful JESUS, how desirous art thou that we should be happy in loving thee, when thou hast created hell on purpose to deter us from hating thee, and heaven to compel us to love thee ; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

I believe, O my LORD and my GOD, that the righteous shall be rewarded with joys unspeakable, with the beatific vision and love of thyself in heaven, with a happiness of body and soul, which shall be in all respects most perfect, eternal, and unchangeable, so that they shall never sorrow nor sin more, which is all the free gift of thy infinite love, O heavenly FATHER, and the purchase of thy blood, O GOD Inearnate ; for which I will ever, to the utmost of my power, adore and love thee.

O boundless Love, when shall I love thee without either coldness or interruption, which, alas, too often seize me here below ?

When, O my GOD, shall I have the transporting vision of thy amiable goodness, that I may unalterably love thee, that I may never more offend thee.

O Thou “whom my soul loveth,” I would not desire heaven but because thou art there ; for thou makest heaven wherever thou art.

I would not, O JESUS, desire life everlasting, but that I may there everlastingly love thee.

O inexhaustible Love, do thou eternally breathe love into me, that my love to thee may be eternally increasing, since a love less than infinite is not worthy of thee.

*Amen.*] O thou great Author and Finisher of our faith, do thou daily increase my faith and heighten my love : O grant that in holy ardours of love towards Love crucified, my love may at last ascend to the region of love, that I may have nothing to do, to all cternity, but to praise and to love thee.

*Q.* You said that your Godfathers and Godmothers did promise for you, that you should keep God's Commandments. Tell me how many there be ?

*A.* Ten.

*Q. Which be they ?*

*A. The same which GOD spake in the twentieth Chapter of Exodus, saying, I am the LORD thy GOD, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*

*I. Thou shalt have none other gods but me.*

*II. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them. For I the LORD thy GOD am a jealous GOD, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shew mercy unto thousands in them that love me and keep my commandments.*

*III. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy GOD in vain : for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*

*IV. Remember that thou keep holy the SABBATH-DAY. Six days shalt thou labour and do all that thou hast to do ; but the seventh day is the SABBATH of the LORD thy GOD. In it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates : for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the LORD blessed the seventh day and hallowed it.*

*V. Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the LORD thy GOD giveth thee.*

*VI. Thou shalt do no murder.*

*VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

*VIII. Thou shalt not steal.*

*IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*

*X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house ; thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.*

*Q. What dost thou chiefly learn by these commandments ?*

*A. I learn two things ; my duty towards GOD, and my duty towards my neighbour.*

**Q.** *What is thy duty towards GOD ?*

**A.** *My duty towards GOD is, to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him, with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship him, to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy name and his word, and to serve him truly all the days of my life.*

**Q.** *What is thy duty towards thy neighbour ?*

**A.** *My duty towards my neighbour is, to love him as myself, and to do to all men as I would they should do to me : to love, honour, and succour, my Father and Mother : to honour and obey the KING, and all that are put in authority under him : to submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters : to order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters : to hurt nobody by word or deed : to be true and just in all my dealings : to bear no malice nor hatred in my heart : to keep my hands from picking and stealing ; and my tongue from evil speaking, lying, and slandering : to keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity : not to covet and desire other men's goods ; but to learn and labour truly to get my own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please GOD to call me.*

**Q.** You have showed me how the Creed presents to us the Motives ; show me next how the Ten Commandments contain the Fruits of divine love.

**A.** JESUS our Love, the great Prophet of Love, has given us the trial of our love : “ If ye love me, keep my commandments.”

**Q.** Are there not some general rules to be observed in expounding the Commandments ?

**A.** Divine love does suggest to us the best rules, and is the best expositor, to teach us the full import of every command.

**Q.** Show me how.

**A.** The love of GOD does necessarily include these two things, a tenderness to please, and a fearfulness to offend our Beloved ; and this love will be a sure guide to us in

both the affirmative and the negative part of each command.

Q. Express this more distinctly.

A. I shall do it in these following particulars :

1. O my GOD, when in any of thy commands a duty is enjoined, love tells me the contrary evil is forbidden ; when any evil is forbidden, love tells me the contrary duty is enjoined. O do thou daily increase my love to good, and my antipathy to evil.

2. Though thy commands and prohibitions, O LORD, are in general terms, yet let thy love direct my particular practice, and teach me, that in one general are implied all the kinds, and degrees, and occasions, and incitements, and approaches, and allowances relating to that good or evil commanded or forbidden ; and give me grace to pursue or to flee from them.

3. O my GOD, keep my love always watchful, that in thy negative precepts I may continually resist evil ; keep my love warm with an habitual zeal, that in all thy affirmative precepts I may lay hold on all opportunities of doing good.

4. Let thy love, O thou that only art worthy to be loved, make me careful to engage others to love thee, and to keep thy commandments. O my GOD, though I cannot love and obey thee as much as I desire, I will do it as much as I am able ; I will, to the utmost of my power, keep all thy commandments with my whole heart to the end. Accept my imperfect duty, and pardon all the defects of it through the merits, and love, and obedience of JESUS thy Beloved.

5. Glory be to thee, O thou supreme Lawgiver, for delivering these commands to sinful men ; they are the words which thou thyself, O great JEHOVAH, didst speak. Let me ever have an awful regard for every word thou hast spoken. Let me ever love thee for giving us the laws of love.

6. Glory be to thee, O LORD GOD, who, to make every one of us sensible of our obligation, hast given all thy

commands in the second person, and by saying *Thou*, hast spoken in particular to every soul, that every soul might love and obey thee.

Glory be to thee, O my GOD, who in these Ten Commandments, hast comprised the full extent of our duty, all the effects of Divine Love.

Teach me, O LORD, to examine my love by thy commands, that I may know how to please thee, that I may know wherein I have offended thee, and grieve for my offences, that I may bewail all my commission of sin, all my omission of duty.

Teach me, O LORD, by this thy law, which is the rule of love, and of all my actions, to examine not only my sins, but also all their aggravations, whether they have been wilful, or known, or frequent, or obstinate, or habitual, or ensnaring to others ; that love may shed the more tears, and in some measure proportion my contrition to my guilt.

7. Glory be to thee, O LORD GOD, who givest us Christians higher obligations to keep thy commands, than thou didst to the *Jews*. They had only the memory of their temporal deliverance out of *Egypt*, and the house of bondage, set before them ; we are delivered out of spiritual *Egypt*, from the bondage of sin, the power of Satan, and the torments of hell. O give us grace to exceed them as much in our love and obedience, as we do in our blessings.

8. Glory be to thee, O great JEHOVAH, who, to constrain us to love and obey thee, art pleased to honour every faithful soul with a near propriety in thyself, and graciously to declare, “ I am the LORD thy GOD.”

O merciful LORD, what is it possible for me to desire more than to have thee for my GOD ? If thou be my GOD, I must be thy servant. LORD, be thou mine, and I will be for ever thine.

My Beloved is mine, and I am his.

My GOD, my Father, my Friend, my Love, whatever is thine I will love : and particularly thy law will I love, for teaching me to love thee ; thy law will I highly

esteem, and diligently read and study ; thy law shall be daily my delight, and my counsellor.

O my good GOD, keep me always thine, and let nothing ever divorce me from thy love.

Q. You have laid down proper rules for interpreting the Commandments, show me now how they are divided.

A. Into two Tables, suitable to the two respects they have to GOD and to our Neighbour.

Q. Begin with the First Table, and show me the number and order of the commands which it contains.

A. It contains the four first commands, which relate to GOD, and teach us the Worship of GOD, even that love which we are to pay to GOD, and which arises from a true sense of his infinite goodness and greatness.

This Worship of GOD is either inward or outward.

The inward worship, being that of the heart, is the nobler of the two ; and this, together with the right object of our worship, is taught in the first commandment, as the foundation of all the rest.

The outward is comprised in the three following, which teach us the regulation of GOD's worship ; in reference to our gestures in the second, to our tongues in the third, to our time in the fourth.

Q. Which are the duties of the Second Table ?

A. They are the six remaining commands, which all relate to our neighbour.

Q. What have you farther to observe of the Commandments in general ?

A. It is observable that those which refer to GOD are put first, to teach us that the Love of GOD is the chief and original command, and ought chiefly to be studied ; and to teach us also, that all the duties of the Second Table must yield unto the First, whenever they stand in any competition.

Q. Go over the Ten Commandments in particular, and show me how they are all the genuine fruits of divine love, exercised either in doing good, or eschewing evil.

A. I shall do it, as distinctly as I can.

*The First Commandment.*

O thou who only art JEHOVAH, if thou be my GOD, and if I truly love thee, I can never suffer any creature to be thy rival, or to share my heart with thee ; I can have *no other GOD*, no other love, but only thee.

