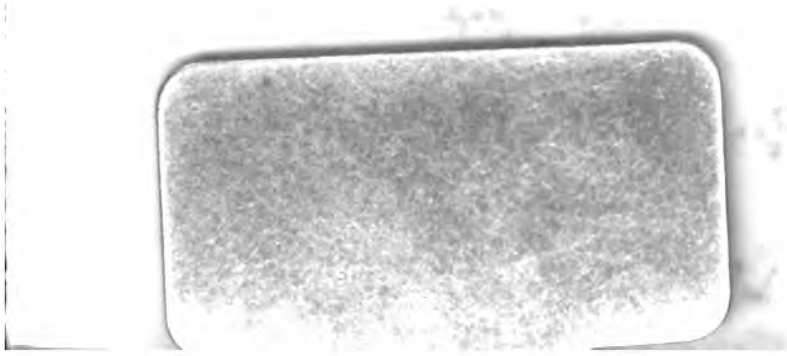

Tho Fuller B.D.

Pub by I Bartlett Oxford.
1810

GOOD THOUGHTS

IN

BAD TIMES;

AND

GOOD THOUGHTS

IN

WORSE TIMES.

BY

THOMAS FULLER, B. D.

WITH

A RECOMMENDATORY PREFACE,

BY

JAMES HINTON, A. M.

OXFORD:

PRINTED BY AND FOR J. BARTLETT;

And for WILLIAMS and SMITH, Stationers' Court, BAYNES, BUTTON, and BURDITT, Paternoster Row, and CONDER, Bucklersbury, LONDON.

1810.

PREFACE.

THOMAS FULLER, the AUTHOR of the following Meditations, was born in the year 1608. He distinguished himself as the Author of several works, of which his *History of the Holy War*—*Holy and Profane State*—*Church History*—*Pisgah's Sight*—*Abel Redivivus*—*and History of the Worthies of England*, are the most conspicuous.

When the civil dissensions, which for so many years distracted the nation, first arose, Fuller espoused the royal cause; and, early in the year 1643, was received with much distinction by Charles I. who was then at Oxford. The King, being prepossessed in his favour by the accounts

he had heard of his singular abilities, as well as of his zealous attachment to Court politics, directed Fuller to preach before him. The Preacher does not appear fully to have answered the expectations, which the report of his character had excited, and he was censured by the partisans of the Court as lukewarm. In this circumstance the moderation of Fuller is somewhat remarkable; since he had not long before incurred the displeasure of the Parliamentary leaders, by a sermon which he preached in London, in which he appeared to them as a zealous advocate for the King.

Soon after his favourable reception at Oxford, he attached himself entirely to the King's service, and followed the fortunes of the royal army, as chaplain to Sir Ralph Hopton: thus giving a de-

cisive

cisive proof of his fidelity to the cause which he had espoused. The general tenor of Fuller's conduct justifies the belief, that, in this decision, he was influenced by conscientious motives, and not by the prospect of any secular advantage. The remainder of his life appears to have been employed in collecting and arranging the materials of his voluminous works, and in attending to his ecclesiastical duties.

At the Restoration, he was appointed Chaplain Extraordinary to Charles II. and in the same year created Doctor in Divinity at Cambridge. He died the 16th of August, 1661. at the age of 54. Such was the estimation in which he was held by his contemporaries, that his grave was attended by two hundred of his clerical brethren; and in a sermon

preached at his funeral by the Dean of Rochester, that Dignitary bestows great encomiums on his character.

The Reader will perceive in the little work now presented to him, many traces of that moderation and pacific spirit, which the Author eminently cultivated, as became a true disciple of the religion he professed: for however difficult it might be to escape the strong influence of party, which, during almost the whole of his life, agitated every part of the kingdom, he seems to have carefully and successfully avoided those extremes both in political and religious controversy, to which the writers and the people of that age were unhappily too prone.

The *Personal Meditations* of the Author

thor display a close attention to the state of his own mind, an acuteness in detecting the fallacies of the heart, and deep consciousness of his own failings, expressed with Christian humility, and with that appropriate and extensive use of Scripture language, which is often conspicuous in the writings of those of his contemporaries, whose religious views were similar to his own.

In the Author's *Historical Applications*, we recognize his general acquaintance with history; and if we cannot always admire the aptness of his applications, we may justly covet that state of mind, which could derive spiritual improvement from every source.

To many Readers, the allusions to the times in which the Author lived will ap-

appear curious and interesting, as they exhibit the public anxieties and the domestic distractions of that remarkable period of the English history. A recollection of the taste which was prevalent amongst writers of his day will furnish an apology for the conceits in which the Author abounds, and which will, in some instances, sound harsh to a modern ear. The retrospect may also, by placing those times in contrast with our own, excite our gratitude to divine Providence, that the principles of religious Liberty are now better understood and more generally avowed. The spirit of piety which pervades the whole of these Meditations, will recommend them to many Readers more powerfully than any other consideration.

No Edition of the present work appears

pears to have been published since that in 1657, which has now become exceedingly scarce; and the Editor hopes, that by reprinting it, he shall be found to have rendered an acceptable service to the interests of religion.

OXFORD,
Dec. 15, 1809.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE LADY DALKEITH,

LADY GOVERNESS

TO HER HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS

HENRIETTA.

MADAM,

IT is unsafe in these dangerous days, for any to go abroad without a convoy, or at least a pass: my book hath both, in being dedicated to your Honour. The Apostle saith, *Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof?* I am one of your Honour's planting, and could heartily wish, that the fruit I bring forth were worthy to be tasted by your judicious palate: howsoever, accept these grapes, if not for their goodness, for their novelty: though not sweetest relished, they are soonest ripe, being the first fruits of Exeter press, presented unto you. And if ever my ingratitude should

for-

forget my obligations to your Honour, these black lines will turn red, and blush his unworthiness that wrote them. In this pamphlet your Ladyship shall praise whatsoever you are pleased but to pardon. But I am tedious; for your Honour can spare no more minutes from looking on a better book, her infant Highness, committed to your charge. Was ever more hope of worth in a less volume! but oh! how excellently will the same, in due time, be set forth, seeing the paper is so pure, and your Ladyship the overseer to correct the press! The continuance and increase of whose happiness, here and hereafter, is desired in his daily devotions, who resteth

Your Honour's,

in all Christian Service,

THOMAS FULLER.

PER-

PART I.

PERSONAL MEDITATIONS.

PERSONAL

MEDITATIONS.

I.

LORD,

HOW near was I to danger, yet escaped! I was upon the brink of the brink of it, yet fell not in; they are well kept who are kept by thee. Excellent Archer! thou didst hit the mark in missing it, as meaning to fright, not hurt me. Let me not now be such a fool, as to pay my thanks to blind fortune for a favour, which the eye of Providence hath bestowed upon me. Rather let the narrowness of my escape make my thankfulness to thy goodness the larger, lest my ingratitude justly cause, that whereas this arrow but hit my hat, the next pierce my head.

II.

LORD,

WHEN thou shalt visit me with a sharp disease, I fear I shall be impatient; for I

am choleric by my nature, and tender by my temper, and have not been acquainted with sickness all my life time. I cannot expect any kind usage from that which hath been a stranger unto me; I fear I shall rave, and rage. Oh whither will my mind sail, when distemper shall steer it? Whither will my fancy run, when diseases shall ride it? My tongue, which of itself || *is a fire*, sure will be a *wildfire*, when the furnace of my mouth is made seven times hotter with a burning fever. But, Lord, though I should talk idly to my own shame, let me not talk wickedly to thy dishonour. Teach me the art of patience whilst I am well, and give the use of it when I am sick. In that day, either lighten my burden, or strengthen my back. Make me, who so often in my health have discovered my weakness, presuming on my own strength, to be strong in sickness, when I solely rely on thine assistance.

III.

LORD,

THIS morning my unseasonable visiting of a friend disturbed him in the midst of

|| James iii. 6.

his

his devotions: unhappy! to hinder another man's goodness. If I myself build not, shall I snatch the ax and hammer from him that doth? Yet I could willingly have wished, that rather than he should then have cut off the cable of his prayers, I had twisted my cord to it, and had joined with him in his devotions: however, to make him the best amends I may, I now request of thee for him, whatsoever he would have requested for himself. Thus he shall be no loser, if thou be pleased to hear my prayer for him, and to hearken to our Saviour's intercession for us both.

IV.

LORD,

SINCE these woeful wars began, one, formerly mine intimate acquaintance, is now turned a stranger, yea, an enemy. Teach me how to behave myself towards him. Must the new foe quite jostle out the old friend? May I not with him continue some commerce of kindness? Though the amity be broken on his side, may not I preserve my counterpart entire? Yet how can I be kind to him, without being cruel to myself, and to thy cause? O guide my shaking hand, to draw so small a line

strait; or rather because I know not how to carry myself towards him in this controversy, even be pleased to take away the subject of the question, and speedily to reconcile these unnatural differences.

V.

LORD,

MY voice by nature is harsh and untunable, and it is vain to lavish any art to better it. Can my singing of psalms be pleasing to thy ears, which is unpleasant to my own? yet though I cannot chaunt with the nightingale, or chirp with the blackbird, I had rather * *chatter with the swallow*, yea, rather croak with the raven, than be altogether silent. Hadst thou given me a better voice, I would have praised thee with a better voice. Now what my music wants in sweetness, let it have in sense, † *singing praises with understanding*. Yea, Lord, *Create in me a new heart*, therein to make ‡ *melody*, and I will be contented with my old voice, until, in thy due time, being admitted into the quire of heaven, I have another, more harmonious, bestowed upon me.

* Isai. xxxviii. 14. † Psalm lvii. 7.
‡ Ephes. v. 19.

VI.

VI.

LORD,

WITHIN a little time I have heard the same precept in sundry places, and by several preachers, pressed upon me. The doctrine seemeth to haunt my soul; whithersoever I turn it meets me. Surely this is from thy Providence, and should be for my profit. It is because I am an ill proficient in this point, that I must not turn over a new leaf, but am still kept to my old lesson. || *Peter was grieved, because* our Saviour *said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me?* But I will not be offended at thy often inculcating the same precept; but rather conclude, that I am much concerned therein, and that it is thy pleasure, that the nail should be soundly fastened in me, which thou hast knocked in with so many hammers.

VII.

LORD,

BEFORE I commit a sin, it seems to me so shallow, that I may wade through it dry-shod from any guiltiness; but when I have com-

|| John xxi. 17.

mitted

mitted it, it often seems so deep, that I cannot escape without drowning. Thus I am always in the extremities: either my sins are so small that they need not any repentance, or so great, that they cannot obtain thy pardon. Lend me, O Lord, a reed out of thy sanctuary, truly to measure the dimension of my offences. But oh! as thou revealest to me more of my misery, reveal also more of thy mercy: lest if my wounds, in my apprehension, gape wider than thy tents, my soul run out at them. If my badness seem bigger than thy goodness, but one hair's breadth, but one moment, that is room and time enough for me to run to eternal despair.

VIII.

LORD,

I Do discover a fallacy, whereby I have long deceived myself. Which is this: I have desired to begin my amendment from my birth-day, or from the first day of the year, or from some eminent festival, that so my repentance might bear some remarkable date. But when those days were come, I have adjourned my amendment to some other time. Thus, whilst I could not agree with myself when to start, I have almost lost

lost the running of the race. I am resolved thus to befool myself no longer. I see no day *to-day*, the instant time is always the fittest time. In * *Nebuchadnezzar's* image, the lower the members, the coarser the metal; the further off the time, the more unfit. To-day is the golden opportunity, to-morrow will be the silver season, next day but the brazen one, and so long, till at last I shall come to the *toes of clay*, and be turned to dust. Grant therefore that † *to day I may hear thy voice.* And if this day be obscure in the calendar, and remarkable in itself for nothing else, give me to make it memorable in my soul; thereupon, by thy assistance, beginning the reformation of my life.

IX.

LORD,

I Saw one, whom I knew to be notoriously bad, in great extremity. It was hard to say, whether his former wickedness or present want were the greater; if I could have made the distinction, I could willingly have fed his person, and starved his profaneness. This being impossible, I adventured to relieve him. For I know that amongst

* Dan. ii. 33. † Psalm xcv. 7.

many

many objects, all of them being in extreme miseries, charity, though shooting at random, cannot miss a right mark. Since, Lord, the party being recovered, is become worse than ever before, (thus they are always impaired with affliction, who thereby are not improved ;) Lord, count me not accessary to his badness, because I relieved him. Let me not suffer harm in myself, for my desire to do good to him. Yea, Lord, be pleased to clear my credit amongst men, that they may understand my hands according to the simplicity of my heart. I gave to him only in hope to keep the stock alive, that so afterwards it might be better grafted. Now, finding myself deceived, my alms shall return into my own bosom.

X.

LORD,

THY servants are now praying in the church, and I am here staying at home, detained by necessary occasions, such as are not of my seeking, but of thy sending; my care could not prevent them, my power could not remove them. Wherefore, though I cannot go to church, there to sit down at table with the rest of thy guests, be pleased,

Lord,

Lord, to send me a dish of their meat hither, and feed my soul with holy thoughts. || *Eldad* and *Medad*, though staying still in the camp, no doubt on just cause, yet prophesied as well as the other elders. Though they went not out to the Spirit, the Spirit came home to them. Thus never any dutiful child lost his legacy for being absent at the making of his father's will, if at the same time he were employed about his father's business. I fear too many at church have their bodies there, and minds at home. Behold, in exchange, my body here, and heart there. Though I cannot pray with them, I pray for them. Yea, this comforts me, I am with thy congregation because I would be with it.

XI.

LORD,

I TRUST thou hast pardoned the bad examples I have set before others; be also pleased to pardon me the sins, which they have committed by my bad examples. It is the best manners in thy court, to heap requests upon requests. If thou hast forgiven my sins, the children of my corrupt

|| Num. xi. 26.

na-

nature, forgive me my grand-children also. Let not the transcripts remain, since thou hast blotted out the original. And for the time to come, bless me with barrenness in bad actions, and my bad actions with barrenness in procreation, that they may never beget others according to their likeness.

XII.

LORD,

WHAT faults I correct in my son, I commit myself: I beat him for dabbling in the dirt, whilst my own soul doth wallow in sin: I beat him for crying to cut his meat, yet am not myself contented with that state thy Providence hath carved unto me: I beat him for crying when he is to go to sleep, and yet I fear I myself shall cry, when thou callest me to sleep with my fathers. Alas! I am more childish than my child, and what I inflict on him, I justly deserve to receive from thee; only here is the difference: I *pray* and *desire* that my correction on my child may do him good; it is in thy power, Lord, to *effect*, that thy correction on me shall do me good.

XIII.

LORD,

I PERCEIVE my soul deeply guilty of envy.

envy. By my good will, I would have none prophesy, but mine own * *Moses*. I had rather thy work were undone, than done better by another, than by myself: had rather thy enemies were all alive, than that I should kill but my thousand, and others their ten thousands of them. My corruption repines at other men's better parts, as if what my soul wants of them in substance, she would supply in swelling. Dispossess me, Lord, of this bad spirit, and turn my envy into holy emulation. Let me labour to exceed them in pains, who excell me in parts; and knowing that my sword in cutting down sin hath a duller edge, let me strike with a greater force; yea, make other men's gifts to be mine, by making me thankful to thee for them. It was some comfort to Naomi, that, wanting a son herself, she brought up † *Ruth's* child in her bosom. If my soul be too old to be a mother of goodness, Lord, make it but a dry nurse. Let me feed, and foster, and nourish, and cherish the graces in others, honouring their persons, praising their parts, and glorifying thy Name, who hath given such gifts unto them.

* Num. xi. 18. † Ruth ii. 16.

XIV.

LORD,

WHEN young, I have almost quarrelled with that petition in our Liturgy, *Give peace in our time, O Lord;* needless to wish for light at noon-day; for then peace was so plentiful, no fear of famine, but suspicion of a surfeit thereof. And yet how many good comments was this prayer then capable of? *Give peace,* that is, continue and preserve it; *give peace,* that is, give us hearts worthy of it, and thankful for it. *In our time,* that is, all our time: for there is more besides a fair morning required to make a fair day. Now I see the mother had more wisdom than her son. The church knew better than I, how to pray. Now I am better informed of the necessity of that petition. Yea, with the daughters of the || horseleech, I have need to cry, *Give, give peace in our time, O Lord.*

XV.

LORD,

UNRULY soldiers command poor people to open them their doors, otherwise threat-

|| Prov. xxx. 15.

ening

ening to break in. But if those in the house knew their own strength, it were easy to keep them out; seeing the doors are threatening proof, and it is not the breath of their oaths can blow the locks open. Yet silly souls being affrighted, they obey, and betray themselves to their violence. Thus Satan serves me; or rather, thus I serve myself. When I cannot be forced, I am fooled out of my integrity. He cannot constrain, if I do not consent. If I do but keep possession, all the *posse* of hell cannot violently eject me: but I cowardly surrender to his summons. Thus there needs no more to my undoing, but myself.

XVI.

LORD,

WHEN I am to travel, I never use to provide myself till the very time; partly out of laziness, loath to be troubled till needs I must; partly out of pride, as presuming all necessaries for my journey will wait upon me at that instant. Some say this is scholars' fashion; and it seems, by following it, I hope to approve myself to be one. However, it often comes to pass, that my journey is finally stopped, through the narrowness of the time to provide for it.

Grant, Lord, that my confessed improvidence in temporal, may make me suspect my providence in spiritual matters. Solomon saith, * *Man goeth to his long home.* Short preparation will not fit so long a journey. O let me not put it off to the last, to have my † *oil to buy,* when I am to burn it. But let me so dispose of myself, that when I am to die, I may have nothing to do but to die.

XVII.

LORD,

WHEN in any writing, I have occasion to insert these passages, *God willing, God lending me life, &c.* I observe, Lord, that I can scarce hold my hand from encircling these words in a parenthesis, as if they were not essential to the sentence, but may as well be left out, as put in. Whereas indeed they are not only of the *commission at large,* but so of the *quorum,* that without them all the rest is nothing; wherefore hereafter I will write those words fully and fairly, without any inclosure about them. Let critics censure it for bad grammar, I am sure it is good divinity.

* Eccles. xii. 5. † Math. xxv. 10.

XVIII.

XVIII.

LORD,

MANY temporal matters, which I have desired, thou hast denied me; it vexed me for the present, that I wanted my will; since, considering in cold blood, I plainly perceive, had that which I desired been done, I had been undone. Yea, what thou gavest me, instead of those things which I wished, though less toothsome to me, were more wholesome for me. Forgive, I pray, my former anger, and now accept my humble thanks. Lord, grant me one suit, which is this; deny me all suits which are bad for me: when I petition for what is unfitting, oh let the King of heaven make use of his *negative voice.* Rather let me fast, than have || *quails* given, with intent that I should be choaked in eating them.

XIX.

LORD,

THIS day I disputed with myself, whether or no I had said my prayers this morning; and I could not call to mind any remarkable passage, whence I could cer-

|| Num. xi. 33.

tainly conclude that I had offered my prayers unto thee. Frozen affections, which left no spark of remembrance behind them! Yet at last I hardly recovered one token, whence I was assured that I had said my prayers. It seems, I had said them, and *only said them*, rather by heart than with my heart. Can I hope, that thou wouldest remember my prayers, when I had almost forgotten that I had prayed? Or rather, have I not cause to fear, that thou rememberest my prayers too well, to punish the coldness and badness of them? Alas! are not devotions thus done, in effect left undone? Well, Jacob advised his sons, at their second going into Egypt, || *Take double money in your hands, peradventure it was an oversight.* So, Lord, I come with my second morning sacrifice; be pleased to accept it, which I desire and endeavour to present with a little better devotion than I did the former.

XX.

LORD,

THE motions of thy Holy Spirit were formerly frequent in my heart; but, alas! of late they have been great strangers. It

|| Gen. xliii. 12.

seems

seems they did not like their last entertainment, they are so loath to come again. I fear they were * *grieved,* that either I heard them not attentively, or believed them not faithfully, or practised them not conscionably. If they be pleased to come again, this is all I dare promise, that they do deserve, and I do desire they should be well used. Let thy Holy Spirit be pleased not only † *to stand before the door and knock,* but also *to come in.* If I do not open the door, it were too unreasonable to request such a miracle, ‡ *to come in, when the doors were shut,* as thou didst to the Apostles. Yet let me humbly beg of thee, that thou wouldest make the ‖ *iron gate of my heart open of its own accord.* Then let thy Spirit be pleased to *sup in my heart;* I have given it an invitation, and I hope I shall give it room. But, O Thou that sendest the guest, send the meat also; and if I be so unmannerly, as not to make the Holy Spirit *welcome,* oh! let thy effectual grace make me to make it *welcome.*

XXI.

LORD,

I CONFESS this morning I remembered

* Ephes. iv. 30. † Revel. iii. 20.
‡ John xx. 19. ‖ Acts xii. 10.

my

my breakfast, but forgot my prayers. And as I have returned no praise, so thou mightest justly have afforded me no protection. Yet thou hast carefully kept me to the middle of this day, entrusted me with a new debt, before I have paid the old score. It is now noon, too late for a morning, too soon for an evening sacrifice. My corrupt heart prompts me to put off my prayers till night; but I know it too well, or rather too ill to trust it. I fear, if till night I defer them, at night I shall forget them: be pleased therefore now to accept them. Lord, let not a few hours the later make a breach: especially, seeing (being spoken not to excuse my negligence, but to implore thy pardon,) *a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday.* I promise hereafter, by thy assistance, to bring forth fruit in due season. See how I am ashamed the sun should shine on me, who now newly start in the race of my devotions, when he, like a giant, hath run more than half his course in the heavens.

XXII.

LORD,

THIS day casually I am fallen into a bad company, and know not how I came thither,

ther, or how to get hence. Sure I am, not my improvidence hath run me, but thy Providence hath led me into this danger. I was not wandering in any base by-path, but walking in the high-way of my vocation: wherefore, Lord, thou that calledst me hither, keep me here. Stop their mouths that they speak no blasphemy, or stop my ears that I hear none; or open my mouth soberly to reprove what I hear. Give me to guard my myself; but, Lord, guard my guarding of myself. Let not the smoke of their badness put out mine eyes, but the shining of mine innocency lighten theirs. Let me give physic to them, and not take infection from them. Yea, make me the better for their badness: then shall their bad company be to me like the dirt of oysters, whose mud hath soap in it, and doth rather scour than defile.

XXIII.

LORD,

OFTEN have I thought with myself, I will sin but this *one sin* more, and then I will repent of it, and of all the rest of my sins together; *so foolish was I, and ignorant.* As if I should be more able to pay my debts, when I owe more: or as if I should say, I will

will wound my friend once again, and then I will lovingly shake hands with him: but what if my friend will not shake hands with me? Besides, can one commit one sin more, and but one sin more? * *Unclean creatures* went by couples into the Ark. Grant, Lord, at this instant I may break off my badness, otherwise thou mayest justly make the last minute wherein I do sin on earth, to be the last minute wherein I shall sin on earth, and the first wherein thou mightest make me suffer in another place.

XXIV.

LORD,

THE Preacher this day came home to my heart. A left handed Gibeonite with † *his sling*, hit not the mark more sure, than he my darling sins. I could find no fault with his sermon, save only that it had too much truth. But this I quarrelled at, that he went far from his text, to come close to me; and so was faulty himself in telling me of my faults. Thus they will creep out at small crannies, who have a mind to escape; and yet I cannot deny, but that that, which he spake, though nothing to that portion of

* Gen. vii. 2. † Judges xx. 16.

Scrip-

Scripture which he had for his text, was according to the proportion of Scripture. And is not thy Word in general the text at large of every preacher? Yea, rather I should have concluded, that if he went from his text, thy goodness sent him to meet me: for without thy guidance it had been impossible for him so truly to have traced the intricate turnings of my deceitful heart.

XXV.

LORD,

BE pleased to shake my clay cottage, before thou throwest it down. May it totter awhile, before it doth tumble. Let me be summoned before I am surprised. Deliver me from *sudden death.* Not from sudden death in respect of itself; for I care not how short my passage be, so it be safe. Never any weary traveller complained, that he came too soon to his journey's end. But let it not be sudden in respect of me. Make me always ready to receive death. Thus no guest comes unawares to him, who keeps a constant table.

SCRIPTURE
OBSERVATIONS.

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATIONS.

I.

LORD,

IN the parable of the four sorts of ground whereon the seed was sown, the * last alone proved fruitful. There the bad were more than the good: but amongst the servants, two improved their † *talents*, or *pounds*, and ‡ one only buried them: there the good were more than the bad. Again, amongst the ten virgins, ‖ *five were wise, and five foolish:* there the good and bad were equal. I see, that concerning the number of the saints, in comparison to the reprobates, no certainty can be collected from these parables: good reason, for it is not their principal purpose to meddle with that point. Grant, that I may never rack a Scripture simile beyond the true intent thereof; lest, instead of sucking milk, I squeeze blood out of it.

* Matth. xiii. 8. † Matth. xxv. 18.
‡ Luke xix. 10. ‖ Matth. xxv. 2.

II.

LORD,

THOU didst intend from all eternity to make Christ the heir of all; no danger of disinheriting him, thy only Son, and so well deserving. Yet thou sayest to him, || *Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, &c.* This homage he must do, for thy boon to beg it. I see thy goodness delights to have thy favours sued for, expecting we should crave what thou intendest we should have; that so, though we cannot give a full price, we may take some pains for thy favours, and obtain them, though not for the merit, by the means of our petitions.

III.

LORD,

I Find that Ezekiel in his Prophesies is styled ninety times and more by this appellation, *Son of man*; and surely, not once oftener than there was need for. For he had more visions than any one, not to say than all, of the prophets of his time. It was necessary therefore, that his mortal

|| Psalm ii. 8.

ex-

extraction should often be sounded in his ears, *Son of man,* lest his frequent conversing with visions might make him mistake himself to be some angel. Amongst other revelations, it was therefore needful to reveal him to himself, *Son of man,* lest seeing many visions might have made him blind with spiritual pride. Lord, as thou increasest thy graces in me, and favours on me, so with them daily increase in my soul the monitors and remembrancers of my mortality. So shall my soul be kept in a good temper, and humble deportment towards thee.

IV.

LORD,

I Read, how Jacob (then only accompanied with his staff) vowed at *Bethel, that if thou gavest him but bread and raiment, he would make that place thy house.* After his return, the condition on thy side was overperformed, but the obligation on his part wholly neglected: for when thou hadst made his staff to swell, and to break into two bands, he, after his return, turned ‖ purchaser, bought a field in Shalem, intending there to set up his rest. But thou

‖ Gen. xxxiii, 19.

art pleased to be his remembrancer in a new vision, and to spur him afresh, who tired in his promise. * *Arise, go to Bethel, and make there an altar, &c.* Lord, if rich Jacob forgot, what poor Jacob did promise, no wonder, if I be bountiful to offer thee in my affliction, what I am niggardly to perform in my prosperity. But oh! take not advantages of the forfeitures, but be pleased to demand payment once again. Put me into the remembrance of my promises, that so I may reinforce my old vows with new resolutions.

V.

LORD,

I Read, when our Saviour was examined in the High Priest's hall, that Peter stood without, till John, being his † spokes-man to *the maid that kept the door,* procured his admission in. John meant to let him out of the cold, and not to let him into a temptation, but his courtesy in intention proved a mischief in event, and the occasion of his denying his Master. O never let my kindness concur in the remotest degree to the damage of my friend. May the chain which

* Gen. xxxv. 1. † John xviii. 16.

I sent

I sent him for an ornament, never prove his fetters. But if I should be unhappy herein, I am sure thou wilt not punish my good will, but pity my ill success.

VI.

LORD,

THE Apostle saith to the Corinthians, * *God will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able.* But how comes he to contradict himself, by his own confession, in his next Epistle; where, speaking of his own sickness, he saith, † *We were pressed out of measure, above strength?* Perchance this will be expounded by propounding another riddle of the same Apostle's: who praising Abraham, saith, ‡ *that against hope, he believed in hope.* That is, against carnal hope, he believed in spiritual hope. So the same wedge will serve to cleave the former difficulty. Paul was pressed above his human, not above his heavenly strength. Grant, Lord, that I may not mangle and dismember thy Word, but study it entirely, comparing one place with another: for diamonds only can cut diamonds, and no such comments on the Scripture, as Scripture.

* 1 Cor. x. 13. † 2 Cor. i. 8.
‡ Rom. iv. 18.

VII.

VII.

LORD,

I Observe that the vulgar translation reads the Apostle's precept thus; * *Give diligence to make your calling and election sure by good works.* But in our English Testament these words, *by good works,* are left out. It grieved me at the first to see our translation defective; but it offended me afterwards, to see the other redundant. For those words are not in the Greek, which is the original. And it is an ill work, to put good works in, to the corruption of the Scripture. Grant, Lord, that though we leave *good works* out in the text, we may take them in, in our comment; in that exposition which our practice is to make on this precept in our lives and conversations.

VIII.

LORD,

I Find the † genealogy of my Saviour strangely chequered with four remarkable changes in four immediate generations.

1. *Rehoboam begat Abiam;* that is, a bad father begat a bad son.

* 2 Pet. i. 10. † Matth. i. 7. 8.

2. *Abiam*

2. *Abiam begat Asa;* that is, a bad father, a good son.

3. *Asa begat Jehosaphat;* that is, a good father, a good son.

4. *Jehosaphat begat Joram;* that is, a good father, a bad son.

I see, Lord, from hence, that my father's piety cannot be entailed; that is bad news for me. But I see also, that actual impiety is not always hereditary; that is good news for my son.

IX.

LORD,

WHEN in my daily service I read David's Psalms, give me to alter the accent of my soul, according to their several subjects. In such Psalms, wherein he confesseth his sins, or requesteth thy pardon, or praiseth for former, or prayeth for future favours, in all these give me to raise my soul to as high a pitch as may be. But when I come to such Psalms, wherein he curseth his enemies, O there let me bring my soul down to a lower note. For those words were made only to fit David's mouth. I have the like breath, but not the same spirit, to pronounce them. Nor let me flatter myself, that it is lawful for me, with David, to curse thine enemies,

enemies, lest my deceitful heart entitle all mine enemies to be thine, and so what was religion in David, prove malice in me, whilst I act revenge under the pretence of piety.

X.

LORD,

I Read of the two witnesses, * *And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.* They could not be killed whilst they were doing, but when they had done their work; during their employment they were invincible. No better armour against the darts of death, than to be busied in thy service. Why art thou so heavy, O my soul? No malice of man can antedate my end a minute, whilst my Maker hath any work for me to do. And when all my daily task is ended, why should I grudge then to go to bed?

XI.

LORD,

I Read at the transfiguration, that † *Peter,*

* Rev. xi. 7. † Matth. xvii. 1.

James,

James, and *John*, were admitted to behold Christ; but *Andrew* was excluded. So again, at the reviving of the daughter of the ruler of the * synagogue, these three were let in, and Andrew shut out. Lastly, in the † agony, the aforesaid three were called to be witnesses thereof, and still Andrew left behind. Yet he was Peter's brother, and a good man, and an Apostle: why did not Christ take the two brothers? Was it not pity to part them? But methinks I seem more offended thereat, than Andrew himself was, whom I find to express no discontent, being pleased to be accounted a loyal subject for the general, though he was no favourite in these particulars. Give me to be pleased in myself, and thankful to thee for what I am, though I be not equal to others in personal perfections. For such peculiar privileges are courtesies from thee, when given, and no injuries to us, when denied.

XII.

LORD,

SAINT Paul teacheth the art of heavenly thrift, how to make a new sermon of an

* Matt. ix. 18. † Mark xiv. 33.

old,

old. * *Many*, saith he, *walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are enemies to the cross of Christ.* Formerly he had told it with his tongue, but now with his tears; formerly he taught it with his words, but now with weeping. Thus new affections make an old sermon new. May I not, by the same proportion, make an old prayer new? Lord, thus long I have offered my prayer dry unto thee, now, Lord, I offer it wet. Then wilt thou own some new addition therein, when, though the sacrifice be the same, yet the dressing of it is different, being steeped in his tears, who bringeth it unto thee.

XIII.

LORD,

I Read of my Saviour, that when he was in the wilderness, † *then the devil leaveth him, and behold angels came and ministered unto him.* A great change in a little time. No twilight between night and day. No purgatory condition between hell and heaven, but instantly, when out devil, in angel. Such is the case of every solitary soul. It

* Philip. iii. 18. † Matth. iv. 11.

will

will make company for itself. A musing mind will not stand neuter a minute, but presently side with legions of good or bad thoughts. Grant therefore that my soul, which ever will have some, may never have bad company.

XIV.

LORD,

I Read, how Cushi and Ahimaaz ran a race, who first should bring tidings of victory to David. Ahimaaz, though last setting forth, came first to his journey's end; not that he had the fleeter feet, but the better brains, to choose the way of most advantage. For the text saith, || *So Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and over-ran Cushi.* Prayers made to God by saints, fetch a needless compass about; that is but a rough and uneven way. Besides one steep passage therein, questionable whether it can be climbed up, and saints in heaven made sensible of what we say on earth. *The way of the plain,* or plain way, both shortest and surest, is, *Call upon me in the time of trouble.* Such prayers, though starting last, will come first to the mark.

|| 2 Sam. xviii. 23.

XV.

LORD,

THIS morning I read a chapter in the Bible, and therein observed a memorable passage, whereof I never took notice before. Why now, and no sooner did I see it? Formerly, my eyes were as open, and the letters as legible. Is there not a thin veil laid over the Word, which is more rarified by reading, and at last wholly worn away? Or was it because I came with more appetite than before? The milk was always there in the breast, but the child till now was not hungry enough to find out the teat. I see the oil of thy Word will never leave increasing, whilst any bring an empty barrel. The old Testament will still be a new Testament to him, who comes with a fresh desire of information.

XVI.

LORD,

AT the first Passover, God kept touch with the Hebrews very punctually: || *At the end of the four hundred and thirty years, in the self-same day, it came to pass, that all the*

|| Exod. xii. 41.

hosts

hosts of the Lord went out of the land of Egypt. But at the first Easter God was better than his word: having promised that Christ should lie but three days in the grave, his fatherly affection did run to relieve him. By a charitable Synecdoche, two pieces of days were counted for whole ones. || *God did cut the work short in righteousness.* Thus the measure of his mercy under the law was full, but it ran over in the gospel.

XVII.

LORD,

THE Apostle dissuadeth the Hebrews from covetousness, with this argument, because God said, *I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee.* Yet I find not that God ever gave this promise to all the Jews, but he spake it only to † Joshua, when first made commander against the Canaanites. Which, without violence to to the analogy of faith, the Apostle applieth to all good men in general. Is it so, that we are heirs apparent to all promises made to thy servants in Scripture? Are the characters of grace granted to them, good to me? Then will I

|| Rom. ix. 28. † Josh. i. 5.

say with Jacob, || *I have enough.* But because I cannot entitle myself to thy promises to them, except I imitate their piety to thee, grant I may take as much care in following the one, as comfort in the other.

XVIII.

LORD,

I Read, that thou didst make † *grass, herbs, and trees, the third day.* As for the ‡ *sun, moon, and stars,* thou madest them on the fourth day of the creation. Thus at first thou didst confute the folly of such, who maintain, that all vegetables, in their growth, are enslaved to a necessary and unavoidable dependance on the influences of the stars. Whereas plants were even when planets were not. It is false, that the mary-gold follows the sun, whereas the sun follows the mary-gold, as made the day before him. Hereafter I will admire thee more, and fear astrologers less; not affrighted with their doleful predictions of dearth and drought, collected from the complexions of the planets. Must the earth of necessity be sad, because some ill-natured

|| Gen. xlv. 28. † Gen. i. 11.
‡ Gen. i. 16.

star

star is sullen? As if the grass could not grow without asking it leave: whereas thy power, which made herbs before the stars, can preserve them without their propitious, yea, against their malignant aspects.

XIX.

LORD,

I Read, how Paul writing from Rome, spake to || Philemon to prepare him a lodging, hoping to make use thereof; yet we find not that he ever did use it, being martyred not long after. However he was no loser, whom thou didst lodge in a higher mansion in heaven. Let me always be thus deceived to my advantage. I shall have no occasion to complain, though I never wear the new clothes fitted for me, if, before I put them on, death clothe me with glorious immortality.

XX.

LORD,

WHEN our Saviour sent his Apostles abroad to preach, he enjoined them in one

|| Philem. 22.

Gospel, * *Possess nothing, neither shoes nor staff.* But it is said in another Gospel, † *And he commanded them, that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only.* The reconciliation is easy. They might have a staff, to speak them travellers, not soldiers: one to walk with, not to war with; a staff which was a wand, not a weapon. But oh! in how doleful days do we live, wherein ministers are not, as formerly, armed with their nakedness, but need staves and swords too, to defend them from violence.

XXI.

LORD,

I Discover an arrant laziness in my soul; for when I am to read a chapter in the Bible, before I begin it, I look where it endeth. And if it endeth not on the same side, I cannot keep my hands from turning over the leaf, to measure the length thereof on the other side: if it swells to many verses, I begin to grudge. Surely my heart is not rightly affected. Were I truly hungry after heavenly food, I would not complain of meat. Scourge, Lord, this laziness

* Matth. x. 10. † Mark vi. 8.

out

out of my soul, make the reading of thy Word not a penance, but a pleasure unto me; teach me, that as amongst many heaps of gold, all being equally pure, that is the best, which is the biggest, so I may esteem that chapter in thy Word the best, which is the longest.

XXII.

LORD,

I Find David making a syllogism, in mood and figure; two propositions he perfected.

|| 18 *If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.*

19 *But verily God hath heard me, he hath attended to the voice of my prayer.*

Now I expected that David should have concluded thus:

Therefore I regard not wickedness in my heart.

But far otherwise he concludes;

20 *Blessed be God, that hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.*

Thus David hath deceived, but not wronged me. I looked that he should have clapped the crown on his own, and he puts

|| Psalm lxvi.

it

it on God's head. I will learn this excellent logic: for I like David's better than Aristotle's syllogisms, that whatsoever the premises be, I make God's glory the conclusion.

XXIII.

LORD,

WISE Agur made it his wish, || *Give me not poverty, lest I steal, and take the name of my God in vain.* He saith not, lest I steal, and be caught in the manner, and then be stocked, or whipped, or branded, or forced to four-fold restitution, or put to any other shameful or painful punishment. But he saith, *Lest I steal, and take the name of my God in vain.* That is, lest professing to serve thee, I confute a good profession with a bad conversation. Thus thy children count sin to be the greatest smart in sin, as being more sensible of the wound they therein give to the glory of God, than of all the stripes that man may lay upon them for punishment.

|| Prov. xxx. 9.

XXIV.

XXIV.

LORD,

I read, that when my Saviour dispossessed the man's son of a devil, he enjoined the evil spirit * *to come out of him, and enter no more into him.* But I find, that when my Saviour himself was tempted of Satan, † *The devil departed from him for a season.* Retreating, as it seems, with mind to return. How came it to pass, Lord, that he, who expelled him finally out of others, did not propel him so from himself? Sure it doth not follow, that because he did not, he could not do it; or that he was less able to help himself, because he was more charitable to relieve others. No, I see my Saviour was pleased to shew himself a God in other men's matters, and but a man in such cases, wherein he himself was concerned. Being contented still to be tempted by Satan, that his sufferings for us might cause our conquering through him.

XXV.

LORD,

‡JANNES and Jambres, the apes of Moses

* Mark ix. 25. † Luke iv. 13.
‡ 2 Tim. iii. 8.

and

and Aaron, imitated them in turning their rods into serpents; only here was the difference; Aaron's rod || *devoured their rods.* That which was solid and substantial lasted, when that which was slight, and but seeming, vanished away. Thus an active fancy in all outward expressions may imitate a lively faith. For matter of language, there is nothing what grace doth do, but wit can act. Only the difference appears in the continuance: wit is but for fits and flashes, grace holds out and is lasting: and, good Lord, of thy goodness, give it to every one that truly desires it.

|| Prod. vii. 12.