O infinite Goodness, thou only art amiable. Whatever is amiable besides thee, is no farther amiable than as it bears some impressions of thy amiableness ; and therefore all love, all glory be to thee.

O my GOD, O my Love, instil into my soul so entire a love of thee, that I may love nothing but for thy sake, or in subordination to thy love.

Give me grace to study thy knowledge, that the more I know thee, the more I may love thee.

O my GOD, do thou create in me a steadfast faith in the veracity, a lively hope in the promises, a firm trust in the power, a confident reliance on the goodness, and a satisfactory acquiescence in the all-sufficiency, of thee my Beloved.

O my GOD, do thou create in me an ardent desire of the presenee, an heavenly delight in the fruition, of thee my Beloved.

O my GOD, fill my heart with thanksgiving for the blessings, praise of the excellence, adoration of the majesty, and zeal for the glory, of thee my Beloved.

O my GOD, fill my heart with a true repentance for offending, and with a constant fear of provoking, thee my Beloved.

O my GOD, fill my heart with a fervent devotion in prayer, and with a profound humility in ascribing all honour to thee, my Beloved.

O my GOD, create in me a sincere obedience to all the commands, a submissive patience under all the chastisements, an absolute resignation to all the disposals, of thee my Beloved.

O my GOD, let thy all-powerful love abound in my heart, and in the hearts of all those that profess thy

name ; that in these, and in all other possible instances of thy love, our souls may continually praise and love thee.

O my GOD, let me ever be seeking occasions to excite all I can to love and adore thee.

O my GOD, I renounce, and detest, and bewail, as odious and offensive to thee, as directly opposite to thy love and to thy glory,—

All self-love, (2 *Tim.* iii. 2,) and inordinate love of things below, (1 *John* ii. 15 :)

All wilful and affected ignorance, (2 *Thes.* i. 8 :)

All atheism, or having no GOD ; and polytheism, or having more Gods than one :

All heresy, apostasy, and infidelity :

All presumption and despair, distrust and carnal security :

All voluntary humility, and worshipping of Angels, reliance on the creature, or recourse to evil spirits :

All unthankfulness and irreligion, lukewarmness and indifference :

All impenitence, and disregard of divine wrath :

All indevotion and pride, disobedience, impatience, and murmuring :

All the least tendencies to any of these impieties.

From all these and the like hateful violations of thy love, and from that vengeance which they justly deserve, O my GOD, O my Love, deliver me.

O my GOD, O my Love, I earnestly pray that thy love may so prevail over our hearts, that we may sadly lament and abhor all these abominations, and may never more provoke thee.

#### *The Second Commandment.*

O my GOD, O my Love, I know the true love of thee is incommunicable to any but thee ; and therefore I renounce, and detest, and bewail, as odious and offensive to thee,—

All making of idols or false gods, or of graven images, with intent of worshipping and bowing down before them :



All representations and picturing of thee, O my God, by visible likenesses of things in heaven or in earth :

All corporeal shapes, which are infinitely unsuitable to thy invisible and spiritual nature :

All idolatry and religious invocation of creatures :

All sacrilege and profanations of thy house, and of things sacred :

All abuse, or disesteem, or carelessness of thy word, and contempt of thy ministers :

All superstitions or unlawful rites, superfluities or mutilations, irreverence or indecencies, in thy public worship, by which thou art any way dishonoured :

All resting in mere outward observances, (*Matt. xv. 9, 11,*) or refusing to give to thee bodily worship :

All the least tendencies to any of these impieties.

From all these and the like violations of thy incommunicable love, and from that vengeance which they justly deserve, O my God, O my Love, deliver me, and deliver all faithful people.

O my God, O my Love, imprint on my soul an awful love of thy Majesty, that I may “worship thee in spirit and in truth.”

O my God, make me so tender of the honour of thee my Beloved, that I may show a due regard to all the parts of thy worship ; that with lowest humiliation of soul and body, whenever I appear in the presence of infinite Love, I may fall down and adore thee.

O my God, may I always enter thy house, the habitation of unbounded Love, with recollected thoughts, composed behaviour, becoming reverence, and sincere intentions of love.

O my God, may I ever frequent the public prayers, and approach thine altar with fervent and heavenly affections.

O my God, may I always read and hear thy word, the heavenly register of thy love, with a serious attention, and a particular application, and ever learn from it some lesson of thy love.

O my God, give me grace to pay a religious veneration to all sacred persons, or places, or things, which are

thine by solemn dedication, and separated for the uses of divine love, and the communications of thy grace, or which may promote the *decency* and *order* of thy worship, or the *edification* of faithful people.

O my God, let thy all powerful love abound in my heart, and in the hearts of all that profess thy name, that in these, and in all other possible instances of thy love, our souls may be continually employed to praise and to love thee.

Thou, O my God, art “a jealous God,” jealous of thy honour, and of the chasteness of my love; O let me never run after other loves, or commit spiritual adultery against thee.

Thou, O my God, dost “visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children;” thou, when thy “jealousy burns like fire” against idolaters, and those that rob thee of thy worship, art wont to punish them in their very posterity, with temporal evils, and with spiritual too, when their children tread in their steps; for then thou makest their fathers’ sins occasions of hastening or of increasing thy judgments, though thou always sparest the children that repent: O let thy just indignation deter me, and all that profess thy name, from such violations.

Thy jealousy, O my God, falls heavy upon them that hate thee; but how is it possible for any one to hate thee, who art infinite Love? And yet, alas! all that are enemies to thy worship, all that exalt any creature into thy throne, to ascribe their happiness, to sacrifice their esteem, and zeal, and affections, and to offer up sovereign honours to it, what do they but love false gods, and hate thee, and are therefore hated by thee.

O LORD GOD, to hate thee is the proper character of Devils, and LUCIFER himself cannot sin beyond that extremity of evil, the hatred of thee; and my heart is full of horror and grief to think, that ever those who bear thy image, and daily subsist by thy love, should turn themselves into Devils, and this world into a hell, by hating

thee : O boundless Love, turn them into men again, and then they cannot choose but love thee.

Glory be to thee, O my GOD, “who showest mercy to them that love thee, and keep thy commandments :” love and obedience always go together, and entail a blessing on the posterity of thy lovers. O keep me always one of that happy number ; let me ever love and obey thee.

Glory be to thee, O LORD GOD, whose love is more diffusive than thy anger ; thy vengeance extends but to the “third,” or, at most, “the fourth generation,”—thy “mercy unto thousands ;” and the more diffused thy love is, the more powerfully let it move us to praise and to love thee.

*The Third Commandment.*

O my GOD, O my Love, thy Name is thy own glorious and amiable self, (*Ps.* lxxxiii. 18,) thy divine nature, and perfections, and works, most worthy to be adored, most worthy to be loved ; and therefore I will always adore and love thy name.

O my GOD, may I ever have awful thoughts of thee ; may I never mention thy venerable Name, unless on solemn and just occasions ; may I never mention it on those occasions without acts of love and adoration.

O my GOD, to love and to glorify thy Name is the great end of our creation, which is still more enforced by our redemption : O let it be the business of my whole life to love and to glorify it in all possible ways, by my mouth, by my conversation, by my public confession of thee before men, even to death, whenever thou art pleased to call me to it, and by engaging all I can to glorify and love thee.

O my GOD, my heart shall ever be jealous of thy Name. I can have no true love, no real concern for thee, if I do not, to the utmost of my power, assert and vindicate the Name of my Beloved whenever I hear it dishonoured.

O my GOD, fix in my soul an habitual pure intention of thy glory in all my actions, that “whether I eat, or drink.

or whatever I do, I may do all to the glory" of my Beloved.

*Oaths.*

O my GOD, O my Love, fill me with a religious awe of oaths, in which the honour of thy beloved name is so highly concerned.

I know, O great **JEHOVAH**, that in an oath I solemnly invoke thee, as a witness to attest the truth of what I swear, and as a judge to punish me if I swear falsely.

Far be it from me, O **LORD GOD**, ever to invoke thee, unless upon inducements lawful and important, when thy glory, the command of my superiors, the visible good of my neighbour, or "the ending of strife," obliges me to it.

O **LORD GOD**, whenever I am duly called to an oath, grant that I may swear "in truth, in righteousness, and in judgment."

Whatever lawful promissory oaths I take, **LORD**, give me grace conscientiously to perform them, "though to my hinderance."