HISTO-

HISTORICAL
APPLICATIONS.

HISTORICAL

APPLICATIONS.

I.

THE English ambassador, some years since, prevailed so far with the Turkish Emperor, as to persuade him to hear some of our English music, from which, as from other liberal sciences, both he and his nation were naturally averse. But it happened, that the musicians were so long in tuning their instruments, that the great Turk, distasting their tediousness, went away in discontent before their music began.—I am afraid, that the differences and dissensions betwixt Christian churches, being so long in reconciling their discords, will breed in Pagans such a disrelish of our religion, as they will not be invited to attend thereunto.

II.

A SIBYL came to Tarquinius Superbus, king of Rome, and || offered to sell unto

|| M. Varro, Solinus, Plinius, Halicar. &c.

 him

him three tomes of her oracles; but he, counting the price too high, refused to buy them: away she went, and burned one tome of them. Returning, she asked him, whether he would buy the two remaining at the same rate; he refused again, counting her little better than frantic: thereupon she burned the second tome, and peremptorily asked him, whether he would give the sum demanded for all the three, for the one tome remaining; otherwise she would burn that also, and he would dearly repent it. Tarquin, admiring her constant resolution, and conceiving some extraordinary worth contained therein, gave her her demand.—There are three volumes of man's time; youth, man's estate, and old age; and ministers advise them || *to redeem their time.* But men conceive the rate they must give to be unreasonable, because it will cost them the renouncing of their carnal delights. Hereupon one third part of their life, youth, is consumed in the fire of wantonness. Again, ministers counsel men to redeem the remaining volumes of their life. They are but derided at for their pains; and man's estate is also cast away in the smoke of vanity. But preachers ought to press peremptorily on old people to redeem, now or never, the

|| Ephes. v. 16.

last

last volume of their life. Here is the difference: the Sibyl still demanded but the same rate for the remaining book; but aged folk, because of their custom in sinning, will find it harder and dearer to redeem this, the last volume, than if they had been chapmen for all the three at the first.

III.

IN Merionethshire in || Wales, there be many mountains, whose hanging tops come so close together, that shepherds, sitting on several mountains, may audibly discourse one with another. And yet they must go many miles before their bodies can meet together, by reason of the vast hollow valleys which are betwixt them.—Our Sovereign, and the members of his Parliament at London, seem very near agreed in their general and public professions; both are for the *Protestant religion*; can they draw nearer? Both are for the *privileges of Parliament*; can they come closer? Both are for the *liberty of the subject;* can they meet evener? And yet, alas! there is a great gulf and vast distance betwixt them, which our sins have

|| Giraldus Cambrensis, and Cambden. The description of that shire.

 made;

made; and God grant, that our sorrow may seasonably make it up again.

IV.

WHEN John, King of France, had communicated the order of the knighthood of the Star to some of his guard, men of mean birth and extraction, the nobility ever after disdained to be admitted into that degree, and so that order in France was extinguished. Seeing that now-adays, drinking, and swearing, and wantonness, are grown frequent, even with base, beggarly people, it is high time for men of honour, who consult with their credit, to desist from such sins. Not that I would have noblemen invent new vices, to be in fashion with themselves alone; but forsake old sins, grown common with the meanest of people.

V.

LONG was this land wasted with civil war between the two houses of York and Lancaster, till the *red rose* became white with the blood it had lost, and the *white rose* red, with the blood it had shed. At last, they were united in a happy marriage, and

and their joint-titles are twisted together in our gracious Sovereign. Thus there hath been a great difference betwixt learned men, wherein *the dominion over the creature is founded*; some putting it in nature, others placing it in grace. But the true servants of God have an unquestioned right thereunto: seeing both nature and grace, the first and second Adam, creation and regeneration, are contained in them. Hence their claim is so clear, their title is so sure, ignorance cannot doubt it, impudence dares not deny it.

VI.

THE Roman Senators conspired against Julius Cæsar to kill him: that very next morning, Artemidorus, || Cæsar's friend, delivered him a paper, desiring him to peruse it, wherein the whole plot was discovered: but Cæsar complimented his life away, being so taken up, to return the salutations of such people as met him in the way, that he pocketed the paper, among other petitions, as unconcerned therein, and so going to the Senate-house, was slain. The world, flesh, and devil have a design for the destruction of men: we ministers bring our

|| Plut. in Jul. Cæsar.

people a letter, God's Word, wherein all the conspiracy is revealed. *But who hath believed our report?* Most men are so busy about worldly delights, they are not at leisure to listen to us, or read the letter, but thus, alas! run headlong to their own ruin and destruction.

VII.

IT is reported of Philip the Second, King of Spain, that besieging the town of St. Quintine, and being to make a breach, he was forced with his cannon to batter down a small chapel on the wall, dedicated to St. Laurence. In reparation to which saint, he afterwards built and consecrated unto him that famous chapel in the Escurial in Spain, for workmanship one of the wonders of the world. How many churches and chapels of the God of St. Laurence, have been laid waste in England by this woeful war! And which is more, and more to be lamented, how many living temples of the holy Ghost, christian people, have therein been causelessly and cruelly destroyed! How shall our nation be ever able to make recompence for it? God of his goodness forgive us that debt, which we of ourselves are not able to satisfy.

VIII.

IN the days of King || Edward the Sixth, the Lord Protector marched with a powerful army into Scotland, to demand their young Queen, Mary, in marriage to our King, according to their promises. The Scotch refusing to do it, were beaten by the English in Musleborough fight. One demanding of a Scottish lord, taken prisoner in the battle, Now, Sir, how do you like our King's marriage with your Queen? *I always,* quoth he, *did like the marriage, but I do not like the wooing, that you should fetch a bride with fire and sword.* It is not enough for men to propound pious projects to themselves, if they go about by indirect courses to compass them. God's own work must be done by God's own ways. Otherwise we can take no comfort in obtaining the end, if we cannot justify the means used thereunto.

IX.

A Sagamore, or petty king in Virginia, guessing the greatness of other kings by his own, sent a native hither, who understood

|| Sir John Heywood, in the Life of Edward the Sixth.

English,

English, commanding him to score upon a long cane, given him on purpose to be his register, the number of Englishmen, that thereby his master might know the strength of this our nation. Landing at Plymouth, a populous place, and which he mistook for all England, he had no leisure to eat, for notching up the men he met. At Exeter, the difficulty of his task was increased; coming at last to London, that forest of people, he brake his cane in pieces, perceiving the impossibility of his employment. Some may conceive that they can reckon up the sins they commit in one day. Perchance they may make hard shifts to sum up their notorious ill deeds; more difficulty it is to score up their wicked words: but oh! how infinite are their idle thoughts! High time then to leave off counting, and cry out with David, || *Who can tell how oft he offendeth? Lord, cleanse me from my secret sins.*

X.

† MARTIN de Golin, master of the Teutonic order, was taken prisoner by the Prussians, and delivered bound, to be beheaded. But he persuaded his executioner,

|| Psalm xix. 12.

† Munst. Cosmog. Book iii. p. 878.

who

who had him alone, first to take off his costly clothes, which otherwise would be spoiled with the sprinkling of his blood. Now the prisoner, being partly unbound to be unclothed, and finding his arms somewhat loosened, strake the executioner to the ground, killed him afterwards with his own sword, and so regained both his life and liberty. * *Christ hath overcome the world*, and delivered it to us, to destroy it. But we are all Achans by nature, and the Babylonish garment is a bait for our covetousness. Whilst therefore we seek to take plunder of this world's wardrobe, we let go the mastery we had formerly of it. And too often, that which Christ's passion made our captive, our folly makes our conqueror.

XI.

I Read, how † Pope Pius the Fourth had a great ship, richly laden, landed at Sandwich in Kent, where it suddenly sunk; and so, with the sands, choked up the harbour, that ever since that place hath been deprived of the benefit thereof. I see that happiness doth not always attend the adventures of his Holiness. Would he had

* John xvi. 33. † Camb. Brit. in Kent.

carried

carried away his ship, and left us our harbour. May his spiritual merchandize never come more into this island, but rather sink in the Tiber, than sail thus far, bringing so small good, and so great annoyance. Sure he is not so happy in opening the doors of heaven, as he is unhappy to obstruct havens on earth.

XII.

|| JEFFERY, Archbishop of York, and base son to King Henry the Second, used proudly to protest *by his faith, and the royalty of the King, his father*. To whom one said, *You may sometimes, Sir, as well remember what was the honesty of your mother*. Good men, when puffed up with pride for their heavenly extraction, and paternal descent, how they are God's sons by adoption, may seasonably call to mind the corruption which they carry about them. † *I have said to the worm, thou art my mother*. And this consideration will temper their souls with humility.

|| Gualter Mappaus de nugis Curialium.
† Job xvii. 14.

XIII.

XIII.

I Could not but sigh and smile at the simplicity of a native American, sent by a Spaniard, his master, with a basket of figs, and a letter, wherein the figs were mentioned, to carry them both to one of his master's friends. By the way, this messenger eat up the figs, but delivered the letter, whereby his deed was discovered, and he soundly punished. Being sent a second time on the like message, he first took the letter, which he conceived had eyes as well as a tongue, and hid it in the ground, sitting himself on the place where he put it; and then securely fell to feed on the figs, presuming that that paper, which saw nothing, could tell nothing. Then taking it again out of the ground, he delivered it to his master's friend, whereby his fault was perceived, and he worse beaten than before. Men conceive they can manage their sins with secrecy; but they carry about them a letter, or book rather, written by God's finger, their || *conscience*, bearing witness to all their actions. But sinners being often detected and accused hereby, grow wary at last; and to prevent this speaking paper from telling any tales, do smother, stifle,

|| Rom. ii. 15.

and

and suppress it, when they go about the committing of any wickedness. Yet conscience, though buried for a time in silence, hath afterwards a resurrection, and discovers all to their greater shame and heavier punishment.

XIV.

JOHN Courcie, Earl of Ulster in Ireland, endeavoured fifteen several times to sail over thither, and so often was beaten back again, with bad weather; at last he expostulated his case with God in a || vision, complaining of hard measure, that having built and repaired so many monasteries to God and his saints, he should have so bad success. It was answered him, That this was but his just punishment, because he had formerly put out the image of the † Trinity, out of the Cathedral Church of Down, and placed the picture of St. Patrick in the room thereof. Surely, God will not hold them guiltless, who jostle him out of his temple, and give to saints that adoration, due only to his Divine Majesty.

|| Annal. Hibern. in Anno 1204. & Cambden's Brit. p. 797.

† Lawfully I presume to apply a Popish vision, to confute a Popish practice.

XV.

XV.

THE Lybians kept all women in common. But when a child was born, they used to send it to that man to maintain, as father thereof, whom the infant most resembled in his complexion. Satan and my sinful nature enter common in my soul, in the causing of wicked thoughts. The sons by their faces speak their sires; proud, wanton, covetous, envious, idle thoughts, I must own to come from myself. God forgive me, it is vain to deny it, those children are so like to their father. But as for some hideous, horrible thoughts, such as I start at the motion of them, being out of the road of my corruption; and yet which way will not that wander? so that they smell of hell's brimstone about them; these fall to Satan's lot to father them. The swarthy blackness of their complexion plainly shews who begat them; not being of mine extraction, but his injection.

XVI.

MARCUS Manilius deserved exceedingly well of the Roman state, having valiantly defended their Capitol. But afterward, falling into disfavour with the people, he was condemned to death. However, the people

would not be so unthankful as to suffer him to be executed in any place from whence the Capitol might be beheld; for the prospect thereof prompted them with fresh remembrance of his former merits. At last, they found a low place in the || Petiline Grove, by the river-gate, where no pinnacle of the Capitol could be perceived, and there he was put to death. We may admire how men can find in their hearts to sin against God. For we can find no one place in the whole world, which is not marked with a signal character of his mercy unto us. It was said properly of the Jews, but it is not untrue of all Christians, that they are God's vine-yard. † *And God fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst thereof, and also digged a wine-press therein.* Which way can men look, and not have their eyes met with the remembrance of God's favours unto them; look about the vine-yard, *it is fenced;* look without it, *the stones are cast out;* look within it, *it is planted with the choicest vine;* look above it, *A tower is built in the midst thereof;* look beneath it, *A wine-press is digged.* It is impossible for one to look any way, and to avoid the beholding of God's bounty. Un-

|| Livius lib. vi. 20. † Matth. v. 2.

grateful

grateful man! And as there is no place, so there is no time for us to sin, without being at that instant beholden to him; we owe to him that *we are*, even when we are rebellious against him.

XVII.

A Duel was to be fought, by consent of both || kings, betwixt an English, and a French lord. The aforesaid John Courcie, Earl of Ulster, was chosen champion for the English: a man of great stomach and strength, but lately much weakened by long imprisonment. Wherefore, to prepare himself before-hand, the king allowed him what plenty and variety of meat he was pleased to eat. But the Monsieur, who was to encounter him, hearing what great quantity of victuals Courcie did daily devour, and thence collecting his unusual strength, out of fear, refused to fight with him. If by the standard of their cups, and measure of their drinking, one might truly infer soldiers' strength by rules of proportion, most vast and valiant atchievements may justly be expected from some gallants of these times.

|| Annal. Hibern. in Anno 1204. & Cambd. Brit. p. 797.

XVIII.

I have heard that the brook near Lutterworth in Leicestershire, into which the ashes of the burned bones of Wickliff were cast, never since doth drown the meadow about it. Papists expound this to be, because God was well pleased with the sacrifice of the ashes of such an heretic. Protestants ascribe it rather to proceed from the virtue of the dust of such a reverend martyr. I see it is *a case for a friend.* Such accidents signify nothing in themselves, but according to the pleasure of interpreters. Give me such solid reasons, whereon I may rest and rely. Solomon saith, * *The words of the wise are like nails, fastened by the masters of the assembly.* A nail is firm, and will hold driving in, and will hold driven in. Send me such arguments. As for these waxen topical devices, I shall never think worse or better of any religion for their sake.

XIX.

† ALEXANDER the Great, when a child, was checked by his governor Leoni-

* Eccles. xii. 11.

† Plutarch, in the Life of Alexander the Great.

das,

das, for being over-profuse in spending perfumes; because on a day, being to sacrifice to the gods, he took both his hands full of frankincense, and cast it into the fire: but afterwards, being a man, he conquered the country of Judæa, the fountain whence such spices did flow, he sent Leonidas a present of five hundred talents' weight of frankincense, to shew him how his former prodigality made him thrive the better in success, and to advise him to be no more niggardly in divine service. Thus *they that sow plentifully shall reap plentifully*. I see there is no such way to have a large heart, as to have a large heart. The free giving of the branches of our present estate to God, is the readiest means to have the root increased for the future.

XX.

THE Poets fable, that this was one of the labours imposed on Hercules, to make clean the Augean stable, or stall rather; for therein, they said, were kept three thousand kine, and it had not been cleansed for thirty years together. But Hercules, by letting the river Alpheus into it, did that with ease, which before was conceived impossible. This stall is the pure emblem of my impure soul, which hath been defiled

with millions of sins, for more than thirty years together. Oh that I might, by a lively faith and unfeigned repentance, let the stream of that fountain into my soul, *which is opened for Judah and Jerusalem!* It is impossible by all my pains to purge out my uncleanness; which is quickly done by the rivulet of the blood of my Saviour.

XXI.

THE Venetians shewed the treasure of their state, being in many great coffers, full of gold and silver, to the Spanish ambassador. But the ambassador, peeping under the bottom of those coffers, demanded, whether that their treasure did daily grow, and had a root; *For such*, saith he, *my Master's treasure hath*; meaning both the Indies. Many men have attained to a great height of piety, to be very abundant and rich therein: but all theirs is but a cistern, not a fountain of grace, only God's goodness hath a spring of itself, in itself.

XXII.

THE ||Sidonian servants agreed amongst themselves, to choose him to be their king;

|| Justin. lib. xviii. pag. 166.

who

who that morning should first see the sun. Whilst all others were gazing on the East, one alone looked on the West; some admired, more mocked him, as if he looked on the feet, there to find the eye of the face: but he first of all discovered the light of the sun shining on the tops of houses. God is seen sooner, easier, clearer in his operations, than in his essence. Best beheld by reflection in his creatures. || *For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.*

XXIII.

AN Italian prince, as much delighted with the person, as grieved with the prodigality, of his eldest son, commanded his steward to deliver him no more money, but what the young prince should tell his ownself. The young gallant fretted at his heart, that he must buy money at so dear a rate, as to have it for telling it; but because there was no remedy, he set himself to task, and being greatly tired with telling a small sum, he brake off in this consideration; *Money may speedily be spent, but how tedious and*

|| Rom. i. 20.

trouble-

troublesome is it to tell it! And by consequence, how much more difficult to get it! Men may commit sin presently, pleasantly, with much mirth, in a moment. But oh! that they would but seriously consider with themselves, how many their offences are, and sadly fall accounting them! And if so hard truly to sum their sins, sure harder sincerely to sorrow for them. If to get their number be so difficult, what is it to get their pardon?

XXIV.

I Know the village in || Cambridgeshire, where there was a cross, full of imagery; some of the images were such, as that people, not foolishly factious, but judiciously conscientious, took just exception at them. Hard by, the youths of the town erected a May-pole, and to make it of proof against any that should endeavour to cut it down, they armed it with iron, as high as any could reach. A violent wind happened to blow it down, which falling on the cross, dashed it to pieces. It is possible, what is counted profaneness, may accidentally correct superstition. But I could heartily wish, that all pretenders to reformation would

|| Cottenham.

first

first labour to be good themselves, before they go about the mending of others.

XXV.

I Read, that || Ægæus, the father of Theseus, hid a sword and a pair of shoes under a great stone, and left word with his wife, whom he left with child, that when the son she should bear was able to take up that stone, wield that sword, and wear those shoes, then she should send him to him: for by these signs, he would own him for his own son. Christ hath left in the custody of the Church, our mother, the sword of the Spirit, and the shoes of a Christian conversation, the same which he once wore himself, and they must fit our feet; yea, and we must take up the weight of many heavy crosses, before we can come at them; but when we shall appear before our heavenly Father, bringing these tokens with us, then, and not before, he will acknowledge us to be no bastards, but his true-born children.

|| Plut. in Theseo.

MIXED

MIXED
CONTEMPLATIONS.

MIXED

CONTEMPLATIONS.

I.

WHEN I look on a leaden bullet, therein I can read both God's mercy and man's malice. God's mercy, whose Providence, foreseeing that men of lead would make *instruments of cruelty*, did give that metal a medicinal virtue; as it hurts, so it also heals; and a bullet, sent in by man's hatred into a fleshly, and no vital part, will, with ordinary care and curing, out of a natural charity, work its own way out. But oh! how devilish were those men, who, to frustrate and defeat his goodness, and to countermand the healing power of lead, first found the champing and empoisoning of bullets! Fools, who account themselves honoured with the shameful title of being the || *inventors of evil things*, endeavouring to out-infinite God's kindness with their cruelty.

|| Rom. i. 30.

II.

I Have heard some men, rather causelessly captious, than judicially critical, cavil at Grammarians, for calling some conjunctions, *disjunctive;* as if this were a flat contradiction; whereas, indeed, the same particle may conjoin words, and yet disjoin the sense. But alas, how sad is the present condition of Christians, who have a *communion, disuniting!* the Lord's Supper, ordained by our Saviour to conjoin our affections, hath disjoined our judgment. Yea, it is be feared, lest our long quarrels about the *manner of his presence,* cause the matter of his absence, for our want of charity to receive him.

III.

I Have observed that children, when they first put on new shoes, are very curious to keep them clean. Scarce will they set their foot on the ground, for fear to dirty the soles of their shoes; yea, rather they will wipe the leather clean with their coats: and yet perchance the next day they will trample with the same shoes in the mire up to the ancles. Alas! children's play is our earnest. On that day, wherein we receive the Sacrament, we are often over-precise, scrupling

pling to say or do those things, which lawfully we may. But we, who are more than curious that day, are not so much as careful the next; and too often (what shall I say?) go on in sin up to the ancles; yea, our sins || *go over our heads.*

IV.

I Know some men very desirous to see the devil, because they conceive such an apparition would be a confirmation of their faith: for then, by the logic of oppositors, they would conclude, there is a God, because there is a devil. Thus they will not believe there is a heaven, except hell itself will be deposed for a witness thereof. Surely such men's wishes are vain, and hearts are wicked: for if they will not believe, having Moses, and the Prophets, and the Apostles, they will not believe, no, if the devil from hell appears unto them: such apparitions were never ordained by God as the means of faith. Besides, Satan will never show himself but to his own advantage; if as a devil, to fright them; if as *an angel of light,* to flatter them; however, to hurt them. For my part, I never desire to see him. And oh! if it were possible, that I might never feel him in his motions

|| Psalm xxxviii. 4.

 and

and temptations! I say, let me never see him till the day of Judgment, where he shall stand arraigned at the bar, and God's Majesty sit Judge at the bench, ready to condemn him.

V.

I observe that antiquaries, such as prize skill above profit, as being rather curious, than covetous, do prefer the brass coins of the Roman emperors, before those in gold and silver; because there is much falseness and forgery daily detected, and more suspected, in gold and silver medals, as being commonly cast and counterfeited; whereas brass coins are presumed upon as true and ancient, because it will not quit cost for any to counterfeit them. Plain dealing, Lord, what I want in wealth, may I have in sincerity. I care not how mean metal my estate be of, if my soul have the true stamp, really impressed with the unfeigned image of the King of heaven.

VI.

LOOKING on the chapel of King Henry the Seventh in Westminster, (God grant I may once again see it, with the saint who belongs

belongs to it, our Sovereign, there in a well-conditioned peace;) I say, looking on the outside of the chapel, I have much admired the curious workmanship thereof. It added to the wonder, that it is so shadowed with mean houses, well nigh on all sides, that one may almost touch it, as soon as see it. Such a structure needed no base buildings about it, as foils to set it off. Rather, this chapel may pass for the emblem of a great worth, living in a private way. How is he pleased with his own obscurity, whilst others of less desert make greater show! And whilst proud people stretch out their plumes in ostentation, he useth their vanity for his shelter; more pleased to have worth, than to have others take notice of it.

VII.

THE mariners at sea count it the sweetest perfume, when the water in the keel of their ship doth stink. For hence they conclude, that it is but little, and long since leaked in; but it is woeful with them, when the water is felt, before it is smelt, as fresh flowing in upon them in abundance. It is the best savour in a Christian soul, when his sins are loathsome and offensive unto him. An happy token, that there hath not been of late

in him any insensible supply of heinous offences, because his stale sins are still his new and daily sorrow.

VIII.

I HAVE sometimes considered, in what troublesome case is that chamberlain in an inn, who being but one, is to give attendance to many guests. For suppose them all in one chamber, yet if one shall command him to come to the window, and the other to the table, and another to the bed, and another to the chimney, and another to come up stairs, and another to go down stairs, and all in the same instant, how would he be distracted to please them all! And yet such is the sad condition of my soul by nature; not only a servant, but a slave to sin. Pride calls me to the window, gluttony to the table, wantonness to the bed, laziness to the chimney, ambition commands me to go up stairs, and covetousness to come down. Vices, I see, are as well contrary to themselves, as to virtue. Free me, Lord, from this distracted case; fetch me from being sin's servant to be thine, whose *service is perfect freedom*; for thou art but one, and ever the same, and always enjoinest commands agreeable to themselves, thy glory, and my good.

IX.

IX.

I HAVE observed that towns, which have been casually burned, have been built again more beautiful than before: mud walls afterwards made of stone; and roofs, formerly but thatched, after advanced to be tiled. The Apostle tells me, * *That I must not think strange concerning the fiery trial which is to happen unto me.* May I likewise prove improved by it. Let my renewed soul, which grows out of the ashes of the old man, be a more firm fabric, and strong structure; so shall affliction be my advantage.

X.

OUR Saviour saith, ‖*when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.* Yet one may generally observe, that Alms-houses are commonly built by *high-way-sides,* the ready road to ostentation. However, far be it from me to make bad comments on their bounty: I rather interpret it, that they place those houses so publicly, thereby, not to gain applause, but imitation. Yea, let those, who will plant

* 1 Peter iv. 12. † Math. vi. 3.

pious

pious works, have the liberty to choose their own ground. Especially in this age, wherein we are likely, neither in by-ways or highways, to have any works of mercy, till the whole kingdom be speedily turned into one great hospital, and God's charity only able to relieve us.

XI.

HOW wrangling and litigious were we in the time of peace! how many actions were created of nothing! suits we had commenced about a mouthful of grass, or a handful of hay. Now he, who formerly would sue his neighbour for *pedibus ambulando,* can behold his whole field lying waste, and must be content. We see our goods taken from us, and dare say nothing, not so much as seeking any legal redress, because certain not to find it. May we be restored in due time to our former properties, but not to our former peevishness. And when law shall be again awaked, or rather revived, let us express our thanks to God for so great a gift, by using it not wantonly, as formerly, in vexing our neighbours about trifles, but soberly, to right ourselves in matters of moment.

XII.

ALMOST twenty years since, I heard a profane jest, and still remember it. How many pious passages of far later date have I forgotten! It seems my soul is like a filthy pond, wherein fish die soon, and frogs live long. Lord, raze this profane jest out my memory. Leave not a letter thereof behind, lest my corruption, an apt scholar, guess it out again; and be pleased to write some pious meditations in the place thereof. And grant, Lord, that for the time to come, because such bad guests are easier kept out, that I may be careful not to admit what I find so difficult to expel.

XIII.

I Perceive there is in the world a good nature, falsely so called, as being nothing else but a facile and flexible disposition, wax for every impression. What others are so bold to beg, they are so bashful as not to deny. Such osiers can never make beams to bear stress in Church and State. If this be good nature, let me always be a clown; if this be good fellowship, let me always be a churl. Give me to set a sturdy porter before my soul, who may not equally open

open to every comer. I cannot conceive how he can be a *friend to any*, who is a friend to all, and the worst *foe to himself*.

XIV.

HA, is the interjection of laughter; *ah*, is an interjection of sorrow. The difference betwixt them very small, as consisting only in the transposition of what is no substantial letter, but a bare aspiration. How quickly, in the age of a minute, in the very turning of a breath, is our mirth changed into mourning!

XV.

I Have a great friend, whom I endeavour and desire to please, but hitherto all in vain; the more I seek, the further off I am from finding his favour. Whence comes this miscarriage? Are not my applications to man more frequent than my addresses to my Maker? Do I not love his smiles more than I fear heaven's frowns? I confess to my shame, that sometimes his anger hath grieved me more than my sins. Hereafter, by thy assistance, I will labour to approve my

my ways in God's presence; so shall I ever have, or not need his friendship, and either please him with more ease, or displease him with less danger.

XVI.

THIS nation is scourged with a wasting war. Our sins were ripe; God could no longer be just, if we were prosperous. Blessed be his name, that I have suffered my share in the calamities of my country. Had I poised myself so politicly betwixt both parties, that I had suffered from neither, yet could I have took no contentment in my safe escaping. For why should I, equally engaged with others in sinning, be exempted above them from the punishment? And seeing the bitter cup, which my brethren have pledged, to pass by me, I should fear it would be filled again, and returned double for me to drink it. Yea, I should suspect, that I were reserved alone, for a greater shame and sorrow. It is therefore some comfort I draw in the same yoke with my neighbours, and with them jointly bear the burden, which our sins jointly brought upon us.

XVII.

WHEN, in my private prayers, I have been

been to confess my bosom sins unto God, I have been loath to speak them aloud; fearing, though no man could, yet that the devil would over-hear me, and make use of my words against me: it being probable, that when I have discovered the weakest part of my soul, he would assault me there. Yet since I have considered, that therein I shall tell Satan no news, which he knew not before. Surely I have not managed my *secret sins* with such privacy, but that he, from some circumstances, collected what they were. Though the fire was within, he saw some smoke without. Wherefore, for the future, I am resolved to acknowledge my darling faults, though alone, yet aloud; that the devil, who rejoiced in partly knowing of my sins, may be grieved more by hearing the expression of my sorrow. As for any advantage he may make from my confession, this comforts me; God's goodness in assisting me, will be above Satan's malice in assaulting me.

XVIII.

IN the midst of my morning prayers, I had a good meditation, which since I have forgotten. Thus much I remember of it, that it

it was pious in itself, but not proper for that time. For it took much from my devotion, and added nothing to my instruction; and my soul, not able to intend two things at once, abated of its fervency in praying. Thus snatching at two employments, I held neither well. Sure this meditation came not from him, who is the God of order; he useth to fasten all his nails, and not to drive out one with another. If the same meditation return again, when I have leisure, and room to receive it, I will say it is of his sending, who so mustereth and marshalleth all good actions, that like the soldiers in his army, mentioned in the Prophet, ‖ *They shall not thrust one another, they shall walk every one in his path.*

XIX.

WHEN I go speedily in any action, Lord, give me to call my soul to an account. It is a shrewd suspicion that my bowl runs down-hill, because it runs so fast. And, Lord, when I go in an unlawful way, start some rubs to stop me; let my foot slip or stumble. And give me the grace to understand the language of the lets thou throwest in my way. Thou hast promised, † *I*

‖ Joel ii. 8. † Hosea ii. 6.

will hedge up thy way: Lord, be pleased to make the hedge high enough, and thick enough, that if I be so made, as to adventure to climb over it, I may not only soundly rake my clothes, but rend my flesh; yea, let me rather be caught, and stick in the hedge, than breaking in through it, fall on the other side into the deep ditch of eternal damnation.

XX.

COMING hastily into a chamber, I had almost thrown down a chrystal hour-glass: fear, lest I had, made me grieve, as if I had broken it: but, alas! how much precious time have I cast away without any regret! The hour-glass was but chrystal, each hour a pearl; that but like to be broken, this lost out-right; that but casually, this done wilfully. A better hour-glass might be bought: but time lost once, lost ever. Thus we grieve more for toys than for treasure. Lord, give me an hour-glass, not to be by me, but to be in me. || *Teach me to number my days.* An hour-glass, to turn me, *that I may apply my heart to wisdom.*

|| Psalm xc. 12.

XXI.

XXI.

WHEN a child, I loved to look on the pictures in the Book of Martyrs. I thought that there the martyrs at the stake seemed like the three children in the fiery furnace, ever since I had known them there, ‖*not one hair more of their head was burned, nor any smell of the fire singing of their clothes.* This made me think martyrdom was nothing. But oh! though *the lion be painted fiercer than he is,* the fire is far fiercer than it is painted. Thus it is easy for one to endure an affliction, as he limns it out in his own fancy, and represents it to himself but in a bare speculation. But when it is brought indeed, and laid home to us, there must be a man, yea, there must be God to assist the man to undergo it.

XXII.

TRAVELLING on the plain, (which notwithstanding hath its risings and fallings,) I discovered Salisbury Steeple many miles off: coming to a declivity, I lost the sight thereof: but climbing up to the next hill, the Steeple grew out of the ground again. Yea,

‖ Dan. iii. 27.

I often found it, and lost it, till at last I came safely to it, and took my lodging near it. It fareth thus with us whilst we are wayfaring to heaven: mounted on the ||*Pisgah* top of some good meditation, we get a glimpse of our celestial Canaan; but when either on the flat of an ordinary temper, or in the fall of some extraordinary temptation, we lose the view thereof. Thus in the sight of our soul, heaven is discovered, covered, and recovered, till, though late, at last, though slowly, surely, we arrive at the haven of our happiness.

XXIII.

I Find myself in the latitude of a fever. I am neither well, nor ill. Not so well, that I have any mind to be merry with my friends, nor so ill, that my friends have any cause to condole with me. I am *a probationer* in point of my health. As I shall behave myself, so I may be either expelled out of it, or admitted into it. Lord, let my distemper stop here, and go no further. Shoot not thy murdering pieces against that clay castle, which surrendereth itself at thy first summons. *O spare me a little,*

|| Deut. xxxiv. 1.

that

that I may recover my strength. I beg not to be forgiven, but to be forborn, my *debt to nature.* And I only do crave time, for a while, till I be better fitted and furnished to pay it.

XXIV.

IT seemed strange to me when I was told, that *aqua vitæ*, which restores life to others, should itself be made of the droppings of dead beer: and that *strong waters* should be extracted out of the dregs, almost, of small beer. Surely many other excellent ingredients must concur, and much art must be used in the distillation. Despair not then, O my soul! No extraction is impossible, where the chymist is infinite. He that is *all in all*, can produce any thing out of any thing. And he can make my soul, which by nature is ‖*settled on her lees*, and *dead in sin*, to be quickened by the infusion of his grace, and purified into a pious disposition.

XXV.

HOW easy is pen and paper piety, for

‖ Zeph. i. 12.

one to write religiously! I will not say, it costeth nothing; but it is far cheaper to work one's head, than one's heart, to goodness. Some, perchance, may guess me to be good by my writings, and so I shall deceive my reader. But if I do not desire to be good, I most of all deceive myself. I can make an hundred meditations, sooner than subdue the least sin in my soul. Yea, I was once in the mind never to write more; for fear lest my writings at the last day prove records against me. And yet why should I not write? that by reading my own book, the disproportion betwixt my lines and my life may make me blush myself, if not into goodness, into less badness than I would do otherwise. That so my writings may condemn me, and make me to condemn myself, that so God may be moved to acquit me.

PART II.

GOOD THOUGHTS
IN
WORSE TIMES.

TO

TO THE

CHRISTIAN READER.

WHEN I read the description of the tumult in Ephesus, Acts ix. 32. wherein they would have their Diana to be *jure divino*, that it fell down from Jupiter, it appears to me the too methodical character of our present confusions. *Some therefore cried one thing, and some another, for the assembly was confused, and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.* O the distractions of our age! And how many thousands know as little why the sword was drawn, as when it will be sheathed. Indeed, thanks be to God, we have no more house-burnings, but many heart-burnings; and though outward bleeding be staunched, it is to be feared, that the broken vein bleeds inwards, which is more dangerous.

This being our sad condition, I perceive controversial writings, sounding somewhat of drums and trumpets, do but make the wound

wound the wider. Meditations are like the minstrel ‖ the Prophet called for, to pacify his mind discomposed with passion; which moved me to adventure on this treatise, as the most innocent and inoffensive manner of writing.

I confess a volume of another subject, and a larger size, is expected from me. But in London I have learned the difference betwixt downright breaking, and craving time of their creditors: many sufficient merchants, though not solvable for the present, make use of the latter; whose example I follow. And though I cannot pay the principal, yet I desire such small treatises may be accepted from me, as interest, or consideration money, until I shall, God willing, be enabled to discharge the whole debt.

If any wonder that this treatise comes patron-less into the world, let such know, that dedications begin now adays to grow out of fashion. His policy was commended by many, and proved profitable unto himself, who, instead of select godfathers, made all the congregation wit-

‖ 2 Kings iii. 15.

nesses

nesses to his child; as I invite the world to this my book, requesting each one would patronize therein such parts and passages thereof, as please them; so hoping that by several persons the whole will be protected.

I have, Christian reader, (so far I dare go, not inquiring into thy sir-name of thy side or sect,) nothing more to burden thy patience with. Only I will add, that I find our Saviour, in Tertullian and ancient Latin fathers, constantly stiled a *Sequestrator*, in the proper notion of the word. For God and man being at odds, the difference was sequestered, or referred into Christ's hand, to end and umpire it. How it fareth with thine estate on earth I know not, but I earnestly desire that in heaven both thou and I may ever be under sequestration in that Mediator, for God's glory and our good, to whose protection thou art commited by

Thy Brother

in all Christian offices,

THOMAS FULLER.

PER-

PERSONAL
MEDITATIONS.

PERSONAL

MEDITATIONS.

I.

Curiosity curbed.

OFTEN have I thought with myself, what disease I would be best contented to die of. None please me. The stone, the cholic, terrible, as expected; intolerable, when felt. The palsy is death before death. The consumption a flattering disease, cozening men into hope of long life at the last gasp. Some sicknesses besot, others enrage men; some are too swift, and others too slow.

If I could as easily decline diseases as I could dislike them, I should be immortal. But away with these thoughts. The mark must not choose what arrow shall be shot against it. What God sends I must receive. May I not be so curious to know what weapon shall wound me, as careful to provide the plaister of patience against it. Only thus much in general: commonly that sickness seizeth on men, which they least suspect. He that expects to be drowned

with a dropsy, may be burned with a fever; and she, that fears to be swoln with a tympany, may be shrivelled with a consumption.

II.

Deceived, not hurt.

HEARING a passing-bell, I prayed that the sick man might have, through Christ, a safe voyage to his long home. Afterwards I understood that the party was dead some hours before; and it seems, in some places of London, the tolling of the bell is but a *Preface of course* to the ringing it out.

Bells better silent than thus telling lies. What is this, but giving a false alarm to men's devotions, to make them to be ready armed with their prayers, for the assistance of such who have already *fought the good fight,* yea, and gotten the conquest? Not to say, that men's charity herein may be suspected of superstition in praying for the dead.

However, my heart thus poured out was not spilt on the ground. My prayers, too late to do him good, came soon enough to speak my good will. What I freely tendered, God fairly took, according to the integrity of my intention. The party, I hope, is in

in Abraham's, and my prayers, I am sure, are returned into my own bosom.

III.

Nor full, nor fasting.

LIVING in a country village, where a burial was a rarity, I never thought of death, it was so seldom presented unto me. Coming to London, where there is plenty of funerals, so that coffins crowd one another, and corpses in the grave jostle for elbow-room, I slight and neglect death, because grown an object so constant and common.

How foul is my stomach to turn all food into bad humours! funerals, neither few nor frequent, work effectually upon me. London is a library of mortality. Volumes of all sorts and sizes, rich, poor, infants, children, youth, men, old men, daily die; I see there is more required to make a good scholar, than only the having of many books: Lord, be thou my schoolmaster, and *teach me to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom.*

IV.

Strange and true.

I Read in the ||Revelation of a beast, one

|| Rev. xiii. 3.

of whose *heads was as it were wounded to death.* I expected in the next verse, that the beast should die, as the most probable consequence, considering,

1. It was not a scratch, but a wound.

2. Not a wound in a fleshly part, or outlimbs of the body, but in the very head, the throne of reason.

3. No light wound, but in outward apparition, (having no other probe but St. John's eyes to search it,) it seemed deadly.

But mark what immediately follows, *and his deadly wound was healed.* Who would have suspected this inference from these premises? But is not this the lively emblem of my natural corruption? Sometimes I conceive, that by God's grace I have conquered and killed, subdued and slain, maimed and mortified, the deeds of the flesh: never more shall I be molested or buffeted with such a bosom sin: when, alas! by the next return, the news is, it is revived and recovered. Thus tenches, though grievously gashed, presently plaister themselves whole by that slimy and unctious humour they have in them; and thus the inherent balsam of badness quickly cures my corruption; not a scar to be seen. I perceive I shall never finally kill it, till first I be dead myself.

V.

V.

Blushing to be blushed for.

A Person of great quality was pleased to lodge a night in my house. I durst not invite him to my family-prayer, and therefore for that time omitted it; thereby making a breach in a good custom, and giving Satan advantage to assault it. Yea, the loosening of such a link might have endangered the scattering of the chain.

Bold bashfulness, which durst offend God, whilst it did fear man! Especially considering, that though my guest was never so high, yet, by the laws of hospitality, I was above him, whilst he was under my roof. Hereafter, whosoever cometh within the doors, shall be requested to come within the discipline, of my house; if accepting my homely diet, he will not refuse my home devotion; and sitting at my table, will be intreated to kneel down by it.

VI.

A lash for laziness.

SHAMEFUL my sloth, that hath deferred my night-prayer till I am in bed! This lying along is an improper posture for piety. Indeed there is no contrivance of our

our body, but some good man in Scripture hath hanselled it with prayer. The Publican standing, * Job sitting, Hezekiah lying on his bed, † Elijah with his *face between his legs.* But of all gestures give me St Paul's, ‡ *For this cause I bow my knees to the father of my Lord Jesus Christ.* Knees when they may, then they must be bended.