*Vows.*

O my GOD, O my Love, whenever I vow a vow to thee, give me grace to vow with all the caution I can, that I may vow those things only which are lawful and acceptable to thee, and which thou hast put into my power; that I may vow with deliberation and ghostly advice, and on weighty and considerable occasions only, and with a design of glory, (*Ps.* cxxxii. 2,) and thankfulness, and love to thee.

O my GOD, give me grace faithfully to perform all the vows I make to thee, especially my baptismal vow, and all my repeated vows of amendment, in which I have so often vowed to glorify and love thy name.

O my GOD, let thy all-powerful love abound in my heart, and in the hearts of all that profess thy name, that in these, and all other possible instances of thy love, our souls may be continually employed to praise and love thee.

O my God, let me ever be seeking occasions to excite all I can to adore thee.

O my God, who that knows thy great, thy beloved name, can ever in the least dishonour it ?

O my God, I renounce, and detest, and bewail, as odious and offensive to thee,

*All taking of thy name in vain :*

All use of it on trivial occasions, and without holy awe :

All abuse of it in impious jests, in charms, or curses, or imprecations, or telling fortunes ; all irreverent thought of thy name, profaneness, and blasphemy :

All denying thee by my works, or refusing publicly to confess thee, or tainely enduring to hear thee dishonoured :

All heathenish, or customary, or rash oaths, or swearing in ordinary communication, or by any creature :

All breaking of lawful oaths, perjury, false-swearing, and invoking thee, O God of Truth, to attest a lie :

All hasty, or unlawful, or superstitious, or impossible vows ; all violations of those that are regularly made :

All the least tendencies to any of these impieties.

From all these, and the like hateful violations of thy love, and from that vengeance which they justly deserve, O my God, deliver me, and deliver all faithful people.

O my God, I earnestly pray that thy love may so prevail over our hearts, that we may sadly lament and abhor all these abominations, and may never more provoke thee.

O great **JEHOVAH**, thou art jealous for thy glorious name ; and without serious repentance, thou wilt “not hold him guiltless, that taketh it in vain ;” thou wilt pour on him the vials of thy wrath : and yet thy ever-blessed name is, alas ! daily, hourly blasphemed.

O Almighty Love, thou canst as easily diffuse thy love over the world, as thou didst at first diffuse light ; O let thy fear and thy love so universally affect the age, that thy great and beloved name may be universally adored and loved.

*The Fourth Commandment.*

Glory be to thee, O my GOD, O my LOVE, who in compassion to human weakness, which is not capable of an uninterrupted contemplation of thee, hast appointed a solemn day on purpose for thy remembrance.

Glory be to thee, O my GOD, for proportioning a seventh part of our time to thyself, and liberally indulging the remainder to our own use.

O my GOD, let me ever esteem it my privilege and happiness to have a day set apart for thy service, and the concerns of my own soul; to have a day free from distractions, and disengaged from the world, wherein I have nothing to do, but to praise and to love thee.

LORD, grant that I may not only on thy day give thee true worship myself, but may give leisure to all under my charge to serve thee also.

Glory be to thee, O blessed SPIRIT, who on the first day of the week didst descend in miraculous gifts on the Apostles; O descend upon me, that I may be always “in the Spirit on the LORD’s day.”

O my GOD, give me grace on thy day to worship thee in my closet, and in the congregation, and to spend it in doing good, in works of necessity and charity, in prayer, and praise, and meditation: O let it ever be to me a day sacred to divine love, a day of heavenly rest and refreshment.

Glory be to thee, O LORD GOD, who didst command the *Sabbath*, or *Seventh Day*, to be “kept holy” by the *Jews* as thy Sabbath, in memory of the Creation; (*Gen. ii. 2*;) of thy “making heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and of thy resting the seventh day; of thy blessing the seventh day, and hallowing it.”

We Christians, O LORD GOD, following the equity of thy command, and authorized by Apostolical Practice, (*Acts xx. 7*, *1 Cor. xvi. 2*;) celebrate the LORD’s day, (*Rev. i. 10*;) “the first day of the week,” in memory of

our redemption, in memory of thy resurrection from the dead, O most beloved JESUS, when thou didst rest from the labours and sorrows of the new creation. O may I ever remember thy day and thee.

Glorify be to thee, O my GOD, who hast under the Gospel delivered us from the rigours, but not from the piety of the *Jewish* Sabbath.

LORD, since the blessing of everlasting salvation does wonderfully exceed the creation commemorated by the *Jews*, let our love and praise, and devotion, and zeal, proportionably exceed theirs also.

O my GOD, let thy all-powerful love abound in my heart, and in the hearts of all that profess thy name; that in these, and in all other possible instances of thy love, our souls may be continually employed to praise and to love thee.

O my GOD, let me ever be seeking occasions to excite all I can to adore and love thee.

O my GOD, O my Love, I renounce and detest all profanations of thy hallowed day, and of all other holy times set apart to thy praise and thy love :

All worldly-mindedness, and unnecessary business, or not allowing leisure for thy service, on thy day, to those under my care :

All unmercifulness to my very beasts : (*Luke* xiii. 15 :)

All indevotion, or forgetfulness of thee : (*Deut.* vi. 12 ; viii. 14 :)

All the least tendencies to any of these impieties.



Next to thy glorious Self, O my GOD, O my Love, and for the sake of thy supreme, independent Love, thou hast commanded me to love my Neighbour, allied to me by nature, or by grace, all strangers and enemies, as well as friends; to honour all men, as being made after thy likeness; and the greater likeness they retain to thee, to honour them the more.

Thou, O my GOD, hast commanded me to love my

Neighbour as myself, for the sake of thy Love ; give me love to relieve and assist him in all instances wherein he may need my help, as freely, as fully, as affectionately as I myself would desire to be treated, were I in his condition.

O my God, for the sake of thy dearest Love, give me grace to love my Neighbour, “ not in word and in tongue only, but in deed and in truth ;” to wish well to all men ; and to contribute my hearty prayers and endeavours, and give them, for thy sake, all lawful, and reasonable, and necessary succours.

Glory be to thee, O my God, who having commanded me to love my Neighbour as myself, dost imply the regular love of myself ; that I should do all I can to preserve myself free and vigorous to glorify thee in my station : it is for thy sake only I can love myself ; and he does not wish or endeavour his own happiness, he really hates himself, that does not love thee.

Thou, LORD, by enjoining me to love my Neighbour as myself, hast intimated my duty of loving those best, who either in blood or in grace are nearest myself : O let thy love teach me to observe the true order of charity in loving others.

O thou eternal Source of Goodness, give me grace to imitate thy boundless goodness ; let thy love work in me an universal propension to love, and to do good to all men.

Q. Show me how the love of your Neighbour is in the second table divided.

A. The love of my Neighbour, which is the fulfilling of the law, of all the commands, of the second table, is divided according to those different conditions of our Neighbour, wherein we most exercise our love or hatred to him.

Q. In how many ruling instances may we exercise that love or hatred ?

A. Either in outward acts, or inward disposition.

Q. How in outward acts ?



A. In five several ways : In respect of his Superiority, as in the Fifth commandment :

His Safety in the Sixth :

His Bed in the Seventh :

His Property in the Eighth ; or,

His good Name in the Ninth.

Q. How in our inward disposition ?

A. By regulating our very desires in relation to him, as the Tenth obliges us to do.

Q. Let me hear how Divine Love moves in each of these commands ?

A. It moves in such acts as follow.

### *The Fifth Commandment.*

Let thy reverential love, O my God, teach and incline me to show respectful love to all my superiors, in my inward esteem, and in my outward speech and behaviour.

Glory be to thee, O LORD, who hast comprehended all that are above me under the tender and venerable names of *Father* and *Mother*, that I, looking on them as resemblances and instruments of thy sovereign power and paternal providence to me, may be the more effectually engaged for thy sake to reverence and love them.

O my God, give me grace to imitate thy paternal goodness, and, for the sake of thy love, to love, to cherish, to provide for, to educate, to instruct, and to pray for my children ; and to take conscientious care to give them correction, and good example, and to make them thy children, that they may truly love thee.

O my God, give me grace, for the sake of thy love, to honour my Father and Mother, to render them all love, and reverence, and thankfulness, and all that regard that is due from a child ; that I may pay obedience to their commands, submission to their corrections, attention to their instructions, and succour to their necessities, and may daily pray for their welfare.

Glory be to thee, O LORD, who hast ordained Pastors,

to be our ecclesiastical parents ; to watch over our souls ; to instruct us in saving knowledge ; to guide us by their examples ; to pray for, and to bless us ; to administer spiritual discipline in the church ; and to manage all the conveyances of thy divine love.