I have read a copy of a grant of liberty, from Queen Mary to Henry Ratcliff, Earl of Sussex, giving him || *leave to wear a night-cap, or coif, in her Majesty's presence,* counted a great favour, because of his infirmity. I know, in case of necessity, God would graciously accept my devotion, bound down in a sick dressing; but now, whilst I am in perfect health, it is inexcusable. Christ commanded some to *take up their bed,* in token of their full recovery; my laziness may suspect, lest thus my *bed taking me up,* prove a presage of my ensuing sickness. But may God pardon my idleness this once, I will not again offend in the same kind, by his grace, hereafter.

VII.

Root, Branch, and Fruit.

A poor man of Seville in Spain, having

* Job ii. 13. † 1 Kings xviii. 42.
‡ Eph. iii. 14. || Weaver's sun. mon. p. 638.

a fair

a fair and fruitful pear-tree, one of the Fathers of the Inquisition desired (such tyrants' requests are commands) some of the fruit thereof. The poor man, not out of gladness to gratify, but fear to offend, as if it were a sin for him to have better fruit than his betters, (suspecting on his denial the tree might be made his own rod, if not his gallows,) plucked up tree, roots and all, and gave it unto him.

Allured with love to God, and advised by mine own advantage, what he was frighted to do, I will freely perform. God calleth on me to present him with ‖*fruits meet for repentance.* Yea, let him take all; soul and body, powers and parts, faculties and members of both, I offer a sacrifice unto himself. Good reason; for indeed the tree was His, before it was mine, and I *give him of his own.*

Besides, it was doubtful, whether the poor man's material tree, being removed, would grow again. Some plants, transplanted, especially when old, become sullen, and do not enjoy themselves in a soil wherewith they were unacquainted. But sure I am, when I have given myself to God, the moving of my soil shall be the mending of it; he will so dress, αἴρειν and καθαίρειν,

‖ Matth. iii. 8.

so ‖ *prune and purge* me, that I shall bring forth most fruit in my age.

VIII.

God speed the Plough.

I Saw in seed-time an husband-man at plough, in a very raining day; asking him the reason, why he would not rather leave off, than labour in such foul weather, his answer was returned me in their country rhyme:

Sow beans in the mud,
And they'll come up like a wood.

This could not but mind me of David's expression, † *They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

These last five years have been a wet and woeful seed-time to me, and many of my afflicted brethren. Little hope have we, as yet, to come again to our own homes; and, in a literal sense now, to *bring our sheaves,* which we see others daily to carry away on their shoulders. But if we shall not share in the *former* or *latter harvest*

‖ John xv. 2. † Psalm cxxvi. 5. 6.

here

here on earth, the third and last in heaven we hope undoubtedly to receive.

IX.

Cras, cras.

GREAT was the abundance and boldness of the frogs in Egypt, * *which went up and came into their bed-chambers, and beds, and kneading troughs, and very ovens.* Strange, that those fen-dwellers should approach the fiery region; but stranger, that Pharaoh should be so backward to have them removed, and being demanded of Moses when he would have them sent away, answered, † *to-morrow.* He could be content with their company one night, at bed and at board, loath, belike, to acknowledge either God's justice in sending, or power in remanding them, but still hoping that they casually came, and might casually depart.

Leave I any longer to wonder at Pharaoh, and even admire at myself. What are my sins but so many toads, spitting of venom and spawning of poison; croaking in my judgment, creeping into my will, and crawling into my affections. This I see and suffer, and say with Pharaoh, *to-morrow, to-*

* Exod. viii. 3. † Exod. viii. 10.

morrow

morrow I will amend. Thus, as the Hebrew tongue hath no proper *present tense*, but two *future tenses*, so all the performances of my reformation are only in promises for the time to come. Grant, Lord, I may seasonably drown this Pharaoh-like procrastination in the sea of repentance, lest it drown me in the pit of perdition.

X.

Green when grey.

IN September I saw a tree bearing roses, whilst others of the same kind, round about it, were barren; demanding the cause of the Gardener, why that tree was an exception from the rule of the rest, this reason was rendered; because that alone being clipped close in May, was then hindered to spring and sprout, and therefore took this advantage, by itself to bud in Autumn.

Lord, if I were curbed and snipped in my younger years, by fear of my parents, from those vicious excrescences to which that age was subject, give me to have a godly jealousy over my heart, suspecting an Autumn-spring; lest corrupt nature, which, without thy restraining grace, will have a vent, break forth in my reduced years into youthful vanity.

XI.

Miserere.

THERE goes a tradition of Ovid, that famous poet, receiving some countenance from his own * confession, that when his father was about to beat him, for following the pleasant but profitless study of poetry, he, under correction, promised his father never to make a verse, and made a verse in his very promise. Probably the same in sense, but certainly more elegant for composition, than this verse which common credulity hath taken up :

Parce precor, genitor, posthac non versificabo.

Father, on me pity take,
Verses I no more will make.

When I so solemnly promise my heavenly father to sin no more, I sin in my very promise ; my weak prayers, made to procure my pardon, increase my guiltiness. O the dullness and deadness of my heart therein ! I say my prayers as the Jews † *eat the Passover, in haste.* And whereas in bodily actions motion is the cause of heat, clean contra-

* De Tristibus, lib. ii. Eleg. 10.
† Exod. xii. 11.

ry, the more speed I make in my prayers, the colder I am in my devotion.

XII.

Monarchy and mercy.

IN reading the Roman (whilst under consuls) and Belgic history of the United Provinces, I remember not any capital offender, being condemned, ever forgiven, but always after sentence follows execution. It seems that the very constitution of a multitude is not so inclinable to save, as to destroy. Such rulers in aristocracies, or popular states, cannot so properly be called God's, because, though having the great attributes of a Deity, power and justice, they want, or will not use, the most godlike property of God's clemency to forgive.

May I die in that goverment, under which I was born, where a monarch doth command. Kings, where they see cause, have graciously granted pardons to men appointed to death; herein the lively image of God, || *to whom belongeth mercy and forgiveness.* And although I will endeavour so to behave myself, as not to need my Sovereign's favour in this kind, yet because none can warrant his innocency in all things, it is

|| Daniel ix. 9.

com-

comfortable living in such a common-wealth, where pardons heretofore on occasion have been, and hereafter may be procured.

XIII.

What helps not, hurts.

A Vain thought arose in my heart, instantly my corruption retains itself to be the advocate for it, pleading that the worst that could be said against it, was this, that it was a *vain thought.*

And is not this the best that can be said for it? Remember, O my soul, the fig-tree was charged, not with bearing noxious, but no fruit. Yea, the barren fig-tree bare the fruit of annoyance; || *Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?* Vain thoughts do this ill in my heart, that they do no good.

Besides, the fig-tree pestered but one part of the garden; good grapes might grow, at the same time, in other places of the vineyard. But seeing my soul is so intent on its object, that it cannot attend too things at once, one tree, for the time being, is all my vineyard. A vain thought engrosseth all the ground of my heart; till that be rooted out, no good meditation can grow with it, or by it.

|| Luke xiii. 7.

XIV.

Always seen, never minded..

IN the most healthful times, two hundred and upwards was the constant weekly tribute paid to mortality in London. A large bill, but it must be discharged. Can one city spend according to this weekly rate, and not be bankrupt of people! At least wise, must not my shot be called for, to make up the reckoning?

When only seven young men, and those chosen || by lot, were but yearly taken out of Athens, to be devoured by the monster Minotaur, the whole city was in a constant fright; children for themselves, and parents for their children. Yea, their escaping of the first, was but an introduction to the next year's lottery.

Were the dwellers and lodgers in London weekly to cast lots, who should make up this two hundred, how would every one be affrighted? Now none regard it. My security concludes, the aforesaid number will amount of infants and old folk: few men of middle age, and amongst them surely not myself. But oh! is not this putting the evil day far from me, the ready way to bring it the nearest to me? The lot is weekly

|| Plut. Vit. in Theseo.

drawn,

drawn, though not by me, for me; I am therefore concerned seriously to provide, lest that death's prize prove my blank.

XV.

Not whence, but whither.

FINDING a bad thought in my heart, I disputed in myself the cause thereof, whether it proceeded from the devil, or mine own corruption; examining it by those signs Divines in this case recommended.

1. Whether it came in incoherently, or by dependance on some object presented to my senses.

2. Whether the thought was at full age at the first instant, or, infant-like, grew greater by degrees.

3. Whether out or in the road of my natural inclination.

But hath not this inquiry more of curiosity than religion? Hereafter, derive not the pedigree, but make the *mittimus*, of such malefactors. Suppose a confederacy betwixt thieves without, and false servants within, to assault and wound the master of a family: thus wounded, would he discuss, from which of them his hurts proceeded? No surely, but speedily send for a surgeon, before he bleed to death. I will no more put it to the question, whence my bad thoughts

come, but whither I shall send them, lest this curious controversy insensibly betray me into a consent unto them.

XVI.

Storm, steer on.

THE mariners sailing with St. Paul, bare up bravely against the tempest, whilst either art or industry could befriend them. Finding both to fail, and that they could not any longer || *bear up into the wind,* they even let their ship drive. I have endeavoured in these distemperate times to hold up my spirits, and to steer them steadily; an happy peace here, was the port whereat I desired to arrive. Now, alas! the storm grows too sturdy for the Pilot. Hereafter all the skill I will use, is no skill at all, but even let my ship sail whither the winds send it.

Noah's ark was bound for no other port, but preservation for the present, that ship being all the harbour, not intending to find land, but to float on water. May my soul, though not sailing to the desired haven, only be kept from sinking in sorrow.

This comforts me, that the most weather-beaten vessel cannot properly be seized on

|| Acts xxvii. 15.

for

for a wreck, which hath any quick cattle remaining therein. My spirits are not as yet forfeited to despair, having one lively spark of hope in my heart, because *God is even where he was before.*

XVII.

Wit out-witted.

JOAB chid the man, unknown in Scripture by his name, well known for his wisdom, for not killing Absalom, when he saw him hanged in the tree, promising him for his pains *ten shekels and a girdle.*

But the man, having the King's command to the contrary, refused his proffer. Well he knew, that politic statesmen would have dangerous designs fetched out of the fire, but with other men's fingers. His girdle promised, might, in payment, prove an halter. Yea, he added moreover, that had he killed Absalom, Joab himself * *would have set himself against him.*

Satan daily solicits me to sin, point-blank against God's word, baiting me with proffers best pleasing my corruption. If I consent, he who last tempted, first † *accuseth me.* The fawning spaniel turns a

* 2 Sam. xviii. 13. † Revel. xii. 10.

fierce

fierce lion, and roareth out my faults in the ears of heaven. Grant, Lord, when Satan shall next serve me, as Joab did this nameless Israelite, I may serve him, as the nameless Israelite did Joab, flatly refusing his deceitful tenders.

XVIII.

Hereafter.

DAVID fasted and prayed for his sick son, that his life might be prolonged. But when he was dead, this consideration comforted him: || *I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.*

Peace did long lie languishing in this land. No small contentment, that, to my poor power, I have prayed and preached for the preservation thereof. Seeing since it is departed, this supports my soul, having little hope that peace here should return to me, I have some assurance that I shall go to peace hereafter.

XIX.

Bad at best.

LORD, how come wicked thoughts to

|| 2 Sam. xii. 23.

perplex

perplex me in my prayers, when I desire and endeavour only to attend thy service? Now I perceive the cause thereof; at other times I have willingly entertained them, and now they entertain themselves against my will. I acknowledge thy justice, that what formerly I have invited, now I cannot expel. Give me hereafter always to bolt out such ill guests. The best way to be rid of such bad thoughts in my prayers, is, not to receive them out of my prayers.

XX.

Compendium dispendium.

POPE Boniface the Ninth, at the end of each hundred years, appointed a Jubilee at Rome, wherein people, bringing themselves and money thither, had pardon for their sins. But centenary years returned but seldom; Popes were old before, and covetous when, they came to their place. Few had the happiness to fill their coffers with Jubilee-coin. Hereupon, || Clement the Sixth reduced it to every three and thirtieth, Paul the Second and Sixtus the Fourth, to every twenty-fifth year.

Yea, an agitation is reported in the Con-

|| Examen con. Trident. p. 736. colum. 2.

clave,

clave, to bring down Jubilees to fifteen, twelve, or ten years, had not some Cardinals, whose policy was above their covetousness, opposed it.

I serve my prayers, as they their Jubilees. Perchance they may extend to a quarter of an hour, when poured out at large. But some days I begrudge this time as too much, and omit the preface of my prayer, with some passages conceived less material, and run two or three petitions into one, so contracting them to half a quarter of an hour.

Not long after, this also seems too long; I de-contract and abridge the abridgement of my prayers. Yea, be it confessed to my shame and sorrow, that hereafter I may amend it, too often I shrink my prayers to a minute, to a moment, to a *Lord have mercy upon me!*

SCRIPTURE
OBSERVATIONS.

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATIONS.

I.

Prayer may preach.

FATHER, I thank thee, said our Saviour, being ready to raise Lazarus, ‖ *that thou hast heard me. And I know that thou hearest me always, but because of the people that stand by, I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.* It is lawful for ministers in their public prayers to insert passages for the edifying of their auditors, at the same time petitioning God, and informing their hearers. For our Saviour glancing his eyes at the people's instruction, did no whit hinder the steadfastness of his looks lifted up to his Father.

When before Sermon I pray for my *Sovereign and Master, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, in all causes, and over all persons, &c.* some, who omit it themselves, may censure it in me for superfluous: but never more

‖ John xi. 41, 42.

need to teach men the King's title, and their own duty; that the simple may be informed, the forgetful remembered thereof, and that the affectedly ignorant, who will not take advice, may have all excuse taken from them. Wherefore in pouring forth my prayers to God, well may I therein sprinkle some by-drops for the instruction of the people.

II.

The vicious mean.

ZOPHAR, the Naamathite, mentioneth a sort of men, in whose mouths || *wickedness is sweet; they hide it under their tongues, they spare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still in their mouths.* This furnisheth me with a tripartite division of men in the world.

The first and best are those, who spit sin out, loathing it in their judgments, and leaving it in their practice.

The second sort, notoriously wicked, who swallow sin down, actually and openly committing it.

The third, endeavouring an expedient betwixt heaven and hell, neither do nor deny their lusts; neither spitting them out, nor

|| Job. xx. 12.

swallow-

swallowing them down, but *rolling them under their tongues*, epicurizing thereon, in their filthy fancies and obscene speculations.

If God at the last day of Judgment hath three hands, a right for the sheep, a left for the goats, the middle is most proper for these third sort of men. But both these latter kinds of sinners shall be confounded together. The rather, because a sin thus rolled becomes so soft and supple, and the throat is so short and slippery a passage, that insensibly it may slide down from the mouth into the stomach; and contemplative wantonness quickly turns into practical uncleanness.

III.

Store no sore.

JOB had a custom to offer burnt-offerings according to the number of his sons; for he said, || *It may be that my sons in their feasting have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.* It may be, not it must be; he was not certain, but suspected it. But now, what if his sons had not sinned, was Job's labour lost, and his sacrifice of none

|| Job. i. 5.

 effect?

effect? Oh no! only their property was altered; in case his sons were found faulty, his sacrifices for them were propitiatory, and through Christ obtained their pardon: in case they were innocent, his offerings were eucharistical, returning thanks to God's restraining grace, for keeping his sons from such sins, which otherwise they would have committed.

I see in all doubtful matters of devotion, it is wisest to be on the surest side; better both lock, and bolt, and barr it, than leave the least door of danger open. Hast thou done what is disputable whether it be well done? Is it a measuring cast whether it be lawful or no, so that thy conscience may seem in a manner to stand neuter? Sue a conditional pardon out of the Court of Heaven: the rather because our self-love is more prone to flatter than our godly jealousy to suspect ourselves without a cause: with such humility Heaven is well pleased. For suppose thyself over-cautious, needing no forgiveness in that particular, God will interpret the pardon thou prayest for to be the praises presented unto him.

IV.

Line on line.

MOSES, in God's name, did counsel Joshua,

shua, Deuter. xxxi. 23. *Be strong, and of a good courage, for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I sware unto them.* God immediately did command him, Joshua i. 6. *Be strong, and of a good courage;* and again, verse 7. *Only be thou strong, and very courageous;* and again, verse 9. *Have I not commanded thee? Be strong, and of a good courage, be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed.* Lastly, the Reubenites and Gadites heartily desired him, verse 28. *Only be strong, and of a good courage.*

Was Joshua a dunce, or a coward? did his wit or his valour want an edge, that the same precept must so often be pressed upon him? No doubt neither; but God saw it needful that Joshua should have courage of proof, who was to encounter both the froward Jew, and the fierce Canaanite.

Though metal on metal, colour on colour, be false heraldry, * *Line on line, precept on precept*, is true divinity.

Be not therefore offended, O my soul, if the same doctrine be often delivered unto thee by different preachers: if the same precept, like the † sword in Paradise, which *turned every way*, doth hunt and haunt thee, tracing thee which way soever thou turnest, rather conclude that thou art

* Isa. xxviii. 10. † Gen. iii. 24.

deeply concerned in the practice thereof, which God hath thought fit should be so frequently inculcated into thee.

V.

O the depth!

HAD I beheld Sodom in the beauty thereof, and had the Angel told me, that the same should be suddenly destroyed by a merciless element, I should certainly have concluded, that Sodom should have been drowned; lead thereunto by these considerations:

1. It was situated in the plain of Jordan, a flat, low, level country.

2. * *It was well watered every where,* and where always there is water enough, there may sometimes be too much.

3. Jordan had a quality, in the † *first month to over-flow all the banks.*

But no drop of moisture is spilt on Sodom, it is burnt to ashes. How wide are our conjectures, when they guess at God's judgments! how far are his ways above our apprehensions! especially when wicked men, with the Sodomites, wander in strange sins, out of the road of common corruption,

* Gen. xiii. 10. † 1 Chron. xii. 15.

God

God meets them with strange punishments, out of the reach of common conception, not coming within the compass of a rational suspicion.

VI.

Self, self-hurter.

WHEN God at the first day of Judgment arraigned Eve, she transferred her fault on the * *serpent, which beguiled her.* This was one of the first fruits of our depraved nature. But ever after regenerate men in Scripture, making the confession of their sins, whereof many precedents, cast all the fault on themselves alone: yea David, when he numbered the people, though it be expressed that † Satan *provoked him thereunto,* and though David probably might be sensible of his temptation, yet he never accused the devil, but derived all the guilt on himself, ‡ *I it is that have sinned*; good reason, for Satan hath no impulsive power; he may strike fire till he be weary, (if his malice can be weary,) except man's corruption brings the tinder, the match cannot be lighted. Away then with the plea of course, *The devil owed me a shame.* Owe thee he might, but pay thee he could not,

* Genesis iii. 13. † 1 Chron. xxi. 1.
‡ 1 Chron. xxi. 17.

unless

unless thou wert as willing to take his black money, as he to tender it.

VII.

Gad, Behold a troop cometh.

THE || Amalekite, who brought the tidings to David, began with truth, rightly reporting the overthrow of the Israelites. Cheaters must get some credit, before they can cozen; and all falsehood, if not founded in some truth, would not be fixed in any belief.

But proceeding, he told six lies successively.

1. That Saul called him.
2. That he came at his call.
3. That Saul demanded who he was.
4. That he returned his answer.
5. That Saul commanded him to kill him.
6. That he killed him accordingly.

A wilful falsehood told, is a cripple, not able to stand by itself, without some to support it: it is easy to tell a lie, hard to tell but a lie.

Lord, if I be so unhappy to relate a falsehood, give me to recal it or repent of it. It is said of the pismires, that to prevent the

|| 2 Samuel i. 4.

grow-

growing, and so the corrupting, of that corn which they hoard up for their winter provision, they bite off both the ends thereof, wherein the generating power of the grain doth consist. When I have commited a sin, O let me so order it, that I may destroy the procreation thereof, and I, by a true sorrow, condemn it to a blessed barrenness.