O my GOD, for thy love's sake, let me ever honour and love the Ministers of thy love, the "ambassadors" thou dost send "in thy stead, to beseech us sinners to be reconciled to thee," and to offer to thy enemies conditions of love, of love eternal : O may I ever hear them attentively, practise their heavenly doctrine, imitate their holy examples, pay them their dues, and revere their censures.

O my GOD, for the sake of thy love, grant that I may ever love, and provide for my Servants, and may treat them like brethren ; let me never exact from them immoderate work : O may I always give them just wages, and equitable commands, and good example, and merciful correction : grant, LORD, that I may daily allow them time for their prayers, indulge them in due refreshments, take care of their souls, and persuade them to love thee ; remembering "that I also have a Master in heaven."

Give me grace, O my GOD, for the sake of thy love, to honour, and love, and obey my Master and Mistress ; to serve them with diligence, and faithfulness, and readiness ; to please and to pray for them : and whatever I do, to do heartily as to thee, O LORD, and not to them.

O my GOD, let thy love incline me to love and to honour all whom thou hast in any way made my Superiors, suitably to their quality, or age, or gifts, or learning, or wisdom, or goodness.

O my GOD, grant that for thy sake I may ever love and honour all that are, or have been, instruments of thy love to me, in doing me good : O may I reverence my teachers, be grateful to my benefactors, and have always a peculiar respect to my particular Pastor.

O my GOD, let thy love engage me to love those, whom

thou hast obliged to love me; to show constancy, and fidelity, and sympathy, and love, and communicativeness to my friends; to be affectionate to my brethren and sisters; to be kind and affable to my equals, condescending to my inferiors, and, in all possible ways, universally helpful, and obliging, and loving to all.

O my GOD, let thy all-powerful love abound in my heart, and in the hearts of all that profess thy name; that in all these, and in all other possible instances of duty, our lives may be continually employed to love thee, and for thy sake to love our neighbour, and to excite our neighbour to love thee.

O my GOD, O my LOVE, I renounce, and detest, and bewail, as odious and offensive to thee, as directly opposite to thy love, and the love of my neighbour for thy sake,

All dishonour of our Superiors, either in despising them, speaking evil of them, or irreverent behaviour:

All unnaturalness to Children:

All undutifulness, or stubbornness, or disobedience, or disrespect to Parents:

All rebelling, or reviling, or murmuring against the King, or against his Ministers:

All defrauding, undervaluing, or rejecting of lawful Pastors:

All schism, and contempt of their regular censures:

All falseness, or negligence, or refractoriness to Masters or Mistresses:

All rudeness, ingratitude, treachery, want of brotherly love, and unfaithfulness:

All the least tendencies to any of these impieties.

From all these, and the like hateful violations of thy love, and of the love of my neighbour, and from the vengeance which they justly deserve, O my GOD, deliver me and all faithful people.

O my GOD, I earnestly pray that thy love, and the love of our neighbour, may so prevail over our hearts, that we

may sadly lament and abhor all these abominations, and may never more provoke thee.

Glory be to thee, O LORD, who, to teach us the importance of this Duty of Subjection, hast placed it the first of all the second table, of all that relate to our neighbour, and hast made it the “first commandment with a promise” to every soul that conscientiously keeps it, that “his days shall be long in the land which the LORD his GOD giveth him.”

Who would not love and obey thee, O my GOD, and for thy sake his superiors, when thou hast promised to reward our duty with a long and happy life here, or, if thou seest it best for us to “take us away from the evil to come,” by enabling us to live a long tract of holiness in a little time, and at last by prolonging our bliss to all eternity in heaven ; for which gracious promise, all love, all glory be to thee.

*The Sixth Commandment.*

O my GOD, O my Love, I renounce and detest, and bewail, as odious and offensive to thee, as directly opposite to thy love, and to the love of my neighbour for thy sake,

All duels, and unlawful war :

All doing hurt to the body and life of my neighbour,—directly, by wounding or murdering him, or indirectly, by contriving or employing others to harm him :

All the ways of procuring abortion :

All malice and envy, hatred and revenge, contention and cruelty :

All injury and violence ; all rash, causeless, immoderate, or implacable anger ; all contumelious speaking or reviling :

All wilful vexing, grieving, or disquieting him :

All threatening, ill wishes, or curses :

All needless endangering ourselves, and self-murder :

All murdering of souls, by encouraging, ensnaring, tempting, or commanding them to sin :

All the least tendencies to any of these impieties.

From all these and the like hateful violations of thy love, and of the love of my neighbour, and from the vengeance which they justly deserve, O my God, O my Love, deliver me, and all faithful people.

O my God, I earnestly pray, that thy love, and the love of our neighbour, may so prevail over our hearts, that we may sadly lament and abhor all these abominations, and may never more provoke thee.

O my God, let thy unwearied and tender love to me, make my love unwearied and tender towards my neighbour, and zealous to procure, promote, and preserve his health, and safety, and happiness, and life, that he may be the better able to serve and love thee.

O my God, make me like thyself, all meekness and benignity, all goodness and sweetness, all gentleness and long-suffering.

Fill me full of good wishes and compassion, of liberality in alms-giving, according to my abilities, and of readiness to succour, and relieve, and comfort, and pray for all whom thy love, or their own necessities, or miseries, or dangers, recommend to my charity.

O let thy love, thou God of Love, make me peaceful and reconcilable, always ready to return good for evil, to repay injuries with kindness, and easy to forgive, unless in those instances where the impunity of the criminal would be injustice or cruelty to the public.

O thou Lover of Souls, let thy love raise in me a compassionate zeal to save the eternal life of souls, and by affectionate and seasonable advice, or exhortation, or corrections, to reclaim the wicked, and win them to love thee.

O my God, let thy all-powerful love abound in my heart, and in the hearts of all that profess thy name, that in these, and in all other possible instances of duty, our lives may be continually employed to love thee, and for thy sake to love our neighbour, and to excite our neighbours to love thee.

*The Seventh Commandment.*

O my God, O my Love, I renounce and detest and bewail, as odious and offensive to thee, as directly opposite to thy love, and to the love of my neighbour for thy sake,

All adultery and violations of my neighbour's bed, robbing him of that he loves best :

All adultery or unchastity of the eye or the hand :

All the kinds and degrees of lust, fornication, pollution of our own bodies, and the works of darkness :

All things that provoke or feed lust, impure company, discourse, songs, books, or pictures :

All lascivious dresses, or dances, or plays ; all idleness, or luxurious diet :

All the excesses and abuses of lawful marriage ; all unreasonable jealousies ; and all things that lessen the mutual kindness, or alienate the affections, of those that are married :

All the least tendencies to any of these impurities.

From all these and the like hateful violations of thy love, and the love of my neighbour, and from the vengeance which they justly deserve, O my God, O my Love, deliver me and all faithful people.

O my God, I earnestly pray, that thy love, and the love of our neighbour, may so prevail over our hearts, that we may sadly lament and abhor all these abominations, and may never more provoke thee.

O my God, let thy love, who art purity itself, create in me a perfect abhorrence of all impurity, that I may purify myself as thou art pure.

I know, O LORD, that I can never be a partaker of the Divine Nature, unless I "escape the pollution that is in the world through lust." O do thou therefore "cleanse me from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, that I may perfect holiness in thy fear." Give me grace "to possess my vessel in sanctification and honour," and to keep thy temple holy, that thy SPIRIT of Love may always there inhabit.

O my GOD, let my love be chaste to thee, chaste to myself, chaste to my neighbour.

O my GOD, may thy love set a strict guard on my senses: turn away mine ears, bridle my tongue, and restrain my hand from all uncleanness.

LORD, give me grace to fly all incitements, or opportunities, or instruments of defiling either my neighbour or myself; "to beat down my body; and to bring it into subjection."

O my Love, let me live ever watching and praying, or profitably employed in thy love, that I may leave no room for any unclean spirit to enter into my soul and tempt me.

O my GOD, let thy all-powerful love abound in my heart, and in the hearts of all that profess thy name, that in these and all other possible instances of duty, our lives may be continually employed to love thee, and for thy sake to love our neighbour, and to excite our neighbour to love thee.

O thou GOD of Love, who hast ordained the marriage state for the cure of our passion, and the comfort of our life, and hast made it the emblem of that divine love and union which thou art pleased to bear towards thy church; let the force of thy mystical love teach us to love each other, and both of us to love thee.

O thou who hast made us one flesh, make us but one soul also; let our love be mutual, constant, and inviolate, full of compliance, and condescension, and sympathy, and forbearance towards each other.

Fill us, O GOD of Love, with reciprocal care and zeal for each other's happiness, temporal and eternal, and with a delight in each other, exclusive of all loves but thine.