VIII.

Out means, in miracles.

WHEN the Angel brought Saint Peter out of prison, *the iron gate opened of its own accord.* But coming to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, he was fain *to stand before the door and knock.* When iron gave obedience, how can wood make opposition?

The answer easy. There was no man to open the *iron gate,* but a portress was provided of course to unlock the door: God would not therefore shew his finger, where men's hands were appointed to do the work. Heaven will not super-institute a miracle, where ordinary means were formerly in peaceable possession. But if they either depart or resign, ingenuously confessing their insufficiency, there miracles succeed in their vacancy.

Lord, if only wooden obstacles, such as can

can be removed by might of man, hindered our hopes of peace, the arm of flesh might relieve us. But alas! they are iron obstructions, as come not within human power or policy to take away. No proud flesh shall therefore presumptuously pretend to any part of the praise, but ascribe it solely to thyself, if now thou shouldest be pleased, after seven years hard apprenticeship in civil wars, miraculously to burn our Indentures, and restore us to our former liberty.

IX.

Military mourning.

SOME may wonder at the strange incoherence in the words and actions, 2 Sam. i. 17. *And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul, and over Jonathan his son. Also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow.*

But the connexion is excellent. For that is the most soldier-like sorrow, which, in midst of grief, can give order for revenge on such as have slain their friends.

Our general fast was first appointed to bemoan the massacre of our brethren in Ireland. But it is in vain to have a finger in the eye, if we have not also a sword in the other hand; such tame lamenting of lost friends, is but lost lamentation. We must

must bend our bows in the camp, as our knees in the churches, and second our posture of piety with martial provisions.

X.

No stool of wickedness.

Sometimes I have disputed with myself, which of the two were most guilty: David, who said in haste * *all men are liars*, or that wicked man, who † *sate and spake against his brother, and slandered his own mother's son.*

David seems the greater offender; for mankind might have an action of defamation against him; yea, he might justly be challenged for giving all men the lie. But mark, David was *in haste*, he spake it *in transitu*, when he was passing, or rather posting by; or, if you please, not David, but David's haste, rashly vented the word. Whereas the other *sate*; a sad, solemn, serious, premeditate, deliberate posture; his malice had a full blow with a steady hand at the credit of his brother. Not to say, that *sate* carries with it the countenance of a judicial proceeding, as if he made a Session or Bench-business thereof, as well condemning, as accusing unjustly.

* Psalm cxvi. 11. † Psalm l. 20.

Lord,

Lord, pardon my cursory, and preserve me from sedentary sins. If in haste or heat of passion I wrong any, give me at leisure to ask thee and them forgiveness. But oh! let me not sit by it, studiously to plot or project mischief to any, out of *malice propense*. To shed blood, in cool blood, is blood with a witness.

XI.

By degrees.

SEE by what stairs wicked || Ahaz did climb up to the height of profaneness.

First, he † *saw an idolatrous altar* at Damascus. Our eyes, when gazing on sinful objects, are out of their calling, and God's keeping.

Secondly, he *liked it*. There is a secret fascination in superstition, and our souls soon bewitched with the gaudiness of false service, from the simplicity of God's worship.

Thirdly, *He made the like to it*. And herein ‡ Uriah the Priest, patron and chaplain well met, was the midwife, to deliver the mother altar of Damascus of a babe, like unto it, at Jerusalem.

Fourthly, || *He sacrificed on it*. What

|| 2 Kings xvi. † Verse 10.
‡ Verse 11. ¶ Verse 13.

else

else could be expected, but that when he had tuned this new instrument of idolatry, he would play upon it.

Fifthly, || *He commanded the people to do the like;* not content to confine it to his personal impiety.

Lastly, *He removed God's altar away.* That venerable altar, by divine appointment peaceably possessed of the place, for two hundred years and upwards, must now be violently ejected by a usurping upstart.

No man can be stark naught at once. Let us stop the progress of sin in our soul at the first stage, for the further it goes the faster it will increase.

XII.

The best bed-maker.

WHEN a good man is ill at ease, God promiseth *to make all his bed in his sickness.* Pillow, bolster, head, feet, sides, *all his bed.* Surely that God, who made him, knows so well his measure and temper, as to make his bed to please him. Herein his art is excellent, not fitting the bed to the person, but the person to the bed, infusing patience into him.

|| 2 Kings xvi. 15.

But oh! how shall God make my bed, who have no bed of mine own to make? Thou fool, he can make thy not having a bed, to be a bed unto thee. When Jacob slept on the * ground, who would not have had his hard lodging, therewithal to have his heavenly dream? Yea, the poor woman in Jersey, † which in the reign of Queen Mary was delivered of a child, as she was to be burned at the stake, may be said to be brought to bed in the fire. Why not? If God's justice threatened to cast ‡ *Jezebel into a bed of fire,* why might not his mercy make the very flames a soft bed to that his patient martyr.

XIII.

When begun, ended.

THE Scripture giveth us a very short account of some battles, as if they were fights without sights, and the armies parted as soon as met; as Gen. xiv. 10. 1 Sam. xxxi. 1. 2 Chron. xxv. 22.

Some will say, the Spirit gives in only the sum of the success, without any particular passages in atchieving it: but there is more in it, that so little is said of the fight. For

* Gen. xxviii. 11. † Fox, Martyr. vol. III.
‡ Rev. ii. 22.

some-

sometimes the question of the victory is not disputed at all, but the bare propounding decides it. The stand of pikes, oft-times no stand, and the footmen so fitly called, as making more use of their feet than their hands. And when God sends a qualm of fear over the soldiers' hearts, it is not all the skill and valour of their commanders can give them a cordial.

Our late war hath given us some instances hereof. Yet let not men tax their armies for cowardice, it being probable, that the badness of such as staid at home of their respective sides, had such influences on those in field, that soldiers' hearts might be fear-broken, by the score of their sins, who were no soldiers.

XIV.

Too late, too late.

THE elder brother laid a || sharp and true charge against his brother prodigal for his riot and luxury. This nothing affected his father; the mirth, meat, music at the feast, was notwithstanding no whit abated. Why so? because the elder brother was the younger in this respect, and came too late. The other had got the speed of him, having

|| Luke xv. 30.

first accused himself, nine verses before, and already obtained his pardon.

Satan, to give him his due, is my brother, and my elder by creation. Sure I am, he will be my grievous accuser. I will endeavour to prevent him, by first condemning myself to God my Father; so shall I have an act of indemnity, before he can enter his action against me.

XV.

Lawful stealth.

I Find two, husband and wife, both stealing, and but one of them guilty of felony: || *And Rachel had stolen the images that were her fathers. And Jacob stole away, unawares to Laban the Syrian.* In the former, a complication of theft, lying, sacrilege, and idolatry; in the latter no sin at all. For what our conscience tells us is lawful, and our discretion dangerous, it is both conscience and discretion to do it with all possible secrecy. It was as lawful for Jacob, in that case, privately to steal away, as it is for that man, who finds the sun-shine too hot for him, to walk in the shade.

God keep us from the guilt of Rachel's stealth; but for Jacob's stealing away, one

|| Gen. xxxi. 19, 20.

may

may confess the fact, but deny the fault therein. Some are said to have gotten their life for a prey, if any, in that sense, have preyed on, or if you will, plundered their own liberty; stealing away from the place, where they conceived themselves in danger, none can justly condemn them.

XVI.

Text improved.

I Heard a preacher take for his text, || *Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine, unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee?* I wondered what he would make thereof, fearing he would starve his auditors for want of matter. But hence he observed;

1. The silliest and simplest, being wronged, may justly speak in their own defence.

2. Worst men have a good title to their own goods. Balaam a sorcerer, yet the ass confesseth twice he was his.

3. They who have done many good offices, and fail in one, are often not only unrewarded for former service, but punished for that one offence.

4. When the creatures, formerly officious

|| Numb. xxii. 30.

to serve us, start from their wonted obedience, as the earth to become barren, and air pestilential, man ought to reflect on his own sin as the sole cause thereof.

How fruitful are the seeming barren places of Scripture! bad ploughmen, which make balks of such ground. Wheresoever the surface of God's Word doth not laugh and sing with corn, there the heart thereof within is merry with mines, affording, where not plain matter, hidden mysteries.

XVII.

The royal bearing.

GOD is said to have brought the Israelites out of Egypt on ‖ *eagle's wings*. Now eagles, when removing their young ones, have a different posture from other fowl, proper to themselves, (fit it is that there should be a distinction betwixt sovereign and subjects,) carrying their prey in their talons, but young ones on their backs, so interposing their whole bodies betwixt them and harm. The old eagle's body is the young eagle's shield, and must be shot through before her young ones can be hurt.

Thus God, in saving the Jews, put himself betwixt them and danger. Surely God, so

‖ Exod. xix. 4.

loving

loving under the Law, is no less gracious in the Gospel: our souls are better secured; not only above his wings, but in his body; ‖ *Your life is hid with Christ in God.* No fear then of harm, God first must be pierced, before we can be prejudiced.

XVIII.

None to him.

IT is said of our Saviour, his †*fan is in his hand.* How well it fits him, and he it! Could Satan's clutches snatch the fan, what work would he make! he would fan, as he doth ‡ *winnow,* in a tempest, yea, in a whirlwind, and blow the best away. Had man the fan in his hand, especially in these distracted times, out goes for chaff, all opposite to the opinions of his party. Seeming sanctity will carry it away from such, who with true, but weak grace, have ill natures, and eminent corruptions.

There is a kind of darnel, called *lolium murium,* because so counterfeiting corn, that even the mice themselves (experience should make them good tasters) are sometimes deceived therewith. Hypocrites, in like manner, so act holiness, that they pass for

‖ Colosians iii. 3. † Matt. iii. 12.
‡ Luke xxii. 31.

saints

saints before men, whose censures often barn up the chaff, and burn up the grain.

Well then! Christ for my share. The fan is in so good a hand, it cannot be mended. Only his hand, who knows hearts, is proper for that employment.

XX.

Humility.

IT is a strange passage, Rev. vii. 13, 14. *And one of the elders answered saying unto me, What are these who are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said unto me, These are they who have come out of great tribulation, &c.*

How comes the elder, when asking a question, to be said to answer? On good reason: for his *quære*, in effect, was a resolution. He asked St. John, not because he thought he could, but knew he could not answer; that John's ingenuous confession of his ignorance might invite the elder to inform him.

As his question is called an answer, so God's commands are grants. When he enjoins us, *Repent, believe*, it is only to draw from us a free acknowledgment of our impotency to perform his commands. This con-

confession being made by us, what he enjoins, he will enable us to do. Man owning his weakness, is the only stock for God thereon to graft the grace of his assistance.

MEDITATIONS
ON THE TIMES.

MEDITATIONS

ON THE TIMES.

I.

Name general.

HEBER had a son born || *in the days when the earth was divided.* Conceive we it just after the *confusion of tongues,* when mankind was parcelled out into several colonies. Wherefore Heber, to perpetuate the memory of so famous an accident happening at the birth of his son, called him Peleg, which in the Hebrew tongue signifieth *partition,* or *division.*

We live in a land and age of dissension: counties, cities, towns, villages, families, all divided in opinions, in affections. Each man almost divided from himself with fears and distractions. Of all the children, born in England within this last five years, and brought to the font, or, if that displease, to the bason, to be baptized, every male may be called Peleg, and female Palgah, in

|| Gen. x. 25.

the sad memorial of the time of their nativity.

II.

Woeful wealth.

BARBAROUS is the custom of some English people on the sea-side, to prey on the goods of poor ship-wrecked merchants. But more devilish is their design, who make false fires, to undirect seamen in a tempest, that thereby, from the right road, they may be misled into danger and destruction.

England hath been tossed with a hurricano of a civil war. Some men are said to have gotten great wealth thereby. But it is an ill leap, when men grow rich *per saltum*, taking their rise from the misery of a land, to which their own sins have contributed their share. Those are far worse, (and may not such be found?) who, by cunning insinuations and false glossings, have, in these dangerous days, trained and betrayed simple men into mischief.

Can their pelf prosper, not got by valour and industry, but deceit? Surely it cannot be wholesome, when every morsel of their meat is mummy, good physic, but bad food, made of the corpses of men's estates. Nor will it prove happy, it being to be feared, that such who have been enriched with other

other men's ruins, will be ruined by their own riches. The child of ten years is old enough to remember the beginning of such men's wealth, and the man of threescore and ten is young enough to see the ending thereof.

III.

A new Plot.

WHEN Herod had beheaded John the Baptist, some might expect that his disciples would have done some great matter, in revenge of their master's death. But see how they behave themselves. *And his disciples came, and took up the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus.* And was this all? And what was all this? Alas, poor men! it was some solace to their sorrowful souls, that they might lament their loss to a fast friend, who, though for the present unable to help, was willing to pity them.

Hast thou thy body unjustly imprisoned, or thy goods violently detained, or thy credit causelessly defamed? I have a design whereby thou shalt revenge thyself, even go and tell JESUS. Make to him a plain and true report of the manner and measure of thy sufferings: especially there being a great difference betwixt JESUS, then clouded in the flesh, and JESUS now shining in glory,

having now as much pity, and more power to redress thy grievances. I know it is counted but a cowardly trick for boys, when beaten but by their equals, to cry that they will *tell their father*. But during their present necessity, it is both the best wisdom and valour even to complain to thy *Father in heaven*, who will take thy case into his serious consideration.

IV.

Providence.

MARVELLOUS is God's goodness, in preserving the young ostriches. For the old one || *leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust, forgetting that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them.* But divine Providence so disposeth it, that the bare nest hatcheth the eggs, and the warmth of the sandy ground discloseth them.

Many parents, which otherwise would have been loving pelicans, are, by these unnatural wars, forced to be ostriches to their own children, leaving them to the narrow mercy of the wide world. I am confident that these orphans, so may I call them whilst their parents are alive, shall be com-

|| Job xxxix. 14.

fortably

fortably provided for. When worthy Master Samuel Hern, famous for his living, preaching, and writing, lay on his death-bed, rich only in goodness and children, his wife made much womanish lamentation, what should hereafter become of her little ones: *Peace, sweet-heart,* said he, *that God who feedeth the * ravens, will not starve the Herns.* A speech censured as lightly by some, observed by others as prophetical; as indeed it came to pass, that they were well disposed of. Despair not therefore, O thou parent, of God's blessing, for having many of his blessings, a numerous offspring. But depend on his Providence for their maintenance: find thou but faith to believe it, he will find means to effect it.

V.

† *Coals for faggots.*

IN the days of King Edward the Sixth, when Bonner was kept in prison, Reverend Ridley, having his Bishopric of London, would never go to dinner at Fulham, without the company of Bonner's ‡ mother and sister; the former always sitting in a chair at the upper end of the table: these guests

* Psal. cxlvii. 9. † Prov. xxvi. 21.
‡ Fox, Martyrolog. Vol. iii. p. 471.

were as constant as bread and salt at the board, no meal could be made without them.

O the meekness and mildness of such men as must make martyrs! Active charity always goes along with passive obedience. How many ministers' wives and children now adays are outed of house and home, ready to be starved! how few are invited to their tables, who hold the sequestrations of their husbands' or fathers' benefices! Yea, many of them are so far from being bountiful, that they are not just, denying or detaining from those poor souls that pittance, which the Parliament hath allotted for their maintenance.

VI.

Fugitives overtaken.

THE City of Geneva is seated in the marches of several dominions, France, Savoy, Switzerland; now it is a fundamental law in that signiory, to give free access to all offenders, yet so as to punish their offence, according to the custom of that place wherein the fault was committed. This necessary severity doth sweep their state from being the sink of sinners, the rendezvouz of rogues, and head quarters of all malefactors, which otherwise would

ny

fly thither in hope of indemnity. Herein I highly approve the discipline of Geneva.

If we should live to see Churches of several governments permitted in England, it is more than probable, that many offenders, not out of conscience, but to escape censures, would fly from one congregation to another. What Nabal said sullenly and spitefully, one may sadly foresee, and foresay of this land, || *Many servants now adays will break every man from his master;* many guilty persons, abandoning that discipline, under which they were bred and brought up, will shift and shelter themselves under some new model of government. Well were it then, if every man, before he be admitted a member of a new congregation, do therein first make satisfaction for such scandalous sins, whereof he stands justly charged in that church, which he deserted. This would conduce to the advancing of virtue, and the retrenching of notorious licentiousness.

VII.

Both and neither.

A City was built in Germany upon the river Weser, by Charles the Emperor, and

|| 1 Sam. xxv. 10.

Vuide-

Vuidekind, first Christian Duke of Saxony; and because both contributed to the structure thereof, it was called || MINE THINE, at this day by corrupt pronunciation, *Mindin,* to shew the joint interest both had in the place.

Send, Lord, in thy due time, such a peace in this land, as Prince and people may share therein; that the sovereign might have what he justly calls *mine,* his lawful prerogative; and leave to the subjects their propriety. Such may be truly termed an accommodation, which is *ad commodum utriusque; for the benefit of both parties concerned therein.*

VIII.

Fed with fasting.

THE salmon may pass for the riddle of the river. The oldest fisherman never as yet met with any meat in the maw thereof, thereby to advantage his conjecture on what bill of fare that fish feedeth. It eats not flies with the perch, nor swallows worms with the roach, nor sucks dew with oysters, nor devoureth his fellow-fishes with the pike: what hath it in the water, but the

|| Munst. Cosmog. l. iii. 6. 450.

water?

water? yet salmons grow great, and very fat in their seasons.

How do many, exiles in their own country, subsist now adays of nothing, and wandering in a wilderness of want, except they have manna miraculously from heaven? they have no meat on earth from their own means. At what ordinary, or rather extraordinary, do they diet, that for all this, have cheerful faces, light hearts, and merry countenances? Surely some secret comforts support their souls. Such never desire but to make one meal all the days of their lives, on the || *continual feast of a good conscience.* The fattest capons yield but sad merry-thoughts to the greedy glutton, in comparison of those delightful dainties, which this dish daily affords such as feed upon it.

IX.

Bare in fat pasture.

FORESTS have informed me, that outlodging deer are seldom seen to be so fat as those as keep themselves within the park. Whereof they assign this reason; that those stragglers, though they have more ground to range over, more grass and grain to take their repast upon, yet they are in constant

|| Prov. xv. 15.

fear,

fear, as if conscious that they are trespassers, being out of the protection, because out of the pale, of the park. This makes their eyes and ears always to stand centinels for their mouths, lest the master of the ground pursue them, for the damage done unto him.

Are there any which unjustly possess the houses of others? Surely such can never with quiet and comfort enjoy either their places or themselves. They always listen to the least noise of news, suspecting the right owner should be reinstated, whose restitution, of necessity, infers the others' ejection. Lord, grant that though my means be never so small, they may be *my means*, not wrongfully detained from others, having a truer title unto them.

X.

Much good do you.

ONE || Niceas, a Philosopher, having his shoes stolen from him, *May they*, said he, *fit his feet that took them away.* A wish at the first view very harmless, but there was that in it, which poisoned his charity into a malicious revenge. For he himself had

|| Plut. Moral.

hurled

hurled or crooked feet, so that, in effect, he wished the thief to be lame.

Whosoever hath plundered me of my books and papers, I freely forgive him, and desire that he may fully understand and make good use thereof, wishing him more joy of them, than he hath right to them. Nor is there any snake under my herbs, nor have I, as Niceas, any reservation, or latent sense to myself, but from my heart do desire, that to all purposes and intents, my books may be beneficial unto him. Only requesting him, that one passage in his, lately my, Bible, namely, Eph. iv. 28. may be taken into his serious consideration.

XI.

The use of the alphabet.

THERE was, not long since, a devout but ignorant Papist dwelling in Spain. He perceived a necessity of his own private prayers to God, besides the *Pater-noster, Ave Maries*, &c. used of course in the Romish Church. But so simple was he, that how to pray he knew not. Only every morning, humbly bending his knees, and lifting up his eyes and hands to heaven, he would deliberately repeat the alphabet. *And now*, saith he, *O good God, put these letters together to spell syllables, to spell words, to make*

make such sense, as may be most to thy glory, and my good!