LORD, give us grace to keep our marriage always honourable, and our bed undefiled: let the affectionate authority of the one, and the submissive sweetness of the other, produce an entire friendship and harmony of disposition, and fervent intercessions for each other: give us, O LORD, an unafflicting foresight of our parting here,

and a passionate longing to be beatified near each other, in neighbouring mansions above, that from thenceforth our love to each other, and to thee, may be co-eternal with thine.

*The Eighth Commandment.*

O my GOD, O my Love, I renounce, and detest, and bewail, as odious and offensive to thee, as directly opposite to thy love, and to the love of my neighbour for thy sake,

All kinds of stealing, by open robbery, violence, or invasion :

All oppression, or extortion, or rapine, vexatious law-suits, and griping usury :

All fraud in trade and contracts, false weights, measures, and coin :

All concealing the defects of our own goods, or depreciating those of our neighbours :

All making haste to be rich, or taking advantage of the ignorance or necessity of the persons we deal with :

All withholding our neighbour's dues, or detaining the hire of the labourer :

All borrowing and not paying, keeping the goods of others, and refusing to make restitution :

All breach of trust, removing of land-marks, wasteful prodigality, or idle begging :

All outrages to the fatherless, the widow, and the stranger :

All the least tendencies to any of these acts of injustice.

From all these and the like hateful violations of thy love, and of the love of my neighbour, and from the vengeance which they justly deserve, O my GOD, deliver me and all faithful people.

O my GOD, I earnestly pray, that thy love, and the love of our neighbour, may so prevail over our hearts, that we may sadly lament and abhor all these abominations, and may never more provoke thee.

O my GOD, let the love of thy eternal and amiable jus-



tice teach me a steady justice in giving men their due, since I cannot love my neighbour if I am unjust to him.

LORD, give me grace to use my neighbour as my friend,— as myself; to buy and sell by just weights and measures; to be content with inoderate gain; to pay debts and wages; and to make restitution for injuries, or for goods unlawfully gotten.

Teach me, O GOD, to use this world so as not to abuse it; and to receive and manage all thy temporal blessings with thankfulness to thee, sobriety to myself, and charity to all.

Make me ever, O my GOD, upright and faithful in trusts, and trade, and agreements; diligent and honest in my station and calling; and, according to my ability, willing to lend and remit to my poor neighbours.

Whenever, O my GOD, I am forced to go to law, let me ever contend more for right than victory; and, in all prosecutions, preserve a charitable and an equitable disposition.

O my GOD, let thy all-powerful love abound in my heart, and in the hearts of all that profess thy name, that in these and in all other possible instances of duty, our lives may be continually employed to love thee, and for thy sake to love our neighbour, and to excite our neighbour to love thee.

### *The Ninth Commandment.*

O my GOD, O my Love, I renounce, and detest, and bewail, as odious and offensive to thee, as directly opposite to thy love, and to the love of my neighbour for thy sake,

All manner of *bearing false witness against my neighbour*; all false accusations, or glosses, or pleadings, or testimonies, or sentences in Courts of Judicature, by concealing, or over-speaking, or perverting right and truth:

All things prejudicial or destructive to my neighbour's good name:

All censoriousness and slander, detraction and calumny, forced consequences, or invidious reflections :

All scoffing at, or exposing of, the infirmities of others :

All whispering and tale-bearing, and raising of evil reports, suspicions, or jealousies, and all evil speaking :

All equivocations and dissembling, flattery and lying :

All the least tendencies to any of these injurious falsehoods.

From all these and the like hateful violations of thy love, and of the love of my neighbour, and from the vengeance which they justly deserve, O my GOD, deliver me, and all faithful people.

O my GOD, I earnestly pray that thy love, and the love of our neighbour, may so prevail over our hearts, that we may sadly lament and abhor all these abominations, and may never more provoke thee.

O my GOD, who dost love truth, and dost hate a lie, instil into my soul an unalterable love of truth, that nothing may tempt me to deviate from it in my whole conversation.

O LORD, give me grace ever to speak the truth, and let my heart and my tongue always go together.

O my GOD, give me grace to be tender of my neighbour's good name, since I cannot love him if I take that from him which I know to be most dear to him.

Grant, O my GOD, for the sake of thy love, that I may be always ready to vindicate my neighbour's good name on all occasions ; that I may judge the best, and speak well of him, and conceal or excuse his infirmities ; that I may be patient to hear, slow to believe, and unwilling to propagate evil reports ; and that I may put candid interpretations on his actions ; since the more he is defamed, the less able he is to serve thee, the less credit he has to persuade others to love thee.

O my GOD, let thy all-powerful love abound in my heart, and in the hearts of all that profess thy name, that in these, and in all other possible instances of duty, our lives may be continually employed to love thee, and

for thy sake to love our neighbour, and to excite our neighbour to love thee.

*The Tenth Commandment.*

O my GOD, I renounce, and detest, and bewail, as odious and offensive to thee, as directly opposite to thy love, and to the love of my neighbour for thy sake,

All inordinate desire of what is my neighbour's, all coveting of his house, or wife, or servants, or maid, or ox, or ass, or any thing that is his :

All discontentedness with my worldly condition, and worldly solicitude :

All envyings, or repining at the happiness of others :

All taking pleasure in sin, or in past impurities :

All the first motions, all the least tendency to concupiscence.

From all these, and the like hateful violations of thy love, and the love of our neighbour, and from the vengeance which they justly deserve, O my GOD, deliver me, and all faithful people.

O my GOD, I earnestly pray that thy love, and the love of my neighbour, may so prevail over our hearts, that we may sadly lament and abhor all these abominations, and may never more provoke thee.

O my GOD, thou art the great Searcher of Hearts, and dost not only require outward acts of duty, but the inward disposition of the heart ; the heart is the chief sacrifice thou requirest ; the heart is the proper seat of thy love ; and my heart I devote to thee.

O my GOD, "create in me a clean heart," that the fountain being clean, the stream may run clean also.

Give me a heart, O thou who only canst change the heart, entirely turned to thee, that may suppress and resist all the first springings of lust, before they shoot up into consent, approbation, and desire, before lust conceiving brings forth sin.

LORD, make me to be contented, and thankful, and well-pleased with that portion which thy providential love has allotted me, and to acquiesce in thy choice as best for me.

O great LORD of Hearts, lodge my neighbour in my heart next to myself; let all my desires be for his good; and let it be the subject of my joy, and praise, and love, to see thy love liberal to him, and to see him abounding in thy blessings.

O my GOD, what can a soul, enamoured of thee, ever desire but thee? O let the world never more have place in my heart: all my affections I withdraw from that to fix on thee.

Forgive me, O my GOD, if I am immeasurably ambitious,—it is only of thy favour; forgive me if I am insatiably covetous,—it is only of thy fruition; forgive me if I am perpetually discontented,—it is only because I cannot love thee more.

O inconceivable happiness of heaven, where my ambition shall rest on a throne, where my covetousness shall be filled with the beatific vision, and where I shall be eternally satisfied with love!

*Q. My good Child, know this, that thou art not able to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the Commandments of GOD, and to serve him, without his special grace, which thou must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer. Let me hear therefore if thou canst say the LORD'S PRAYER?*

*A. Our FATHER which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. Amen.*

*Q. What desirest thou of GOD in this prayer?*

*A. I desire my LORD GOD, our Heavenly Father, who is the giver of all goodness, to send his grace unto me and to all people, that we may worship him, serve him, and obey him, as we ought to do. And I pray unto GOD that he will send us all things that be needful both for our souls and bodies; and that he will be merciful unto us, and forgive us our sins; and that it will please him to save and*

*defend us in all dangers ghostly and bodily; and that he will keep us from all sin and wickedness, and from our ghostly enemy, and from everlasting death. And this I trust he will do of his mercy and goodness, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST. And therefore I say Amen. So be it.*

O LORD, it is my duty and my happiness to love thee; but, alas! my own sad experience teaches me how little able I am to love.

Ah! LORD, there is a dark cloud of ignorance spread over my soul, that intercepts thy beams; I cannot clearly see, I cannot fully know how lovely thou art.

Ah! LORD, when ever any gleams of thy loveliness break in upon my spirit, and attract my will, a crowd of strange loves importune and tempt me to wander after them.

Since, O my God, I can of myself neither know nor love thee, since I cannot by my own strength do those things thou requirest, nor walk in thy commandments, nor serve thee, nor think so much as one good thought; whither can I fly but only to thy free and unbounded love? thou art my hope, my help, and my salvation; thou only canst teach and enable me to know and to love thy own goodness.

By thy special grace, O my God, by thy particular assistance, by the strength of thy love, "I can do all things:" O let thy grace ever enlighten and inflame me; let it ever prevent, and accompany, and follow me; let it ever excite, and increase, and support thy love in my heart; O let it ever work in me, both "to will and to do of thy good pleasure."

I know, LORD, that thy grace, and all other blessings, "I must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer;" and I adore and love thy infinite benignity to sinners, in indulging us with the privilege, the honour, the happiness to pray to thee, to pour out our souls, to breathe out our desires, to present our wants, and to unbosom our griefs at thy throne of love.

I praise and I love thee, O sovereign Love, for not only permitting us miserable wretches to pray to thee,

but also for giving us all imaginable encouragement to so important a duty.

I adore and love thee, for inviting, for commanding us to pray. I adore and love thee, for pouring out thy HOLY SPIRIT of grace and supplication on us, to help our infirmities, to assist us in praying, to make "intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered," with the utmost ardour of a penitential and indigent love. I adore and love thee, for giving us so many glorious promises of hearing our prayers, so many firm assurances of a gracious acceptance.

O thou great Prophet of Divine Love, who, as if thy invitation, and command, and assistance, and promises, were not enough to make us pray, hast condescended to teach us this duty thyself, and to give a perfect Pattern of Prayer; for this I adore and love thee.

Glory be to thee, who in dictating a form of prayer, and enjoining us to use it, hast complied with our weakness; and who, in dictating a short form, hast taught us to avoid "vain repetitions," or "thinking we shall be heard for much speaking," and to measure our prayers rather by their fervency than their length.

That prayer which was composed by thyself, O God that hearest prayer, we are sure is most divine, and excellent, and perfect like its author, and most agreeable to thee; for which I adore and love thee.

O blessed JESUS, the only Beloved of God, thou best understandest the language of love, and in that language thou hast taught us to pray; and whenever we pray in that language, we have an humble confidence that thy Heavenly FATHER will hear us, who, with the words of his own Beloved SON, will ever be well pleased.

Thou, O heavenly Guide of our devotion and our love, by teaching us to pray, hast showed us that prayer is our treasury where all blessings are kept, our armoury where all our strength and weapons are stored, the only preservative, and the very vital heat, of divine love. Give me grace therefore to call on thee "at all times by diligent prayer."

O the unspeakable misery of those who either totally neglect the duty of prayer, or else profane it by drawing near to God with their lips when their hearts are far from him, whose prayers, being void of all devotion and concern, are turned into fresh sins. How deservedly shall he have God for his enemy, who would not beg pardon of a most reconcilable Father! How deservedly shall he suffer eternal wrath, who thought heaven not worth the asking!

O my God, let me daily offer up to thee my morning and evening sacrifice in private, and in public too, if my circumstances permit; and as near as I can, let me omit no opportunities of praying, or of praising thee.

O my God, may I ever "keep myself in thy love, by praying in the HOLY GHOST," and by "praying without ceasing," since I incessantly want the succours of thy love.

Ah, LORD, I know my devotion has daily many interruptions; I cannot always be actually praying; but keep my heart always in an habitual disposition to devotion, and in mindfulness of thy divine presence.

O my God, as thy infinite love is ever streaming in blessings on me, let my soul be ever breathing love to thee.

O my God, to prayer, whereby I address thee, give me grace to add the daily reading and meditation of thy word, whereby thou art pleased to converse with me.

It is of thy abundant love to us, O LORD, that thou indulgest us with thy word in our own tongue; and from those dear volumes of thy love, every devout lover may daily, and on all occasions, supply proper fuel to his love; for which all love, all glory be to thee.

I adore and love thee, O heavenly Oracle of Love, for contriving this prayer in so admirable a method, that thou hast withal taught us all the requisites of an acceptable prayer; thou, in the preface, hast taught us how to pray; in the petitions, for what to pray; and in the conclusion, what ought to be the end of our prayers; for which I adore and love thee.

*FATHER.*] Glory be to thee, O JESUS, who hast taught us to direct our prayers to God only, since he only is omni-

niscient to know, and all-sufficient to succour us in our necessities.

Glory be to thee, who hast taught us for whose sake only we can hope to be heard, even for thy own, O blessed JESUS; for it is through thy alone mediation that we sinners can call GOD, *Father*: thou hast taught us to pray with the affections of a child, with reverential love, and reliance on the paternal care and love of our heavenly Father.

*Our FATHER.*] Glory be thee, O LORD, who in teaching me to call GOD, *Our Father*, hast taught me not to confine my charity to myself, but to pray also with the affections of a brother, and to enlarge it to all mankind, who are children by creation, and to all Christians, who are children by adoption, of the same heavenly Father. O give me that brotherly-kindness to them all, that I may beg the same blessings for them as for myself, and earnestly pray that they may share with me in thy fatherly love.

*Which art in heaven.*] Glory be to thee, O thou Beloved of the FATHER, who in teaching us to pray to our Father *in Heaven*, hast taught me the infinite distance between GOD and us, and to pray in the humility of a suppliant, and with that awe that becomes a frail creature, a miserable sinner, before his CREATOR and his JUDGE.

O FATHER Almighty, though thou fillest all places, yet thy glory is most manifested in heaven, and there thy majesty does most illustriously dwell, and to thy throne there are we to lift up our hearts when we pray. O let my soul fly up to thee, in heavenly thoughts, and desires, and love: O let me savour nothing of the earth, whenever I treat with thee in heaven!

Glory be to thee, O gracious LORD, who in the petitions of thy divine prayer, hast taught us for what we are to pray, for all blessings temporal and eternal, for all things lawful, and according to thy will.

Glory be to thee, O JESUS, who in ranking the petitions for spiritual blessings first, has taught us to seek heaven



in the first place ; grant, LORD, that I may always beg thy blessings in their due order ; that I may pray for blessings spiritual with holy violence, with importunity, and resolution not to be denied, as being the proper ingredients of thy love, and absolutely necessary to my eternal welfare,—and for temporal, with resignation to thy will, since I may love thee, and be eternally happy, without them.

*Hallowed be thy Name.*] O LORD GOD, may *thy Name*, thy own glorious and amiable self, have a love and honour incommunicable. May thy infinite Goodness and Greatness be for ever, by all men, and all angels, admired, and adored, and magnified, both in private and public, in our hearts, our mouths, and our lives.

All creatures share in thy goodness, O God ; O let all creatures help us to glorify thy Name.

O may “ every thing that hath breath praise the LORD.”

*Thy kingdom come.*] O thou King of kings, may *thy kingdom of grace*, the church militant, the catholic seminary of divine love, come to its utmost perfection in this life.

O may thy Gospel be daily propagated, unbelieving nations converted, and the number of thy saints augmented.

Grant, O LORD GOD, that thy true religion, thy word, thy conveyances of grace, all the holy institutions, laws, and governors, fixed by thee in thy spiritual kingdom, may be loved, and honoured, and obeyed ; and that thy faithful subjects may be protected against all the malice of wicked men, and powers of darkness.

O my GOD, let it be thy good pleasure to put a period to sin and misery, to infirmity and death ; to complete the number of thine elect, and to hasten thy kingdom of glory ; that I, and all that wait for thy salvation, may in the church triumphant eternally love and praise thee.

*Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.*] O my GOD, thy will and thy commands “ are most holy, just, and good,” and condescending to our weakness, and by

no means grievous ; O give me grace conscientiously to observe them.

Thy blessed Angels, O LORD, “always behold thy face in heaven :” they have the beatific vision of thy incomparable amiableness ; they cannot but unalterably choose thee ; they must needs to their utmost capacity praise and love thee ; they cannot possibly offend thee ; they ever perfectly obey thee, and are always upon the wing at thy command.

LORD, give me grace, in imitation of the blessed spirits above, to set thee always before me. O fix my serious contemplation on thee. Ravish my soul with a lively sense of thy infinite amiableness. O vouchsafe me one short glimpse of thy goodness. O may I once “taste and see how gracious thou art,” that all things besides thee may be tasteless to me ; that my desires may be always flying up towards thee ; that I may render to thee love, and praise, and obedience, pure and cheerful, constant and zealous, universal and uniform, like that which the holy Angels render to thee in heaven.

*Give us this day our daily bread.*] Glory be to thee, “who openest thy hand, and fillest all things living with plenteousness.”

Let it be thy good pleasure to give me, and all that wait on thy love, our food in due season ; give us *bread*, health, food, raiment, and all the necessaries of life.

Give us, O heavenly FATHER, *daily bread*, nothing to gratify our luxury, but such a competence as thy divine wisdom sees fitted for us.

Give us, O bountiful CREATOR, daily bread *this day* ; teach us to live without anxiety for to-morrow, in a dependance on thy fatherly goodness, and to be content and thankful for the present portion,

O merciful LORD, give us *our bread*, that which is our own bread, by honest labour or a lawful title ; and grant that we may never eat the bread of idleness or of deceit.