In these distracted times, I know what generals to pray for; God's glory, truth and peace, his Majesty's honour, privileges of Parliament, liberty of subjects, &c. but when I descend to particulars, when, how, by whom, I should desire these things to be effected, I may fall to that poor pious man's A, B, C, &c.

XII.

The good effect of a bad cause.

GOD, in the Levitical law, gave reward to the woman causelessly suspected of her jealous husband, that the *bitter water,* which she was to drink in the Priest's presence, should not only do her no harm, but also procure her children, * if barren before; that water, *drunk by her to quench the fire of her husband's jealousy,* proved like the spaw unto her, so famous for causing fruitfulness. Thus her innocency was not only cleared, but crowned.

His gracious Majesty hath been suspected to be Popishly inclined. A suspicion like those mush-rooms, which Pliny † recounts among the miracles in nature, because *grow-*

* Numb. v. 18. † Nat. Hist. l. xix. c. 2.

ing

ing without a root. Well, he hath passed his purgation, a bitter morning's draught hath he taken down for many years together.

See the operation thereof; his constancy in the Protestant religion hath not only been assured to such, who unjustly were jealous of him, but also, by God's blessing, he daily grows greater in men's hearts, pregnant with the love and affection of his subjects.

XIII.

The child man.

JOHN Gerson, the pious and learned Chancellor of Paris, beholding and bemoaning the general corruption of his age in doctrine and manners, was wont to get a * quire of little children about him, and to entreat them to pray to God in his behalf; supposing their prayers least defiled with sin, and most acceptable to heaven.

Men now adays are so infected with malice, that little children are the best chaplains to pray for their parents. But oh! where shall such be found, not resenting of the faults and factions of their fathers? Gerson's plot will not take effect. I will try another way.

* In his Life, juxta finem.

I will make my address to || *the holy child Jesus,* so is he stiled, even when glorified in heaven; not because he is still under age, like Popish pictures, placing him in his mother's arms, and keeping him in his constant infancy, but because, with the strength and perfection of a man, he hath the innocence and humility of a child: him only will I employ *to intercede for me.*

XIV.

Worse before better.

STRANGE was the behaviour of our Saviour towards his beloved Lazarus; informed by a messenger of his sickness, † *he abode two days still in the place where he was.* Why so slow? bad sending him on a dying man's errands. But the cause was, because Lazarus was not bad enough for Christ to cure, intending not to recover him from his sickness, but to revive him from death, to make the glory of the miracle greater.

England doth lie desperately sick of a violent disease in the bowels thereof. Many messengers we dispatch, monthly fasts, weekly sermons, daily prayers, to inform God of our sad condition. He still stays in the same place; yea, which is worse, seems to

|| Acts iv. 27. † John. xi. 6.

go

go backward, for every day less likelihood, less hope of help. May not this be the reason, that our land must yet be reduced to more extremity, that God may have the higher honour of our deliverance?

XV.

All sin, all suffer.

THE Mariners that guided the ship in the tempest, Acts xxvii. 32. had a design for their own safety, with the ruin of the rest; intending, under pretence of casting out an anchor, to escape in a boat by themselves. But the soldiers prevented their purpose, *and cut off the cord of the boat, and let it fall into the sea. One and all: all sink, or all save.* Herein their martial law did a piece of exemplary justice.

Do any intend willingly, without special cause, to leave the land, so to avoid that misery which their sins with others have drawn upon it? might I advise them, better *mourn in, than move out of sad Sion.* Hang out the || *scarlet lace* at the casement, eyes made red with sorrow for sin, but slide not down out of the window without better warrant. But if they be disposed to depart and leave their native soil, let them take

|| Josh. ii. 18.

heed their fly-boat meets not with such soldiers as will send them back, with shame and sorrow, into the ship again.

XVI.

Eat worthily.

SAUL being in full pursuit of the flying Philistines, made a law, * *That no Israelite should eat until evening.* But it was the judgment of Jonathan, that the army, if permitted to eat, had done greater execution on their enemies. For time so lost was gained, being laid out in the necessary refection of their bodies.

Yea, mark the issue of their long fasting. The people at night coming with ravenous appetites † *did eat the flesh with the blood, the provoking of God's anger.*

Many English people, having conquered some *fleshly lusts, which fight against their souls,* were still chasing them, in hope finally to subdue them. Was it a pious or politic design, to forbid such the receiving of the Sacrament, their spiritual food?

I will not positively conclude, that such, if suffered to strengthen themselves with that heavenly repast, had thereby been enabled more effectually to cut down their

* 1 Sam. xiv. 24. † Verse 32.

cor-

corruptions. Only two things I will desire; First, that such Jonathans, who by breaking this custom have found benefit to themselves, may not be condemned by others. Secondly, I shall pray, that two hungry years make not the third a glutton. That communicants, two twelve-months together forbidden the Lord's Supper, come not, when admitted thereunto, with better stomach than heart, more greediness than preparation.

XVII.

Devotions duplicate.

WHEN the Jewish Sabbath, in the primitive times, was newly changed into the Christian's Lord's Day, many devout people twisted both together in their observation, abstaining from servile works, and keeping both Saturday and Sunday wholly for holy employments.

During these civil wars, Wednesday and Friday fasts have been appointed by different authorities. What harm had it been, if they had been both generally observed?

But alas! when two messengers, being sent together on the same errand, fall out and fight by the way, will not the work be worse done, than if none were employed? In such a pair of fasts, it is to be feared, that the divisions of our affections rather

would increase, than abate, God's anger against us.

Two negatives make an affirmative. Days of humiliation are appointed for men to deny themselves, and their sinful lusts. But do not our two fasts more peremptorily affirm and avouch our mutual malice and hatred? God forgive us, we have cause enough to keep ten, but not care enough to keep one monthly day of humiliation.

XVIII.

Law to themselves.

SOME sixty years since, in the University of Cambridge, it was solemnly debated betwixt the Heads, to debar young scholars of that liberty allowed them in Christmas, as inconsistent with the discipline of students. But some grave governors maintained the good use thereof, because thereby, in twelve days, they may more discover the dispositions of scholars than in twelve months before. That is a vigilant virtue indeed, which would be early up at prayers and study, when all authority to punish lay asleep.

Vice, these late years, hath kept open house in England. Welcome all comers without any examination. No penance for the adulterer, stocks for the drunkard, whip for

for the petty larcener, brand for the felon, gallows for the murderer.

God all this time tries us, as he did Hezekiah, || *that he might know all that is in our hearts.* Such as now are chaste, sober, just, true, shew themselves acted with a higher principle of piety, than the bare avoiding of punishment.

XX.

The new disease.

THERE is a disease of infants, and an infant-disease, having scarcely as yet got a proper name in Latin, called the *rickets;* wherein the head waxeth too great, whilst the legs and lower parts wain too little. A woman in the West hath happily healed many, by cauterizing the vein behind the ear. How proper the remedy for the malady, I engage not, experience oft-times out-doing art, whilst we behold the cure easily effected, and the natural cause thereof hardly assigned.

Have not many now adays the same sickness in their souls? Their heads swelling to a vast proportion, and they wonderfully enabled with knowledge to discourse? But, alas, how little their legs, poor their

|| 2 Chron. xxxii. 31.

practice,

practice, and lazy their walking in a godly conversation? Shall I say, that such may be cured by searing the vein in their head, not to hurt their hearing, but hinder the itching of their ears.

Indeed his tongue deserves to be burned, that talks of searing the ears of others; For *faith cometh by hearing*. But I would have men not to hear fewer sermons, but hear more in hearing fewer sermons. Less preaching, better heard, (Reader, lay the emphasis, not on the word *less*, but on the word *better*,) would make a wiser and stronger Christian, digesting the word from his heart, to practise it in his conversation.

MEDITATIONS

ON ALL KIND

OF PRAYERS.

MEDITATIONS,

ON ALL KIND

OF PRAYERS.

I.

Newly awaked.

BY the Levitical Law, the firstling of every clean creature which opened the || matrix was holy to God: by the moral analogy thereof, this first glance of mine eyes is due to him. By the custom of this kingdom, there accrueth to the landlord a fine and herriot from his tenant, taking a further estate in his lease. I hold from God this clay cottage of my body; an homely tenement, but may I in some measure be assured of a better, before outed of this. Now being raised from last night's sleep, I may seem to renew a life. What shall I pay to my Landlord? Even the best quick creature which is to be found on my barren copy-hold, namely *the calves of my lips*, praising him for his protection over me. More he doth not ask, less I cannot give:

|| Exod. xxxiv. 19.

yea,

yea, such is his goodness, and my weakness, that before I can give him thanks, he giveth me to be thankful.

II.

Family-Prayer.

LONG have I searched the Scriptures to find a positive precept enjoining, or president observing, daily prayer in a family; yet hitherto have found none proper for my purpose. Indeed I read, that there was a *yearly sacrifice* offered at Bethlehem for the family of Jesse; but if hence we should infer household holy duties, others would conclude they should only be annual. And whereas it is said, ‖*Pour out thine indignation on the heathen, and on the families which have not called on thy name;* the word taken there in a large acceptation, reproveth rather the want of national, than domestic, service of God.

But let not profaneness improve itself, or censure family-prayer for will-worship, as wanting a warrant in God's Word. For where God enjoineth a general duty, as to serve and fear him, there all particular means, whereof prayer a principal, tending thereunto, are commanded. And surely,

‖ Jerem. x. 25.

the

the pious households of *Abraham, †Joshua, and ‡ Cornelius, had some holy exercises to themselves, as broader than their personal devotion, so narrower than the public service, just adequate to their own private family.

III.

Self, without other self.

SOME loving wife may perchance be, though not angry with, grieved at, her husband, for excluding her from his private prayers, thus thinking with herself; *Must I be discommuned from my husband's devotion? What? several closet-chapels for those of the same bed and board? Are not our credits embarked in the same bottom, so that they sink or swim together? May I not be admitted an auditor at his petitions, were it only to say* AMEN *thereunto?*

But let such a one seriously consider what the Prophet saith, || *The family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart.* Personal private faults must be privately confessed. It is not meet she should know all the bosom-sins of him, in whose bosom she

* Gen. xviii. 19. † Josh. xxiv. 15.
‡ Acts x. 2. || Zach. xii. 12.

lieth. Perchance, being now offended for not hearing her husband's prayers, she would be more offended if she heard them. Nor hath she just cause to complain, seeing herein Nathan's wife is equal with Nathan himself; what liberty she alloweth, is allowed her, and may, as well as her husband, claim the privilege privately and apart to pour forth her soul unto God in her daily devotions. Yet man and wife, at other times, ought to communicate in their prayers, all other excluded.

IV.

Groans.

HOW comes it to pass, that groans, made in men by God's Spirit, *cannot be uttered?* I find two reasons thereof. First, because those groans are so low and little, so faint, frail, and feeble, so next to nothing; these still-born babes only breath without crying. Secondly, because so much diversity, yea, contrariety of passion, is crowded within the compass of a groan, are stayed from being expressive, and the groan become unutterable.

How happy is their condition, who have God for their Interpreter! who not only understands what they do, but what they would say. Daniel could tell the meaning of

of the dream which Nebuchadnezzar had forgotten. God knows the meaning of those groans, which never as yet knew their own meaning, and understands the sense of those sighs, which never understood themselves.

V.

Ejaculations, their use.

EJACULATIONS are short prayers, darted up to God on emergent occasions. If no other artillery had been used this last seven years in England, I will not affirm more souls had been in heaven, but fewer corpses had been buried in earth. O that with David we might have said, * *my heart is fixed,* being less busied about fixing of muskets.

The principal use of ejaculations, is against the † *fiery darts* of the devil. Our adversary injects (how he doth it, God knows, that he doth it, we know) bad motions into our hearts, and that we may be as nimble with our antidotes, as he with poisons, such short prayers are proper and necessary. In hard havens, so choked up with the envious sands, that great ships, drawing many foot water, cannot come near, lighter and lesser pinnaces may freely and safely arrive. When we are time-bound,

* Psalm lvii. 7. † Ephes. vi. 16.

place-bound, or person-bound, so that we cannot compose ourselves to make a large solemn prayer, this is the right instant for ejaculations, whether orally uttered, or only poured forth inwardly in the heart.

VI.

Their privilege.

EJACULATIONS take not up any room in the soul. They give liberty of callings, so that, at the same instant, one may follow his proper vocation. The husbandman may dart forth an ejaculation, and not make a balk the more. The seaman nevertheless steer his ship right, in the darkest night. Yea, the soldier, at the same time, may shoot out his prayer to God, and aim his pistol at his enemy, the one better hitting the mark for the other.

The field wherein bees feed is no whit the barer for their biting; when they have took their full repast on flower or grass, the ox may feed, the sheep fat, on their reversions. The reason is, because those little chymists distil only the refined part of the flower, leaving the grosser substance thereof. So ejaculations bind not men to any bodily observance, only busy the spiritual half, which maketh them consistent with the prosecution of any other employment.

VII.

VII.

Extemporary prayers.

IN extemporary prayer, what men most admire, God least regardeth; namely, the volubility of the tongue. Herein a Tertullus may equal, yea, exceed, Saint Paul himself, * *whose speech was but mean.* Oh, it is the heart keeping time and tune with the voice, which God listeneth unto. Otherwise the nimblest tongue tires, and loudest voice grows dumb, before it comes half way to Heaven. † *Make it,* said God to Moses, *in all things, like the pattern in the mount.* Only the conformity of the words with the mind, mounted in heavenly thoughts, is acceptable to God. The gift of extemporary prayer and ready utterance may be bestowed on a reprobate, but the grace thereof, religious affections, is only given to God's servants.

VIII.

Their causeless scandal.

SOME lay it to the charge of extemporary prayer, as if it were a diminution to God's Majesty to offer them unto him, be-

* 2 Cor. x. 10. † Hebr. viii. 5.

cause, alluding to David's expression to || Ornan the Jebusite, *they cost nothing*, but come without any pains or industry to provide them. A most false aspersion.

Surely, preparation of the heart, though not premeditation of every word, is required thereunto. And grant the party praying, at that very instant fore-studieth not every expression, yet surely he hath formerly laboured with his heart and tongue too, before he attained that dexterity of utterance, properly and readily to express himself. Many hours in night no doubt he is waking, and was by himself practising Scripture phrase, and the language of Canaan, whilst such as censure him for his laziness were fast asleep in their beds.

Suppose one should make an entertainment for strangers with flesh, fish, fowl, venison, fruit, all out of his own fold, field, ponds, park, orchard, will any say, that this feast cost him nothing who makes it? Surely, although all grew on the same, and for the present he bought nothing by the penny, yet he, or his ancestors for him, did at first dearly purchase home-accommodations, from whence this entertainment did arise.

So the party who hath attained the faculty and facility of extemporary prayer, the

|| 1 Chron. xxi. 23.

easy

easy act of a laborious habit, though at the instant not appearing to take pains, hath been formerly industrious with himself, or his parents with him, in giving him pious education, or else he had never acquired so great perfection, seeing only long practice makes *the pen of a ready writer.*

IX.

Night-prayer.

DEATH in Scripture is compared to sleep. Well then may my night-prayer be resembled to making my will. I will be careful not to die intestate; as also not to defer my will-making till I am not *compos mentis*; till the lethargy of drowsiness seize upon me.

But being in perfect memory, I bequeath my soul to God, the rather because I am sure the devil will accuse me when sleeping. O the advantage of spirits above bodies! If our clay-cottage be not cooled with rest, the roof falls a fire. Satan hath no such need: the night is the fittest time. Thus man's *vacation* is the *terms* for the beasts of the forest; they move most, whilst he lies quiet in his bed.

Lest, therefore, whilst sleeping I be outlawed

lawed for want of appearance to Satan's charge, I commit my cause to him, *who neither slumbers nor sleeps. Answer for me, O my God.*

X.

A Nocturnal.

DAVID surveying the firmament, brake forth into this consideration, || *When I considered the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast created; what is man, &c.*

How cometh he to mention the moon and stars, and omit the sun. The other being but his pensioners, shining with that exhibition of light, which the bounty of the sun allots them.

It is answered, this was David's night-meditation, when the sun departing to the other world, left the lesser lights only visible in heaven; and as the sky is best beheld by day in the glory thereof, so it is best surveyed by night, in the variety of the same.

Night was made for man to rest in. But when I cannot sleep, may I, with this Psalmist, entertain my waking with good thoughts. Not to use them as opium, to invite my

|| Psalm viii. 3.

corrupt

corrupt nature to slumber, but to bolt out bad thoughts, which otherwise would possess my soul.

XI.

Set Prayers.

SET prayers are prescript forms of our own, or others' composing; such are lawful for any, and needful for some to use.

Lawful for any. Otherwise God would not have appointed the Priests, presumed of themselves best able to pray, a form of blessing the people; nor would our Saviour have set us his prayer, which, as the town bushel is the standard both to measure corn and other bushels by, is both a prayer in itself, and a pattern, or platform of prayer. Such as accuse set forms to be pinioning the wings of the dove, will by the next return affirm, that girdles and garters, made to strengthen and adorn, are so many shackles and fetters, which hurt and hinder men's free motion.

Needful for some. Namely, for such who as yet have not attained, what all should endeavour, to pray *ex tempore* by the Spirit. But as little children, to whom the plainest and evenest room at first is a labyrinth, are so ambitious of going an-hie-lone, that they scorn to take the guidance

guidance of a form, or bench, to direct them, but will adventure by themselves, though often to the cost of a knock and a fall; so many confess their weakness, in denying to confess it; who, refusing to be beholding to a set form of prayer, prefer to say nonsense, rather than nothing, in their *ex tempore* expressions More modesty, and no less piety, it had been for such men, to have prayed longer with set forms, that they might pray better without them.

XII.

The same again.

IT is no base and beggarly shift, arguing a narrow and necessitous heart, but a piece of holy and heavenly thrift, often to use the same prayer again. Christ's practice is my directory herein, who the third time said the same words ||.

A good prayer is not like a stratagem of war, to be used but once. No, the oftener the better. The clothes of the Israelites, whilst they wandered forty years in the wilderness, never waxed old, as if made of *perpetuano* indeed So a good prayer, though often used, is still fresh and fair in the ears and eyes of heaven. Despair not then,

|| Math. xxvi. 44.

thou

thou simple soul, who hast no exchange of raiment, whose prayers cannot appear every day at heaven's court in new clothes. Thou mayest be as good a subject, though not so great a gallant, coming always in the same suit. Yea, perchance, the very same, which was thy father's and grand-father's before thee: a well composed prayer is a good heir-loom in a family, and may hereditarily be descended to many generations: but know thy comfort, thy prayer is well known to heaven, to which it is a constant customer. Only add new, or new degrees of old affections thereunto, and it will be acceptable to God, thus repaired, as if new erected.

XIII.

Mixed Prayers.

MIXED prayers are a methodical composition, no casual confusion, of *ex tempore* and premeditate prayers put together. Wherein the standers, still at the same, and the essential parts, confession of sin, begging of pardon, craving grace for the future, thanking God for former favours, &c. like the bones of the prayer, remain always unaltered: whilst the moveable petitions, like the flesh and colour of thy prayers, are added, abridged, or altered, as God's Spirit ad-

adviseth and enableth us, according to the emergencies of present occasions.

In the midland sea, gallies are found to be most useful, which partly run on legs of oars, and partly fly with the wings of sails, whereby they become serviceable both in a wind and in a calm. Such the conveniency of mixed prayer, wherein infused and acquired graces meet together, and men partly move with the breath of the holy Spirit, partly row on by their own industry. Such medley prayers are most useful, as having the steadiness of premeditate, and the activity of extemporary, prayer joined together.

XIV.

Take your company along.

IT is no disgrace for such who have the gift and grace of extemporary prayer, sometimes to use a set form, for the benefit and behoof of others. Jacob, though he could have marched on a man's pace, yet was careful not to over-drive the children, and ‖ *ewes big with young*. Let ministers remember to bring up the rear in their congregations, that the meanest may go along with them in their devotions.

‖ Gen. xxxiii. 13.

God

God could have created the world *ex tempore*, in a moment, but was pleased, as I may say, to make it premeditately, in a set method of six days; not for his own ease, but our instruction, that our heads and hearts might the better keep pace with his hands, to behold and consider his workmanship.

Let no man disdain to set his own nimbleness backward, that others may go along with him. Such degrading one's self, it is the quickest proceeding in piety; when men prefer the edification of others, before their own credit and esteem.

XV.

Prayer must be quotidian.

AMONG other arguments enforcing the necessity of daily prayer, this not the least, that Christ enjoins us to petition for daily bread. New bread, we know, is best; and, in a spiritual sense, our bread, though in itself as stale and mouldy as that of the Gibeonites, is every day new, because a new and hot blessing, as I might say, is daily begged and bestowed of God upon it.

Manna must daily be gathered, and not provisionally be hoarded up. God expects that men every day address themselves unto him, by petitioning him for sustenance.

How contrary is this to the common practice of many! As camels in sandy countries are said to drink but once in seven days, and then *in præsens, præteritum, et futurum*, for time past, present, and to come, so many fumble this last and next week's devotion all in a prayer. Yea, some defer all their praying till the last day.

Constantine had a conceit, that because baptism washed away all sins, he would not be baptized till his death-bed, that so his soul might never lose the purity thereof, but immediately mount to heaven. But sudden death preventing him, he was not baptized at all, as some say, or only by an Arian bishop, as others affirm. If any erroneously, on the same supposition, put off their prayers to the last, let them take heed, lest, long delayed, at last they prove either none at all, or none in effect.

XVI.

The Lord's prayer.

IN this age we begin to think meanly of the Lord's prayer; oh! how basely may the Lord think of our prayers! Some will not forgive the Lord's prayer for that passage therein, *as we forgive them that trespass against us.*

Others play the witches on this prayer.

Witches

Witches are reported, amongst many other hellish observations, whereby they oblige themselves to Satan, to say the Lord's prayer backwards. Are there not many, who though they do not pronounce the syllables of the Lord's prayer retrograde, their discretion will not suffer them to be betrayed to such a nonsense sin; yet they transpose it in effect, desiring their *daily bread*, before God's *kingdom come*, preferring temporal benefits, before heavenly blessings. Oh! if every one by this mark should be tried for a witch, how hard would it go with all of us! *Lamiarum plena sunt omnia.*

XVII.

All best.

AT the siege and taking of New Carthage in Spain, there was dissension betwixt the soldiers about the crown mural, due to him who first footed the walls of the city. Two pretended to the crown; parts were taken, and the Roman army siding in factions, was likely to fall foul, and mutually fight against itself. Scipio, the General, prevented the danger, by providing two mural crowns, giving one to each who claimed it; affirming, that on the examination of the proofs, both did appear to him at the same instant to climb the wall. O let us not set several

kinds of prayers at variance betwixt themselves, which of them should be most useful, most honourable. All are most excellent at several times; crown-groans, crown-ejaculations, crown-extemporary, crown-set, crown-mixt-prayer. I dare boldly say, he that in some measure loves not all kind of lawful prayers, loves no kind of lawful prayers. For if we love God the Father, we can hate no ordinance, his child, though perchance an occasion may affect one above another.

XVIII.

All manner of prayers.

IT is an ancient stratagem of Satan, yet still he useth it, still men are cheated by it, to set God's ordinance at variance, as the disciples fell out among themselves, which of them should be the greatest. How hath the reader's pew been clashed against the preacher's pulpit, to the shaking almost of the whole church! whether that the word preached, or read, be most effectual to salvation: also, whether the word preached, or catechized, most useful. But no ordinance so abused as prayer. Prayer hath been set up against preaching, against catechizing, against itself. Whether public or private, church or closet, set or extem-

porary

porary prayer be the best. See how St. Paul determines the controversy; || πάσῃ προσευχῇ, *with all manner of prayer*, (so the Genevan translation,) *and supplication in the Spirit*. Preferring none, commending all lawful prayer to our practice.

XIX.

To God alone.

AMONGST all manner of prayer to God, I find in Scripture neither promise, precept, nor precedent to warrant prayers to saints. And were there no other reason, this would encourage me to pray to Christ alone; because,

St. Paul struck Elymas blind, Christ made blind Bartimeus see. St. Peter killed Ananias and Sapphira with his word, Christ with his word revived dead Lazarus. The disciples forbade the Syrophenician woman to call after Christ, Christ called unto her, after they had forbidden her. All my Saviour's works are saving works, none extending to the death of mankind. Surely Christ being now in heaven hath not less goodness, because he hath more glory; his bowels still yearn on us. I will therefore rather present my prayers to him, who always did heal,

|| Eph. vi. 18.

than to those, who sometimes did hurt. And though this be no convincing argument to Papists, it is a comfortable motive to Protestants. A good third, where so good firsts and seconds have been laid before.

OCCASIONAL
MEDITATIONS.

OCCASIONAL

MEDITATIONS.

I.

Love and anger.

I SAW two children fighting together in the street. The father of the one passing by fetched his son away, and corrected him; the other lad was left without any check, though both were equally faulty in the fray. I was half offended, that being guilty alike, they were not punished alike: but the parent would only meddle with him, over whom he had an undoubted dominion, to whom he bare an unfeigned affection.

The wicked sin, the godly smart most in this world. God singleth out his own sons, and beateth them by themselves; * *whom he loveth, he chasteneth;* whilst the ungodly, preserved from affliction, are reserved for destruction: it being needless, that their † *hair should be shaved with an hired razor,* whose heads are intended for the ‡ *ax* of divine justice.

* Hebr. xii. 6. † Isa. vii. 20.
‡ Math. iii. 10.

II.

II.

Upwards, upwards.

HOW large houses do they build in London on little ground! Revenging themselves on the narrowness of their room with store of stories. Excellent arithmetic! from the root of one floor, to multiply so many chambers. And though painful the climbing up, pleasant the staying there; the higher the healthfuller, with clear light and sweeter air.

Small are my means on earth. May I mount my soul the higher in heavenly meditations, relying on divine Providence; he that fed many thousands with ||*five loaves*, may feed me and mine, with the FIFTH PART of that one loaf, that once all mind. Higher, my soul! higher! In bodily buildings, commonly the garrets are most empty, but my mind the higher mounted, will be the better furnished. Let perseverance to death be my uppermost chamber, the roof of which grace is the pavement of glory.

III.

Beware wanton wit.

I SAW an Indenture too fairly engrossed;

|| Mat. xiv. 4.

for

for the writer, better scrivener than clerk, had so filled it with flourishes, that it hindered my reading thereof; the wantonness of his pen made a new alphabet, and I was subject to mistake his dashes for real letters.

What damage hath unwary rhetoric done to religion! Many an innocent reader hath taken Damascene and Theophilact at their word, counting their eloquent hyperboles of Christ's presence in the Sacrament, the exact standards of their judgment; whence after ages brought in transubstantiation. Yea, from the Fathers' elegant apostrophes to the dead, (lively pictures by hasty eyes may be taken for living persons,) prayers to saints took their original. I see that truth's secretary must use a set hand, in writing important points of divinity. Ill dancing for nimble wits, on the precipices of dangerous doctrines. For though they escape by their agility, others, encouraged by their examples, may be brought to destruction.

IV.

Ill done, undone.

I SAW one, whether out of haste, or want of skill, put up his sword the wrong way; it cut, even when it was sheathed, the edge being transposed where the back should

should have been: so that, perceiving his error, he was fain to draw it out, that he might put it up again.

Wearied and wasted with civil war, we, that formerly loathed the manna of peace, because common, could now be content to feed on it, though full of worms, and putrified: some so desirous thereof, that they care not on what terms the war be ended, so it be ended: but such a peace would be but a truce, and the conditions thereof would no longer be in force, than whilst they are in force. Let us pray, that the sword be sheathed the right way, with God's glory, and without the dangerous dislocation of prince and people's right: otherwise it may justly be suspected, that the sword put up, will be drawn out again; and the articles of an ill agreement, though engrossed in parchment, not take effect so long as paper would continue.

V.

Apace, apace.

ROWING on the Thames, the waterman confirmed me in what formerly I had learned from the maps, how that river, westward, runs so crooked, as likely to lose itself in a labyrinth of its own making. From Reading to London by land thirty, by water

an

an hundred miles. So wantonly that stream disporteth itself, as if as yet unresolved, whether to advance to the sea, or retreat to its fountain.

But the same being past London, as if sensible of its former laziness, and fearing to be checked of the Ocean, the mother of all rivers, for so long loitering; or else, as if weary with wandering, and loath to lose more way; or lastly, as if conceiving such wildness inconsistent with the gravity of his channel, now grown old, and ready to be buried in the sea, runs in so direct a line, that from London to Gravesend, the number of the miles are equally twenty, both by land and by water.

Alas! how much of my life is lavished away! Oh the intricacies, windings, wanderings, turnings, tergiversations, of my deceitful youth! I have lived in the midst of a * *crooked generation*, and with them † *have turned aside unto crooked ways:* high time it is now for me to make ‡ *strait paths for my feet*, and to redeem what is past, by amending what is present and to come. *Flux, flux*, in the German tongue, *quick, quick*, was a motto of § Bishop Jewel's, presaging the approach of his death. May I

* Phil. ii. 15. † Psalm cxxv. 5.
‡ Heb. xii. 13. § In his Life, p. 10.

make good use thereof; *make haste, make haste;* God knows, how little time is left me, and may I be a good husband, to improve the short remnant thereof.

VI.

Always the rising sun.

I Have wondered why the Romish Church do not pray to Saint Abraham, Saint David, Saint Hezekiah, &c. as well as to the Apostles and their successors since Christ's time; for those ancient Patriarchs, by the confession of Papists, were long since relieved out of limbo; soon out, who were never in; and admitted to the sight and presence of God. Especially Abraham, *being father of the faithful,* as well Gentile as Jew would, according to their principles, be a proper patron for their petitions.

But it seems, that modern saints rob the old ones of their honour; a Garnet, or late Bernard of Paris have severally more prayers made unto them, than many old saints have together. New besoms sweep clean; new || *cisterns* of fond men's *own hewing,* most likely to hold water.

Protestants, in some kind, serve their living ministers as Papists their dead saints.

|| Jer. ii. 13.

For

For aged pastors, *who have born the heat of the day* in our Church, are jostled out of respect by young preachers, not having half their age, nor a quarter of their learning and religion. Yet let not the former be disheartened, for thus it ever was and will be, English-Athenians, all for novelties, new sects, new schisms, new doctrines, new disciplines, new prayers, new preachers.

VII.

Charity, charity.

CHURCH story reports of St. John, that being grown very aged, well nigh a hundred years old, wanting strength and voice to make a long sermon, he was wont to go up into the pulpit, and often repeat these words, *Babes keep yourselves from idols; brethren, love one another.*

Our age may seem sufficiently to have provided against the growth of idolatry in England. Oh that some order were taken for the increase of charity! It were liberty enough, if for the next seven years, all sermons were bound to keep residence on this text, *Brethren, love one another.*

But would not some fall out with themselves, if appointed to preach unity to others; vindictive spirits, if confined to this text, would confine the text to their passion:

passion; by *brethren*, understanding only such of their own party. But O! seeing other monopolies are dissolved, let not this remain against the fundamental law *of charity*. Let all bend their heads, hearts, and hands, to make up the breaches in Church and State. But too many now adays, are like Pharaoh's magicians, who could conjure up with their charms more new || *frogs*, but could not remove or drive away those multitude of frogs, which were there before. Unhappily happy in making more rents and dissensions, but unable or unwilling to compose our former differences.

VIII.

The sensible plant.

I HEARD much of a sensible plant, and counted it a senseless relation; a rational beast carrying as little contradiction: until beholding it, mine eyes ushered my judgment into a belief thereof. My comprehension thereof is this. God having made three great stairs, vegetable, sensible, and reasonable creatures, that men thereby might climb up into the knowledge of a deity, hath placed something of a middle nature,

|| Ex. viii. 7.

as

as half piece betwixt the stairs, so to make the step less, and the ascent more easy for our meditations.

Thus this active plant, with visible motion, doth border and confine on sensible creatures. Thus in Africa, some most agile and intelligent Marmasites may seem to shake, fore feet shall I say, or hands, with the rudest savages of that country, as not much more than one remove from them in knowledge and civility.

But, by the same proportion, may not man, by custom and improvement of piety, mount himself near to an angelical nature. Such was Enoch, who, whilst living on earth, * *walked with God.* O may our conversation be in heaven! For shall a plant take a † *new degree,* and proceed sensible, and shall man have his grace stayed for want of sufficiency, and not whilst living here commence angel, in his holy and heavenly affections?

IX.

Christ my King.

I READ how King Edward the first ingeniously surprized the Welch into sub-

* Gen. v. 22. † Phil. iii. 20.

jection, profering them such a prince as should be,

1. The son of a King.

2. Born in their own country.

3. Whom none could tax for any fault.

The Welch accepted the conditions, and the King tendered them his son Edward, an infant, newly born in the castle of Caernarvon.

Do not all these qualifications mystically center themselves in my Saviour?

1. The King of heaven saith unto him, * *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.*

2. Our true countryman, real flesh; whereas *he took not on him the nature of angels.*

3. *Without spot or blemish,* like to us in all things, sin only excepted.

Away then with those wicked men, who † *will not have this King to rule over them.* May he have dominion in and over me! *Thy Kingdom come.* Heaven and earth cannot afford a more proper Prince for the purpose, exactly accomplished with all these comfortable qualifications.

* Psalm. ii. 7. † Luke xix. 14.

X.

Tribulations.

I Find two sad etymologies of tribulation. One from *tribulus,* a three forked thorn, which intimates, that such afflictions which are as full of pain and anguish to the soul, as a thorn thrust into a tender part of the flesh is unto the body, may properly be termed *tribulations.*

The other from *tribulus,* the head of a flail, or flagel, knaggy and knotty, made commonly, as I take it, of a thick black-thorn; and then it imports, that afflictions falling upon us as heavy as the flail threshing the corn, are stiled *tribulations.*

I am in a strait which deduction to embrace, from the sharp, or from the heavy thorn. But which is the worst, though I may choose whence to derive the word, I cannot choose so as to decline the thing; || *I must through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God.*

Therefore I will labour not to be like a young colt first set to plough, which more tires himself out with his own untowardness, whipping himself with his mispent metal, than with the weight of what he draws;

|| Acts xiv. 23.

and

and will labour patiently to bear what is imposed upon me.

XI.

Beware.

I Saw a cannon shot off. The men, at whom it was levelled, fell flat on the ground, and so escaped the bullet. Against such blows, falling is all the fencing, and prostration all the *armour of proof.*

But that which gave them notice to fall down, was their perceiving of the fire before the ordnance was discharged. Oh the mercy of that fire! which, as it were, repenting of the mischief it had done, and the murder it might make, ran a race and out-stripped the bullet, that men, at the sight thereof, might be provided, when they could not resist, to prevent it. Thus every murdering piece is also a warning piece against itself.

God, in like manner, *warns, before he wounds; frights,* before he *fights. Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed. Oh let us fall down before the Lord our Maker!* Then shall his anger be pleased to make in us a daily Passover, and his bullets levelled at us, must fly above us.

XII.

The first fruits.

PAPISTS observe, such are curious priers into Protestants' carriage, that charity in England lay in a swoon from the dissolution of abbeys, in the reign of King Henry the Eighth, till about the tenth of Queen Elizabeth.

As if in that age of ruin, none durst raise religious buildings, and as if the ax and hammer, so long taught to beat down, had forgot their former use, to build up for pious intents.

At last comes * William Lambert, Esq. and first founds an hospital at Greenwich in Kent, calling that his society, like politic Joab after † David's name, *The poor people of Queen Elizabeth.* And after this worthy man followed many, that we may almost dazzle Papists' eyes with the light of Protestant good works. The same Papists perchance may now conceive charity so disheartened in our days, by these civil wars and the consequences thereof, that no Protestants hereafter should be so desperate as to adventure upon a public good deed. O for a Lambert Junior, and I hope some

* See Cam. Brit. in Kent, p. 327.

† 2 Sam. xii. 28.

of

of his lineage are left heirs to his lands and virtues, who shall break through the ranks of all discouragements; so that now English Protestants, being to begin a new score of good works, might from him date their epoch. Such a charity deserves to be knighted for the valour thereof.

XIII.

The recruit.

I Read how one main argument which the Apostle Paul enforceth on Timothy *to make full proof of his ministry*, is this, * *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.* Thus the dying saints' drawing near to heaven, their mark is the best spur for the surviving to make the more speed in their race.

How many excellent divines have these sad times hastened to their † *long home!* so called in Scripture, not because long going thither, but *long* [*ever*] tarrying there. How many have been sorrow-shot to their heart! O that this would edge the endeavours of our generation to succeed in the dead places of worthy men. Shall the Papists curiously observe and sufficiently boast, that their ‡ Stapleton was born on the same day on

* 2 Tim. iv. 6. † Eccles. xii. 5.
‡ Pitzeus in vita Stapleton.

which

which Sir Thomas More was beheaded, as if his cradle made of the other's coffin; and shall not our nurseries of learning supply the void rooms of our worthies deceased? No sin I hope to pray, that our Timothies come not short of our Pauls, as in time, so in learning and religion.

XIV.

The mongrel.

I Find the natural Philosopher, making a character of the lion's disposition, amongst other his qualities, reporteth, first that the lion * feedeth on men, and afterwards, if forced with extremity of hunger, on women. Satan is a *roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.* Only he inverts the method, and in his bill of fare, takes the second first. Ever since he over-tempted our grandmother Eve, encouraged with success, he hath preyed first on the weaker sex. It seems he hath all the vices, not the virtues, of that king of beasts; a wolf-lion, having his cruelty without his generosity.

XV.

Edification.

I Read in a learned Physician, how our

* *In viros prius quam in fœminas sævit.* Plin. Nat. Hist. xviii. c. 10.

pro-

provident mother, nature, foreseeing men, her wanton children, would be tampering with the edge-tools of minerals, hid them far from them, in the bowels of the earth; whereas she exposed plants and herbs more obvious to their eye, as fitter for their use. But some bold empiricks, neglecting the latter, as too common, have adventured on those hidden minerals, oft times, through want of skill, to the hurt of many, and hazard of more.

God in the New Testament hath placed all historical and practical matter, needful for Christians to know and believe, in the beginning of the Gospel. All such truths lie above ground, plainly visible, in the literal sense. The Prophetical and difficult part comes in the close; but though the Testament was written in Greek, too many read it like Hebrew, beginning at the end thereof. How many trouble themselves about the Revelation, who might be better busied in plain divinity! Safer prescribing to others, and practising in themselves, positive piety; leaving such mystical minerals to men of more judgment to prepare them.

XVI.

Mad, not mad.

I Find St. Paul, in the same chapter, confess and

and deny madness in himself, Acts xxvi. 11. *And being exceeding mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.* Vers. 25. when Festus challenged him *to be besides himself, I am not mad, most noble Festus.* Whilst he was mad indeed, then none did suspect or accuse him to be distracted; but when converted, and in his *right mind,* then Festus taxeth him of madness.

XVII.

The deepest cut.

I Beheld a lapidary cutting a diamond with a diamond hammer, and anvil both of the same kind.

God, in Scripture, stiled his servants his **jewels.* His diamonds they are, but, alas! rude, rough, unpolished, without shape or fashion, as they arise naked out of the bed of the earth, before art hath dressed them. See how God, by rubbing one rough diamond against another, maketh both smooth. †Barnabas afflicts Paul, and Paul afflicts Barnabas, by their hot falling out: Jerom occasioneth trouble to Ruffinus, and Ruffinus to Jerom.

In our unnatural war, none, I hope, so weak and wilful as to deny many good men, though misled, engaged on both sides.

* Mal. viii. 19. † Acts xv. 19.

O how

O how have they scratched, and raced, and pierced, and bruised, and broken one another! Behold heaven's hand grating one diamond with another; as for all those, who uncharitably deny any good on that party which they dislike, such shew themselves diamonds indeed in their hardness, cruel censuring, but none in any commendable quality, in their conditions.

FINIS.

[*Printed by J. Bartlett, Oxford.*]