Do thou, LORD, *give* us our bread, for unless thou givest it we cannot have it ; and together with our bread

give us thy blessing, otherwise our bread will not nourish us.

Above all, O LORD GOD, give us the bread of life, the bread that came down from heaven, the body and blood of thy most blessed SON, to feed our souls to life eternal.

Blessed JESUS, O that it might be "my meat," as it was thine, "to do the will of thy heavenly FATHER."

*And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.*] For thy own mercies' sake, and for the merits of the SON of thy Love, *forgive us*, and all penitent sinners, *our trespasses*, our sins, known or secret, of omission or commission, which are the vast debts we owe to thy justice.

Forgive us, O LORD, *as we forgive them*, even our greatest enemies, that *trespass against us*, their trespasses, which are infinitely inconsiderable in comparison of our trespasses against thee.

Glory be to thee, O LORD, who, to teach us charity, hast made our forgiveness of others the condition of obtaining thine.

O easy, O gracious condition of pardon! Who would not forgive his brother a few *pence*, when he may have *ten thousand talents* forgiven?

Let my love learn from thine, not only to forgive my enemies, but to be zealous also to do them good.

*And lead us not into temptation.*] O LORD GOD, thou seest how our ghostly enemies, the world, the flesh, and the Devil, are every moment soliciting, alluring, or tempting us to evil; be merciful unto us; save, help, and deliver us.

Thou seest, O my GOD, how infirm I am, and how ready my own deceitful heart is to surrender to the tempter; I know that SATAN cannot tempt me without thy permission; O lead me not, and if it be thy good pleasure, suffer me not to fall, into violent and lasting temptations, that may endanger my perseverance.

I know, O heavenly FATHER, that to be tempted is no sin, for thy own beloved SON was tempted to the most

horrid of all sins, "to fall down and worship" the Devil; I know, LORD, the sin lies in yielding to the temptation.

O my GOD, if thou for trial of my love lead me into any great temptation; and let me continue under it, thy will, LORD, be done, not mine: let thy paternal tenderness limit and controul the tempter; let thy all-sufficient grace restrain my consent, and keep me always on my guard, watching and praying; and let me be at last more than conqueror.

I am content, LORD, to be tried, so I be not wicked, though it be grievous for those that love thee to be tempted to offend thee.

*But deliver us from evil.*] O FATHER of Mercies, if thou thinkest fit to *lead me into temptation, deliver me from the evil* to which I am tempted: deliver me from the evil of sin, and the evil of punishment, from the evil one, from the evil world, and from my own evil heart, and from all suggestions to evil; for all that is evil is most hateful to thee, who art infinite goodness, and most destructive of thy love. And therefore from all that is evil, O Almighty LORD, defend me.

*For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.*] I adore and love thee, O JESUS, who by concluding thy prayer thus, hast taught us, that the right end of our prayers should be the glory of GOD, that we should be ever careful to mix praise with our prayers, and that we should be as zealous to give thanks for what we receive, as to pray for what we want.

To thee, O LORD, do we pray, on thee only we depend for acceptance, to thee only we offer up our praises; for *thine is the kingdom*, sovereign right to dispose of all things: *thine is the power*, almighty to relieve and bless us: *thine is the glory*; all the communications of thy goodness, as they flow from thee, return to thee again in sacrifices of love, of praises, and of adoration.

*Amen.*] For the sake, O heavenly FATHER, of thy Beloved, in whom all "thy promises are Amen," and who is himself "the Amen, the faithful and true witness"

of thy love to us, hear me, and pardon my wanderings and coldness, and help me to sum up and enforce my whole prayer, all my wants, and all the wants of those I pray for, in a hearty, and fervent, and comprehensive *Amen.*

*Q. How many Sacraments hath CHRIST ordained in his church?*

*A. Two only, as generally necessary to salvation, that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the LORD.*

Glory be to thee, O crucified Love, out of whose wounded side flowed water and blood, for the two sacraments which thou hast ordained in thy church, Baptism, and the Supper of the LORD; the one to initiate, the other to confirm us in our christianity.

Glory be to thee, O LORD, who having ordained two sacraments only, and made them generally necessary to salvation, art yet pleased to have mercy rather than sacrifice; in cases where they cannot be had, thou dost supply the want of them by thy merciful acceptance of those persons who earnestly desire, and are disposed to receive them.

O blessed JESUS, the greater thy compassion is to those who want thy sacraments, by reason of their infelicity, not their choice, the greater will be thy indignation against those who wilfully neglect what thy love has ordained to be throughout thy whole church used and revered, from which neglect of thy love, good LORD, deliver me.

*Q. What meanest thou by this word Sacrament?*

*A. I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us, ordained by CHRIST himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.*

*Q. How many parts are there in a Sacrament?*

*A. Two: the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace.*

Glory be to thee, O tenderest Love, who, to stoop to our weak apprehension, hast in the two sacraments made

*an outward, and visible, and familiar thing, to be the sign of an inward, invisible, mysterious, and spiritual grace.*

Glory be to thee, O bountiful Love, for ordaining and giving us the holy sacraments. Thou thyself only art the Author and Fountain of grace, and thou only hast the right of instituting the conveyances of thy own grace:— all love, all glory be to thee.

Glory be to thee, O mighty Love, who hast elevated these outward signs to an efficacy far above their natures, not only to signify, but to be means to convey thy grace to us, and to be seals and pledges to assure to us the communications of thy love; that our sight may assist our belief that, if with due preparation we receive them, both parts of the sacraments will go together; as certainly as we receive the outward and visible sign, so certainly shall we receive the inward and invisible grace; for which all love, all glory be to thee.

**Q.** *What is the outward visible sign or form in Baptism?*

**A.** *Water: wherein the person is baptized, in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST.*

**Q.** *What is the inward and spiritual grace?*

**A.** *A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness: for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.*

**Q.** *What is required of persons to be baptized?*

**A.** *Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of GOD made to them in that sacrament.*

**Q.** *Why then are infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them?*

**A.** *Because they promise them both by their sureties; which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.*

Glory be to thee, O thou Lover of Souls; it was by thy preventing love, that I was baptized with the *outward sign, water*, “in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST;” (*Matt. xxviii. 19*;) that I should believe in the most Holy Trinity; that I should

entirely live devoted to the three most adorable Persons ; that I should wholly depend on their gracious assistances, and love and glorify that triune Love, the Author of my salvation.

Glory be to thee, O JESUS, who by *water*, that washes away the filth of the body, dost represent thy *invisible grace*, which spiritually washes and cleanses the soul.

Glory be to thee, O blessed LORD, who savest us, not by the outward washing, but by the inward purifying grace, accompanied with the “ answer of a good conscience towards God,” that thy propitious love brought me into thy church, the spiritual ark, to save me from perishing in the deluge of sin, which overwhelms the world ; for this all love, all glory be to thee.

Glory be to thee, by whose *invisible grace* we die to sin, to all carnal affections, renouncing them all, and resolving to take no more pleasure in them than dead persons do in the comforts of life. O may I ever thus die to sin.

Glory be to thee, O JESUS, who, from our death to sin, dost raise us to a new life, and dost breathe into us the breath of love. “ In the laver of regeneration ” we are “ born again by water and the SPIRIT, by a new birth unto righteousness ; ” that as the natural birth propagated sin, our spiritual birth should propagate grace ; for which all love, all glory be to thee.

Glory be to thee, who dost give us the Holy Spirit of love, to be the principle of new life in us, to infuse into our souls a supernatural ability to obey and love thee ; for which all love, all glory be to thee.

Glory be to thee, O compassionate Love, who, when we were conceived and “ born in sin,” of sinful parents, when we sprang from a root wholly corrupt, and were all “ children of wrath,” hast made us children of thy own heavenly Father by adoption and grace ; and who, when we were heirs of hell, hast made us heirs of heaven, even joint heirs with thy own self, of thy own glory ; for which, with all the powers of my soul, I adore and love thee.

I know, LORD, that I am thine no longer than I love thee; I can no longer feel the efficacy of my baptism, than I am faithful to my vow I there made; if I “name the name of CHRIST, I am to depart from iniquity.” (2 *Tim.* ii. 19.) O do thou give me the grace of true repentance for all my sins, for my original impurity, and for all my actual transgressions, that I may abhor and forsake them all: wound my soul with a most affectionate sorrow for all the injuries and dishonours I have offered to infinite love.

Glory be to thee, O JESUS, for all those exceeding great and precious promises of pardon, and grace, and glory, which thou hast made to us Christians in the sacrament of Baptism: O may I ever steadfastly believe, O may I ever passionately love, and may I ever firmly rely on thy superabundant love in all these promises; for which I will ever adore and love thee.

Glory be to thee, who in my infancy didst initiate me by holy Baptism; and who, by thy preventing grace, when I was a little child, didst receive me into the evangelical covenant, didst take me up into the arms of thy mercy, and didst bless me. Glory be to thee, who didst early dedicate me to thyself, to prepossess me by thy love, before the world should seize and defile me.

Ah gracious LORD, how long, how often have I polluted myself by my sins? But I repent and deplore all those pollutions, and I consecrate myself to thee again: O pardon and accept me, and restore me to thy love: O let the intenseness of love retrieve all the love I have lost.

Glory be to thee, O JESUS, who, when by reason of my infancy I could not promise to repent and believe for myself, didst mercifully accept of the act of my [parents or] sureties for me, as thou didst accept for good to the paralytic the charitable intentions of those that brought him to thee, and those of the woman of *Canaan*, for the cure of her daughter: for which merciful acceptance, all love, all glory be to thee.

O my GOD, the promise which was made for me, I ac-



knowledge that as soon as I came to age I was bound myself to perform ; and I own and renew my obligation : I promise, with all the force of my soul, to love thee ; O do thou ever keep me true to my own promise, since thou art unalterably true to thine.

*Q. Why was the Sacrament of the LORD's Supper ordained ?*

*A. For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of CHRIST, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.*

*Q. What is the outward part or sign of the LORD's Supper ?*

*A. Bread and wine, which the LORD hath commanded to be received.*

*Q. What is the inward part, or thing signified ?*

*A. The body and blood of CHRIST, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the LORD's Supper.*

*Q. What are the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby ?*

*A. The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of CHRIST, as our bodies are by the bread and wine.*

*Q. What is required of them who come to the LORD's Supper ?*

*A. To examine themselves whether they repent them truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life ; have a lively faith in GOD's mercy through CHRIST, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and be in charity with all men.*

Glory be to thee, O crucified Love, who at thy last supper didst ordain the Holy Eucharist, the sacrament and feast of love.

It was " for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of thy death, and of the benefits we receive thereby," that thou wast pleased to ordain this awful rite : all love, all glory be to thee.

Ah ! LORD, how little sensible is he of thy love in dying for us, who can ever forget thee.

Woe is me, that ever a sinner should forget his Saviour ; and yet, alas, how prone are we to do it !

Glory be to thee, O gracious JESUS, who, to impress thy love deeply on our souls, hast instituted the blessed Sacrament, and commanded us, “ Do this in remembrance of me.”

O JESUS, let the propitiatory sacrifice of thy death, which thou didst suffer upon the cross for the sins of the whole world, and particularly for my sins, be ever fresh in my remembrance.

O blessed SAVIOUR, let the mighty salvation that love has wrought for us never slip out of my mind ; but especially let my remembrance of thee in the holy Sacrament be always most lively and most affecting.

O JESUS, if I love thee truly, I shall be sure to frequent thy altar, that I may often remember all the love of my crucified Redeemer.

I know, O my LORD and my GOD, that a *bare remembrance* of thee is not enough ; do thou fix in me such a remembrance of thee, as is suitable to the infinite love I am to remember : work in me all those holy and heavenly affections, which become the remembrance of a crucified Saviour.

Glory be to thee, O adorable JESUS, who under the outward and visible part, the bread and wine, both which thou hast commanded to be received, dost communicate to our souls the inward and invisible grace, thy own most blessed body and blood, “ which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in thy Supper ;” for which all love, all glory be to thee.

LORD, what need I labour to search out the manner of thy mysterious presence in this sacrament, when my love assures me thou art there ? All the faithful who approach thee know that thou art there ; they feel the virtue of divine love going out of thee to heal their infirmities, and to inflame their affections ; for which all love, all glory be to thee.

O holy JESUS, when at the altar I see the bread broken,

and the wine poured out, teach me to discern thy body there; let those sacred and significant actions create in me a most lively remembrance of thy sufferings, how thy blessed body was scourged, wounded, bruised, and tormented; how thy precious blood was shed for my sins; and let them set all my powers at work to love thee, and to celebrate thy love in thus dying for me.

Glory be to thee, O JESUS, who didst institute the holy Eucharist in both kinds, and hast commanded both to be received, both the bread and the wine, both thy body broken, and thy blood shed: thy love, O LORD, has given me both, and both are equally significative and productive of thy love: I do as much thirst after the one, as I hunger after the other: I equally want both, and it would be grievous to my love to be deprived of either.

O my LORD and my GOD, do thou so dispose my heart to be thy guest at thy holy table, that I may feel all the sweet influences of Love Crucified, strengthening and refreshing my soul, as our bodies are by the bread and wine.

O merciful JESUS, let that immortal food, which in the holy Eucharist thou vouchsafest me, instil into my weak soul new grace, new life, new love, new vigour, and new resolution, that I may never more faint or droop in my duty.

Raise in me fresh ardours of love, that it may be henceforth the greatest torment I can endure, ever to offend thee, and that it may be my greatest delight to please thee.

O amiable JESUS, when I devoutly receive the outward elements, as sure as I receive them, I receive thee; I receive the pledges of thy love, to quicken mine; O indulge me with one foretaste of the deliciousness of thy love, that in the strength of that I may perseveringly love thee.

Glory be to thee, my LORD and my GOD, who hast given me an invitation to thy heavenly feast. All love, all glory be to thee.

LORD, give me grace, that I may approach this holy mystery with a heart fully disposed to love thee.

O my GOD, my Judge, give me grace, I most humbly besecch thee, to examine my whole life past by the rule of thy commandments, before I presume to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup; give me grace to deplore all my provocations, lest, coming unprepared, I receive “unworthily, and eat and drink my own damnation.”

O thou great Searcher of Hearts, help me so impartially to judge and condemn myself, so humbly to repent, and beg pardon, that I may not be condemned at thy tribunal, when I shall appear there at the last day.

LORD, give me grace to search every secret of my heart, to leave no sin unrepented of; fill my eyes full of tears of love, that with those tears I may lament all the indignities I have offered to thy love.

But alas! after the most strict examination we can make, who can number his impieties? Who can tell how oft he offendeth? LORD, cleanse me from my secret faults, which in general I renounce and bewail.

Thou who alone changest the heart, be pleased to change mine; change my aversion of thee, into an entire love of thee. Give me a filial repentance, that with a broken and contrite heart I may grieve and mourn, and repent of all my former sins, and may for ever forsake them, and return to my obedience.

Let thy love, O my GOD, so fill my soul, that I may for the future steadfastly propose to lead a new life, that I may renew my baptismal vow, and hereafter live as a sworn votary to thy love.

O heavenly FATHER, settle in my soul a lively faith in thy mercy through CHRIST, a steady belief in all thy love to sinners, and an affectionate reliance on the merits and mediation of thy crucified Son.

O my crucified GOD, let the remembrance of thy death set all the powers of my soul at work, that I may desire and pant after thee; that I may admire and adore thee; that I may take heavenly delight in thy gracious presence; and that with praise and thanksgiving I may receive thee into my heart.

LORD, when I present myself and my love, as all the gift I have to offer, at thy altar, next to my love to thee, and for the sake of thy infinite love to me, which I there remember, give me grace to love my neighbour, and to be in charity with all men, and to “ walk in love, as thou hast loved us, and hast given thyself for us, an offering, and a sacrifice to GOD, for a sweet-smelling savour.”

O JESUS, in this memorial of thy sufferings I see how thou didst forgive me and love me, when I was thy enemy; O, for thy dearest love to me, give me love to forgive all my enemies, and to be at peace with the world, as I desire to be loved, and to be forgiven, and to be at peace with thee.

All that have any way injured me, I freely forgive, for thy sake: do thou also forgive them; incline them to brotherly charity; and let them at last feel the comfort of that reconciliation which thou didst make upon the cross, for which I will ever adore and love thee.

O my GOD, if I have wronged or injured my neighbour, give me grace to beg his pardon, and, as I have opportunity, to make him satisfaction and restitution, according to my power.

O crucified Love, whenever I see thee, in any of thy poor members, hungry, naked, or in distress, let the remembrance of thy love engage me to contribute all I can to their relief; may I ever be liberal in my alms to thee, who wert so liberal of thy inestimable blood for me.

To GOD the FATHER, who first loved us, and made us accepted in the Beloved; to GOD the SON, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; to GOD the HOLY GHOST, who sheds the love of GOD abroad in our hearts, be all love, and all glory, from time, and for eternity. Amen.

END OF VOL. XIII.





